

# Newsletter

Canadian Battlefields Foundation  Fall 2013 [www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca)

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Visit [www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca) to view photos from the 2013 CBF tour and to read tour blog posts written by both students and instructors.



The 2013 CBF Study Tour atop the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial

## President's Message

The 2013 Tour, led by Dr. Andrew Iarocci and Dr. Graham Broad with the excellent logistics support of Jérémie LeBlanc, was a total success. Andrew's comments are published on the Laurier Centre for Military Strategy and Disarmament Studies' website ([canadianmilitaryhistory.ca](http://canadianmilitaryhistory.ca)). This Newsletter includes additional information on the tour.

The Education Committee will propose an itinerary for next year's tour, the centenary of the first year of the First World War and the 70th anniversary of D-Day in 1944. This tour will centre on the sites where Canadians fought during these major conflicts. The Canadian Expeditionary Force deployed to Europe during the Fall of 1914 but its units did not fight under the Canadian flag until the following year. For the 2015 tour, the focus will be visits to the battlefields where Canadians fought and died 100 years ago.

The CBF annual study tours consist of 12 to 16 students from most Canadian universities and the goal of this ongoing association with academia is to achieve broad representation of post graduate students from coast to coast to coast. An extract from the report of three students who participated in this year's tour is reproduced in this Newsletter and represents very well the sentiments of most participants.

Thanks to the excellent work of Jérémie LeBlanc, the updated and user-friendly website is now online at [www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca). All who are interested in Canada's military history will find its contents most interesting.

The CBF Fund is being well managed by Wood Gundy but the volatile economic situation worldwide has led the Board to opt for investment prudence as opposed to high but risky yields. As a result, the yield,

the yearly donations and the contributions of participating students have not covered yearly operations and it has been necessary to withdraw from the capital these last few years. Donors should know that their contributions go to cover student tours and commemorative signage at Canadian battlefields sites to complement, where needed, that provided by Veterans Affairs and French authorities. They should also know that the members of the Foundation are all volunteers and that the yearly administrative costs are limited to a few thousand dollars. The cost to the Foundation of each participating student is \$5,000. If they wish, donors can subsidize one or more students who will report to them on their experience.

Sincerely,

**Claude LaFrance**  
Major General (ret'd)  
President, CBF

## 2013 CBF Executive Committee

The Spring meeting of the Board and the Annual General Meeting took place on 6 May 2013. At those meetings, the following were elected as members of the Executive Committee:

- **Claude LaFrance:** President
- **Georges Rousseau:** Vice-President
- **David Patterson:** Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee
- **Clive Addy:** Chair of the Fund Raising Committee
- **Senator J. Day:** Chair of the Trustees Committee
- **Charles Gruchy:** Treasurer
- **Geoff Hayes:** Chair of the Education Committee
- **Jérémie LeBlanc:** Chair of Tours and Public Affairs Committee, & Webmaster

Two Board members who have provided signal services to the CBF resigned for health reasons. Dr. Serge Durlinger resigned as Chair of the Education Committee but remains on the Board, Keith Spicer resigned as the Foundation VP France. On behalf of the members of the Foundation, I extend our heartfelt thanks to these gentlemen and our thoughts are with them in the difficult circumstances they are facing. The Executive Committee is currently in discussions with two potential successors to Keith Spicer as VP France.

The Honourary Patron of the CBF remains The Right Honourable Beverly McLachlin, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada.

## Contact the CBF

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# The 2013 Tour Was A Complete Success

The tour was led by Doctor Andrew Iarocci, with help from Doctor Graham Broad and Ms. Amanda Green, following a well planned itinerary:

- Saint-Martin-de-Fontenay - Point 67 where improvements to the signage and control of access to the commemorative site were discussed with the deputy mayor.
- The Saint-Lambert-sur-Dives site, where Mayor Duval who advised that the town has received funding to improve a path to the monument.
- Rouvre, where a plaque commemorating the actions of the Fort Garry Horse was discussed – the Foundation will cover the cost of the plaque and the town will cover the cost of mounting it.
- Abbaye Ardenne, where the Foundation has an historical presence - installation and costs of installing interpretive plaques were discussed with local administrators.

- Caen, where ceremonies and a vin d'honneur were well attended.
- Bernière-sur-mer and Juno Beach, where two of the participating students read the Commitment to Remembrance.

Here is an extract from the moving comments of student Eric de Kroon:

*“Standing amongst the graves of approximately three thousand Canadians, men who had died during the D-Day bridgehead battles, I felt a profound sense of sorrow. Reading the names on the stones, the ages of those who had died, and the personal epitaphs chosen by family and friends, I felt incredibly sad. I realized that too many of those buried had died as young men, barely adults, and that they had lived lives as individual and precious to them as mine is to me. They had loved and been loved.”*

The group huddles at the base of the Brooding Soldier at the Saint Julien Monument



Katie Domansky's words from the online tour blog also give a sense of the profound impact of the tour:

*"Walking among these graves really brought home for me the fact that remembrance is about more than just recognizing those connected to us through family, friends, or patriotism. We are all a part of a larger human community, one in which sacrifice is both mourned and celebrated in equal measure, regardless of which side you take up arms for..."*

*For a group of strangers who knew nothing of one another two weeks ago, the tour group became remarkably close... Despite our differences in age and varied backgrounds we have managed to find a lot of surprisingly common ground. We became a family for the few short weeks we travelled together, and I know that the genuine, honest, and heartfelt openness shown by my tour-mates during this journey was what truly made this experience profound."*

Andrew Iarocci eloquently summarized his experience as an instructor:

*"I gradually realized that we had a special group this year. All twelve participants were clearly intellectually and emotionally engaged in the undertaking."*

*"Sometimes the tour leaders get so preoccupied with countless daily administrative chores, driving, navigating, and preparing for the next stop, that we forget to pause and take it all in. I would like all of the participants from CBF 2013 to know just how much I prized the experience, primarily because the company was so fine. I learned something from everyone, and I would pack up and do it all over again tomorrow without a second thought."*



Tour participants meet Second World War veteran Albert Brum in Normandy, France

Andrew also spoke strongly on the educational value battlefield of touring and the importance of walking the ground for students:

*"This year's experience truly underscored the potential of the battlefield tour as an educational instrument. Graham and I had the right group of students, and we were able to combine our own research and teaching specialties to fully capitalize on what the sites had to offer. But I cannot emphasize enough how important, and rewarding, it was to have a cohesive group of students who were genuinely invested in the intellectual goals of the tour."*

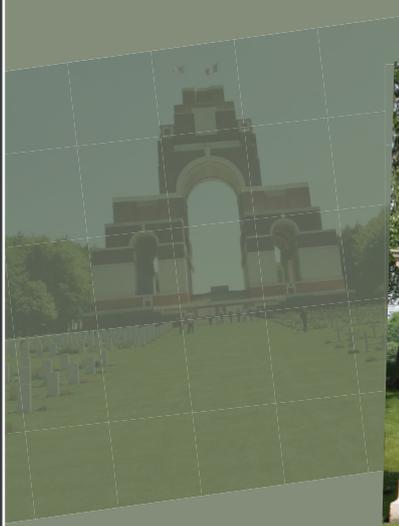
*I would note in particular that visiting the ground not only helps students to better understand the tactical and operational dimensions of the war experience - it also illuminates a host of larger themes. One example that comes to mind is Canada's role as an alliance partner in the two World Wars. It is one thing to visit Vimy Ridge, but that visit takes on a different meaning when it is partnered with a preliminary examination of the French battlefields that overlap the Vimy site, including Notre Dame de Lorette."*



Katie Domansky (University of Calgary) gives her soldier presentaiton at Dieppe Canadian Cemetery

# 2014 - 2018 Student Tours

This period will mark the centenaries of several Canadian regiments and of the battles they have fought during the First World War. The Canadian Battlefields Foundation will seek to bring these events in focus, not only for the participating students but also for the Canadian public in general. The Foundation activities in this regard will be coordinated to the extent possible with those of Veterans Affairs, the Vimy Foundation, the War Museum and the various participating regiments.



## Photos from the 2013 Student Tour



Yes! The **Canadian Battlefields Foundation** can count on my support 

You can support the Canadian Battlefields Foundation either **online** at [www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca) using credit card,  
**OR** via **cheque** by completing and mailing this form:

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 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ I wish to receive future mailings about the CBF

I would like to make a:  One-time gift  Monthly gift  Annual gift

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Please send completed form and cheque to: Canadian Battlefields Foundation, 1 Vimy Place, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0M8, Canada  
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