

# Newsletter

Canadian Battlefields Foundation **Fall 2014** [www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca)

A non profit charity established in 1992 to educate and actively promote public awareness of Canada's role in the wars of the 20th century.



The 2014 CBF Study Tour atop the Tiger Tank at Vimoutiers

## President's Message

It is with great honour and enthusiasm that I accept the position of President of the Canadian Battlefields Foundation (CBF). The foundation plays an essential role in the remembrance and commemoration of sacrifices of thousands of Canadians during conflicts and wars in the 20th century. It is with humility, respect and gratitude towards those soldiers that I assume the leadership of the CBF.

Fulfilling its education mandate, the foundation organises and sponsors, among other things, a study programme in which university students, selected as a result of a Canada-wide contest, are deployed to Europe to visit battlefields and other important sites to understand land, sea and air operations conducted on that continent in the 20th century. Upon their return, these students are then in an excellent position to inform colleagues, friends and the population at large, through a multitude of communications means, about their observations. By doing so, they are reminding Canadians of the sacrifices that our soldiers have made towards peace and freedom which we value so much today. The CBF also sponsors certain commemoration sites in Europe, ensuring that Canada's legacy in conflicts and wars is remembered. You will find in this newsletter an overview of the most recent of those study tours along with the most recent commemorative plaque unveiling.

You will no doubt understand that those activities rely on your support and, as such, I

wish to remind you that we are in a full canvassing campaign. Your contributions are extremely important and ensure that the sacrifices of Canadian soldiers remain well alive in our collective memory.

In 2015, the foundation will celebrate its 20th year of sponsored battlefield study tours. For the occasion, we will organise a commemorative gala dinner scheduled for Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 6:30 for 7p.m. I am delighted to inform you that our Patron, The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada has graciously accepted to attend. I invite you to join us for this exceptional event. This dinner represents a prime opportunity to show your support to the CBF and, on a larger perspective, to the memory of thousands of soldiers who have risked their lives in the name of our freedom. The sale of corporate and individual tickets has already started. More information is available in this newsletter.

In closing, I would like to thank the CBF Executive Committee for their trust. We face important challenges in order to continue fulfilling the foundation's mandate. We will only succeed this noble and crucial role with your support.

Lieutenant-General (ret'd) Marc Lessard

President

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Visit [www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca) to view photos from the 2014 CBF tour and to read tour blog posts written by students

## In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden passing, on July 6, 2014, of Major-general (ret'd) Claude LaFrance, member of the foundation for seven years and its President since 2013. You will find in this newsletter an overview of the fulfilling career of this great Canadian whose services to the nation are an inexhaustible source of inspiration.

## Nomination

At the Board of Directors' meeting held on September 19, 2014, Lieutenant-General (ret'd) Marc Lessard was nominated to the position of President. You will find a short biography on the new president inside this newsletter on page 4.

## 2014 CBF Executive Committee

The Spring meeting of the Board and the Annual General Meeting took place on May 26, 2014. At those meetings, the following were elected as members of the Executive Committee:

- Claude LaFrance: President
- Georges Rousseau: Vice-President
- Hervé Hoffer: Vice-President France
- David Patterson: Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee
- Clive Addy: Chair of the Fundraising Committee
- Senator Joseph Day: Chair of the Trustees Committee
- Christian Rousseau: Treasurer
- Geoff Hayes: Chair of the Education Committee
- Jérémie LeBlanc: Chair of Tours and Public Affairs Committee

Col (ret'd) Christian Rousseau was elected to the position of Treasurer to replace Mr. Charles Gruchy who resigned but remains a member of the foundation. Hervé Hoffer was elected as Vice-President France to replace Mr. Keith Spicer, who also resigned. Mr. Hoffer, a long time friend of the foundation, is known for his hard work to maintain Canada House in Bernières-sur-mer. He is a true Canadian at heart who has welcomed many Canadians in his home. He continues to inform visitors about the sacrifices made by our soldiers during the Second World War.

### Contact the CBF

Online:  
[www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca)

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Canadian Battlefields  
Foundation

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Ottawa, Ontario  
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Charitable Registration  
13974 1177 RR0001

Editor: Marcel Cloutier



**LaFrance, Claude**  
**Major General (ret'd) RCAF**

**July 1, 1929 – July 6, 2014**

Passed away peacefully at age 85 at Hospice Cornwall, less than two weeks after feeling tired following a game of golf, and a subsequent diagnosis of acute leukemia.

Born in Québec City, he attended l'Académie de Québec, obtaining a Latin-Science Diploma, and later a BA from Carleton University. In 1947, just before the outbreak of the Korean War, and taking up his father's tradition of military service, he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. Training as a fighter pilot, he became one of 22 RCAF pilots sent by Canada to serve with the US Air Force in Korea. It was on 5 August 1952 while leading a flight of four F-86 Sabre jets that Flt Lt. LaFrance shot down a Mig-15, becoming one of only a handful of Canadians to have engaged in air to air combat since the Second World War. For this action and on return to Canada after 50 missions, he was awarded the American Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal.

Following Korea, Claude continued his Air Force career, advancing rapidly through a variety of senior appointments, notably establishing Escadron Tactique de Combat 433 as a French speaking unit and becoming its first Commanding Officer. He later became Commander of Canadian Forces Base Winnipeg, Director General of Plans and Policy at National Defence Headquarters, Commander of 10 Tactical Air Group in St Hubert, and Chief of Plans, Policy and Programs at NORAD HQ in Colorado Springs. In 1981, after 34 years of service and having accumulated 5000 flying hours in more than 35 different types of fixed and rotary wing aircraft, he retired from the Canadian Forces in the rank of Major General. He continued to be active in aerospace activities including from 1985 to 1989 as Assistant Deputy Minister Aviation in Transport Canada.



Claude then moved on to become a consultant for the International Civil Aviation Organization, overseeing the development of aviation control systems in Albania and Lebanon. In 1994, he became President of Aerospaciale Canada Inc., which later became EADS Canada (now part of Airbus Group) and remained in that position until 2005. Widely regarded for his leadership and planning expertise, he served on a variety of boards and panels including President of the Canadian Battlefields Foundation, Chairman of the Trustees Committee of Unmanned Systems Canada, and as a member of Aerospace Industries Association of Canada and of the French Académie de l'Air et de l'Espace. For his services to French aerospace he was inducted into the Légion d'Honneur in the rank of Chevalier.

Having never fully retired, he found time to become an avid golfer, as well as being active in the Korea Veterans Association. But his main love was his wife and family who will always remain inspired by his zest for life, his integrity and being the epitome of a true gentleman.

# Commemorative Dinner

For more than 20 years, the Canadian Battlefields Foundation (CBF) has been actively and energetically involved in remembrance and commemoration activities. The cornerstone of the CBF remains its educational mandate. More than 250 university students and no fewer than 40 history teachers at colleges and institutions of higher learning from all across Canada have benefitted from our sponsored study tours. To highlight this important aspect of our mandate, the CBF is organising a commemorative dinner on May 8th, 2015 at the Canadian War Museum. In addition to remembering the numerous sacrifices of our courageous soldiers, this dinner will be an unprecedented event aimed at thanking publicly all our partners and donors for their generous and unfailing support towards the ideal and the objectives of the CBF. It will coincide with the 70th anniversary of VE Day and with the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of the new Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. You are all invited to this milestone event. Additional information is available in this newsletter and on our web site.

## CANADIAN BATTLEFIELDS FOUNDATION



EDUCATE

REMEMBER

COMMEMORATE



## FONDATION CANADIENNE DES CHAMPS DE BATAILLE

ÉDUCATION

SOUVENIR

COMMÉMORATION



### COMMEMORATIVE DINNER DÎNER COMMÉMORATIF

#### Our Patron

**The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C.,  
Chief Justice of Canada  
has graciously accepted to attend**

**Notre Présidente d'honneur  
la très honorable Beverley McLachlin, C.P.,  
Juge en chef du Canada  
a gracieusement accepté de participer**

**Friday May 8th, 2015 at 6:30 for 7 p.m.  
(70th Anniversary of VE Day)  
*Vendredi, le 8 mai 2015 à 18h30 pour 19h  
(70e anniversaire du jour de la Victoire en Europe)***

**Canadian War Museum  
*Musée canadien de la guerre*  
1 Vimy Place  
Ottawa (Ontario)  
K1A 0M8**

**Tickets: corporate table \$2,000 - individual non-corporate seat \$200  
*Billets : table d'entreprise 2 000 \$ - place individuelle hors entreprise 200 \$*  
email: [dinner@cbf-fccb.ca](mailto:dinner@cbf-fccb.ca) - *courriel : [diner@cbf-fccb.ca](mailto:diner@cbf-fccb.ca)***

**Information: [www.cbf-fccb.ca](http://www.cbf-fccb.ca)**

**Proceeds in support of the foundation's bursary program  
*Les recettes seront versées au programme de bourses d'études de la fondation***

**In partnership with  
*Avec le soutien de***



## Biography: Lieutenant-General (ret'd) Marc Lessard, C.M.M., M.S.C., C.D.



Lieutenant-General (ret'd) Marc Lessard was born in Iserlohn, Germany. He graduated in 1978 from the Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean and served in a variety of regimental positions with the Royal

22e Regiment in Lahr, Germany and Valcartier, Quebec. He was also posted with the Canadian Airborne Regiment in Petawawa, Ontario.

His various command appointments include: Commanding Officer of the 3R22eR/1R22eR in Valcartier, Commander of the Combat Training Centre in Gagetown, Commandant of the Canadian Army Staff College in Kingston and Commander of Land Force Central Area in Toronto. From 2001 to 2003, he was posted to Norfolk, Virginia as Deputy Commander Striking Fleet Atlantic, a

US Navy joint task force under NATO control. He was also the Assistant Chief of the Land Staff in Ottawa.

Lieutenant-General Lessard's operational experience includes a deployment to Cyprus in 1985. While commanding the 1R22eR battalion group in 1993/1994 in Croatia, his unit received the Commander UNPROFOR's Unit Commendation for excellence in operations. He returned to the Balkans in 1996 as Deputy Commander of 5 Canadian Multinational Brigade, as part of NATO's involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 2008, Lieutenant-General Lessard commanded Regional Command (South), the ISAF formation headquartered in Kandahar airfield, Afghanistan and was responsible for 22,000 troops from 17 nations.

From May 2009 to September 2011, he was Commander of the Canadian Expeditionary Force Command (CEFCOM) which included all Canadian Forces operations outside North America. The counter-insurgency operations in Kandahar province and the rapid deployment of a 2,200 task force to Haiti in 2010, follow-

ing the disastrous earthquake, were major Canadian Forces' commitments during his command. He was responsible for the Canadian Forces' Libya operations under NATO's Operation Unified Protector.

He retired in 2011 after 39 years of service and is presently a Senior Mentor for the National Security Programme at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto, Canada as well as a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Defence Association Institute.

Lieutenant-General Lessard holds a Bachelor degree in Administration from Collège Militaire Royal and a Master in Strategic Studies from the US Army War College. He is a graduate of the British Army Staff College and the US Army War College.

He was awarded the Order of Military Merit at the Commander level and received the Meritorious Service Cross for his determined leadership as Commander Regional Command South in Afghanistan.

## 2014 BATTLEFIELD STUDY TOUR

Battle study tours are intended for Canadian university students who want to learn more about the role Canadians played in the liberation of Europe in the two World Wars. This year's tour was comprised of 12 such highly motivated students. The tour took place from May 30 to June 15. The itinerary varies every year. In 2014, the group went to Ypres, the Somme region, Vimy Ridge, Dieppe and the Normandy battlefields. This year's tour also coincided with the 70th anniversary of the D-Day Landings. As such, the group participated in numerous commemorative ceremonies marking this important anniversary and was privileged to meet several high profile dignitaries and veterans, from Canada and Europe.

The tour was led by Professor Marc Milner from University of New Brunswick and by Colonel Dave Patterson, a past president and a current director of the foundation. Senator Joseph Day along with Mrs. Bobbie Milner, the tour 'mother', were also part of the group. Senator Day acted as the emcee at the ceremonies organised by the CBF.

Students were expected to prepare academically for the trip, each having to lead one on-site discussion, present a short biography of a Canadian soldier buried at one of the sites on the itinerary, and keep a detailed journal describing their experiences while maintaining a blog to inform potential readers.

The following photos, courtesy of Rob Blanchard, illustrate some of the highlights of the tour.

## Student's reflections:

"Today we visited Vimy Ridge. What an experience! Having read and heard about this battle, it was something else altogether to see it in person. Soaring out of the ground on Hill 145 and overlooking the Douai plain, it is truly a sight. However, it is also very sobering. 10,000 Canadians fell trying to take this ridge, a cost which cannot be forgotten and is not when you visit the site. In my mind's eye, I could see the thousands of Canadian soldiers charging through craters, barbed wire and blasted landscape to take the hill."

Jordan Fraser

"En ce 6 juin 2014, 70 ans plus tard, nous nous sommes réunis au musée canadien de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale ...Les vétérans disent souvent que les "vrais" héros sont ceux qui sont tombés au combat, mais à mes yeux, ils le sont tous et je me considère privilégiée d'avoir pu assister à la cérémonie en leur compagnie aujourd'hui. Je leur dis à tous merci et je poursuivrai le devoir de mémoire une fois de retour au Canada avec une plus grande compréhension des efforts et sacrifices réalisés par ces soldats en 1944."

Maryse Bédard

"I was just excited to share what I had learned with everybody and finally see with my own eyes what I had spent so much time studying. So as we drove steadily along the winding roads, I had an overall sense of calm and readiness.

That changed immediately as we pulled up to the beach at Puys. It was exactly how it looked in the pictures I had seen – a narrow pathway running between two soaring cliffs, a beach covered in not sand but stones. It's not like I was surprised by what I saw. It was what I felt that was surprising. Nothing could have prepared me for the crushing emotional response to actually being there. I could barely walk over the stones to where I was supposed to present."

Allison Wiber

# Photo highlights from the Study Tour



*Photos courtesy of Rob Blanchard from the University of New Brunswick*



# 2014 CBF Tour Students



Jordan Fraser  
Royal Military College



Emilie Bowles  
Bishop's University



Marko Kljajic  
Western University



Amanda Shepherd  
University of New Brunswick



Matthew Moore  
Carleton University



Ryan Flavelle  
Western University



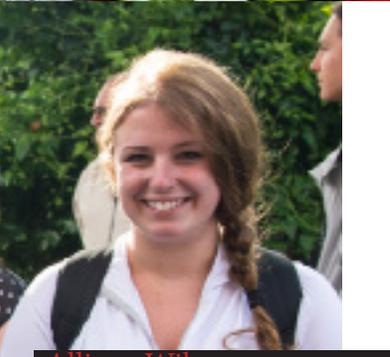
Julien Labrosse  
University of Ottawa



Marlee Goyette  
Western - King's College



Tyson Ochitwa  
University of Winnipeg



Allison Wiber  
Western - King's College



Sarah Hogenbirk  
Carleton University



Maryse Bédard  
Université du Québec à Montréal

# New commemorative plaque...



## New plaque site: Rouvres, Normandy, France.

As part of its commemoration and remembrance objectives, the foundation unveils from time to time interpretive plaques in areas where Canadians have fought. This year, the foundation offered such a plaque to the town of Rouvres in Normandy, France, commemorating the crossing of the Laison River by Canadian troops during operation Tractable in 1944.

Mr. Hervé Hoffer, the foundation's Vice-President France, attended the official unveiling ceremony held on October 25th, 2014.

## Canadian Battlefields: The Laison River

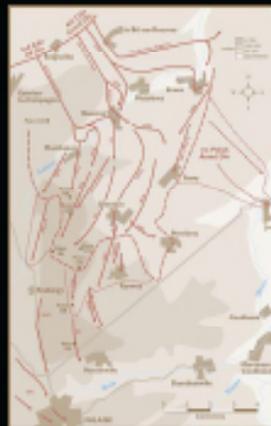
Operation "Tractable," 14-16 August 1944, was First Canadian Army's second attempt to close the Falaise Pocket and prevent the escape of the remaining German forces in Normandy. The 2nd and 4th Canadian armoured brigades with the 9th and 10th Infantry brigades advanced in a daylight attack using massed armour. The Laison River proved to be a significant obstacle to tanks until bridges, including the one pictured here at Rouvres, were constructed. By 16 August, Canadian and Polish troops were poised to close the Falaise Gap between Trun and Chambois. Most of the 473 Canadian soldiers and airmen who died between 14 and 16 August 1944 are buried in Canadian War Cemeteries at Beny sur Mer and Bretteville sur Laize.



### Operation "Tractable" 14-17 August 1944

Frontier bridge 14 August  
Front bridge 15-16 August

1st AC - 1st Armoured Regiment  
2nd AC - 2nd Armoured Regiment  
4th AC - 4th Armoured Regiment  
9th IB - 9th Infantry Brigade  
10th IB - 10th Infantry Brigade  
1st PPCLI - 1st Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry  
2nd PPCLI - 2nd Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry  
1st MRC - 1st Medium Regiment  
1st MTR - 1st Medium Tank Regiment  
1st MCR - 1st Medium Reconnaissance Regiment  
1st MCL - 1st Medium Cavalry Squadron  
1st MCRG - 1st Medium Reconnaissance Squadron  
1st MCRG - 1st Medium Reconnaissance Squadron



Panel text/Texte : Terry Copp & Louise Pilon  
Design/Conception : Mike Bechtold  
Map/Carte : Mike Bechtold

## Les champs de bataille canadiens : La rivière Laison

L'opération « Tractable », du 14 au 16 août 1944, était la deuxième tentative de la Première Armée canadienne à fermer la poche de Falaise et à empêcher la fuite des forces allemandes en Normandie. Les 2e et 4e brigades blindées canadiennes et les 9e et 10e brigades d'infanterie canadiennes se sont avancées durant la journée à l'aide d'une concentration de chars d'assaut. Avant la construction de ponts, comme celui-ci qui se situe à Rouvres, la rivière Laison fut un obstacle important pour les chars d'assaut.

Le 16 août, les troupes canadiennes et polonaises étaient sur le point de fermer la poche de Falaise entre Trun et Chambois. La plupart des 473 soldats et aviateurs canadiens qui sont morts entre 14 et 16 août 1944 sont enterrés dans les cimetières de guerre canadiens à Beny-sur-Mer et Bretteville-sur-Laize.

« Ils se sont battus pour  
la libération de l'Europe et  
l'espoir d'un monde meilleur. »

In memory of / À la mémoire de  
Eddie Goodman  
(1918-2006)  
Fort Garry Horse

Canadian Battlefields Foundation  
La Fondation canadienne des champs de bataille  
<http://www.cbf-fccb.ca/>



2014



# The Canadian Battlefields Foundation

## Patrons and directors

The Rt. Hon. Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin, PC (Honorary Patron)

The Late Mr. G. Hamilton Southam, OC (Founder/Fondateur) – (Veteran)

## Honorary Life Members

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Mr. John Rae

MGen Roland A. Reid, CVO, CM, MC, CD (Veteran)

Mrs. Lilliane Stewart, CStJ, CD

BGen Radley-Walters, CMM, DSO, MD, CD (Veteran)

Mrs. Shelagh Whitaker

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Col Christian Rousseau (Treasurer) (Veteran)

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Mr. Russell A. Mills

Dr. Marc Milner (Historian)

Col Wayne M. Shiplo, CD (Veteran)

LCol Bradley K White, CD (Veteran)

Mr. James Whitham

## Keep their Memory Alive...

You can commemorate the life of a fallen relative or war hero buried in a European cemetery by sponsoring one of Canada's leading university students to walk through his battlefield. The student will learn firsthand of the soldier's sacrifices and contributions, on land, sea or air. Then, while at his actual gravesite, the student will share the history of this brave Canadian volunteer with his colleagues.

Thus documented, his story will live on in two ways. The sponsor will receive a bound copy of the presentation. The student will carry the memory throughout his/her academic career, sharing it with future students and peers.

The cost for a two-week battle study tour for one student, named in memory of a relative or respected veteran:

One year: \$3,500\*  
3 years: \$10,000

\*All donations are tax deductible

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  
 Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send completed form and cheque to: Canadian Battlefields Foundation, 1 Vimy Place, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0M8, Canada  
 Charitable Registration: 13974 1177 RR0001