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# Remembrance Day: In the words of the children

In May of this year, 60 children and 30 adults from the Georgetown Children's Chorus visited Holland to participate in Remembrance services at the Canadian War Cemetery in Holten, and to participate in the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Holland by Canadian troops.

The choir travelled throughout Holland and sang in eight concerts. The highlights of their trip included a visit to the Holten Canadian War Cemetery, a silent Remembrance walk in Ermelo, a Liberation Day military parade in Nijkerk and marching in the veterans' parade in Apeldoorn.

The following are comments from the children about their trip:

*At Holten, I had a feeling of sadness overcome me, because it is so hard to imagine the pain and the suffering that every soldier had to endure, as well as the Dutch people and many families all over the world. It was an honour to be at such a moving ceremony and place. This trip showed me how lucky I am to live in Canada, and how lucky we were and are to have the veterans who sacrificed their lives for Holland and for Canada.*

**Carly Bravo, age 15**

*The messages on the gravestones really broke my heart. The ages of some of the soldiers were so young. It was unbearable to think about family and friends of mine that are the same age as some of those men were. I regretted having to leave so soon. If I was given the time, I would go back and visit every stone. I only wish that every Canadian could see and experience what I saw in Holten.*

**Victoria Fraser, age 12**

*Singing at Holten Cemetery and other remembrance ceremonies, and watching the reaction of the veterans and of those in Holland, gave me a feeling that's hard to explain. It gave me a shivery feeling when I sang O Canada, because of the reaction of the Dutch and because I realized how lucky I am to be a Canadian.*

**Melanie Ronco-Hornby**



Joanna Fraser, 17, a member of the Georgetown Children's Chorus, lays a flower on the grave of a fallen Canadian soldier during the Chorus' tour of the Holten Canadian War Cemetery in Holland this past May. Members of the local choir shared their thoughts on the Liberation Day ceremonies and how the trip impacted them. Photo courtesy Lois Fraser

*I never realized how much the Dutch people valued Canadians and how they still remember us so fondly. The war was a long time ago but not only the old people are involved in these activities but also the young people. When we visited the cemeteries I could not believe how many graves there were and how well they were taken care of. I heard that it is now the job of the young people to take care of these graves.*

**Jeff Leonard, 14**

*I was amazed at how important the Liberation is to all of the people in Holland. When we were traveling, people decorated their towns and were very welcoming. Although there were many lives sacrificed, Canada helped change their country forever. Canadian soldiers will always be heroes. They will always be remembered.*

**Shannon Carruthers**

*My friend Amy and I laid the wreath on behalf of the choir. This was a special honour as it was my way to be able to say thank you to all the veterans for helping to fight for my freedom.*

**Laura Collie, 9**

*The end was the most memorable part of the whole service. A helicopter came by and as it passed over the cemetery, all you could see were petals of poppies falling daintily from the sky. I realized how much we should respect our veterans. They risked their lives, to go across the ocean to save people who they didn't even know. I realized that, even though many are gone, we will never forget.*

**Megan Collie, 12**

*What really made me sad was how these people who went through so many horrible things still made an effort to learn and sing our national anthem at the remembrance ceremony held at the Holten Cemetery. It then occurred to me that all the things I take for granted now are thanks to those soldiers. These men fought for not only our country but for the way the way of life we cherish.*

**Erin McConaghy, 13**

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