

# Guide to Commemorative a Services



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# Introduction

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## Introduction

This package contains information that may be of assistance when planning a commemorative ceremony. Holding ceremonies, and passing on the traditions of remembrance, is one of the important ways we have of showing our appreciation to the Veterans of Canada, and their families, for the losses and sacrifices they have endured. This booklet covers the basic steps of a ceremony, however, organizers should decide what to include to best meet their needs.

Organizers may wish to include vigil sentries. The vigil sentries are in place before the *March on the Colours* and stand sentry at the four corners of the cenotaph or memorial. These sentries take post prior to the commencement of the Commemorative Service and remain in position until dismissed, after the Colours are marched off.

The vigil sentries usually represent the three services and the RCMP. If Regular or Reserve Force Service personnel are not available, the positions may be filled by Sea, Army and Air Cadets. In some instances, unarmed scouts and guides may serve as vigil sentries. In all instances, however, each sentry must be dressed in full uniform appropriate to their service of organization and medals are worn.

If the National Flag is flown from a flag pole at the cenotaph or memorial, it is lowered to the half-mast position, during the playing of the Last Post. Then, it is smartly returned to the erect position during the playing of the Reveille.

A ceremony generally begins with an address or opening remarks. This is then followed by Prayers and the \*Act of Remembrance. Following the Act of Remembrance a bugler will sound the *Last Post*, this will be followed by two minutes of silence and the sounding of the Reveille. Once the Reveille has been sounded a piper will play the Lament, (this is generally played to commemorate highland regiments). Following the Lament the Wreath laying takes place. Once the wreath laying is concluded it is then followed by a Blessing which is then followed by the playing of the National Anthem(s).

\* The Act of Remembrance is a stanza from a poem written by Laurence Binyon, Entitled "For the Fallen".

# A Suggested Service of Remembrance

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## A Suggested Service of Remembrance

Address or Opening Remarks

Poem (Optional)

Prayers

Act of Remembrance

Last Post (Bugler)

Silence (Two minutes)

Reveille (Bugler)

Lament (Piper) (Optional)

Wreath Laying - (as an option a hymn can be  
   performed during the wreath  
   laying)

Blessing

National Anthems

# National Anthem

## National Anthem

### O Canada

O Can - a - da! Our home and na - tive  
O Can - a - da! Ter - re de nos aï -

land! True pa - triot love in  
eux, Ton front est ceint de

all thy sons com - mend. With glow - ing hearts we  
fleu - rons glo - ri - eux! Car ton bras sait por - ter l'é -

see thee rise, The True North strong and free! From  
pé - é - e, Il sait por - ter la croix! Ton his -

far and wide O Can - a - da, we stand on guard for thee.  
toire est une é - po - pé - é - e Des plus bril - lants ex - ploits

God keep our land glo - rious and free!  
Et ta va - leur, de foi trem - pée,

O Can - a - da, we stand on guard for thee.  
Pro - té - ge - ra nos foy - ers et nos droits.

O Can - a - da, we stand on guard for thee.  
Pro - té - ge - ra nos foy - ers et nos droits.

# Opening Remarks

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## Opening Remarks

Commemorative ceremonies are solemn in nature. *Opening remarks* is a time to set the tone of the event. It is also a good time to welcome everyone, introduce special guests and thank those who should be acknowledged for their contributions.

### **The Story of Remembrance**

Following the opening remarks, someone may be invited to speak about remembrance and why it is so important. Inviting a local Veteran is always a good idea. There are some fact sheets included in the appendices that may be of assistance.

Across Canada, and in many other countries, people gather on November 11 to honour the courage and devotion of brave men and women who made the supreme sacrifice of dying for their country. The hostilities of the First World War ceased on November 11, 1918, at 11:00 a.m. - the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The following year marked the first observance of a day to remember and honour those who died, as well as to give thanks for the sacrifices of those who came back from serving their country. Since then, Canadians have fought other wars and many have given their lives so that we might enjoy freedom today. They too should be remembered.

# In Flanders Fields

## In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly

Scarce heard amid the guns below.  
We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders Fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders Fields.

□ □ □ □ □ John McCrae

### A Short Biography of Dr. John McCrae

In April 1915, one of Dr. John McCrae's closest friends and comrades was killed in the trenches near Ypres, Belgium. He was buried in a humble grave with a simple wooden cross. Wild poppies bloomed between the crosses marking the many graves. The next day, unable to help his friend or any of the others who had died, Dr. McCrae gave them a voice through this poem.

On January 28, 1918, John McCrae succumbed to pneumonia and meningitis. He died not knowing the outcome of the war, but with a full understanding of the cost of it. Before he died, Dr. McCrae had the satisfaction of knowing that his poem had been a success. Soon after its publication, it became the most popular poem on the First World War. It was translated into many languages and used on billboards advertising the sale of first Victory Loan Bonds in Canada in 1917.

In part because of the poem's popularity, the poppy was adopted as the Flower of Remembrance. The symbolic poppy and John McCrae's poems are still linked, and the voices of those who have died in war continue to be heard each Remembrance Day.

# For the Fallen

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## For the Fallen

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,  
England mourns for her dead across the sea.  
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,  
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal  
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,  
There is music in the midst of desolation  
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,  
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.  
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;  
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;  
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;  
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;

They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,  
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,  
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known  
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;  
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,  
To the end, to the end, they remain.

□ □ □ □ □ Laurence Binyon (1869 - 1943)  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ September 1914



# High Flight

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## High Flight

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds - and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air...

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue  
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace  
Where never lark, or even eagle flew -  
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

□ □ □ □ □ Officer John G. Magee, Jr.  
□ □ □ □ □ November, 1941

### **A Short Biography of John Gillespie Magee, Jr.**

John Gillespie Magee, Jr. was born in Shanghai, China 9 June 1922. As he reached high school age, he played rugby in England and spent three years there. Meanwhile, his parents had returned to the United States and his father, Reverend Magee, became a chaplain at Yale University. John Magee Jr. returned to the United States in 1939 to attend Yale.

The Second World War began September 1939. In October, 1940, at age 18, John Magee Jr. went to Canada and enrolled in the RCAF. After his flight training, he went back to England a commissioned pilot officer. In the course of his training in the spitfire, he was assigned to make a high altitude flight "into the stratosphere". On landing, he went to his quarters and there wrote his now famous sonnet on the back of a letter to his mother.

# Why Wear a Poppy?

## Why Wear a Poppy?

"Please wear a poppy," the lady said,  
And held one forth, but I shook my head.  
Then I stopped and watched as she offered  
them there,  
And her face was old and lined with care;

But beneath the scars the years had made  
There remained a smile that refused to fade.  
A boy came whistling down the street,  
Bouncing along on care-free feet.

His smile was full of joy and fun,  
"Lady," said he, "may I have one?"  
When she'd pinned it on, he turned to say;  
"Why do we wear a poppy today?"

The lady smiled in her wistful way  
And answered; "This is Remembrance Day.  
And the poppy there is a symbol for  
The gallant men who died in war.

And because they did, you and I are free -  
That's why we wear a poppy, you see.  
I had a boy about your size,  
With golden hair and big blue eyes.

He loved to play and jump and shout,  
Free as a bird, he would race about.  
As the years went by, he learned and grew,  
And became a man - as you will, too.

He was fine and strong, with a boyish smile,  
But he'd seemed with us such a little while  
When war broke out and he went away.  
I still remember his face that day.

When he smiled at me and said, 'Goodbye,  
I'll be back soon, Mum, please don't cry.'  
But the war went on and he had to stay,  
And all I could do was wait and pray.

His letters told of the awful fight  
(I can see it still in my dreams at night),  
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed  
wire,  
And the mines and bullets, the bombs and  
fire.

Till at last, at last, the war was won -  
And that's why we wear a poppy, son."  
The small boy turned as if to go,  
Then said, "Thanks, lady, I'm glad to know.  
That sure did sound like an awful fight  
But your son - did he come back all right?"  
A tear rolled down each faded cheek;  
She shook her head, but didn't speak  
I slunk away in a sort of shame,  
And if you were me, you'd have done the  
same:

For our thanks, in giving, if oft delayed,  
Though our freedom was bought - and  
thousands paid!  
And so, when we see a poppy worn,  
Let us reflect on the burden borne  
By those who gave their very all  
When asked to answer their country's call  
That we at home in peace might live.  
Then wear a poppy! Remember - and Give!

by Don Crawford

# Last Post

## Last Post

The Last Post should be played live by a bugler or prerecorded. If no bugler or recording is available, this piece is best omitted.

Traditionally, the Last Post is played at the end of the day to signal lights out. In a commemorative service, it symbolizes death.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Last Post". The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 76. The score consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo marking "♩ = 76." is placed above the first staff. The music is a single melodic line. The score includes various musical notations such as quarter notes, eighth notes, and rests. There are also some decorative elements like slurs and accents. The score ends with a double bar line.

# Lament

## Lament

The Lament should be played live by a piper or prerecorded. If no piper or recording is available, this piece is best omitted.

### Flowers of the Forest



# Reveille

## Reveille

Reveille should also be played live by a bugler or prerecorded. If no bugler or recording is available, this piece is best omitted.

Reveille is the first call sounded in the morning and is used as a wake up call. During the ceremony, it is played to signify the resurrection of the spirit of the fallen

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'Reveille'. The score is written in 2/4 time and consists of six staves of music. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, along with rests and dynamic markings. Key markings include measure numbers 76, 108, 132, and 152, and a 'rall' instruction at the end of the piece. The score is presented in a standard musical notation format with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat.

# Act of Remembrance

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## Act of Remembrance

They shall not grow old,  
as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning

We will remember them.

**Response:** We will remember them

Laurence Binyon  
 (An excerpt from For the Fallen)

# Hymns of Remembrance

## Hymns of Remembrance

### **O God, Our Help in Ages Past**

O God, Our Help in Ages Past  
O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home:

Under the shadow of Thy throne,  
Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,  
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight  
Are like an evening gone,  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
Bears all its sons away;  
They fly, forgotten, as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Be thou our guide while troubles last,  
And our eternal home!

### **O Valiant Hearts**

His letters told of the awful fight  
(I can see it still in my dreams at night),  
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed  
wire,  
And the mines and bullets, the bombs and  
fire.

Till at last, at last, the war was won -  
And that's why we wear a poppy, son."  
The small boy turned as if to go,  
Then said, "Thanks, lady, I'm glad to know.  
That sure did sound like an awful fight  
But your son - did he come back all right?"  
A tear rolled down each faded cheek;  
She shook her head, but didn't speak  
I slunk away in a sort of shame,  
And if you were me, you'd have done the  
same:

For our thanks, in giving, if oft delayed,  
Though our freedom was bought - and  
thousands paid!  
And so, when we see a poppy worn,  
Let us reflect on the burden borne  
By those who gave their very all  
When asked to answer their country's call  
That we at home in peace might live.  
Then wear a poppy! Remember - and Give!

by Don Crawford

# Wreath Laying

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## Wreath Laying

Wreaths may or may not be part of a commemorative service, though they are very common for ceremonies on November 11. During the wreath laying, appropriate music may be played, such as *Abide with Me* or *O Valiant Hearts*.

The wreath is usually carried by someone walking alongside the person who is to lay the wreath. The two approach, briefly pause, exchange the wreath, place it (often on a stand), step back, pause for a moment (military personnel will salute), turn to the right and walk off. Protocol dictates the order in which the wreaths will be laid. According to the Royal Canadian Legion, depending on who is present, the order of precedence is:

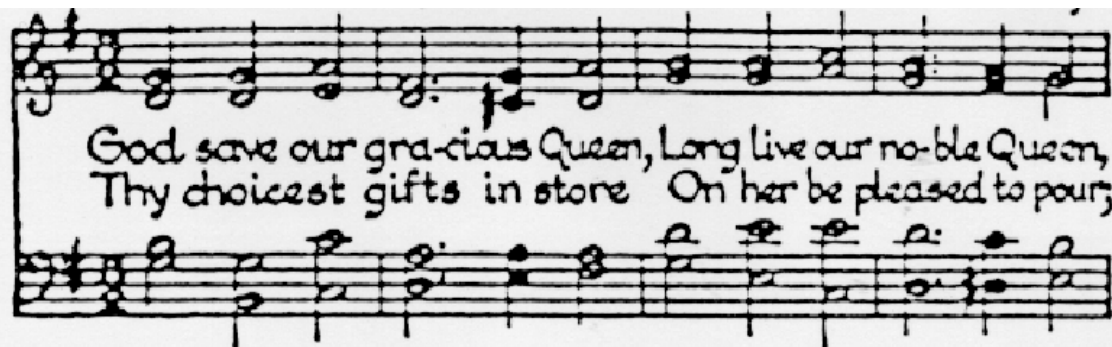
- a representative of the Queen (Governor General, Lieutenant Governor)
- a representative of the Government of Canada (highest ranking official present)
- a representative of a provincial government
- a representative of a municipal government
- a Silver Cross Mother
- a representative of the Canadian Forces
- a representative of the Royal Canadian Legion
- representatives of other organizations and individuals

The order in which wreaths are laid may vary to suit the ceremony at regional and local levels. However, it is imperative that a wreath representing Canada be laid before all others.

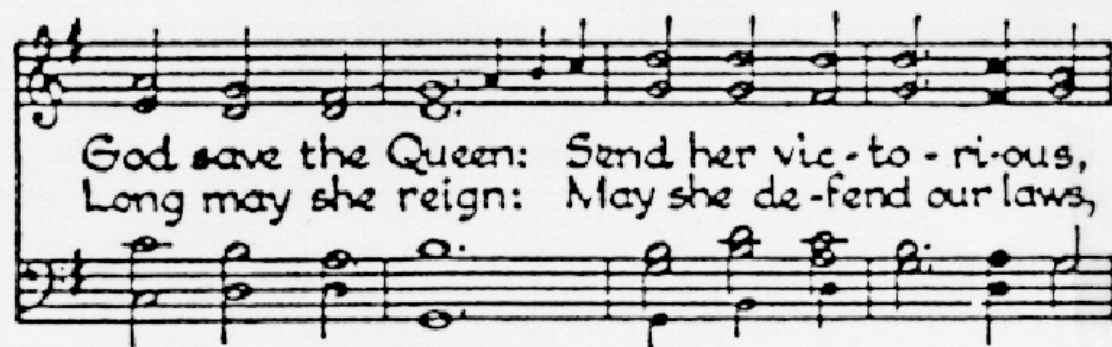


# God Save the Queen

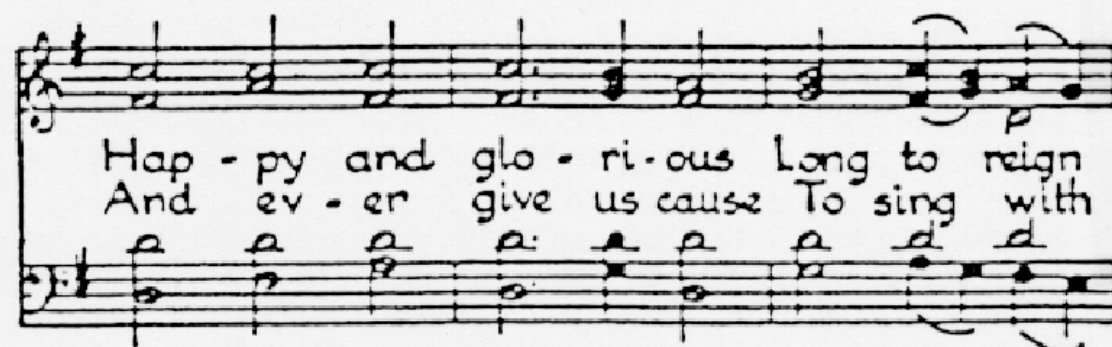
## God Save the Queen




God save our gra-cious Queen, Long live our no-ble Queen,  
Thy choicest gifts in store On her be pleased to pour;



God save the Queen: Send her vic-to-ri-ous,  
Long may she reign: May she de-fend our laws,



Hap-py and glo-ri-ous Long to reign  
And ev-er give us cause To sing with



o-ver us; God save the Queen. A-men.  
heart and voice,

# Remembrance Day Facts

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## Remembrance Day Facts

Remembrance Day commemorates Canadians who died in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. It is held every November 11.

The first Remembrance Day was conducted in 1919 throughout the Commonwealth. Originally called Armistice Day, it commemorated the end of the First World War on Monday, November 11, 1918 at 11 a.m.:

□ *the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.*

From 1923 to 1931, Armistice Day was held on the Monday of the week in which November 11 fell. Thanksgiving was also celebrated on this day.

In 1931, M.P. Allan Neill introduced a bill to hold Armistice Day on a fixed day - November 11. During the bill's introduction, it was decided the word *Remembrance* would be used instead of *Armistice*. The bill passed and Remembrance Day was conducted on November 11, 1931. Thanksgiving Day was moved to October 12 that year.

The poppy is the symbol of Remembrance Day. Replica poppies are sold by the Royal Canadian Legion to raise money for Veterans in need.

# Poppy Facts

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## Poppy Facts

- ☐ During the Napoleonic Wars, the poppy drew attention as the mysterious flower that bloomed over the graves of fallen soldiers.
- ☐
- ☐ In the 20th Century, the poppy again was widely noticed after soils in France and Belgium became rich in lime from rubble during the First World War. The little red flowers flourished around the graves of the war dead as they had 100 years earlier.
- ☐
- ☐ In 1915, Guelph, Ontario native John McCrae, a doctor serving with the Canadian Forces Artillery, recorded this phenomenon in his famous poem In Flanders Fields.
- ☐
- ☐ Two days before the Armistice, Moina Michael, an American woman from Athens, Georgia, read the McCrae poem and was inspired to wear a poppy year-round in memory of the war dead.
- ☐
- ☐ In 1920, Madame E. Guérin of France visited the United States and happened to meet Miss Michael at the YMCA at Columbia University, where the latter was a volunteer. Madame Guérin then resolved to sell handmade poppies around Armistice Day to raise money for poor children in the war-torn areas of Europe.
- ☐
- ☐ In 1921, Field-Marshal Earl Haig, the former Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies in France and Belgium and the principal founder of the British Legion, was sold on Madame Guérin's fundraising idea and approved organization of the British Poppy Day Appeal by the Legion to raise money for poor and disabled veterans.
- ☐
- ☐ The same year, Madame Guérin visited Canada, and convinced the Great War Veterans Association (predecessor to the Royal Canadian Legion) to similarly adopt the poppy as a symbol of remembrance in aid of fundraising.
- ☐
- ☐ Today, the Poppy Campaign is one of the Royal Canadian Legion's most important programs. The money raised from poppy sales provides direct assistance for ex-service people in financial distress, as well as funding for medical appliances and research, home services, care facilities, and numerous other purposes.
- ☐