

Hooray!

Korea's MPVA is once again offering the Korea Revisit Program to veterans of the Korean War.

참고 | 2026년도 국가별 초청 계획

* 배경 표시한 인원(총 148명) 재외공관 모집 요청

참전국	4월 (가평전투, 안축데이)	7월 (유엔군 참전의 날)			9월 (미 건국 250주년)		11월 (국제 추모의 날)	계 (총 4회, 230명)
		포상, 저명	재향 군인	참전 용사 등	복무 장병	전사실종 징병유족		
미 국			1	6	60	30	12	109
영 국	8		1	2			4	15
캐나다	6		1	2			4	13
튀르키예			1				6	7
호주	6		1				2	9
그리스			1	2				3
필리핀			1	2				3
태국			1				2	3
네덜란드			1				2	3
콜롬비아			1				2	3
뉴질랜드	6		1				2	9
에티오피아			1	2				3
벨기에			1				2	3
프랑스			1				2	3
남아공			1				2	3
독일			1	2				3
인도			1	2				3
노르웨이			1				2	3
덴마크			1	2				3
스웨덴			1	2				3
이탈리아			1	2				3
독일			1	2				3
포상 저명		20						20
계	26	20	22	28	90		44	230
			70					

The remarkable MPVA Veterans Revisit Program, now in its 51st year, will see 230 veterans from 22 nations invited to Korea in 2026, with application deadlines for the April revisit due by Feb. 20 in Canada and then or a little later in other nations. This chart is repeated for reference at the end of this article. The program was first launched in 1975 on the occasion of the 25th of the Korean War,

By Vince Courtenay

(Anyone wishing to skip past my chatter about this generous program can turn to the subheading below: *The details of the 2026 program.*)

Once again Korea's Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs is expressing appreciation for those who served in the Korean War by issuing invitations on a competitive basis for the 2026 Veterans Revisit to Korea program. This year 230 veterans from 22 nations are being invited for revisits in April, July, September (USA only) and November. Veterans from the Republic of Korea who are now living in other nations are also being invited.



This grand philanthropist, Canadian Veteran Claude Petit is truly joyful on his final revisit to Korea. He holds the Order of Canada and the Saskatchewan Order of Merit for his years of generosity and philanthropy to Canada's Aboriginal Youth. Claude turned 17 on the ship that carried him to Korea and was wounded in action in the Second Battle of the Hook three weeks after arriving in Korea. After surgery and recuperation he returned to action. Claude has suffered from PTSD ever since his service in Korea, but overcame its torment and ravages to become a very successful

sporting goods entrepreneur. Claude this very day is watching the 2026 Olympic winter games in his room in a veteran care facility in Edmonton, Canada where he is receiving end of life care. His wife, Ardis, is with him. His spirits are high. Two days ago he asked his wife Ardis to go home for a rest (so that he could watch the NFL Superbowl game on TV). The author served under fire with Claude in Korea.

Some thoughts on the revisit program

This is a most generous and thoughtful program much sought after by those of us who served in Korea during the war or during the immediate post armistice period.

For those who served under fire it is much more than a sentimental journey to the nation that has been in their psyche these past 70-some years.

For veterans who suffer the ravages of post-traumatic stress syndrome, the diagnosis and term unheard of during the period of the Korean War, it will be a last chance to face the demons the war inspired and make ongoing life a little easier.

This is not overdramatization of fact. PTSD is a very real thing and has destroyed the lives and opportunities of many veterans, torn apart the families they tried to raise, resulted in divorce, alienation, alcoholism, employment difficulties, and a post war lifetime of haunted nights that kept many in state of perpetual tiredness.

(Some years ago when Korean born Commodore Dr. Hans Jung was the Surgeon General of the Canadian Forces he said in a Korea Broadcasting Network interview that with a revisit to Korea, a Korean War Veteran's PTSD symptoms were lessened).

For others not so inflicted, and those who did not serve under fire, the revisit opens their hearts once again to the days of their youth, perhaps when they experienced the greatest adventures of their lives, for one did not have to be in the presence of bomb or bullet or threat of life to know bold, rapturous adventure.

None of us think of the drudgery of military service, the wretched discipline that irritated free spirits, the humdrum hardships and boredom, none of that. That is the chafe discarded by mind. The glory of youth and of doing good and helping others or just enjoying the wonderful newness of Korea and of Asia was the lasting gift our efforts bestowed on us.

And finally, one does not dwell on his wounds. I never believed that until very, very recently. But one is appreciative that he still has life and glories when others behold him with kindness, and when others genuinely express thanks for the service provided in his youth and reinforce his belief that he did something worthwhile when he was very young.

What he did was not just worthwhile, it was magnificent! But only the hearts of the soldiers and sailors and airmen who served knew it, and for most of the rest of their lives the world paid no attention to what they had done, and never offered thanks.

And that is what the MPVA veteran revisit program does. Heartfelt thanks from the descendants of the people we defended and whose nation we saved.

(Article continues below photograph)



hClaude Petit met a delightful friend of the author, Albert Shovlin (centre) who served in Korea in the Royal Artillery. Albert lives in Ayr, Scotland. Like Claude he is a philanthropist who opens his purse to veterans and their families. He actually is a blood relative of the King of England! With them is Cadet Brian Kanakakeesic of the Royal Military College of Canada who received special permission to wear his uniform on the revisit where he paid homage to his late grandfather, Archie Hearsey, and grand uncle Joseph Hearsey who was killed in action in Korea. Archie Hearsey died many

years after the war. The Hearsey brothers both served in Korea with the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. The brothers are buried in the same plot in the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan.

Yes, many from each nation may apply for the revisit and few will be accepted, and more years to try again are not guaranteed, but the gesture and opportunity provided is greatly appreciated by all of us.

For those selected, it is none less than wonderful!

Having worked very closely with the MPVA international operations in the past, in fact for six years as a consultant and the only non-Korean member of Korea's 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee, the author hopes that today's young officials who plan and conduct the revisit program know how very important it is for the veterans.

To them it offers possibly needed warmth and grace in what time in this world is left to them and to them it is genuinely, if the word is adequate to express it, *truly wonderful!*

The details of the 2026 programs:

The conditions and applications are the same for all nations, except a few nations which the MPVA has deemed need additional support.

Veterans should complete the applications in very legible printing. They will be viewed in the screening/selection process in Korea. The applications are available on the following link. The applications need to be completed and submitted within the next two weeks, but the dates will differ slightly for each nation.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=ea9fad7f34&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1856414915937729692&th=19c34f87c4347c9c&view=att&zw&disp=inline>

There are three programs open to veterans from all of the nations. A fourth program in September is exclusive to US veterans.

April 22-27 / Theme: Brotherhood

This program follows the regular format that has existed for more than 20 years. It was developed primarily for veterans of the Commonwealth nations (UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand). The timing was to have veterans in Korea on the April dates of the Battle of the Imjin River and the Battle of Gapyeong.

July 24-29 / Theme: Appreciation

This program originated as the annual international meeting of Korean War Veterans Associations, and is still relevant to them and expresses appreciation to them and the veterans from their respective nations.

November 8-13 / Theme: Remembrance

The author planned and initiated this program in 2006 with ceremonies held on November 11 in Busan and in Canada and US and other UN Allied nations. More than 1,000 guests participate in Busan where a moment of silence is held at the ceremony and throughout the entire metropolitan area. Sirens sound at 11 a.m. to remind the population to observe a minute of silence for the Korean War Fallen. A 21 gun artillery salute is fired by a ROK Army unit within the UN Cemetery where the ceremony takes place. In 2020 the National Assembly passed the Act on the Elevation of Honor of UN Korean War Veterans. The Act established November 11 in Korea as the UN Veterans International Memorial Day.

Instructions for Veterans in Canada.

The completed applications should be sent by email or regular postage to Sosun Suh, defenceaide@mofa.go.kr.

Embassy of the Republic of Korea
150 Boteler St. Ottawa, ON K1N 5A6

The deadline for receiving the completed applications for Canada is February 20.

Canada has six allocations for 12 people (six couples or pairs)

April revisit 6 people (3 couples or pairs)

July revisit 2 people (one couple or pair)

November revisit 4 people (two couples or pairs)

Please direct general questions about the program to defenceasst@mofa.go.kr

참고

2026년도 국가별 초청 계획

* 배경 표시한 인원(총 148명) 재외공관 모집 요청

참전국	4월 (가평전투, 안중대이)	7월 (유엔군 참전의 날)			9월 (미 건국 250주년)		11월 (국제 추모의 날)	계 (총 4회, 230명)
		포상, 저명	제향 군인	참전 용사 등	복무 장병	전사실종 장병 유족		
미 국 			1	6	60	30	12	109
영 국 	8		1	2			4	15
캐나다 	6		1	2			4	13
튀르키예 			1				6	7
호 주 	6		1				2	9
그리스 			1	2				3
필리핀 			1	2				3
태 국 			1				2	3
네덜란드 			1				2	3
콜롬비아 			1				2	3
뉴질랜드 	6		1				2	9
에티오피아 			1	2				3
벨기에 			1				2	3
프랑스 			1				2	3
남아공 			1				2	3
독일 			1	2				3
인도 			1	2				3
노르웨이 			1				2	3
덴마크 			1	2				3
스웨덴 			1	2				3
이탈리아 			1	2				3
독일 			1	2				3
포상 저명		20						20
계	26	20	22	28	90		44	230
		70						