
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Finance

B.C. honours veterans, creates scholarship

Updated April 23, 2015, for clarification

VANCOUVER – Funding for student scholarships and financial support for B.C. veterans of the Second World War who travel to the Netherlands for ceremonies commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands and Victory in Europe Day will help honour the sacrifices of B.C. veterans, Premier Christy Clark announced.

“Canadian troops made a tremendous contribution to the liberation of the Netherlands during the Second World War,” said Premier Clark. “I am humbled and privileged to honour these veterans and their courageous service to both Canada and the Netherlands.”

Finance Minister Michael de Jong will announce details of the funding tonight at a dinner held to honour B.C. veterans of the Second World War.

The Province of British Columbia is supporting B.C. veterans who will travel to the Netherlands to mark the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe. British Columbia is contributing \$2,000 to each travelling veteran, each with an accompanying person, matching funding provided through a federal program that supports veterans travelling to the Netherlands for the commemoration.

“The liberation of the Netherlands is a defining moment in our history and Canadians should be very proud of the service and sacrifice of our troops who freed a nation after years of oppression,” said Erin O’Toole, Minister of Veterans Affairs. “It is also reassuring to know that the Dutch people have not forgotten the brave service of our soldiers, sailors and airmen. The strong bond between our two countries continues to celebrate our strong friendship and mutual dedication to liberty. I applaud the Government of British Columbia for marking this special anniversary in an innovative way that will further deepen the special relationship between Canada and the Netherlands.”

“The Netherlands commemorate the liberation of their country 70 years ago by Canadian troops with deep gratitude,” said Gert Heijoop, Consul-General for the Netherlands. “It has created a special, lasting relationship between our countries.”

The Province is also awarding a \$150,000 grant to the Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society to create a one-time Victory in Europe Scholarship.

“Canada has a very strong connection to the Netherlands,” said de Jong. “Providing scholarships for Dutch students to study in British Columbia is one way we can continue the legacy of goodwill between our two nations.”

The grant will support awards for up to 10 students from the Kingdom of the Netherlands who

are enrolled in graduate- or doctoral-degree programs at B.C. universities in the **2016-17** academic year.

“For many, VE day commemorates liberation and the restoration of peace,” said Angus Stanfield, command president, B.C. & Yukon, Royal Canadian Legion. “It is only fitting that as we celebrate this event, we pay tribute to those brave men and women who fought so hard to make it a reality. I’m pleased to see our provincial government striving to do just that.”

On May 7, 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered unconditionally to allied forces, marking the end of the Second World War in Europe. Victory in Europe was celebrated on May 8, 1945.

Quick Facts:

- 181,000 British Columbians fought in the Second World War.
- Approximately 45,000 Canadians lost their lives during the Second World War.
- More than 7,600 Canadians died fighting in the Netherlands.
- During the Second World War, Canada provided sanctuary to members of the Dutch royal family.
- According to the 2011 census, approximately 204,700 British Columbians are of Dutch heritage.

Learn More:

Veteran’s affairs: 70th anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands:

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/history/second-world-war/liberation-netherlands/70th-anniversary>

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