

Veterans' graves marked

Actonians revive Decoration Day service



The flags were fluttering and the Acton Citizens' Band was playing as more than 100 W. W. II veterans marched through the streets of Acton, Sunday afternoon, on their way to decorate the

graves of fallen comrades buried in Fairview and St. Joseph's cemeteries. Parade marshal is Hugh O'Rourke.



Legionnaires join in prayer to commemorate the ultimate sacrifice made by their former comrades-in-arms during the Second World War. The Biblical theme behind the service was

cited by Father Speagle: "Greater love than this hath no man, that he should lay down his life for a friend".



As prayers are recited, members of the Legion Ladies' Auxiliary and other involved organizations bow their heads and recall proud achievements of the past.

After a two-year absence, Acton's Decoration Day service returned Sunday to renewed support from the public and a revived spirit of gratitude to those whose graves in Fairview and St. Joseph's cemeteries gave the day its focus.

More than 300 Acton area citizens gathered at Fairview for the hour-long service of prayer, hymns and Remembrance Day-style patriotism. Members of at least ten local organizations then circulated among the graves decorating those of fallen comrades with geraniums.

A 25-year old tradition in Acton, Decoration Day was cancelled in recent years due to declining interest in the community. A Decoration Day committee formed this year to revive the commemoration of World War Two valor, recruiting more than 100 veterans for a parade from the Acton post office to the cemetery.

Committee chairman Jessie Coles thanked the many organizations who had helped arrange this year's service before commenting on continuing instances of vandalism in the community. During the parade's march along Main Street, Miss Coles said, she noticed how many of the committee's flags had been removed from flagpoles where they'd been placed by the Acton Chamber of Commerce following a contribution from the Decoration Day committee.

Miss Coles expressed her dismay at what she called a "disheartening" example of youthful disrespect.

Joining Miss Coles and committee members Helen Fowler and Mary Daigle were Halton Hills Mayor Pete Pomeroy, Ward 1 councillors Terry Grubbe, Ed Wood and Ross Knechtel, members of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 197, and its Ladies Auxiliary, the Lakeside and Duke of Devonshire chapters of the IOOE, the Women's Institute of Dublin, Acton Firefighters Association, Acton Citizen's Band, Acton Clergy Association, V's Men's Club of Acton and the Chamber of Commerce.

Music for the occasion was provided by the Citizen's Band and the Choralliers. Rev. John Robertson, Father Leo Speagle, Lieutenant Lorne Pritchett of the Salvation Army and Mayor Pomeroy offered brief words about the nature of the event.

Graves of veterans at St. Joseph's Cemetery on Church Street were also decorated.



The Choralliers, directed by Ted Hansen and accompanied on piano by Millie Smith, added to the service with solemn hymns

and a rousing contribution to "O Canada" and "God Save the Queen".



Among the officials taking part in Decoration Day were Rev. John Robertson, Father Leo Speagle, Mayor Pete Pomeroy and Ward 1 councillors Ed Wood and Terry Grubbe. The Acton

Citizen's Band, under the direction of Dr. George Elliott, provided music for hymns and anthems.



The color party marched its flags into Fairview Cemetery for the service before standing the banners in a row along the stage front. After several flags slipped and fell to the ground, a

lone Union Jack was inadvertently left on the grass, but a proud veteran came forward to return the standard to its position.

**Herald
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