

# TODAY'S NEWS

By Anne Greeno

## A Wendy Dunham Travel Adventure

Wendy and Trafalgar put together a customized itinerary for our group of 22 people. Highlights included stays in Paris, Lyon, Carcassonne,

Bordeaux, Tours and Deauville, with visits to Beaune, Saint Emilion, the Loire Valley, Brittany and the D-Day Landing Beaches in Normandy.



### Special Moments

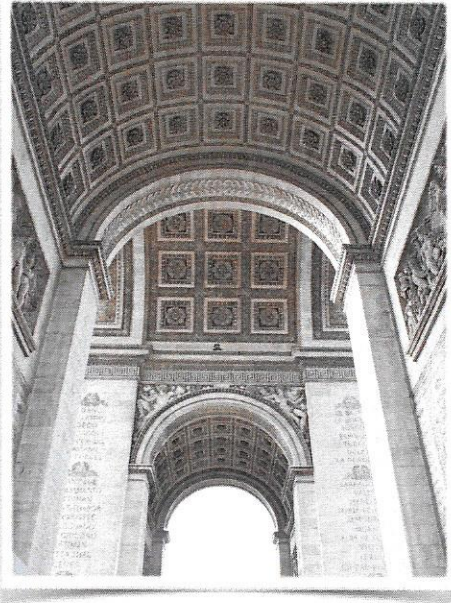
France was a major battleground during the first and second World Wars. Canada played a large part in the eventual defeat of Germany. However, victory came at a cost. Not all Canadian soldiers returned home. On this trip, the group visited Juno Beach and Juno Park, and also got to visit the graves of Frank Cameron's grandfather, Staff Sgt. A. F. Cameron, and Rose Collicutt's uncle, Private Walter McFarlane.

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## Highlights of Paris

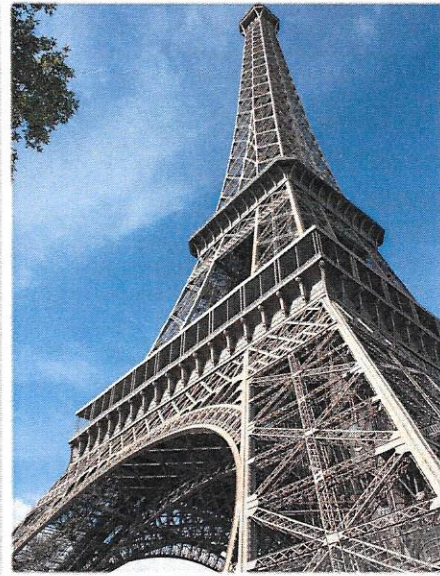
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### The Arc de Triomphe



The Arc de Triomphe was built between 1810-1836 and is located at the western end of the Champs Elysees. It was built to honour those who fought and died for France in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Beneath its vault lies the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier from World War I. Famous victory marches around or under the Arc have included the Germans in 1871, the French in 1919, the Germans in 1940, and the French and Allies in 1944 and 1945.

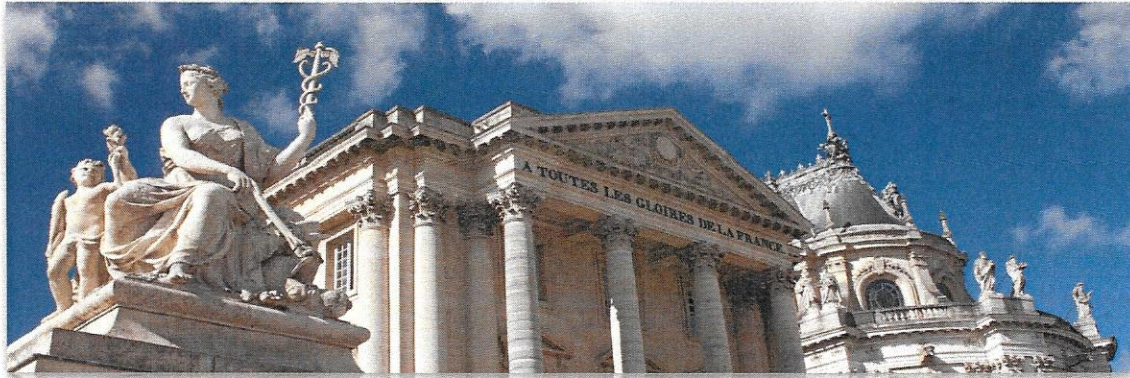
### The Eiffel Tower



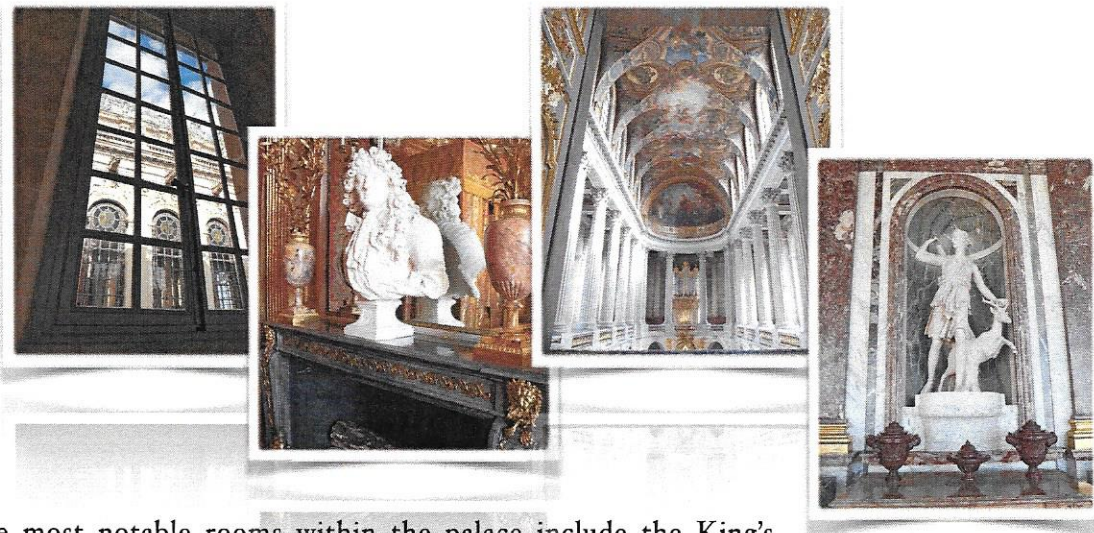
The Eiffel Tower is located on the Champ de Mars and stands at 324 meters. It was designed and built in 1889 by a company owned by Gustave Eiffel. It was part of the Exposition Universelle, a world's fair to celebrate the centennial of the French Revolution. Original plans called for it to be dismantled in 1909, but it was kept for communication purposes. We visited the second level for a spectacular panoramic view.



## The Palace of Versailles



The original accommodations at Versailles were Louis XIII's hunting lodge, built in 1623. Under Louis XIV's reign, Versailles became the royal palace, the Palace of Versailles, official government seat of the kingdom of France and the location of the royal court. During its reconstruction and expansion from 1661 to 1715, no expense was spared in creating the most spectacular structures, gardens and fountains.



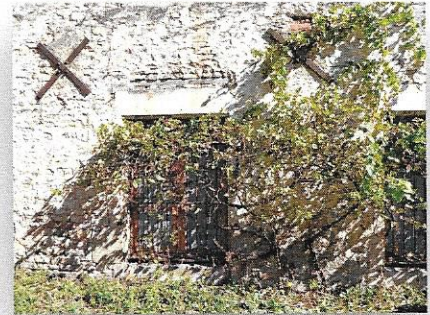
The most notable rooms within the palace include the King's apartment, the King's private apartment, the Queen's private apartment, the Hall of Mirrors, five Chapels and the Royal Opera.

Besides the members of the royal family, those with position, favour and birth rights, known as courtiers, lived in one of the 350 apartments within the palace. Interesting to note is that the current French President of the National Assembly has an official apartment at the Palace of Versailles.

## Beaune

### *Beaune*

Beaune is a walled city in the Burgundy wine region of France. It is an ancient and historic town on a plain by the hills of the Côte d'Or. Upon arrival, we instantly saw the influences of pre-Roman and Roman eras, with most of its original architecture still in place. We stopped in the central old town area and enjoyed lunch in the park followed by a tour of the 15th century Hospice de Beaune.



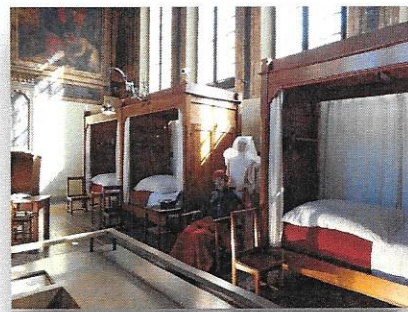
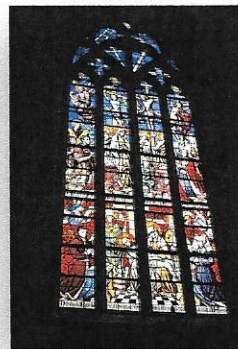
### *Hospice de Beaune*

The Hospice de Beaune was built in 1443 by Nicolas Rolin, a Chancellor of the Duke, and his wife Guigone de Salins, in response to a need for refuge and medical care of the region's destitute. The Hundred Years' War had caused much misery and famine, along with disease. The destitute and poor had no where to go. Incredibly, the hospital stayed in operation until the late 1970's.



The hospital contains two two-storied buildings with adjoining wings that form a natural stone courtyard. The most notable area within the hospital is the "Room of the Poor" where the patients were administered aid by Catholic nuns.

At the end of this room was the Chapel where patients could at least see and hear mass if they weren't able to physically attend.

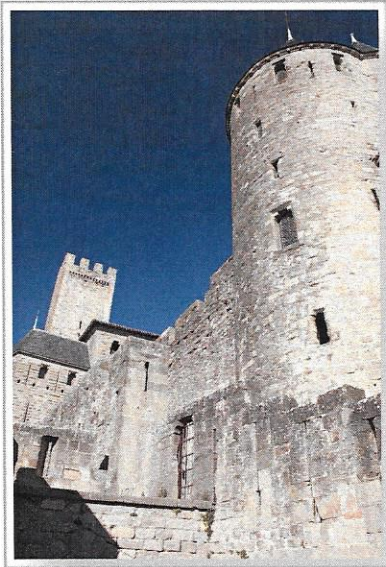
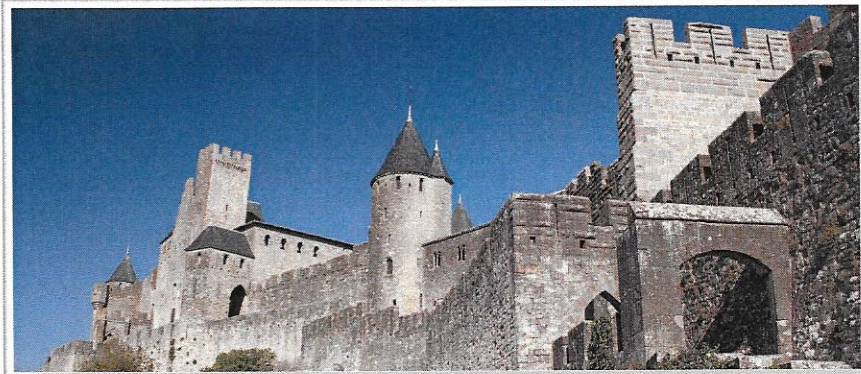


Within another section of the hospital was a smaller room with more privacy for those who were able to pay for their aid. This money was put back into running the hospital.

Additional funding for the hospital came through the Domaine des Hospices de Beaune, a non-profit organization. It manages 150 acres of donated vineyard land, much of it now designated for the renowned Grand and Premier Cru brands. It participates in a yearly charity auction arranged annually since 1859.

## Carcassonne

Carcassonne is a city strategically located in the Aude plain between Massif Central and the Pyrenees, two major thoroughfares linking the Atlantic to the Mediterranean Sea. Upon a hilltop within the city is a walled fortress, castle and the Basilica of Saint Nazaire. The Romans built the original section of the fortress around 100 B.C. Throughout the years until 1659, the fortress was expanded by successive reigning groups, each with its own unique architectural differences, evident by one section being Roman and others more medieval with red brick layers and shallow pitched terracotta tile roofs.

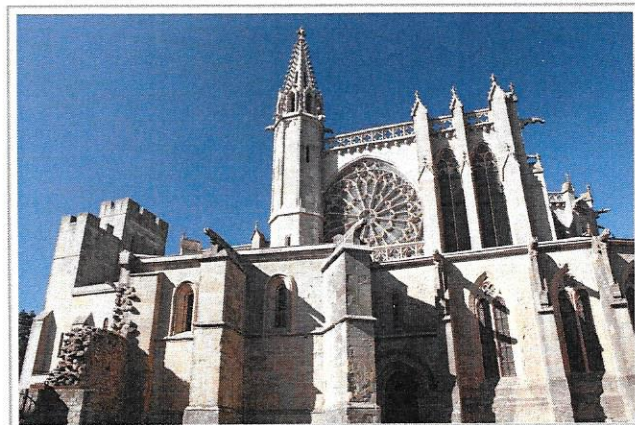


The fortress has two outer walls with 53 towers used for lookout and defence. It also has several barbicans, which are fortified towers over entrance gates.

An interesting fact - Historically, the language spoken in Carcassonne was not French but Occitan. Occitan is considered a Romance language spoken in southern France, Monaco, Italy's Occitan Valleys and Spain's Val d'Aran region.

The Carcassonne fortress was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Site list in 1997.

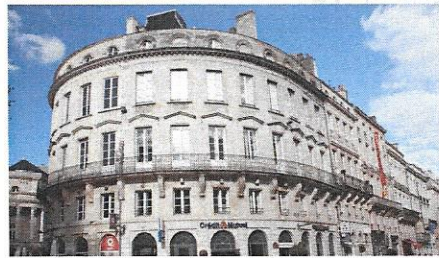
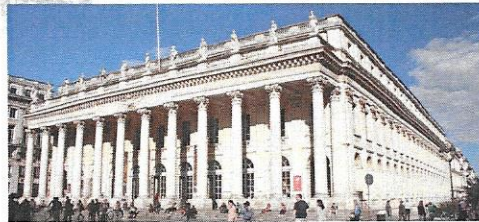
### *Basilica of Saint Nazaire*



## Bordeaux

### *Another UNESCO World Heritage Site*

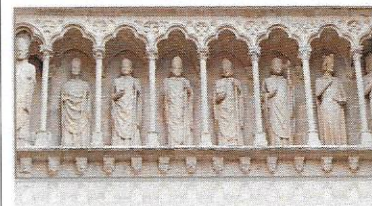
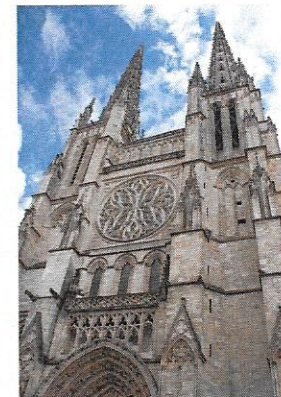
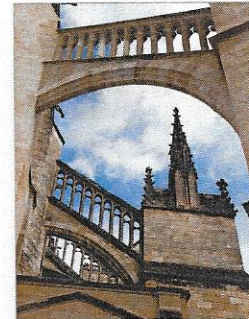
Bordeaux is a city dating back to 100 B.C., however, it was in the 18th century that it boomed. It has the second highest number of preserved historical buildings in France, behind Paris. The historic part of the city is now on the UNESCO World Heritage Site list as "an outstanding urban and architectural ensemble" of the 18th century.



### *Historical Fact - Betasom*

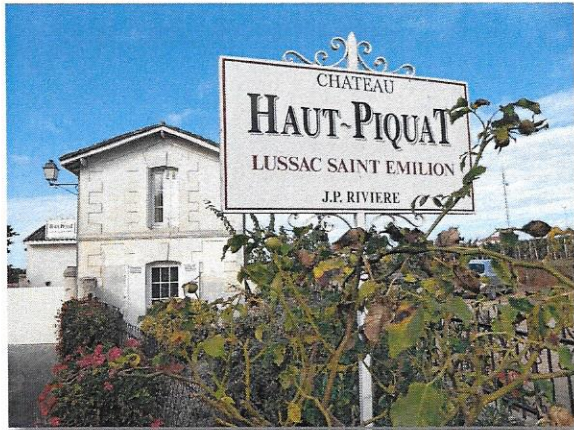
In 1940, the Italian Royal Navy established a submarine base named Betasom in Bordeaux. Italian submarines participated in the Battle of the Atlantic from this post. Betasom was also used by Germany as the headquarters of the 12th U-boat Flotilla. 42 submarines were located here, with 39 being destroyed between 1942 and 1944.

### Bordeaux Churches



## Wine Tasting

Our group visited the Haut-Piquat winery in the region of Saint Emilion. Located just outside several medieval Bastide villages, this estate is truly a slice of paradise. We were in France at the most opportune time, the last of the harvesting season. Haut-Piquat is well known for its red merlot varieties and has also won awards for its Cabernet Sauvignon. The host brought out bottles of both red and wine for us to try. Undecided, we bought several of each.



The grounds of the estate were beautiful. Row upon row of grapevines, some already picked, some not. The weather was the perfect autumn temperature with lots of sunshine. The only thing that got us back on the coach was the promise of an afternoon in Saint Emilion, which was to include lunch and more wine.

### Facts about Merlot

Merlot's red wine variety has strong historic ties to Bordeaux and the southwest of France. It is the predominant variety in most wines from Saint Emilion, the area in which the variety originated. The variety is now widely planted in wine regions across the world and, in terms of the volumes of wine produced internationally, it is rivalled only by its Bordeaux companion, Cabernet Sauvignon.

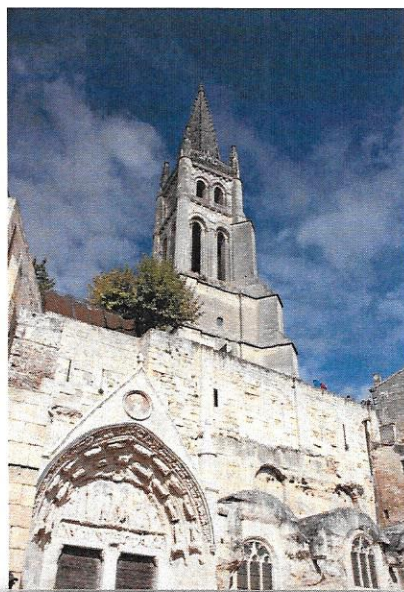


## Saint Emilion



### *The Town's Origin*

In the 8th century, a Breton monk named Emillon fled to escape persecution by the Benedictine Order. Emillon adopted an eremitic existence, living in a cave, and was said to perform miracles which attracted a following of monks. The region became known as Saint-Emilion. It acquired wealth and prominence due to wine production and to its strategic position along a pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela. The cultural landscape of Saint Emilion, including its most famous church, was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Site list in 1999.



### *Saint-Emilion Monolithic Church*

The church was constructed in the 12th century. It was carved out of limestone and is partly subterranean. It has a 53-meter-high bell tower that rises above the town.

Within the church are catacombs, of which several artifacts remain. The underground church has two rows of columns that hold up the roof of the church, however, constant water infiltration and the 3,000 ton weight of the bell tower made it susceptible to collapsing. In the late 1990's, extensive stabilization efforts were undertaken to reinforce the structure and fix the water infiltration problems.





## Augustus Frank Cameron

### Frank Meets His Grandfather

Today was a special day. Frank was the first Cameron from Canada to have the privilege of visiting his grandfather's grave. Augustus F. Cameron was stationed in France as a Staff Sergeant in the Canadian Army Service Corp. As was with many of the enlisted men, he died in France serving his country.

### Talence

The graveyard where Augustus is buried is in the quaint town of Talence near Bordeaux. This beautifully kept graveyard is under the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. There are eleven Canadian soldiers buried here together.

### Legion Commemorative

Wendy and the Royal Canadian Legion provided a commemorative cross for Augustus' grave. Poppies were placed on all of the soldiers' graves as a sign that their service will never be forgotten.

Video of Frank's special day  
<https://youtu.be/zZCSr12cn30>

### *Staff Sergeant Augustus F. Cameron*



*"Canada entered World War I as a colony and came out a nation..."*



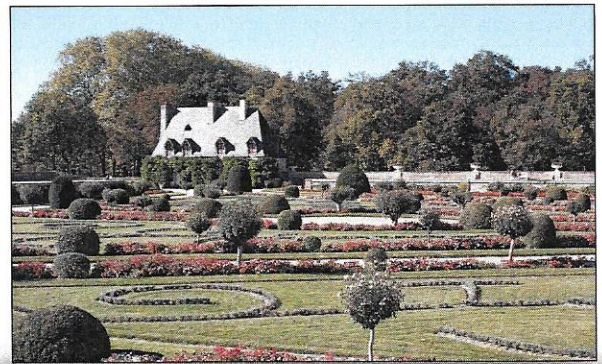
## Chenonceau



The beautiful Chateau de Chenonceau is located in the Poitou-Charentes region of the Loire Valley. It was built on the foundation of an old mill in 1514 and later expanded to cross the River Cher.

The Chateau had many owners over the years, including Thomas Bohier, King Francis I and Henry II. It was Henry's mistress who created the first garden, the largest of the two, and his wife who created the second, smaller one.

Over the past 500 years, the Chateau had many structural expansions and renovations done. It seems that each family that undertook these renovations did not have sufficient funds to pay for them and the estate was continually being sold to pay off the large debts.

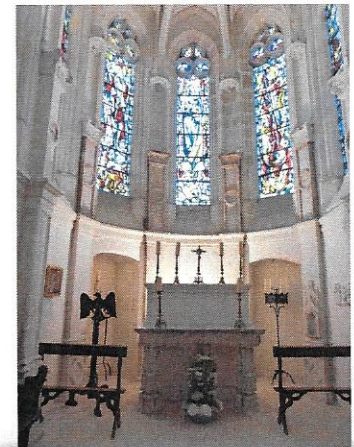


### *The Use of the Chateau as a Hospital*



During World War I, Gaston Menier set up the gallery to be used as a hospital ward. During the Second World War, in June, 1940, the Chateau was bombed by the Germans. The Chateau was also a means of escaping from the Nazi occupied zone on one side of the River Cher to the "free" zone

on the opposite bank. Occupied by the Germans, the Chateau was bombed by the Allies on June 7, 1944, when the chapel was hit and its windows destroyed.



## Mont Saint Michel

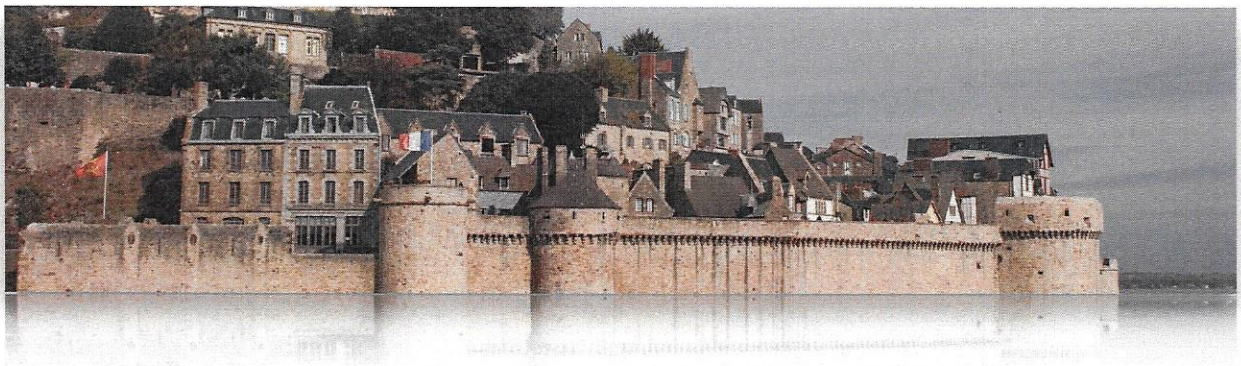


### *A More Beautiful Castle There Never Was*

Mont Saint Michel is an island of 247 acres located just 600 metres from land at the mouth of the Couesnon River near Avranches. Mont Saint Michel is considered a commune town, which is equivalent to a municipality in Nova Scotia. The town still has permanent residents living there.

The many buildings on the island include an Abbey, a monastery, many great halls, stores and housing. Being so close to shore meant the island was accessible only during low tide, which gave it a great defensive position. An island is also a good place to put a prison, which is what Louis XI did. Prisoners couldn't easily escape unless they were good swimmers against the tidal waters! The Abbey was designated as a prison some time during the Ancient Regime between the 15th and 18th centuries.

In 1979, Mont Saint Michel was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. To accommodate the three million visitors each year, a new bridge was constructed in 2014.

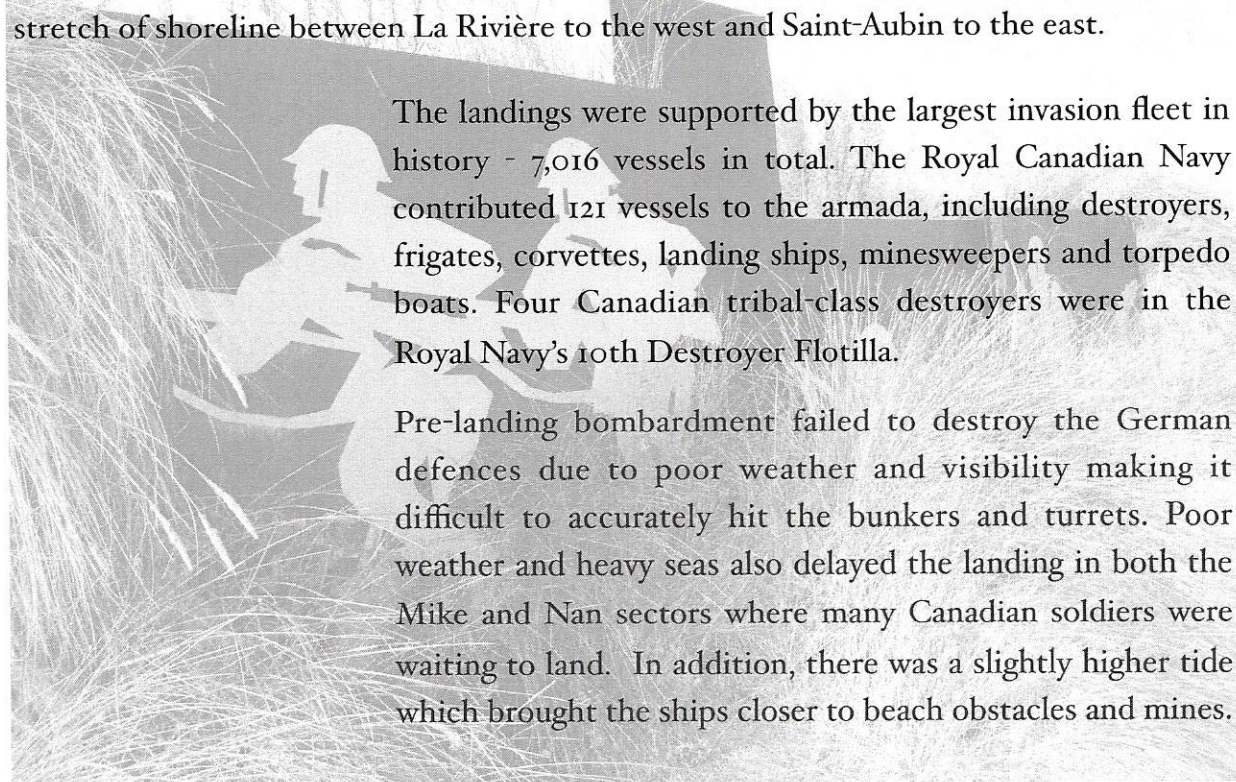


## Juno Beach



### D-Day - June 6, 1944

The Normandy invasion was code named Operation Neptune, the landing phase of Operation Overlord. A five-division front was spread across 80 kms of coastline, with the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division being responsible for taking Juno Beach, a 9.7 km stretch of shoreline between La Rivière to the west and Saint-Aubin to the east.



The landings were supported by the largest invasion fleet in history - 7,016 vessels in total. The Royal Canadian Navy contributed 121 vessels to the armada, including destroyers, frigates, corvettes, landing ships, minesweepers and torpedo boats. Four Canadian Tribal-class destroyers were in the Royal Navy's 10th Destroyer Flotilla.

Pre-landing bombardment failed to destroy the German defences due to poor weather and visibility making it difficult to accurately hit the bunkers and turrets. Poor weather and heavy seas also delayed the landing in both the Mike and Nan sectors where many Canadian soldiers were waiting to land. In addition, there was a slightly higher tide which brought the ships closer to beach obstacles and mines.

45,000 Canadians lost their lives during World War II, of which 5,500 were killed during the Battle of Normandy and 359 on D-Day.

## Centre Juno Beach



The Juno Beach Centre is Canada's permanent memorial to all Canadians who served in World War II.

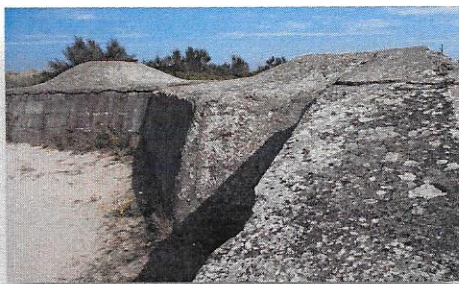
The centre's founder was Lt. Garth Webb from Calgary, Alberta who was

with the Canadian 14th Field, part of the Allied forces that landed at Juno Beach on D-Day. Together with other World War II veterans, the centre was created in remembrance of those who served their country and to educate everyone on the role Canada played in preserving the freedoms and privileges we all enjoy today.



### *Atlantic Wall Defence System*

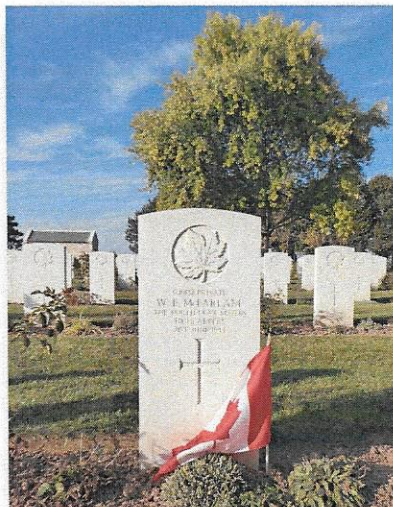
The bunker located in front of the Juno Beach Centre was uncovered in 2004 and its access was cleared with the creation of Juno Park. This bunker was a German observation post that was part of



the Atlantic Wall defence system. In 1944, it contained radio equipment that allowed communication with other bunkers in the coordination of the beach's defence. A machine gun post was positioned on the top of the bunker. A steel dome, removed in the late 1970s, protected the look-out. Our group visited the underground Command Post of the 6th Company, 736th Infantry Regiment of Hauptmann Grote which controlled the site in 1944.

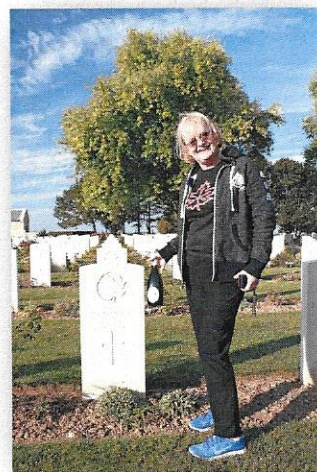


## Pte. Walter E. McFarlane



In the Beny-Sur-Mer Reviere Canadian War Cemetery in Normandy, within eyesight of Juno Beach, lies Rose Collicutt's uncle, Pte. Walter E. McFarlane. Walter died on June 21, 1944, just over two weeks after the D-Day invasion. Walter was from Canterbury, a village in western New Brunswick, and served with the North Nova Scotia Highlanders, Royal Canadian Infantry Corps. On D-Day, he would have been assigned to the 9th Canadian Infantry Brigade, 3rd Canadian Infantry Division.

It was a special moment to be with Rose and John at the gravesite and to toast a glass of champagne in Walter's honour. Frank gave a touching speech to commemorate the legacy Walter left behind, and to honour him for the ultimate sacrifice he gave to his country.



Video of Rose and John honouring Walter  
<https://youtu.be/4ZG4mtLzLRY>

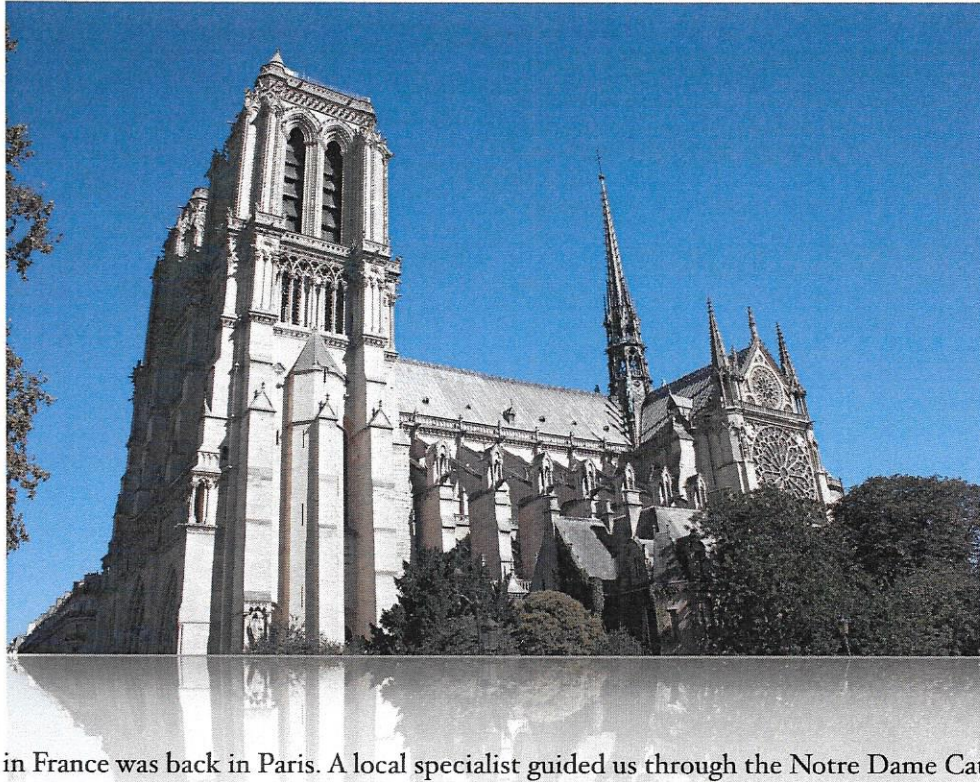
Motto of the Royal Canadian Infantry Corp  
 Ducimus - "We Lead"

## Beny-Sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery

The Bény-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery is located in and named after Bény-sur-Mer in the Calvados department, near Caen in lower Normandy. Of the 2,048 graves, all but four are Canadian soldiers killed during the early stages of the Battle of Normandy in the Second World War. The grounds are beautifully landscaped and immaculately kept. Contained within the cemetery is a Cross of Sacrifice, designed for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1918 by Sir Reginald Blomfield.



## Paris - Notre Dame Cathedral

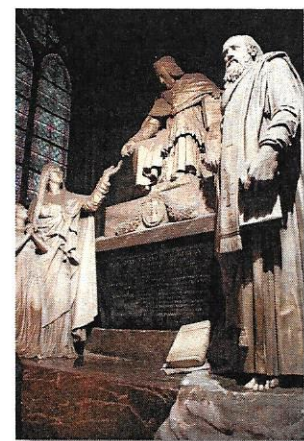


Our last day in France was back in Paris. A local specialist guided us through the Notre Dame Cathedral.

The Notre Dame is not the original cathedral of Paris. In 1160, the Bishop of Paris, Maurice de Sully, ordered the demolition of Saint-Étienne (St Stephen's) shortly after he took over as Bishop. It took until 1345 to have the new building constructed. Since then, extensive renovations occurred in 1845 and 1991.



Interesting Fact: The cathedral was the first building in the world to use the flying buttress technique, an arched structure from the top down to a mass object. The structure does not come in contact with the wall it supports, it transmits the lateral forces across the span of intervening space between the wall and the object.



## France 2016



Marc Roubi - Coach Driver  
Wendy Dunham  
Beverly Lynch  
Roland Levesque  
Myrtle Levesque  
Pearl Newcombe  
Michaela Hortie-Rogers  
Carolyn Hortie

Frances Ferguson  
Rod D'eon  
Arlene D'eon  
Dr. Saira Malik  
Rose Collicutt  
John Halley  
Bonnie Meads  
Don Lane

Francesca Ferguson  
Hillary Ferguson  
Anne Greeno  
Wanda Quesnel  
Frank Cameron  
Cindy Harrett  
Jim Greeno  
Brian Tippa - Tour Director