

Patron

His Excellency The Right Honourable
David Johnston, C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.
Governor General of Canada



Président d'honneur

Son Excellence le très honorable
David Johnston, C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.
Gouverneur général du Canada

Honorary Advisors

The Rt. Hon. Beverley McLachlin, P.C.
The Hon. John Fraser, P.C., O.C., O.B.C., C.D., Q.C.
The Hon. Peter Milliken, P.C., O.C.
The Hon. Bill Blaikie, P.C.
The Hon. Perrin Beatty, P.C.
The Hon. Bill Graham, P.C., Q.C.
Gen. John de Chastelain, C.C., C.M.M., C.D., C.H.

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La très hon. Hon. Beverley McLachlin, C.P.
L'hon. John Fraser, C.P., O.C., O.B.C., C.D., c.r.
L'hon. Peter Milliken, C.P., O.C.
L'hon. Bill Blaikie, C.P.
L'hon. Perrin Beatty, C.P.
L'hon. Bill Graham, C.P., c.r.
Le Gén. John de Chastelain, C.C., C.M.M., C.D., C.H.

24 December 2015

Hi Folks!

I hope this letter finds you well. Here is a short report on the recent progress of our Hill 70 team. If you want more details on any issue please don't hesitate to call me. It has been a very busy twelve months:

Because the Patron of the Project is the Governor General there has been no trouble raising great interest from other governments including France, Ukraine, and Ireland. (Canadians of Irish and Ukrainian descent have already contributed large sums to the project because Canadian soldiers of their background distinguished themselves by winning VC's at Hill 70.)

We are a legally constituted Charity in both France and Canada and can issue tax receipts.



Many other distinguished Canadians have acted as our advisers and supporters and their names are listed on the letterhead. We are delighted to inform you that Chris Hadfield has agreed to be our national spokesman and is now considering how best to participate. He is pictured here at the

RCMI wearing his Hill 70 pin with Mark Blevis (Director of Communications) and Rob Baxter (Director of Fundraising).

The land for the monument is already secured and an agreement signed with the City of Loos en Gohelle.

This month the RFP was issued with the engineering requirements of the monument to several French construction firms for the Memorial Park and Obelisk. Five firms have confirmed their interest to Paul Fenton (our project manager from Turnbull and associates); not because of the size of the project, but because they think it will lend their companies prestige.



French Government Involvement. The Ambassador and his staff are very enthusiastic. They see this monument as the last one to be built in France for the First War. They also see this as perfectly fitting into the commemoration ceremonies agreed to by both countries. He anticipates attendance at the opening by the highest representatives of the French Government. If His Excellency the Governor General attends, they would foresee the French Prime Minister attending.



The photo above shows M. Chapuis, the French Ambassador, with Hill 70 Team members Henrietta Southam and Susan Everett after they pinned a Hill 70 Pin to his lapel. The French Embassy has also agreed to host a reception for the friends of the Project early in the New Year, and appropriate members of the new government have indicated they will attend.

We recently received confirmation that the project will be exempt GST in France (TVA). This will save us nearly \$2M on construction tax. The French government has been enormously helpful in doing this, and has expended a lot of staff time to achieve it.

Fundraising from private sources has got commitments for over one quarter of our budget of \$14M. All project team members are working pro bono, including the Canadian architects, lawyers, engineers, bankers, etc. The Project has zero administrative overhead. Rob Baxter has been working full time developing new friends and supporters of the project and many more approaches are planned for January/February of 2016. Rob has the assistance of two new team members John MacDonald and George Javornick, who bring a wealth of experience to the Project.

Our finished website is not yet accessible via search engines, but *will be* as soon as we have commitments for 50% of the project funds. You can view it at <http://hill70.inorbital.com/>

A short film about the battle was just completed and will be available through the website. You can view that at:

https://youtu.be/JYXKS_8Tx2I, or <https://youtu.be/zrBFKhdOGsw>

(it plays first in French then in English.)

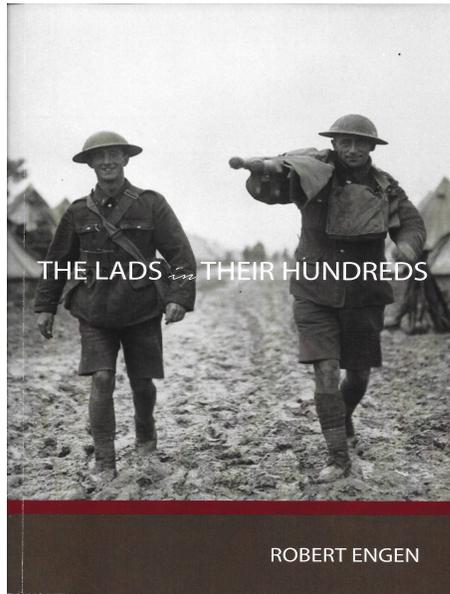
In addition, the CEO of Historica Tony Wilson -Smith has agreed to create a Heritage Minute about Hill 70 for TV.

Opening Ceremonies. It was proposed by the Canadian Forces commemorations planners to leverage the 9 April 2017 celebrations at Vimy by holding our own parade and ceremony at Loos-en-Gohelle on 8 April using the same bands, guards of honour, and security personnel. The Vice Chief of Defence Staff and I discussed this plan in September and he was most supportive. Howard Coombs and I briefed Armed Forces Council 8 Dec and it was quite well received.

Canadian Government Involvement. While we have not sought government funding, we have received letters of support from three ministers of the previous government: Heritage, Veterans Affairs and Defence. I believe the Project conforms to this Government's objectives in several ways, including demonstrating our solidarity and support of French Liberty throughout our two countries' long relationship. We are already arranging to conduct briefings to the new ministers in 2016.

The education programme is well advanced. The teachers resource package is prepared in draft and is being beta tested with students and teachers. Three of four books are complete, including a graphic novel aimed at public schools students. The Education Team led by Susan Everett has made rapid strides and many donations are specifically targetted at supporting their efforts.

The picture below is the cover of *The Lads in Their Hundreds*, which is complete and ready for publication as a resource to teachers and students in high schools across Canada. Doctor Robert Engen has written this book and the *Victory Forgotten* book for secondary school students.



The fourth book is an anthology prepared by some of Canada's foremost historians, including Jack Granatstein and Tim Cook; it has finished peer review and will be published by UBC Press. We received the news last week that this manuscript, 'Capturing Hill 70', (edited by Doug Delaney and Serge Durlinger) has been approved for a publication grant by the ASPP. The awards process is competitive, so this grant affirms the incredibly high quality of the submission. (To give some perspective: fewer than 30% of edited volumes are approved on the basis of one round of peer review. Most require revision and resubmission.) The UBC coordinator also said that it is unusual for her to deal with such organised volume editors, who've met all their time-lines and delivered an exceptionally interesting and well-crafted collection. Well done Serge and Doug!

Our team is about to settle down for a long winters nap, which is very well deserved. We hope you have a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you in 2016.

Sincerely,

Mark Hutchings
Chairman,
The Hill 70 Memorial Project

P. S. Ronald Roach's design for the Battle For Hill 70 Tartan is now registered with the Scottish Herald.



Hill 70 - Grey

Grey: The skies and battlefields of war torn Europe

Red & White: Canada / Infantry Corps

Red: 1 Cdn Div / Sacrifice

Blue: 2 Cdn Div / Air Support

French Grey: 3rd Cdn Division / The grey skies

Green: 4th Cdn Div / The field of combat

White: Birth of a nation / The chalk ground

Black: Mourning for the lost / The coal fields of Lens

Red & Blue: Innovative use of Artillery and Engineers

Six Crimson stripes: The VCs

Black and White stripes: The four brigades in each division and four battalions in each brigade.

Red Band/White stripe: Canadian Flag

The four diagonal checks extending from the crossing of the white stripes represent the four divisions.