

75th Anniversary of Dutch Liberation Remembrance Goes Virtual

The Canadian Remembrance Torch's Virtual Tour honours Canada's WWII veterans

"We can still carry the torch of remembrance for our veterans ..." said Karen Hunter in a segment on CBC's May 5th *The National*. When Covid-19 prevented travel to the Netherlands for the 75th anniversary of the Dutch Liberation, Canadians, like Hunter, needed to get creative.

Hunter launched "The Canadian Remembrance Torch's May 2020 Virtual Tour" running from Apr.30th to May 10th. That's when her not-for-profit pilgrimage, *In Our Fathers' Footsteps*, would have carried the Torch 60 km in the footsteps of the Canadian troops in the Netherlands.

The Canadian Remembrance Torch would have been lit near the Peace Tower in Ottawa, flown by Air Force plane to Halifax, sailed by ship (representing the Navy) to the Netherlands, then been carried by the Army to the start of the walk. When COVID-19 prevented the Torch's travel by sea, Air Canada agreed to be the Official Carrier of The Canadian Remembrance Torch's flame. However, those plans soon fell apart, too.

Hunter, the daughter of a Canadian WWII veteran who served in the Netherlands, was inspired to walk in her father's footsteps for the 75th anniversary (in May 2020) when he gave her a memoir he'd written about his war experiences. She invited other Canadian descendants of veterans who'd served there to join her, and over 155 Canadians took her up on the offer. "*In My Father's Footsteps* became *In Our Fathers' Footsteps*," she said.

"*The Canadian Remembrance Torch* represents Canadian veterans' legacy of peace, freedom, and friendship with others, like the Dutch," says Hunter. "And, it symbolizes Canadians' promise: We will never forget."

In Our Fathers' Footsteps and the inaugural journey of *The Canadian Remembrance Torch* have been rescheduled to May 2021.

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