



'In honour of those who served our country We Remember'

Cenotaph a symbol of service, freedom

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ALDERVILLE — The Alderville First Nation Cenotaph, built in 1927 by Alf McKeel and Son of Campbellford, remembers the First Nation men who fought in the First and Second World Wars and Vietnam. This year special medals were to be presented at the Nov. 9 Remembrance Day service honouring those in WWI, says Chief Jim Bob Marsden.

Some of the medals are the size of small saucers, he said.

The significance of the tall monument on County 45 at Alderville is described as follows in a history of the structure and its creation.

"The cube on the very top symbolizes the four corners of the earth. The three globes beneath the cube symbolize holy trinity. The three large pillars supporting the above symbolize the three holy virtues: FAITH-HOPE-CHARITY. The square base on which the Cenotaph stands symbolize the four freedoms: FREEDOM OF SPEECH-FREEDOM FROM FEAR-FREEDOM OF RELIGION-FREEDOM OF THE PRESS...

"The nine large cubes situated around the Cenotaph represent the nine men who were killed in World War 1. The chain that is comprised of 35 links that encircles the Cenotaph and is fastened to the nine cubes represents who served in World War 1, and at the same time represents ETERNITY."

Volunteers made the cement for the monument by hand and others supplied meals as they undertook the construction of the monument, Marsden said in a recent interview.

The unique monument has been restored three times: 1992, 2000 and in 2011 - likely due to the nearby county road where salting and sanding operations are undertaken each year, the chief suggested.

"Alderville First Nation has a duty to preserve, look after and care for this community Cenotaph for Future Generations, in Remembrance of all our Veterans," he also stated in an e-mail.

Where most areas of the country hold their Remembrance Day services on Nov. 11, Marsden



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Alderville First Nation Chief Jim Bob Marsden shares this photo of his family, including his grandmother Sarah Marsden and (from left) uncle Bruce Marsden who was a U.S. Paratrooper during the Second World War, uncle Norman Marsden Jr., father Robert Marsden, grandfather Chief Norman Marsden who served in the First World War and was a Veterans Guard during the Second World War, and uncle Vernon Marsden.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Members of the Alderville First Nation community take part in the 2011 Remembrance Day Parade.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Young boys watch as veterans march in a Remembrance Day parade after the Second World War.

explained that "past tradition" was to hold it on Nov. 9 to allow area Canadian Legions to participate. The current participants include Warkworth, Cobourg and Bewdley Legion members, he said.

The event begins with a walk to the cenotaph from the community centre along County Road 45 where there is the traditional laying of the wreaths.

"It is an emotional time," he said, as they honour the First Nation military participation in

the wars.

During the 1950s, after the service, people were invited to dinner and Chief Marsden recalls one account where 75 sat down to a wild duck dinner at his great-grandfather Norman's place.

"It was always a tradition with my grandparents," he said.

Norman Marsden was also the man who put forward the plan for the monument after WWI, he said.

The current tradition is luncheon at the community centre held

for the community at the conclusion of the memorial service that has so much significance for the Alderville First Nation.

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