

Township of  
**Langley**



Est. 1873

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR RELEASE: January 22, 2019**

### **GAPYEONG STONE KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL UNVEILED**

A symbol of sacrifice, honour, and gratitude for the important contribution Canada made to the Korean War during the Battle of Kapyong was unveiled by the Township of Langley on January 22 with some very special guests in attendance.

Veterans, volunteers, representatives of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, and Korean and Canadian dignitaries joined Township of Langley Council and members of the local Korean community for the official unveiling of the Gapyeong Stone Korean War Memorial at the Derek Doubleday Arboretum.

The stone was presented to the Township by Gapyeong County, South Korea, as a gesture of appreciation for Canada's involvement in the Korean War, in tribute to the Canadian soldiers who served and sacrificed in the pivotal Battle of Kapyong.

Kapyong is the historical western spelling that was used at the time of the battle and afterwards by the soldiers who participated, while Gapyeong is the Korean name for the area where the battle occurred.

Donation of the memorial was facilitated by the Gapyeong Stone Committee, made up of members of the Korea Veterans Association of Canada, the Korean War Veterans Association, the Korean Veterans Association, and the Vietnam War Veterans Association.

"This is a very special day for our community and our country," said Township of Langley Mayor Jack Froese. "The bravery and tenacity shown by Canadian soldiers in the momentous Battle of Kapyong affected the course of history, and the important role Canada played in the Korean War forged a unique bond between our two countries."

"We are honoured that Gapyeong County has commemorated Canada's contribution with this poignant memorial, and grateful to the Gapyeong Stone Committee for its efforts to bring the Stone to the Township of Langley," Froese said.

The Korean War was one of Canada's most significant military engagements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1950 and 1953, Canada served as part of a United Nations multi-national force that protected South Korea from being invaded by Communist North Korea. More than 26,000 Canadians were involved in the conflict. Of them, more than 1,500 were injured and over 500 gave their lives for the cause.

The pivotal Battle of Kapyong started on April 23, 1951, and lasted for two days, about 60 kilometres northeast of Seoul. The United Nations' force had been strongly outnumbered by the communist Chinese Army, but about 650 troops from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, held off an entire Chinese division, preventing the capture of the South Korean capital of Seoul and marking a turning point in the war.

The Gapyeong Stone comes from the region where that key battle was fought and now stands in Langley Township's Derek Doubleday Arboretum, in the 21200 Block of Fraser Highway. The Arboretum is home to the treed Walk to Remember and commemorative structure for soldiers who fell in Afghanistan, as well as an oak tree grown from an acorn from Vimy Ridge.

A visiting delegation from South Korea, including Gapyeong County Mayor Sungki Kim and his International Relations staff, were in attendance at the ceremony. Also at the unveiling were Canadian Senator Yonah Martin, Consul General of Korea Byung-won Chung and Consul Dongsoo Han, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry representative Captain Adam Goddard, Korean War veterans, and representatives from the Royal Canadian Legion.

During the ceremony, Ken Hardie, Member of Parliament for Fleetwood - Port Kells, announced that the Township of Langley would receive \$25,000 in funding from Veteran Affairs Canada's Community War Memorial Program to expand the Gapyeong Stone project and allow for the installation of three flag poles.

The Township of Langley has a growing Korean-Canadian population of about 3,000 and the Stone will be used by the community for ceremonies and memorials.

"The Korean War is sometimes called 'the Forgotten War,' but we have not forgotten. The people of South Korea have not forgotten," said Froese. "The Gapyeong Stone will stand as a permanent reminder of the valour shown by the Canadian soldiers and other UN countries who fought for peace and security in that area of the world, and as a symbol of appreciation and goodwill."

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