

CHIMO Communique

“No Sapper Can Be Forgotten”

by Ken Holmes

The Canadian Military Engineer Association and its predecessor, the Military Engineer Association of Canada (MEAC) have a long history of recognizing the sacrifices of those members of the Canadian Military Engineer Family who have given their lives in the Service of Canada.

Four Royal Canadian Engineer and Canadian Military Engineer Books of Remembrance record the names of Canadian Military Engineers who lost their lives on active service during the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War, and in the post-WW II era. The originals or copies of these books are on permanent display in the Canadian Military Engineer Remembrance Lane at the Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering (CFSME) in specially constructed display cases. The pages are turned monthly, but the Museum Staff is always available to show a particular name.



The MEAC work in this area started with the WW I and WW II Books of Remembrance where the originals are held, with those of other Engineers of the Commonwealth, in the Royal Engineers (Kitchener) Memorial Chapel in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, England. The original colour illustrations of the WW II book is of such a high quality that the book was displayed at museums and art galleries across Canada before being sent to England. The Museum is working on obtaining a high-quality digitization of the WW I & II Books of Remembrance from the UK and we will eventually have them posted on-line in a searchable format. The MEAC commitment continued with the preparation of a third volume that recorded the Royal Canadian Engineer fatalities of the Korean War.

The CMEA next undertook the research to recognize our post-WW II deaths in the latest “Canadian Military Engineer Book of Remembrance.” An early version was displayed in the halls of CFSME to coincide with our CME 2003 Centennial celebrations. The research work was eventually expanded to combine with Veterans Affairs Canada production of the national 7th Book of Remembrance - "In the Service of Canada" - that resides in the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill. Unlike the previous RCE Books of Remembrance, the “Canadian Military Engineer Book of Remembrance” is designed to be updated as authorizations are announced by Veterans Affairs Canada.

In addition to these official books, there are several other sources that help to record the names of our fallen:

- A separate (unofficial) book listing those Canadian Military Engineers who have died “in the service of peace” with either United Nations or NATO operations is displayed in the CME Museum.
- The names of the fatalities of the Second World War RCAF Construction and Maintenance Units are found in Deller’s Book: “*Per Ardua ad Usquam, History of the CMUs and 1 CEU.*”
- The names of all RCAF Second World War fatalities are recorded in “*They Shall Not Grow Old - A Book of Remembrance*” by Hayward and Allison (but it is difficult to identify the Engineers).
- Many names of Fallen Firefighters are listed at the site www.FireHouse651.com and,
- The Royal Canadian Legion Magazine has a massive database and several Search Tools at: <https://legionmagazine.com/en/last-post/>.

Today, the CMEA records deaths of Fallen Engineers and acknowledges their accomplishments on our Website under Last Posts. The information is almost entirely provided by a small group of individuals and groups who report such passings to us. We research each Sapper’s military career to acknowledge their accomplishments and must depend heavily on Chapters and affiliated groups to help fill in the gaps we find in most newspaper obituaries. We post a recent and a vintage photo of each person whenever we can. Our website reports deaths back to the origins of the CMEA in 2000 and this information is also being archived by the CME Museum.

In 2015 it was realized there were many individuals whose death had not been reported to us and, consequently, none of these had an appropriate Last Post tribute. To remedy this situation, we are now involved in an aggressive research project: “**No Sapper Can Be Forgotten**” to discover passings of our Engineer comrades in the post-2000 era that have to-date, been unreported. To-date, this project has enabled us to add some 500 names to our original collection of some 750 CME Family members.

What Can You Do?

We need your help to ensure that no Fallen Sapper is forgotten. To check that a Sapper whose name you are familiar with is included, simply enter the LAST NAME in the Search Last Posts search box near the Upper Left of page <https://cmea-agmc.ca/cme-family-last-post>. To browse for a particular name among the current list of names, go to: <https://cmea-agmc.ca/cme-family-last-post-year>. If you still cannot locate the name of an individual whom you believe has passed or if you have information or photographs that you believe should be added to an existing Last Post, go to: <https://cmea-agmc.ca/submitting-last-post-entries> and submit a completed form.