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via E-mail

Dear Editor:

Bright yellow daffodils and vivid varicoloured tulips cause me to pause, reflect and remember. When a student at Tantramar, as a guest of the Dutch government, I traveled to the Netherlands on an exchange trip to experience Dutch culture –and saw acres of colourful blooming tulips. That trip was organized by the Dutch to honour the Canadian-led Liberation of the Netherlands in 1945. Dutch students, in turn, explored Canada with our family the following summer.

Through WWII the Dutch Royal family sought refuge in Canada. During their stay the Canadian government declared a room at the Ottawa Civic Hospital as “International Territory” so that in 1943, when Princess Margriet was born to Queen Juliana, the infant would be able to have Dutch citizenship. The Dutch Royal family gifted 100,000 tulips to Canada in appreciation of the hospitality extended to them by Canadians. Annually since, the Dutch continue to send 20,000 tulip bulbs to Ottawa in respect and in memory of Holland’s 1945 Liberation by Canadian troops from Nazi occupation. The Netherlands celebrates Memorial Day May 4 with Services of Remembrance and, at sundown, Holland stops to pause for 2 minutes of silent stillness to remember the war dead and to give thanks for their Liberators – Canadians. Each May 5, the Dutch have a national holiday; they commemorate Liberation Day with special celebrations and festivals.

Canadians flock to Ottawa to take in the Capital’s spring Tulip Festival. The city blossoms; color abounds. In Ottawa’s Commissioner’s Park stands a striking statue of the *Man with Two Hats*, a gift from the Dutch - a replica is in Apeldoorn. The plaque reads: *With donation of this monument - an expression of joy and a celebration of freedom - the Netherlands pays lasting tribute to Canada... The twin monuments symbolically link Canada and the Netherlands; though separated by an ocean, the two countries will forever be close friends.* The Dutch recognize and celebrate the immeasurable cost paid for their freedom and the lives sacrificed for their liberty – especially Canadian lives.

Amongst those who gave the Supreme Sacrifice in the Netherlands are nine Allisonians remembered in the Mt A Cenotaph, **Memorial Library 1914 1918**: James Bell, 28, of McAdam, NB; Thomas Campbell, 28, of North Sydney, NS; Donald Eddy, 27, of Bathurst, NB; Arnold Hupman, 30, Rugged Is, NS; Donald Jack, 31, Westmont, Que; William Kackafanas, 23, Glace Bay, NS; Lawson Smith, 25, New Glasgow, NS; Gerald Tanton, 39, Summerside, PEI; and G. Stanley Bickerton, 24, of Upper

Sackville, NB – a local lad from the Tantramar. The Canadian War Memorial at Groesbeek, NL is inscribed with these profound words: *Pro amicis mortui amicis vivimus*. [We live in the hearts of the friends for whom we died.] The Dutch revere this trust.

Why would we destroy the memory of these heroes when the Dutch do not? Would we not better honour the sacrifice of those lost overseas by sharing the May 4 “Sundown Pause of Silence” and by planting tulips, the Dutch symbol of freedom, life and hope - rather than by destroying our Cenotaph?

Restore **Memorial Library 1914 1918**. Relocate Arts. Remove Tweedie Annex – and plant there a festive tulip garden!

Yours truly,

C. Jean Cameron