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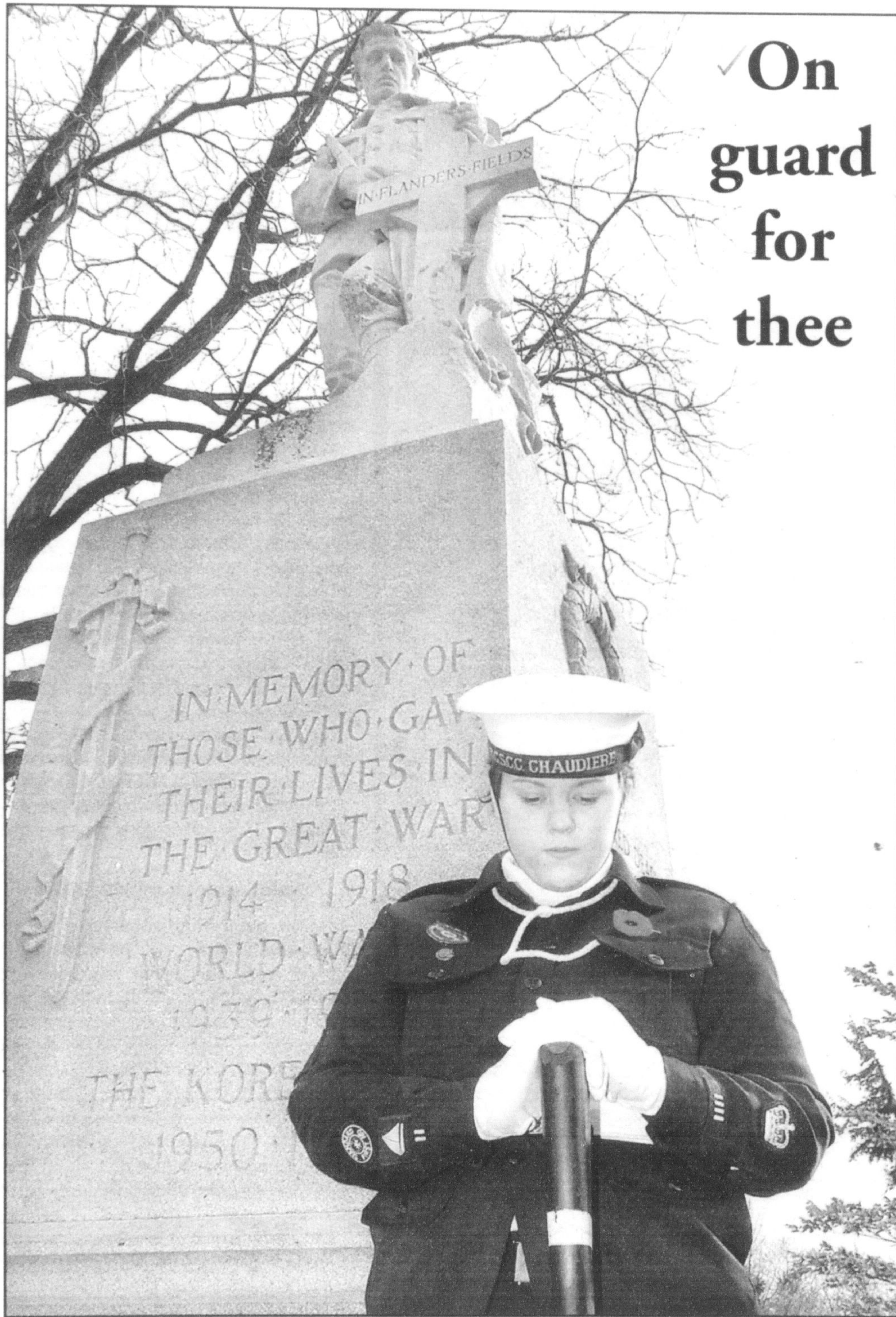


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✓ **On guard for thee**

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Jennifer Charlton, a sea cadet with the #304 RCSCC Chaudiere, stands on guard at the Victoria Park Cenotaph Sunday during Remembrance Day services. See more photos from the local services on page A4.

Older drivers still not getting message, say MADD officials

Local chapter launches annual red ribbon campaign

By **TIM WHITNELL**
Special to *The Champion*

There are still too many young people dying due to drinking and driving, but a room full of politicians and emergency services personnel agreed that older generations aren't necessarily getting the message either.

While some headway is being made with the youngest of drivers, the 50-plus-year-old individual, who should know better and be providing an example to relatively inexperienced drivers, is still getting behind the wheel after consuming alcohol.

That was the almost universal observation of a series of speakers who showed up to the Mothers Against Drunk Driving 2005 red ribbon kick-off campaign recently at the Hilton Garden Inn in Burlington.

The Halton/Peel Chapter of MADD attracted police, fire and paramedic representatives and city politicians from both regions.

Red ribbons available

As well, Oakville MPP Kevin Flynn and MADD Canada CEO Andrew Murie attended the chapter's 12th annual event under this year's theme Tie One On for Safety.

About four million red ribbons, the organization's symbol, will be made available for a donation across Canada, to be affixed to vehicles.

Oakville Mayor Ann Mulvale was one of several speakers to admit that her peers continue to drop the ball in the realm of understanding the consequences of drinking and driving.

"This age group," she said of three teens who addressed the group to start the event, "has a different attitude from my generation."

Ms Mulvale said when people in her age group were much younger the general attitude about drinking and driving was, 'Oh, too bad they got caught' — it wasn't about the potential for personal tragedy.

She said each lost life could affect the course of humanity.

"A dry (school) graduation can be just as much fun. We banned alcohol at council meetings years ago and we still have fun," Ms Mulvale chuckled.

"The statistics need to change and they will only change when we take responsibility for our choices."

The figures she alluded to are indeed sobering.

MADD Canada states that almost four people die every day across the country in alcohol or drug-related traffic accidents; the number of injured daily is nearly 200.

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