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Gouverneur général du Canada

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*Le Gén. John de Chastelain, C.C., C.M.M., C.D., C.H.*

10 March 2016

Dear Friends of Hill 70

I hope you are enjoying this lovely spring weather, wherever you are! There is lots of progress being made with all of the Hill 70 Memorial Project and it is time to share some of the good news.

The aim of the Hill 70 Memorial Project is to permanently elevate Canadians' awareness of the significance of the Battle of Hill 70. Many men sacrificed their health and even their lives in order to achieve victory at Hill 70, yet their deeds are largely forgotten. Our aim is to create a program of educational elements, which will forever embed the achievement of the Canadian Corps in the Canadian cultural consciousness.

The component parts of our program include a media package, educational kits for schools, lesson plans for teachers, textbooks for students, a reference book at the university level, popular history books aimed at historians as well as the general public, a graphic novel intended for adolescents, and a physical monument at the site of the battle itself. The Hill 70 Monument is designed to be the focal point of the project and will serve as a centrepiece for school trips, essay contests / bursaries / scholarship winners, and teachers tours (the first of which is to occur this summer). We are cooperating in this initiative with the University of NB. It is anticipated that several hundred thousand people per year will visit the memorial, and each of these visitors will become a supporter of the message that



contributes to the ongoing education of future generations about this important but missing chapter in their national history.

In France, our project Managers at Turnbull Associates called for bids from five interested contractors, reviewed their submissions and have selected the best. Eiffage Corp will contract to do all the construction for the Hill 70 Memorial Park. The Building Permits were issued by City Of Loos-en-Gohelle last week. The Mayor, Jean-Francois Caron, assures me that his staff are very happy with our Managers and architects from Castro Deniss Hof in Paris. In mid-February they completed a Public meeting with the people of Loos, the Mayor, and his City staff. Everyone was quite satisfied with the outcome. We have given the go ahead for the preparation of the shop drawings by Eiffage.

To date fund raising results have not been able to match the desired construction tempo, leaving us with the option to carefully phase the project. We are currently planning on two construction stages, the first including the monument, major pathways and landscaping and the second phase catering to the amphitheatre and parking lot. Our fund raising efforts are now concentrating on enabling this construction, particularly the Phase 1 effort, to launch this year.

## **Education**

The primary aim of our project is to increase awareness of Canadians, and our education program aims to ensure that all future generations of high school students will learn of this important Battle. The teachers lessons plans and student handout package are now complete in draft , and we are awaiting a quote for their mass production.

There will be a travelling display which will visit dozens of museums across Canada. It will be comprised of the same material which is view able in the information Centre at the monument site in France. We also plan to have a series of video and audio stories available for use on the handheld devices of anyone touring the site, and have met with a technical coordinator this week to develop the specifications.

The anthology *Capturing Hill 70: Canada's Forgotten Victory of the First World War* is a peer-reviewed book commissioned by the Project. Thanks to the efforts of quality authors and dedicated editors, the book was accepted by UBC Press for publication and made it through peer review unscathed. This means we will have this jacketed hard-covered book on shelves before Remembrance Day this year, rather than spring 2017. (details are available at appendix B for your information)

Other books are already written and in various stages of production are:

*The Lads in the Hundreds* - targeted at high school students

*Victory Forgotten* - a description of all the military units participating at Hill 70

*The Battle of Hill 70* - a graphic novel targeted at adolescents

*Valour Forgotten* - a compilation of notable RMC cadets who served at Hill 70.

The Canadian War Museum Director has indicated that he would like to carry these books in the Museum's bookshop.

## Reception

We were most fortunate to have had a reception at the French Embassy in early February, hosted by Ambassador , Monsieur Nicholas Chapuis to thank the many supporters of the Project. It was a wonderful event. His Excellency, the Governor General presided at the first public showing of several new items done for our media promotion of the Battle: the new tartan, the new music, new artwork, and many more.



Monsieur Nicholas Chapuis is shown here welcoming His Excellency the Governor General to the Embassy.

Most of the people attending were from the Ottawa area, but many also came from Kingston and beyond. We were very fortunate to have one of our Founding Donors attend, Sir Cyril Woods and Lorna, who came from Mexico for the event.

There were displays of Hill 70 Memorial site, Educational Kits, and the Graphic Novel, and the new



Hill 70 Video played throughout the reception for guests to view.

Our temporary Hill 70 Website: <http://hill70.inorbital.com/?lang=en-ca> (please allow time to load)

Hill 70 video: <https://vimeo.com/144061338>

The feedback from the guests was uniformly positive and we cannot thank the French Ambassador enough for his generosity and support of the Project.



We must also extend a Special thanks to Chris Sproule who organised the event for the Project, shown here with Nancy and General Gen Walt Natynczyk, CMM MSC CD, Deputy Minister of Veterans Affairs. More photos of the reception are at Appendix A.

The project has already accomplished many of its aims thanks to the tireless efforts of a dedicated team of volunteers. We are now 16 months out from the hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Hill 70 and huge progress has been made in creating the elements necessary to ensure Canadians are made aware of its significance to our Country's development.

There are enough funds to pay for the first phase of construction -- that is the creation of shop drawings by the selected Contractor. Our fund-raising team is burning the midnight oil in their pursuit of our timeline. We appreciate your continued interest and support and look forward to hearing from you as the project progresses.

Sincerely,

Mark Hutchings  
Chairman,  
The Hill 70 Memorial Project

Appendix A.



Doug and Cheryl Casey discuss the project with Sean Murray



Hi Excellency David Johnston unveils the newly commissioned Tartan – Hill 70.



Col. Ihor Likarenko (Ukrainian military Attaché) discusses the Victoria Cross awarded at Hill 70 to a Ukrainian-born Canadian, Cpl Fillip Konowal with Minister of National Defence.



Henrietta Southam discusses the project with Whitney Fox and Pam Murray



His Excellency The Governor General of Canada David Johnston, CC, CMM, COM, CD shown here with The Honourable Harjit Singh Sajjan, Minister of National Defence, PC OMM MSM CD sharing some fun with BGen(retired) Ernest Beno , OMM, CD



Hon Colonel Ken Armstrong (The Hastings & Prince Edward Regiment) and his wife Audrey with Ambassador Chapuis



The Honourable Peter Milliken, P.C., O.C. With Honorary Colonels Jim Reid (21 EW Regt) and Shirley Westeinde (33 Service Battalion)



Honorary Colonel Emeritus Sir Cyril Woods and his wife Lorna chat with His Excellency



BGen Ernie Beno and Sir Cyril Woods listen to The Honourable Dr. Ray Bassett (Irish Ambassador) describe the Irish born soldiers part in Hill 70. Two Irish-Canadian men were awarded the Victoria Cross, one a protestant from the North and the other a Catholic from the South of Ireland

## Appendix B

### The newly written Hill 70 Anthology

#### Capturing Hill 70: Canada's Forgotten Victory of the First World War

##### Book description

The Battle of Hill 70 in August 1917 was a spectacularly successful, shockingly costly – and yet virtually-forgotten Canadian engagement of the First World War. Capturing Hill 70, and defeating three days of determined German counter attacks in order to hold it, cost the Canadian Corps nearly 5,400 casualties, but the action was also the first major battle that the troops of the corps fought under one of their own: Canadian Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie. The Canadian corps commander and his staff proved themselves entirely capable of planning and conducting large-scale and complex offensive operations. The battle for Hill 70 was the first example of Canadian national affirmation on the Western Front.

This ground-breaking collection groups together leading scholars whose contributions dissect different facets of the battle's planning, conduct, and longer-term ramifications. Based on Canadian, British, and German records, these essays form a powerful addition to the emerging literature on Canada and the First World War, and will offer a detailed and comprehensive understanding of a little-known, yet significant, part of Canada's wartime experience.

This innovative, thought-provoking, and timely collection will appeal to scholars, students, and anyone interested in Canadian military history, the First World War, and Canadian history generally.

##### Chapters and authors

Chapter 1	Higher Command: Relations between First Army and the Canadian Corps during the Operations against Hill 70 and Lens	<i>Nikolas Gardner</i>
Chapter 2	The Corps Nervous System in Action: Commanders, Staffs, and Battle Procedure	<i>Douglas E. Delaney</i>
Chapter 3	The Best Laid Plans: Sir Arthur Currie and the Development of the Hill 70 Operation	<i>Mark Humphries</i>
Chapter 4	The Fire Plan: Gas, Guns, Machine Guns, and Mortars	<i>Tim Cook</i>
Chapter 5	Sinews of War: Transportation and Supply at Hill 70 and Lens	<i>Andrew Iarocci</i>
Chapter 6	Force Preservation: The Medical Services at the Battle of Hill 70	<i>Robert Engen</i>
Chapter 7	The Other Side of Hill 70: The German Defence of Lens and its Implications	<i>Robert T. Foley</i>
Chapter 8	“To win at any cost”: Politics and Manpower Policies at the time of Hill 70	<i>J.L. Granatstein</i>

**Editor bios.**

Professor Douglas E. Delaney holds the Canada Research Chair in War Studies at the Royal Military College of Canada. He is the author of *The Soldiers' General: Bert Hoffmeister at War* (2005), which won the 2007 C.P. Stacey Prize for Canadian Military History, and *Corps Commanders: Five British and Canadian Generals at War, 1939-1945* (2011).

Serge Marc Durflinger is a Professor in the History Department at the University of Ottawa. His publications include *Fighting from Home: The Second World War in Verdun, Quebec* (2006) and *Veterans with a Vision: Canada's War Blinded in Peace and War* (2010).