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LEST WE FORGET Remembrance DAY 2021

 Program helps students honour sacrifice and service of military

No Stone Left Alone was officially launched in 2011 to help ensure "an enduring national respect and gratitude for the sacrifice of the Canadian men and women who have lost their lives in the service of peace, at home and abroad".

Every November, students in participating communities across the country learn about the soldiers and place poppies at the headstones of veterans in local cemeteries.

Maureen Bianchini Purvis is the program's founder and it has become her mission to see that one day all of the soldiers' headstones will have a poppy placed in their honour. In 1971 when Purvis was 12, her mother, a Second World War veteran, was near death when she asked her daughter to never forget her on Armistice Day.

Purvis has laid a poppy every year since at the Field of Honour in Beechmount Cemetery in Edmonton, Alberta to honour her mother Lillian Mary Bianchini. First alone, then with her husband and eventually her two daughters. The girls asked why other veterans didn't have poppies at their markers.

Their question resulted in the establishment of No Stone Left Alone. Purvis was encouraged to proceed by the Minister of Veterans Affairs at the time as well as the Minister of Education and a supportive young Lieutenant-Colonel.

Earlier this year, Purvis, 61, was among the 98 recipients of the Meritorious Service Decorations by The Office of the Secretary to the Governor General. The medals are awarded to individuals who have performed a deed or an activity in a highly professional manner, or at a very high standard that brings benefit or honour to Canada.

Four No Stone Left Alone ceremonies were planned for 2021 in Ontario communities including Hamilton (Woodland Cemetery), Ridgeway (Greenwood Cemetery), Peterborough (Little Lake Cemetery) and Ottawa (Beechwood Cemetery). Others are scheduled across the country. Although the pandemic and public health restrictions impacted the program, in 2020 there



Cpl Michael Barry plays the last post during the No Stone left Alone ceremony at Hamilton's Woodland Cemetery in November 2019. Nikki Wesley, Metroland photo

were 28,722 poppies placed and 59,116 headstones honoured with 1,510 students participating. In 2019 more than 12,000 students participated in the program, placing nearly 65,000 poppies.

Donations to the program are being matched this year by an anonymous matching gift partner. For details about No Stone Left Alone visit the website at nostoneleftalone.ca.



On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of the year 2018, 100 years had passed since the signing of the Armistice marking the end of the "Great War" in Europe.

The Bomb Craters Of The Battlefield At Vimy France WW1

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