

Ceremony in Senate Chamber Launches Veterans' Week

Ottawa – The Honourable Noël Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate, together with the Honourable Greg Thompson, Minister of Veterans Affairs, officially launched Veterans' Week 2006 today during the annual ceremony held in the Senate Chamber. The theme of Veterans' Week, which runs from November 5th to Remembrance Day on November 11th, is “*Sharing the Story*”.

“I am sure a visit to the grave of John McCrae at Essex Farm where he penned In Flanders Fields causes us all to reflect on the passing of the torch from hand to hand, from one generation of Canadians to another. And so it has been: from Flanders to Normandy, from the terrain of Korea to the waters of the Suez, from the Island of Cyprus to the valleys of Lebanon, from the plains of Rwanda to the hills of Afghanistan. It is indeed a time for commemoration and remembrance,” said Senate Speaker Noël Kinsella.

During the ceremony, the *Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation* was presented to five outstanding Canadians for their dedication and devotion to Canada's Veterans :

Devin Castilloux (Oakville, Ontario)
John Gooch (Kanata, Ontario)
George Nash, CD (Glace Bay, Nova Scotia)
Douglas Sample (St. Laurent, Quebec)
Blake Seward (Smiths Falls, Ontario)

“Through their generous spirit, wonderful enthusiasm and unceasing commitment to the cause of remembrance, these remarkable citizens are keeping the sacred memory of Canada's Veterans alive,” said Minister Thompson. “By their leadership and in their work, they have inspired many Canadians to ‘Share the Story’ of our Veterans, especially those who did not return home.”

The Commendation is presented to individuals who have contributed to the care and well-being of Veterans and to the remembrance of their contributions, sacrifices and achievements. It is intended primarily for Veterans, but in rare circumstances may also be awarded to non-Veterans.

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The *Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation* consists of a bar, which can be worn above or below official decorations on a Veteran's blazer, a lapel pin for civilian wear and a certificate.

More information, including an image of the *Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation*, can be found on the Veterans Affairs Canada Web site at www.vac-acc.gc.ca. Citations for the five recipients are available upon request.

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