



# VETERANS DAY NOVEMBER 8

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## ABOUT

(From: [www.righttoplay.ca](http://www.righttoplay.ca))

This November 8th is National Indigenous Veterans Day, a day of remembrance and commemoration of the contributions of Indigenous veterans in the First and Second World Wars, as well as the Korean War. Each Indigenous Veterans Day, we express our gratitude for the contributions Indigenous veterans have made to Canada and the world.

National Indigenous Veterans Day began in Winnipeg in 1994 when Indigenous veterans were not recognized in Remembrance Day activities and is now celebrated in many communities across Canada. Over 12,000 Indigenous people are estimated to have volunteered in all three wars, including 7,000 First Nations members, and approximately 300 died during these conflicts.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis people were not eligible for conscription because they were not citizens of Canada (they were also unable to vote), but many volunteered despite the challenges they faced, including traveling long distances from remote communities to enlist, learning a new language (English), and coping with racism against them. Indigenous people were not allowed to join the Canadian Air Force until 1942 and the Canadian Navy until 1943. Both men and women enlisted, serving as soldiers, nurses and in other roles. Many served with distinction, winning medals for bravery in action.

After the war, enlisted Indigenous people returned home to continued discrimination, including in some cases denial of benefits, loss of Indian Status, and expropriation of their land by the government for non-Indigenous veterans. It was only in 1995 that Indigenous veterans were allowed to lay wreaths commemorating their fallen comrades at the National War Memorial in Ottawa. The first monument commemorating the role of Indigenous people during these three wars was dedicated in 2001 in Ottawa. It took until 2003 for the Government of Canada to provide veterans' benefits to First Nations soldiers who had been denied them in the past, and until 2017 to provide recognition payments to Métis veterans.

Today, Indigenous people continue to serve in Canada's armed forces. Learn more about Indigenous Veterans:

- Indigenous Veterans – Veterans Affairs Canada
- The Memory Project: Remembering Indigenous Veterans
- Aboriginal Veterans Tribute List
- The Canadian Encyclopedia: Indigenous People and the World Wars
- Aboriginal War Heroes – More Than a Few Good Men (Bob Joseph)
- Remembering & Honouring Indigenous War Heroes: World War 1 & 2

## NATIONAL ABORIGINAL VETERANS MONUMENT

(From: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/memorials/national-inventory-canadian-memorials/details/7972>)

On June 21, 2001, on the occasion of National Aboriginal Day, a national monument to the Indigenous Veterans was unveiled in Ottawa.

The unveiling is the result of the hard work and perseverance of the National Indigenous Veterans Association (NIVA), the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and Senator Nick Taylor that began in the early 1990's. Through the work of artist Lloyd Pinay, the monument is reflective of all Indigenous Peoples in Canada; First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

Indigenous Veterans have reason to be proud of their wartime contributions. More than 7,000 First Nations members served in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War, and an unknown number of Inuit, Métis and other Indigenous people also participated. One Veterans group estimates that 12,000 Indigenous people served in the three wars. On each occasion, Indigenous members of the armed forces overcame cultural challenges and made impressive sacrifices and contributions to help the nation in its efforts to restore world peace. It was an incredible response - consistent with a remarkable tradition.



### Inscription found on Memorial

#### TO ABORIGINAL WAR VETERANS IN CANADA AND TO THOSE THAT HAVE FALLEN

This monument is raised in sacred and everlasting honour of the contributions of all Aboriginal Canadians in war and peacekeeping operations.

Many thousands of Aboriginal people saw action and endured hardship in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. They served with honour and distinction in all branches of the service and in every rank and appointment from Private to Brigadier. They fought overseas to defend the sovereignty and liberty of allied nations, in addition to supporting the cause at home. Their dedication continues in peacekeeping operations in far away lands.

Their heroic acts earned many decorations for bravery as well as the respect and enduring friendship of their comrades in arms. Hundreds from across Canada gave fully of their lives so that all Canadians might know peace and inherit freedom.

We who would follow in their path are humbled by the magnitude of their sacrifice and inspired by the depths of their resolve. We owe them a debt of gratitude we cannot soon hope to repay.

Unveiled by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada and Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Forces, on June 21, 2001, National Aboriginal Day.

This monument was made possible by the National Aboriginal Veterans Association and the generous donations of the Canadian people.

Artist: Noel Lloyd Pinay



From: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/pdf/cr/pi-sheets/Aboriginal-pi-e.pdf>

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit people of Canada have a long and proud tradition of military service to our country. While exact statistics are difficult to determine, the rate of Indigenous participation in Canada's military efforts over the years has been impressive. These determined volunteers were often forced to overcome many challenges to serve in uniform, from learning a new language and adapting to cultural differences, to having to travel great distances from their remote communities just to enlist.

## Legacy

The story of Indigenous service in the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War and later Canadian Armed Forces efforts is a proud one. While exact numbers are elusive, it has been estimated that as many as 12,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit people served in the great conflicts of the 20th century, with at least 500 of them sadly losing their lives.

This rich heritage has been recognized in many ways. The names given to several Royal Canadian Navy warships over the years, like HMCS Iroquois, Cayuga and Huron, are just one indication of our country's lasting respect for the contributions of Indigenous peoples. This long tradition of military service is also commemorated with the striking National Aboriginal Veterans Monument in Ottawa. This deeply symbolic memorial features a large bronze eagle at its top, with four men and women from different Indigenous groups from across Canada immediately below. A wolf, bear, bison and caribou—powerful animals that represent “spiritual guides” which have long been seen by Indigenous cultures as important to military success—look out from each corner. Remembrance ceremonies are held at this special monument, including on National Indigenous Veterans Day which is observed each year on November 8.

## CANADA REMEMBERS PROGRAM

The Canada Remembers Program of Veterans Affairs Canada encourages all Canadians to learn about the sacrifices and achievements made by those who have served—and continue to serve—during times of war and peace. As well, it invites Canadians to become involved in remembrance activities that will help preserve their legacy for future generations.

*Veterans Affairs Canada acknowledges the assistance of Fred Gaffen, whose research was drawn upon in the creation of this publication.*

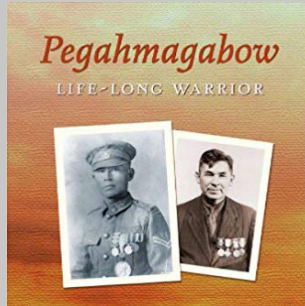
For more information, including videos and learning activities:

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/those-who-served/indigenous-veterans>



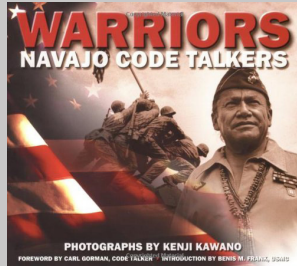
# Book List

(Educational resources available from goodminds.com)



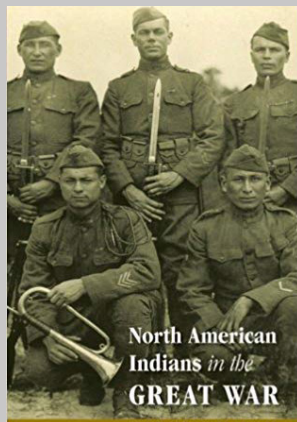
**Pegahmagabow: Life-Long Warrior** by journalist and historian Adrian Hayes details the life and times of Ojibwe leader and veteran Frances Pegahmagabow (1889-1952).

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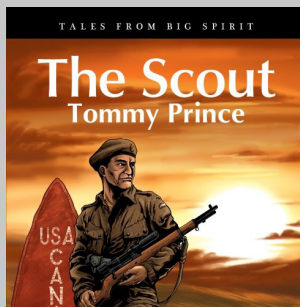
**Warriors: Navajo Code Talkers** is a tribute book to the Navajo marines who served as code talkers during the Second World War.

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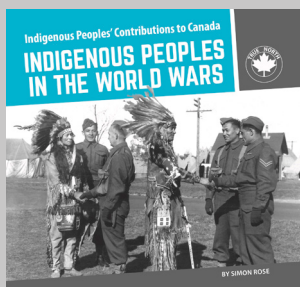
**North American Indians in the Great War** by associate professor of anthropology Susan Applegate Krouse examines the first-hand accounts of Native Americans who served in the United States military.

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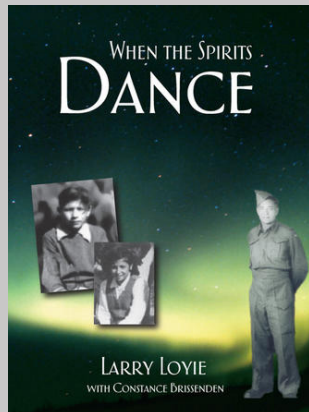


**The Scout: Tommy Prince** is one of the titles from Tales from Big Spirit series.

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**Indigenous Peoples in the World Wars** is part of the four volume Indigenous Peoples' Contributions to Canada series from Beech Street Books.



**When the Spirits Dance** by award-winning authors Larry Loyie and Constance Brissenden is a recent children's book about a Cree family during the Second World War.

## Statement - Government of Canada marks Aboriginal Veterans Day

OTTAWA, Nov. 8, 2018 /CNW/ - Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence Seamus O'Regan, Minister of National Defence Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Carolyn Bennett, and Minister of Indigenous Services Jane Philpott today issued the following joint statement to mark Aboriginal Veterans Day:

"On Aboriginal Veterans Day, we honour and remember the First Nations, Inuit and Métis people – past and present – who have served our country with great pride and sacrificed for our freedom.

"Since 1994, Aboriginal Veterans Day has been a way to pay respect to Indigenous peoples for their contributions to our country's military efforts. By some estimates, more than 12,000 First Nations, Inuit and Métis served during the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. Their bravery and dedication earned them many military decorations.

"We remember Brigadier Oliver Milton Martin, a Mohawk from Six Nations of the Grand River, who rose to the highest rank ever held by an Indigenous person. He also became the first Indigenous man to be appointed a provincial magistrate in Ontario. Martin — remembered for his commitment to education and Indigenous rights and his distinguished military career —served in the First and Second World Wars.

"We remember Harry Lavallee, a Métis Veteran from Stonewall, Manitoba, who proudly served in the Second World War. Lavallee joined the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps and went on to fight in Northwest Europe as a rifleman with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders.

"We remember Fredrick Freida, an Inuit hunter and trapper from Labrador who served overseas during the First World War. In 1951, Freida joined the Canadian Rangers—an army reserve force that protects Canada's sovereignty in remote and northern areas.

"We remember Edith Anderson Monture, a nurse who was born in Six Nations of the Grand River in 1890. After finding few opportunities to become a nurse in Canada, she trained in the United States and subsequently joined the U.S. Medical Corps. Monture was one of 14 Canadian nurses who joined the American Army in 1917 and she tended to many wounded soldiers overseas.

Read full statement here: <https://www.newswire.ca/>

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