

LAST POST FUND
FONDS DU SOUVENIR
ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

APRIL 1 2022 - MARCH 31 2023



LAST POST FUND
FONDS DU SOUVENIR





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LAST POST FUND | FONDS DU SOUVENIR

MESSAGE FROM THE
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

*

Randy Brooks



I am pleased to provide my first message as Last Post Fund National President. As the first year of my term comes to an end, I want to express my deep appreciation for the extraordinary dedication and hard work of our members, volunteers, and staff in the service of Veterans and their families.

The Last Post Fund has carried on its work for 114 years, an accomplishment few Canadian organizations can celebrate. This is a testimony to the importance of the work we do to ensure that all Veterans are remembered. Our staff, members and volunteers continue to provide exemplary service in delivering the Funeral and Burial Program to Veterans and their loved ones, as well as our more recent initiatives including the Unmarked Grave Program and the Indigenous Veterans Initiative.

This year we have moved forward with renewed efforts to engage a cross-section of members and volunteers from each branch in the following functional Sub-committees:

1. Unmarked Grave Program
2. Commemoration
3. Communication
4. Fundraising
5. Member Engagement and Diversity

Reports and plans developed by these five Sub-committees were first presented to the Executive Committee for their review. Key among them is the Diversity Plan that will go before the Governing Council for consideration for acceptance at the Annual General Meeting.

The details set out in this Annual Activity Report are a testimony to the great work being done every day to serve our Veterans and help fulfill the mission of the LPF.

This work helps to keep alive the important role of our Veterans in safeguarding and contributing to the development of our nation and ensure they are remembered. Without all of you, much of this important work would be left undone.

I would like to pass on my gratitude, and the gratitude of the members of the Governing Council and the Executive Committee, to our full-time staff, who work hard to assist Canadians from across the country during what is a very stressful time in their lives: the passing of a loved one. Your professionalism and compassion are remarkable, and I am proud of having the opportunity to contribute my time to this great mission.

Lest we forget,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

RANDY BROOKS

National President

LAST POST FUND | FONDS DU SOUVENIR

MESSAGE DU
PRÉSIDENT NATIONAL

*

Randy Brooks



C'est avec plaisir que je vous écris mon premier message à titre de président national du Fonds du souvenir. Alors que la première année de mon mandat tire à sa fin, je tiens à exprimer ma profonde appréciation pour le dévouement et l'excellent travail de nos membres, nos bénévoles et notre personnel au service des Vétérans et de leurs familles.

Le Fonds du souvenir poursuit son travail depuis 114 ans. Il s'agit d'un accomplissement que peu d'organisations canadiennes peuvent célébrer. Ceci témoigne de l'importance du travail que nous faisons afin d'assurer que tous les Vétérans sont commémorés. Notre équipe, nos membres et nos bénévoles fournissent un service exemplaire dans l'exécution du Programme de funérailles et d'inhumation auprès des Vétérans et de leurs êtres chers, ainsi que pour nos plus récentes initiatives, incluant le Programme de sépultures non marquées et l'Initiative pour Vétérans Autochtones.

Cette année nous sommes allés de l'avant et avons renouvelé nos efforts afin d'impliquer une variété de membres et bénévoles de chaque branche au sein des sous-comités suivants :

1. Programme de sépultures non-marquées
2. Commémoration
3. Communication
4. Levée de fonds
5. Engagement et diversité des membres

Dans un premier temps, les rapports et plans développés par ces cinq sous-comités ont été présentés au comité exécutif pour leur revue. Le principal parmi ceux-ci est le plan de diversité qui sera présenté pour considération auprès du conseil de gouvernance lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle.

Les détails soulignés dans ce rapport annuel témoignent de l'excellent travail effectué à chaque jour afin de desservir nos Vétérans et d'atteindre la mission du Fonds du souvenir.

Ce travail nous permet de continuer de mettre en lumière le rôle important de nos Vétérans de sauvegarder et contribuer au développement de notre nation et de nous assurer qu'ils sont commémorés. Sans chacun d'entre vous cet important travail ne pourrait être fait.

J'aimerais exprimer ma gratitude ainsi que celle des membres du conseil de gouvernance et du comité exécutif envers notre équipe permanente, qui travaille de façon acharnée pour soutenir les Canadiens de partout au pays durant cette période très difficile de leur vie, soit le décès d'une être cher. Votre professionnalisme et votre compassion sont remarquables et je suis fier d'avoir l'opportunité de contribuer mon temps à cette très belle mission.

Je me souviens,



RANDY BROOKS

Président national

LAST POST FUND | FONDS DU SOUVENIR

MESSAGE FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*

Edouard Pahud



Dear Members,

It was good to start the year with our in-person Annual Meetings, it is clear it is advantageous to have them hybrid-style allowing members from across the country to participate in the Annual Meeting of Members.

Our hallmark Funeral and Burial Program broke its ongoing slide downwards, and we had a 4% increase in approved cases for the current year.

Our newest program, the Indigenous Veterans Initiative (IVI), was relatively quiet this year with our coordinator, Maria Trujillo, off on maternity leave. Her much-awaited annual report is not being prepared this year as no outreach activities occurred, we are simply processing applications as they come in. Even during Maria's absence many markers were installed from coast to coast to coast gathering significant press coverage from local and national news outlets.

As I do each year, I want to congratulate our employees for their ongoing commitment to the Fund and serving Veterans in such fine fashion. Our monthly applicant surveys continue to confirm an elevated level of customer service satisfaction. Excellent work, everyone; job well done!

On behalf of myself and the entire LPF staff, it is our honour and pleasure to continue our tradition of service to and recognition of Veterans.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'E. Pahud', written in a cursive style.

EDOUARD PAHUD
Executive Director

LAST POST FUND | FONDS DU SOUVENIR

MESSAGE DU
DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL

*

Edouard Pahud



Chers membres,

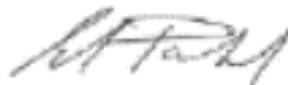
Ce fut agréable d'entamer l'année avec une Assemblée annuelle des membres en présentielle, bien qu'il soit clair qu'il est avantageux de les tenir en mode hybride, ce qui permet aux membres de partout au Canada d'y participer.

La tendance à la baisse de notre programme phare de funérailles et d'inhumation a cessé, avec une augmentation de 4% des cas approuvés pour l'année.

Notre plus récent programme, l'Initiative pour Vétérans autochtones (IVA), a été relativement tranquille cette année en l'absence de notre coordonnatrice, Maria Trujillo, qui est en congé de maternité. Son très attendu rapport annuel n'est donc pas présenté cette année puisqu'aucune activité de sollicitation n'a été tenue. Nous traitons simplement les demandes quand elles nous sont envoyées. Même en l'absence de Maria plusieurs marqueurs ont été installés d'un bout à l'autre du pays, engendrant une couverture médiatique significative à l'échelle locale et nationale.

Comme je le fais à chaque année, je tiens à féliciter nos employés pour leur engagement continu envers le Fonds du souvenir, desservant les Vétérans de manière impeccable. Nos sondages mensuels continuent de confirmer un niveau élevé de satisfaction envers notre service à la clientèle. Excellent travail tout le monde!

En mon nom et au nom de toute l'équipe du FDS, c'est un honneur et un plaisir de poursuivre notre tradition de desservir et reconnaître les Vétérans.



EDOUARD PAHUD

Directeur général



BEGINNINGS

In December 1908, a homeless man was found unconscious and taken to the Montreal General Hospital. Head Orderly Arthur Hair, himself a Veteran of the South African War, found an envelope in the poor man's coat pocket. It contained an honourable discharge certificate issued by Britain's War Office for Trooper James Daly, who had served the Empire for 21 years. This certificate was the man's sole possession. Suffering from hypothermia and malnutrition, Daly died a few days later at age 53. Without any friend or family member to claim his remains, his body was to be delivered over to the morgue.

Instead, Hair raised the necessary funds to provide the soldier with a dignified funeral and burial in the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges cemetery on the Mount Royal. His act of charity is the founding

event of the Last Post Fund in Montreal on April 19, 1909. There-after, the Fund's Trustees launched a crusade to ensure that no serviceman or woman would suffer James Daly's narrowly-avoided fate.

The early work of the Fund was supported exclusively by private donations. In 1921, however, the Last Post Fund was federally incorporated and began to receive regular government subsidies, allowing the organization to expand its operations to the entire country. In 1995, it was mandated to deliver the Funeral and Burial Program on behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada.

Since 1909, hundreds of dedicated men and women have ensured that deceased Veterans receive the respectful recognition they have earned through their service and sacrifice.

**THE 2022-2023 ANNUAL ACTIVITY
REPORT PROVIDES A RECORD OF
LAST POST FUND ACTIVITIES FOR
FISCAL YEAR
1 APRIL, 2022 TO 31 MARCH, 2023**

**LAST POST FUND
AT A GLANCE**

Who we are and who we serve.

MISSION AND ACTIVITIES

Created 114 years ago, the Last Post Fund has since arranged funerals and, where necessary, burials and grave markers for more than 158,000 Veterans from Canada, Britain, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, Belgium, France, Poland, South Africa and other allied countries.

The mission of the Last Post Fund is to ensure that no Veteran is denied a dignified funeral and burial, as well as a military gravestone, due to insufficient funds at time of death.

In addition to delivering the Funeral and Burial Program on behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada, the Last Post Fund supports other initiatives aimed at commemorating Canadian Veterans. These include the Last Post Fund's own military cemetery, the National Field of Honour in Pointe-Claire, Quebec where more than 22,420 burials have been performed since it was opened in 1930. The Fund also supports other local Fields of Honour and is present in over 2,900 cemeteries across the country.

The Last Post Fund recognizes the importance of honouring those who served. Every year in June, commemorative ceremonies are held on the St. Lawrence River in Montreal, at the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges and Mount-Royal cemeteries, and at the National Field of Honour in Pointe-Claire, Quebec.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, since 2020 these commemorative ceremonies have been condensed into a single ceremony, held in a reduced format, and broadcast online to our larger community.

Other Last Post Fund activities include the Unmarked Grave Program through which the Last Post Fund provides military markers for eligible Veterans who have been deceased for over five years and lie in unmarked graves. Since the inception of this Program in 1996, the graves of 8,197 Veterans have been properly marked across the country.

The Indigenous Veterans Initiative, launched in March of 2019, focuses specifically on Indigenous communities while the newly launched Lost Veterans Initiative aims to support volunteer researchers for unmarked Veterans graves.

Finally, the Last Post Fund also works in conjunction with the Department of National Defence to provide headstones, markers or memorials for eligible Canadian Forces members who die while in service. To date, 557 such memorials have been provided through the action of the Last Post Fund.

We are deeply indebted to the hundreds of dedicated men and women who have volunteered over the years to ensure that the Last Post Fund's mission is upheld.

*"I cannot thank you enough for your compassionate gesture. It is rare to come across individuals or organizations that are willing to go above and beyond to help those in need, and your company has certainly done just that. Your kindness has made a significant impact on our family, and we are forever grateful for your support." **

**Throughout this report, we feature quotes from our client survey. The comfort that we bring to families of Veterans across Canada to whom the LPF extends a helping hand, and the knowledge that we have honourably commemorated our Veterans is our motivation to continue our work, and our true reward.*

LAST POST FUND **OVERVIEW**

Principal Programs and Initiatives

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES



Funeral & Burial Program



Indigenous Veterans Initiative



Unmarked Grave Program



Lost Veterans Initiative

MISSION AND ACTIVITIES

The Last Post Fund is made up of both volunteer members and paid employees. Its Boards of Directors are elected from a volunteer membership in each province. Each provincial Board of Directors elects a representative who sits on the national Governing Council. These elected representatives have overall responsibility for the strategic direction of the Last Post Fund's policies, standards and controls relating to administration and national program delivery.

In turn, the Governing Council delegates to the Executive Director the management responsibility for office operations and delivery of the national program as well as for communications and cooperative actions with Veterans Affairs Canada. The Executive Director operates from the Last Post Fund National Office in Pointe-Claire, Quebec.

LAST POST FUND
FONDS DU SOUVENIR
**SERVING VETERANS SINCE
AU SERVICE DES
VÉTÉRANS DEPUIS**

1909

GOVERNING COUNCIL 2022-2023

The Governing Council is comprised of the Executive Committee and the Branch Presidents from each province.

It also holds seats for the Honorary President and Honorary Solicitor, as well as a VAC liaison.

Governing Council Directors	Name	Residence
Executive Committee		
National President	Col (Retired) Randy Brooks	Regina, SK
Past National President	Mr. Derek Sullivan	Moncton, NB
Vice President East	Maj (Retired) James Lynch	St. John's, NL
Vice President West	Maj (Retired) Ken Usher	Edmonton, AB
Treasurer	Mr. Uwe Manski	Stouffville, ON
Secretary	Bobbi Foulds	Edson, AB
Branch Presidents (East to West)		
Newfoundland and Labrador	RCMP Supt. (Retired) Leo O'Brien	St. John's, NL
Nova Scotia	Mr. Bob Carter	Halifax, NS
New Brunswick and PEI	Capt (Ret'd) Kelly Newstead	Summerside, NB
Quebec	LCol (Ret'd) Michel Crowe	Brossard, QC
National Field of Honour	A/SLt Nicolas Marcotte	Montréal, QC
Ontario	Col (Ret'd) R.G (Geordie) Elms	Dundas, ON
Manitoba	Maj (Ret'd) Robert Orzechowski	Winnipeg, MB
Saskatchewan	LCol (Ret'd) Doug Penner	Warman, SK
Alberta	Maj (Ret'd) Tony Jewells	Calgary, AB
British Columbia	Maj (Ret'd) Gino Simeoni	Burnaby, BC
VAC Liaison		
DG Commemoration	Mr. Paul Thomson	Charlottetown, PEI
Honorary Roles		
Honorary Solicitor	LCol (Ret'd) Raymond Mikkola	Desboro, ON
Honorary President	Ms. Jean Miso	Ottawa, ON



JEAN MISO
Honorary President



EDOUARD PAHUD
Executive Director

GOVERNING
COUNCIL

Executive Committee



COL RANDY BROOKS (RET'D)
National President



MR. DEREK SULLIVAN
Past National President



MAJ JAMES LYNCH (RET'D)
Vice-President East



MAJ KEN USHER (RET'D)
Vice-President West



MR. UWE MANSKI
Treasurer

LPF STAFF 2022-2023

Executive Director	Édouard Pahud
Finance Manager	Enza Testa
Administrative Assistant	Natalie Escaler
Communications Agent	Julie Brouard
Accounts Payable	Christian Dupuis
Indigenous Project Coordinator	Maria Trujillo
Senior Counsellor	Tara Muia
Counsellor	Amy Khamlong
Counsellor	Chan Khamlong
Counsellor	Kelly Martin
Counsellor	Heather Pettipas

*"Excellent program that assisted with my father's passing in an expedited and compassionate way. It helped my mother not worry about the expenses of his burial while she was dealing with his passing.
Thank you."*

**PROGRAM
ACTIVITY**

The below charts show all program activity in a breakdown by province. As noted in the introductory remarks, Funeral and Burial (F&B) program activity is steadily declining, while activity related to the Unmarked Grave Program (UMG) continues to increase due to the recent addition of the Indigenous Veterans Initiative and of the Lost Veterans Initiative, and thanks to the tireless and dedicated efforts on the part of volunteers across the country.

All programs

PROCESSED CASES BY PROVINCE 2022-2023

Diagram 1: Processed cases by province

Summary of program activities by province, including Funeral & Burial, Unmarked Graves and Dept. of National Defense programs.

Province	F&B			UGP	DND	Total
	Cases Approved	Not Approved	Total Cases			
AB	59	33	92	136	1	229
BC	76	41	117	205	2	324
MB	30	14	44	35	1	80
NB/PEI	72	34	106	2	0	108
NL	22	11	33	1	1	35
IN.	5	3	8	2	0	10
NS	88	49	137	5	0	142
ON	201	90	291	86	2	379
QC	51	42	93	4	1	98
SK	19	10	29	12	0	41
Totals	623	327	950	488	8	1,446

FUNERAL & BURIAL **PROGRAM**

Potential clients for the Veterans Affairs Funeral and Burial Program (generally the next-of-kin or the executor of the Veteran’s estate) apply to the Last Post Fund for funeral and burial benefits on behalf of Veterans who meet service eligibility criteria.

Once military service is confirmed, applications are submitted to means testing that assesses the financial status of the Veteran’s estate at time of death. If the net worth of the estate is below the established financial level, a grant is approved to assist with funeral and burial expenses, as defined in the Veterans Burial Regulations (VBRs). If a pensioner dies from his/her pensioned condition, a full grant for an allowable amount is approved without means testing. These applications become matter-of-right cases.

In the Canadian Government fiscal year from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 the Last Post Fund processed 950 applications for funeral and burial grants, of which 623 were approved for grants.

Diagram 2: Cases Processed, Cases Approved and Cases Not Approved

These three charts show the numbers of all cases processed, approved and not approved for the Funeral and Burial program for a 5-year period.

TOTAL CASES PROCESSED (APPROVED AND NOT APPROVED) - FIVE-YEAR TREND					
Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total cases	1,902	1,453	1,208	953	950
CASES APPROVED - FIVE-YEAR TREND					
Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Standard (Type 1)	49	46	59	62	55
Assisted (Type 2)	908	699	585	538	568
Total approved	957	745	644	600	623
Matter-of-right cases (included in Standard Types 1 & 2)	162	107	119	121	96
CASES NOT APPROVED - FIVE-YEAR TREND					
Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Not approved	945	708	564	353	327

DEFINITIONS

Standard, Assisted and Matter-of-Right Services

The Last Post Fund provides three types of funeral and burial services: standard services (Type 1); assisted services (Type 2); and matter-of-right services.

1. Type 1 (standard) services are provided when a Veteran's family approaches the Last Post Fund before funeral arrangements have been made. If the deceased Veteran is deemed eligible for benefits, the Last Post Fund will contract directly with the funeral home.
2. Type 2 (assisted) services are provided when the Veteran's family contracts for funeral arrangements and an application for financial assistance is submitted afterwards. If the deceased Veteran is deemed eligible for benefits, the Last Post Fund reimburses the family for allowable costs, as set out in the Veterans Burial Regulations (VBRs).
3. Matter-of-right services concern disability compensation recipients who die from their service-related condition. In this situation, the Veteran's family will receive a grant up to the maximum amount allowable under the VBRs, and no means-testing is required.



UNMARKED GRAVE **PROGRAM**

The Last Post Fund initiated the Unmarked Grave Program in 1996 with financial assistance from Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) to provide markers for Veterans deceased for over five years and lying in unmarked graves. The Last Post Fund receives annual financial support from Veterans Affairs Canada for this program. Applications to mark such graves are made to the Last Post Fund and provision for grave markers under this program is on a “first-approved-first-served” basis.

In fiscal year 2022-2023, 600 markers were paid for and installed under the Unmarked Grave Program.



DND
PROGRAM

In 1999, the Last Post Fund entered into an agreement with the Department of National Defence (DND) to provide grave markers for Canadian Armed Forces members who die while in service. Since 2000, the Last Post Fund assisted the DND in installing 557 grave markers for deceased Canadian Forces members.

In 2022-2023, 8 Canadian Forces markers were installed. The Department of National Defence reimburses the Last Post Fund for this expenditure.



INDIGENOUS VETERANS **INITIATIVE**

The Indigenous Veterans Initiative (IVI) was inaugurated in March of 2019. Launched as an initiative of the Last Post Fund National Office with the approval of VAC, the Initiative is consistent with the Canadian government's efforts towards advancing reconciliation and renewing the relationship with Indigenous peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership.

This program has two main components:

1. Indigenous Unmarked Graves - To provide grave markers to Indigenous Veterans deceased for over 5 years and lying in unmarked graves.
2. Indigenous Traditional Name Marking - To add the traditional names of Indigenous Veterans, where requested, to new and existing military grave markers.

Both program components require research and community support from members of Canada's Indigenous communities. The Indigenous Program Coordinator coordinates and oversees the IVI and manages the LPF's partnerships with researchers.

Statistics on the program will be available again next fiscal year.

**LOST VETERANS
INITIATIVE**

On February 1st, 2021, the Last Post Fund launched the Lost Veterans Initiative in order to support the ongoing efforts of current volunteer researchers and to stimulate the recruitment of new volunteers for the UMG Program.

LPF created an information toolkit designed to assist volunteers with their research. In addition, research volunteers are given a t-shirt for their field work in cemeteries that identifies them as a researcher for the Lost Veterans Initiative. A specially branded “Field Notes” newsletter features volunteer researchers and their work as a way of highlighting their contribution, and providing encouragement to other volunteer field researchers.



**FIELDS OF
HONOUR**

National and Provincial



Gate of Remembrance at the National Field of Honour, Pointe-Claire, Quebec.

LAST POST FUND NATIONAL FIELD OF HONOUR, POINTE-CLAIRE, QC

During the year 2022-2023, a total of 137 burials were conducted, compared to 112 the prior year. The types of burials were as follows:

Casket burials – 19

Urn burials – 100

Columbarium – 18

Since the year of its consecration in 1930, a total of 22,557 burials have taken place at the Last Post Fund National Field of Honour.

In addition to the National Field of Honour in Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Last Post Fund is responsible for the Ontario Field of Honour and the Manitoba Columbarium. As of last year, all of our niches at the Manitoba Columbarium as well as the Nova Scotia Columbarium, which is owned by the Halifax Regional municipality, are filled. Plots are available at the Ontario and Newfoundland Fields of Honour.

ONTARIO FIELD OF HONOUR, MEADOWVALE CEMETERY, BRAMPTON, ON

Located within Section 1 of Meadowvale Cemetery in Brampton, Ontario, the Ontario Field of Honour is located next to the Korean Veterans National Wall of Remembrance. As of March 31, 2023, 58 remaining plots are available to Veterans.

MANITOBA COLUMBARIUM, BROOKSIDE CEMETERY, WINNIPEG, MB

The Last Post Fund Manitoba Columbarium, located within Brookside Cemetery in Winnipeg, is a focal point as one of the oldest military Fields of Honour in Canada. Although all of the niches have been sold, the Last Post Fund continues to assist the City of Winnipeg to arrange opening and closing of niches for Veterans and their family members as well as arranging inscriptions on their niche plates, provided by Larsen's Memorials.

NOVA SCOTIA COLUMBARIUM, FAIRVIEW LAWN CEMETERY, HALIFAX, NS

The niches at the Last Post Fund Nova Scotia Columbarium located within Fairview Lawn Cemetery in Halifax are all filled. Halifax Regional Municipality owns the columbarium.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, MEMORIAL GARDENS CEMETERY, ST. JOHN'S (GALWAY), NL

The Newfoundland and Labrador Branch recently opened a new Field of Honour. It is located at Memorial Gardens in Southlands near Galway. A beautiful cenotaph highlights the entrance to the cemetery grounds. This cenotaph was donated by Commissionaires Newfoundland and Labrador who are a major financial supporter of our Branch.

Summary financial highlights for the years ending March 31, 2023 and 2022

Diagram 3: Summary Financial Data

The Last Post Fund received charitable donations from private organizations and the general public in all provinces.

These funds are used to support the Last Post Fund's National Field of Honour, other Fields of Honour across the country, and to finance various commemoration initiatives.

	2023	2022
	(unaudited)	(audited)
Total Assets	\$4,096,493	\$4,223,862
Donations	\$184,069	\$211,326
Funeral and Burial Program	\$4,177,769	\$4,073,466
Unmarked Graves Program	\$998,006	\$1,228,865
Administration	\$1,130,953	\$1,170,720
Total Program Expenses	\$6,306,728	\$6,473,051
Administration Percentage	17.9%	18.1%

"I was very pleased with the service. I appreciate the compassion and genuine care. Thank you so much for being there for my husband and myself. I am truly grateful."

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Governing Council

The Last Post Fund Strategic Action Plan 2021-2024 was approved and adopted by the Governing Council at the 2001 Annual General Meeting. The Action Plan delineates the Last Post Fund's strategic direction for the period and details an action plan for the achievement of its strategic objectives. It is our belief that this Strategic Action Plan will focus our attention on continuing initiatives to increase internal capacity around inclusion and diversity, strengthen our services to current and prospective clients, and assist us to continue to build a healthy, dynamic and innovative organization with strong volunteer engagement strategies. Based on the foregoing, the Last Post Fund will focus its effort on the following 6 objectives:

- Objective 1- Promote Inclusion and Diversity in the overall membership of the Last Post Fund
- Objective 2- Enhanced Volunteer Engagement
- Objective 3- Enhances Communications-Raising Awareness of the Last Post Fund
- Objective 4- Governance/Renewal
- Objective 5- Advocating on behalf of deceased Veterans and their families
- Objective 6- Fundraising

While all objectives are pursued there has been a particular focus on inclusion and diversity. Every person has a unique background and therefore brings a different perspective to a discussion. Having a sound strategy in place for inclusion, one that makes sure underrepresented groups have a voice, is critical to the future success of the Last Post Fund. Given the changing demographics in Canada, the Last Post Fund will make every effort to attract members of different gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. In carrying out our mission, The Last Post Fund will act in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, place of residence, socioeconomic background or linguistic background.

At the Last Post Fund, we value diversity and inclusion of ideas and people. We respect the value that diverse life experiences, perspectives, and viewpoints bring to our organization. We are committed to building a diverse Board and strongly encourage applications from historically marginalized, underrepresented, or disadvantaged individuals.

J.G. Lynch

ADVOCACY GOALS

Minister of Veterans Affairs

While we seek to continue alliances with like-minded Veterans' organizations, given that we deliver a government program our advocacy efforts are limited to issues related to our mandate. Two outstanding issues remain, which the Last Post Fund continues to address with the Minister of Veterans Affairs :

1. INDEXATION OF FUNERAL AND BURIAL PROGRAM BENEFITS

In 2016 the Federal budget increased the Estate Spousal Exemption and made provision for it to be indexed on an annual basis for cost-of-living. On the other hand, Budget 2013 increased the Funeral allowance component of the Program with no indexation clause. We believe that the Funeral allowance should receive the same indexation treatment as Estate Spousal Exemption; otherwise the Funeral allowance amount will only erode with time due to unaccounted-for inflation.

2. INCREASE THE FUNERAL AND BURIAL PROGRAM APPLICATION PERIOD

Families of deceased Veterans have one year from date of death to apply for benefits. This limitation is problematic for two reasons:

1. The LPF's greatest ongoing challenge is making Veterans and their families aware of the existence of the Funeral and Burial program. In doing this we become aware of some 50 or more cases per year where families belatedly learn they may well have been eligible for assistance; and
2. Even with knowledge of the Program, some grieving families do not manage to submit an application within the year.

Diagram 4: Case Projections

This table below shows Veterans Affairs Canada's projections for Funeral & Burial Program and Unmarked Grave Program cases by fiscal year.

Please note that these are projections only and not actual program numbers.

"This is an incredible program. Thank you so very much from the bottom of our hearts."

Veterans Affairs Canada Case Projections

Fiscal Year	F&B	War Time	F&B MDV	Totals for F&B Program	Unmarked Grave Program	Grand Total
2015-16		729	445	1,174	344	1,518
2016-17		689	462	1,151	314	1,465
2017-18		590	482	1,072	262	1,334
2018-19		440	560	1,000	225	1,225
2019-20		380	590	970	200	1,170
2020-21		319	592	911	200	1,111
2021-22		196	644	840	150	990
2022-23		112	693	805	150	955

ANNUAL **COMMEMORATION**

Annual Commemorative Ceremony

After a 2-years hiatus, the annual Remembrance Day ceremony of the Last Post Fund was held in-person. A group from the Royal Military College Saint-Jean was present as Honor Guard, as well as Mr. Bayliss, and the deputies MP Scarpallegia and MP Kelley. Thank you for attending this annual ceremony to remember those who fought for our freedom.

We Will Remember Them.



OTHER
EVENTS

Private tour of the National Field of Honour

On Sunday June 5, 2022 Mr. Derek Sullivan, National President of the Last Post Fund (LPF) with the assistance of Michel Crowe, President of the Quebec Branch of the LPF conducted a private tour of the National Field of Honour for the benefit of Mr. Darrell Samson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada and Associate Minister of Department of National Defence and Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia, Member of Parliament, Lac-Saint-Louis, Quebec. Other members of the LPF were in attendance.



Lakeview Cemetery re-consecration ceremony

A re-consecration ceremony took place on June 18 at the Lakeview Cemetery in Yellowknife, NWT. The re-consecration ceremony remembers and honours our Veterans, many of whom were from WWI and WWII. During the ceremony, each grave site was individually blessed as well as the Veteran's attending family and friends. Prior to the ceremony, new military headstones replaced old wooden markers or previously unmarked graves. For 11 of the 12 Veterans, the Last Post Fund provided a new military headstone or marker. Five of those Veterans were Indigenous. Thanks to our dedicated IVI volunteer researcher, Master Warrant Officer (Retired) Floyd Powder who organized this ceremony.



Highway of Heros Veterans Tribute Ride

On August 20th, NovaScotia Last Post Fund members, Steve St Amant and Paul O'Boyle participated with a booth in the Highway of Heroes Veterans Tribute Ride. The 120-minute ride takes motorcyclists around Dartmouth to pay tribute to Canadian Armed Forces members, veterans, police, firefighters, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). As a result of this event, the Last Post Fund was able to raise \$200 in donations.



COMMUNICATIONS
ACTIVITIES

Publications

Several feature articles as well as news interviews on the Last Post Fund were published in 2022-2023. Some articles were published as “sponsored content”, where publications granted space for and informational article upon purchase of advertising space.

Advertising

National print and digital ad placements were published in Canadian Funeral News, Legion Magazine, Canadian Military Families and Two Row Times (online).

E-Newsletter

Since 2018 The Bugler has been replaced by the electronic newsletter format. The e-newsletter is an effective communication tool, allowing LPF to communicate frequently with members on a variety of topics in a concise format.

Our e-newsletter remains popular with an above average open rate of 63%. While this is higher than the industry average (22%), it is low for a newsletter to which recipients have subscribed. This may point to overly active spam filters causing our emails to be redirected to “promotions” or “spam” folders, where they remain ignored by subscribers.

**WEBSITE &
SOCIAL MEDIA**

Online Presence

The Last Post Fund website and social media accounts are an integral part of the communication strategy. Together, they make up our online presence, amplified by online news stories, and publications about the LPF.

Last Post Fund online goals are:

1. To raise awareness of our programs to both general and targeted audiences,
2. To increase applicant traffic to the LPF website,
3. To facilitate donations to LPF.

Website

In the last fiscal year there were 25,554 visits to the website, of which 70% accessed through organic search and 34% accessed directly. The total page views is 45,600 and the average visitor spends 1.39 minute on the site. Other than the home page, the most visited page is the Funeral and Burial Program page (52%), followed by the Unmarked Grave Program (10%)

Facebook

Facebook remains an effective method for reaching a large audience. As of March 31, 2023, the Last Post Fund Facebook page @lastpostfund had 2,015 followers, a decrease of 40 over 2021-2022.

Last Post Fund does not use any funds to promote posts on Facebook, relying on “organic” reach.

WEBSITE &
SOCIAL MEDIA

Online Presence

Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn

Twitter is used to share timely news items as Twitter posts are more time-sensitive and ephemeral than posts on other social media platforms. As of March 31st, 2023 the @LastPostFund Twitter account had 1,288 followers.

The LPF YouTube channel has 24 subscribers, up from 3 in 2021-2022. The channel features 19 professionally produced videos. We continue to use these high-quality videos to promote our activities as well as to explain our mission through social media as well as on the Last Post Fund website.

The Last Post Fund LinkedIn profile is used to share professional accomplishments and news relating to our members or activities. As of March 31st, 2023, the Last Post Fund LinkedIn account had 98 subscribers an increase of 40 over 2021-2022.

A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Closing Remarks from Edouard Pahud, Executive Director

As an organization, we are now holding and attending conferences and meetings in person. Virtual and hybrid meetings are now solidly part of the way we conduct our business however in-person activities have an immense value in creating awareness, so it is good to see members out promoting our programs and services at conferences and various outreach activities.

We had another banner year under the Unmarked Graves Program/Lost Veterans Initiative, applications and markers installations continue to grow. The number of Volunteer Researchers remain stable with certain individuals significantly more active than others.

With regards to marketing our Funeral and Burial Program, we have expanded our online advertising with the Legion Magazine and Canadian Military Family websites. We are starting a series of ads with Base Newspapers which covers each military base in the country. We continue to advertise in Canadian Funeral News, the only industry magazine. Other promotional activities done before the pandemic, such as attending conferences and tradeshows, will resume with local branch members staffing the booths.

“Compassionate, efficient and relevant support at a very difficult time in our lives. Thank you!”

UN REGARD VERS L'AVENIR

Remarques de clôture d'Édouard Pahud, directeur général

En tant qu'organisation, nous tenons et participons à nouveau en présentielle à des conférences et des réunions. Les rencontres virtuelles et hybrides sont désormais bien ancrées dans notre façon de conduire les affaires, mais les activités en présentielle sont d'une grande valeur pour informer le public sur notre travail. Il est donc bon de voir les membres promouvoir nos programmes et services dans le cadre de conférences et autres activités promotionnelles.

Nous avons connu une autre année phare avec le Programmes de sépultures non-marquées et l'Initiative pour Vétérans oubliés alors que les applications et les installations de marqueurs continuent de croître. Le nombre de chercheurs bénévoles demeure stable et certains sont significativement plus actifs.

En ce qui a trait à la promotion de notre Programme de funérailles et d'inhumation, nous avons augmenté notre publicité en ligne sur les sites des revues Légion et Canadian Military Family. Nous commençons une série de publicités avec Base Newspapers, lequel couvre chaque base militaire au pays. Nous continuons nos placements avec Canadian Funeral News, la seule revue de l'industrie. D'autres activités promotionnelles que nous faisons avant la pandémie, comme notre participation à des conférences et des foires commerciales, reprendront avec les membres locaux occupant les kiosques.

“Un soutien compassionné, efficace et pertinent durant une période très difficile de notre vie. Merci!”

2022-2023 ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

Prepared By:

Edouard Pahud, CPA, Executive Director

Julie Brouard, Communications Agent

Natalie Escaler, Administrative Assistant

***Invitation to submit:** We like to use photos submitted by our members for this AAR, please send in your best photos to Julie throughout the year with a small description of each.

***Invitation à soumettre :** Nous aimons utiliser les photos soumises par nos membres pour ceG rapport annuel, veuillez envoyer vos meilleures photos à Julie tout au long de l'année avec une petite description de chacune. *



LAST POST FUND
FONDS DU SOUVENIR

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Prepared by Last Post Fund | Fonds du Souvenir National Office
#330 – 6600 Trans-Canada Hwy Pointe-Claire, QC H9R 4S2
(514) 695-4897

www.lastpostfund.ca

