

# OPERATION VETERAN

## Welcoming Veterans at the Canadian War Museum and Educating Youth Across Canada

### Operation Veteran: The Story

Operation Veteran was founded by Dr. Paul Kavanagh in 2009, following a poignant encounter involving a Second World War veteran at the Canadian War Museum.

From their place in the cafeteria line, Paul and his son watched a dignified, elderly veteran make his way to the cash. “His pride in his service was clear,” Paul recalls, with his “blazer pressed to perfection, medals gleaming, pants with a crease that could cut butter and boots so polished you could see your face in them.” But as the veteran reached the cashier, his shoulders slumped, and his proud demeanour seemed to fade away. Recognizing the problem, Paul motioned discreetly to the cashier that he would take care of it: the veteran was waved through, never realizing that a stranger had paid for his meal. “He didn’t have enough to pay, and there was a long lineup,” Paul later explained. “He was upset, and I felt I had to do something. So, I paid for his meal.”

Paul was moved by the incident; the idea of Operation Veteran took shape that day. Paul’s background — along with that of his wife, who was born in Holland — is intertwined with the military. Like many Canadians, the Kavanaghs have had family members who served in the armed forces. Paul was raised to respect Canada’s wartime sacrifices, and to honour the men and women who gave so much.

Today, Operation Veteran provides complimentary meals to all Canadian veterans who visit the Canadian War Museum, helping to pay tribute, in a small way, to the men and women who have served our nation. Meal vouchers, valued at \$11 each, are made available every day for use at the cafeteria. During Operation Veteran’s first year, 66 veterans benefitted from the program, and since then, **more than 15,000 complimentary meals have been provided!**

Thanks to the initiative begun by Dr. Kavanagh and his family, and wholeheartedly supported by the Museum — as well as the fundraising efforts of thousands of students and private donors from across Canada — veterans visiting the Canadian War Museum no longer pay for their meals.

The program has been supported by Veterans Affairs Canada, the Royal Canadian Legion and other key institutions across Canada, and receives donations from individuals, schools, foundations and companies, including the Museum’s food-services provider, Sodexo.

## **Educating Youth Through Interactive Learning — Supply Line**

Educating young people about Canada’s debt to veterans is a critical aspect of Operation Veteran. Its funds contribute to the Supply Line educational outreach program.

Launched by the Canadian War Museum in September 2014, Supply Line loans Discovery Boxes to schools across the country. These wildly popular educational tools contain both authentic and replica First World War artifacts, along with explanatory materials and activity plans. Supply Line allows students from Grades 4 through 12 to handle and examine military artifacts as they learn the stories of Canadians who served overseas. First World War Discovery Boxes can be borrowed for two weeks at a time, at no cost to schools.



Thanks to Supply Line, a Grade 10 student in Medicine Hat, Alberta, who never met her great-great-grandfather, was able to handle a scratchy uniform like the one he wore during the First World War. And a Grade 6 student in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, was able to hear the unnerving crackle of a gas rattle and taste chalky ration biscuits.

The Supply Line program has been an outstanding success, reaching an estimated 47,000 students during the 2017–2018 school year alone. In addition to providing meal vouchers to veterans, Operation Veteran funds go toward keeping existing Discovery Boxes in top condition and creating new boxes.

## **Remembrance Day**

Schools across Canada raise funds for Operation Veteran. School officials recognize that this is a tangible way for students to connect with history while honouring the past. Each year, fundraising schools are invited to participate in Remembrance Day activities in Ottawa. Highlights include attending the wreath-laying ceremony at the National War Memorial, and visiting the War Museum, where students meet and talk with veterans. These interactions have proven incredibly meaningful to students. “Just because they served before we were born,” said one, “doesn’t mean it wasn’t for us. It makes you really proud to be Canadian. I don’t think I’ll look at a Remembrance Day service the same way again.”

Since 2010, hundreds of students from across Canada have participated in Operation Veteran Remembrance Day programming.

## They Served Us, Now Let's Serve Them

Operation Veteran warmly welcomes and pays tribute to veterans at Canada's national museum of military history. We ask you to support Operation Veteran today, knowing that, through this important program, you are expressing respect for the service of Canadian veterans and honouring their many invaluable contributions. Operation Veteran also actively builds intergenerational bridges, connecting young Canadians to the men and women who have helped build and shape this country. Stories of sacrifice are passed on, and new generations are inspired and educated.

"This gesture makes me feel recognized.  
It's much appreciated."

A Canadian veteran who received a complimentary lunch at the  
Museum's cafeteria through Operation Veteran.

### To make a donation to Operation Veteran, please contact:

Megan Ollivier  
Coordinator, Donor Relations and Research  
Canadian War Museum  
100 Laurier Street, Gatineau QC K1A 0M8  
Tel.: 819-776-8336  
Email: [megan.ollivier@warmuseum.ca](mailto:megan.ollivier@warmuseum.ca)

Dr. Paul Kavanagh (Founder)  
300, boulevard de la Concorde E  
Laval QC H7G 2E6  
Tel.: 450-629-7290  
Email: [pkcandutch6@gmail.com](mailto:pkcandutch6@gmail.com)

### About the Canadian War Museum

The Canadian War Museum is **Canada's national museum of military history**. Its exhibition galleries offer a revealing and affecting look at Canada's military past and how it has shaped the country. Home to an outstanding collection of artifacts, ranging from ancient arrowheads to Victoria Cross medals and personal diaries from the home front, the Museum occupies one of Canada's most striking and iconic buildings. As a **national centre for remembrance, education and historical research**, the Museum is also a venue and a facilitator for informed discussion of military affairs, past and present.

The Canadian War Museum is administered by the Canadian Museum of History, a federal Crown corporation established by the *Museums Act*. The corporation is a qualified donee under the *Income Tax Act*, eligible to issue official donation receipts.

## APPENDIX A

# OPERATION VETERAN SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

Cumulative List (2009–2018)

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Fraser Academy  
Glenlyon Norfolk School  
Meadowridge School  
Shawnigan Lake School  
St. George's School

### ALBERTA

Dr. Gerald B. Probe Elementary School  
Juno Beach Academy of Canadian Studies  
Veteran High School  
Western Canada High School

### SASKATCHEWAN

Athol Murray College of Notre Dame  
Star City School  
Victoria School

### MANITOBA

St. Paul's High School  
Lt. Colonel Barker V.C. School

### ONTARIO

All Saints Catholic Secondary School  
Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School  
Ashbury College  
Brookfield High School  
Cedarview Middle School  
École élémentaire catholique Roger-Saint-Denis  
École secondaire publique De la Salle  
Encounters with Canada  
Father Leo J. Austin Catholic Secondary School  
John McCrae Secondary School  
Monsignor John Pereyma Catholic School  
Monsignor Paul Dwyer Catholic High School  
Mother Cabrini Catholic School  
Norman Johnston Alternate Program  
Notre Dame High School  
Notre Dame Secondary School  
Osgoode Township High School  
Ridley College  
Royal Military College of Canada  
Saint Paul Catholic High School  
Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School  
South Carleton High School  
St. Andrew's College  
St. Augustine Secondary School  
St. Mary Catholic Secondary School  
The Country Day School  
Upper Canada College  
Woodroffe High School

### QUEBEC

Alexander von Humboldt German International School  
Collège de Montréal  
Collège Letendre  
Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean  
Collège Notre Dame  
Collège Queen of Angels  
Collège Saint-Sacrement  
Eastern Townships School Board  
Hebrew Foundation School  
Kells Academy  
Kuper Academy  
Lake of Two Mountains High School  
Laval Junior High School  
Laval Liberty High School  
Laval Senior Academy  
Lindsay Place High School  
Lower Canada College  
Loyola High School  
Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School  
Phoenix Alternative High School  
Queen of Angels Academy  
Richmond Regional High School  
Sacred Heart School of Montreal  
Selwyn House School  
St. George's School of Montreal  
Ste. Agathe Academy  
Stanstead College  
The Study  
Trafalgar School for Girls  
Villa Maria College

### NEW BRUNSWICK

Rothesay Netherwood School  
St. Stephen Middle School

### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Gulf Shore Consolidated School

### NOVA SCOTIA

King's–Edgehill School

### NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Eric G. Lambert School  
Sheshatshiu Innu School  
St. Bonaventure's College Inc

### NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Paul W. Kaeser High School