

ARMISTICE '18

(Updated 02/22/2018)

Canada's Largest Commemoration of the 1918 Armistice September 29 - November 11, 2018

Theatre • Music • Art • Talks • Film • Displays • Events

THE COMMEMORATION

From September 29 to November 11, 2018, Cobourg, Ontario, will host **Canada's largest centennial commemoration of the 1918 Armistice** with plays, music, talks by leading historians, films, commemorative exhibitions and ceremonies and a public art installation.

THE HISTORY

Cobourg lost more than 100 young men in World War 1, many of them during the war's closing months in 1918. Ten years later the town's Old Bailey courthouse was the scene of a sensational trial that has been called "the last battle of the Great War." The case was a libel suit brought by Sir Arthur Currie, the general who had led the Canadian Corps to victory in 1918. The cause of his grievance was a front-page article in a Port Hope newspaper which claimed that Currie had needlessly wasted Canadian lives in the capture of Mons on the last day of the war. The trial placed Canada's entire role in the Great War under a spotlight and kept the country riveted for weeks.

OFFICIAL OPENING

A host of events will highlight the weekend of Armistice '18 on **Sept 29-30**. There will be a VIP opening of the WW1 History and Art Exhibit and the unveiling of the public art piece at noon on Sunday Sept 30th. At this opening, **Peter Mansbridge** (husband of Cynthia Dale who will also be present) will speak along with other VIPs. Invitations will be extended to the Prime Minister, the Governor General and the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Seamus O'Regan.

THEATRE

The Centrepiece – *LAST DAY, LAST HOUR: Canada's Great War On Trial*, a new play by **Hugh Brewster**, recreates the charged atmosphere of this epic trial. Presented in the historic courtroom in which it all took place, the play is directed by **Michael Khashmanian** of the Beech Street Theatre and produced by the **Northumberland Players**. It will run from October 18 - November 11 (Thursdays through Sundays) in the Old Bailey, in the historic and majestic Victoria Hall, 55 King St W., Cobourg.

In addition to the premiere of *Last Day, Last Hour*, the **Northumberland Players** will present the powerful World War I drama *Mary's Wedding* by Stephen Massicotte, which highlights the last great cavalry charge of the war.

September 21 - October 14 (most Thursdays to Sundays) in the Firehall Theatre.

There will also be a reading of a new play about Canadian nurses in World War 1. *The Stars on Her Shoulders* by Stephen Massicotte.

October 18, 20, November 4, 8 & 10 in the Victoria Hall Concert Hall

MUSIC

ARMISTICE: The Coming of Peace in 1918 Remembered in Words, Images and Song, a commemorative concert created by historian **Hugh Brewster**, features the celebrated **Elora Singers** conducted by **Noel Edison**, along with actor narrators, **Hugh Brewster** and **Cynthia Dale**, musicians and a multi-media screen show. This will be the gala opening event of Armistice'18.

Saturday, September 29, 7:00 pm, Trinity United Church, 284 Division St., Cobourg. Reception to follow

A SPEAKERS SERIES

A series of talks by leading Canadian historians will be held on **October Sunday afternoons at 2:00 at the Cobourg Public Library, 200 Ontario St.**

October 14: Jack Granatstein is acclaimed as the dean of Canada's war historians. The author of over 60 books and a former head of Canada's War Museum, he will speak on Canada's Hundred Days in 1918, the subject of his latest book, *The Greatest Victory*. *Sponsored by the International Festival of Authors Lit on Tour program.*

October 21: Tim Cook is a historian at Canada's War Museum and the author of many authoritative yet highly readable accounts of Canadians under fire. He will speak about the fraught relationship between Arthur Currie and Sam Hughes, the subject of his book, *The Madman and the Butcher*.

October 28: Charlotte Gray has been hailed as Canada's best-loved historical writer. The author of such bestsellers as *Sisters in the Wilderness* and *The Promise of Canada*, she is also a biographer of Nellie McClung, a pioneer of women's suffrage who will feature in her talk about how Canadian women won the vote in 1918.

TBC: Paul Gross is the well-known Canadian actor, director and producer and writer who achieved fame in the TV series *Due South* and went on to create the acclaimed war films

Passchendaele and *Hyena Road*. He will speak about his experiences in bringing Canada's war stories to life on screen.

FILM

TBC: *Passchendaele* and *Hyena Road*, two films by Paul Gross about Canadians in war, will be presented prior to his talk in Cobourg. Other classic films or documentaries about WW1 may also be part of a film series.

HISTORY & ART EXHIBIT

Throughout Armistice '18, a multi-media exhibition on World War I will take place at Victoria Hall.

The Northumberland Art Gallery will feature a WW1 painting exhibition about WW1 by contemporary Canadian artist **Charles Pachter**. It may also feature period works by Group of Seven artists and others from the Canadian War Art program and museum collections.

An exhibition on WWI will be on display in Victoria Hall's Concert Hall, including **The Great War in Colour** photographs, an exhibition, book and documentary sponsored by the Vimy Foundation. This will be a Timeline of WW1 that will also include information on local veterans, Arthur Currie, the Hundred Days and the capture of Mons and ending with LAST DAY, LAST HOUR. Original artifacts such as the offending editorial in the *Port Hope Evening Guide* could be shown in display cases.

PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION

Plans are underway for a public art installation to run for the duration of the Armistice '18 commemoration (under development). Banners will highlight the stories of local World War 1 veterans.

TV DOCUMENTARY

Production of a TV documentary about the remarkable story of the Currie trial is in the planning stage.

OFFICIAL CLOSING

For the closing weekend of **November 10 - 11**, **Her Honour Elizabeth Dowdeswell**, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario (TBC) and other dignitaries will be in Cobourg for the Town's renowned Remembrance Day Parade and Service, followed by lunch, a viewing of the exhibitions and a final performance of LAST DAY, LAST HOUR on the afternoon of November 11th.