

The Liberation and Remembrance Tour April 2025

Guelph Museums offers a guided group tour of Italy, France, Belgium, and Netherlands, commemorating the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, exploring the impacts of the First and Second World Wars on the ground in Europe and at home in Canada from the Italian Campaign to the Liberation of Holland, and reflecting on the contemporary resonance of Lt. Col. John McCrae and his poem "In Flanders Fields."

Toronto	April 23	Air Canada 890	depart:	20:40
Rome FCO	April 24		arrive:	11:15

Thursday April 24, 2025 Rome / Cassino (D)

Arrival at Rome airport and reception by our English-speaking Tour Manager, who will remain with the group the whole tour. Transfer to Cassino. Dinner and overnight at our hotel.

Friday April 25, 2025 Cassino / Montecassino (B, L)

Buffet breakfast at our hotel. This morning we visit (with local guide) Liri Valley and Cassino War Cemetery and Memorial. Lunch at a local restaurant. In the afternoon we continue our visit (with local guide) to Montecassino Abbey and Kingsmill Bridge, passing by Rapido River. Open for dinner and overnight in Cassino.

Saturday April 26, 2025 Cassino / Campobasso / Ortona (B, D)

Buffet breakfast at our hotel. Transfer to Campobasso (Canada Town) and visit (with our tour manager) this town, liberated by Canadian soldiers from German occupation in 1944. In the afternoon, transfer to Ortona, where we will enjoy a walking tour (with local guide), including the Moro River Canadian War Cemetery. In the evening, enjoy a performance of La Montanara by Mike Ford and Murray Foster. Check-in at our hotel, dinner and overnight.

Sunday April 27, 2025 Ortona / Ravenna / Bologna (B, L)

Buffet breakfast at our hotel. Transfer to Ravenna and visit (with local guide) the historic center, including Commonwealth Graves Cemetery. Lunch at a local restaurant. Transfer to Bologna and check-in. Free dinner and overnight.

Monday April 28, 2025 Bologna / Paris (B, D)

Breakfast, transfer and departure for Bologna airport to take our flight to Paris.

Bologna	April 28	Air France 1229	depart:	10:20
Paris CDG			arrive:	12:10

12.10 Arrival of the group at Paris airport. Meet and greet with our permanent English-speaking tour guide Mathilde. Transfer in a modern tour coach to Courseulles-sur-Mer (app 300 km). on arrival enjoy a guided tour at the Juno Beach Centre, created to offer visitors a better understanding for the contribution of Canada to the Second World War. We then transfer to Caen, ca. 20 km
Check-In at Hotel Campanile Centre Caen. Welcome dinner at the hotel

Tuesday April 29, 2025 Caen / Arras (B, D)

Breakfast at our hotel and check-out

8.30 Transfer to Bény-Sur-Mer and visit the Canadian War Cemetery. Bény-sur-Mer was created as a permanent resting place for Canadian soldiers who had been temporarily interred in smaller plots close to where they fell. As is usual for war cemeteries or monuments, France granted Canada a perpetual concession to the land occupied by the cemetery.

Mid-morning departure for a panoramic drive along the Normandy Coast via Dieppe to Arras, with free time for lunch in Dieppe. Arras (app 390 km)

Check-in at Mercure Centre Gare in Arras with dinner tonight

Wednesday April 30, 2025 Arras (B, L)

Breakfast at our hotel

8.00 Transfer to Wimereux and visit the Wimereux Cemetery for McCrae graveside commemoration (organized by our group)

12.00 Lunch

13.30 Transfer to Boulogne-sur-Mer. Here we enjoy a guided walk through Boulogne-sur-Mer famous for its medieval old town and its ramparts . Strolling through its cobbled streets, we admire the stone houses and the magnificent historic buildings that include the Notre-Dame Basilica and its impressive crypt. The city's 12th-century belfry was the keep of a Norman-era castle. Ancient Egyptian and Greek artifacts are on display at the Castle Museum, which is set within a 13th-century chateau. There will be plenty of time following our tour for independent discoveries.

16.30 Transfer back to Arras

Arrival and an open evening

Thursday May 1, 2025 Arras (B, L)

Breakfast in our hotel

8.30 Transfer to Vimy. Here we visit the Canadian National Vimy Memorial site dedicated to the memory of Canadian Expeditionary Force members killed during WWI. It serves as a place of commemoration for WWI Canadian soldiers killed and / or presumed dead in France but have no known grave. The monument is the centerpiece of a 100 ha preserved battlefield park

11.00 Transfer to Beaumont-Hamel including lunch on the way

13.30 Visit the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial - The Memorial stands as an important symbol of remembrance and a lasting tribute to all Newfoundlanders who served during the First World War. At the heart of the memorial stands a great bronze caribou (the emblem of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment). Its defiant gaze forever fixed towards its former foe, the caribou stands watch over rolling fields that still lay claim to many men with no known final resting place

15.30 Transfer to Somme

16.00 Independent visit at Somme Battlefield Cemetery

17.30 Transfer back to Arras

Independent dinner and overnight at our hotel.

Friday May 2, 2025 Arras / Ieper (B, L, D)
Breakfast at our hotel and check-out

9.00 Transfer to Langemark. Here we stop at the Langemark German Cemetery and also the statue of the Brooding Soldier. The 'Deutscher Soldatenfriedhof' in Langemark is particularly poignant by the power of simplicity. Behind the monumental gate made of pink Weserberg sandstone more than 44,000 Germans are buried. Almost 25,000 are buried in a mass grave. More than 3,000 student-volunteers from the 22nd to 27th Reserve Corps found their final resting place here. They died between October and November 1914 during repeated attacks in the First Battle of Ypres. Because of the large number of students among these volunteers, the cemetery was given the name 'Studentenfriedhof'.

12.00: Transfer to Poperinge Picnic lunch at Talbot House Visit at Talbot House. The Talbot House was a very special place during WWI. It was established by the Reverend 'Tubby' Clayton in December 1915 as an 'Everyman's Club' for soldiers and officers of the British Army. Now it is a 'living museum'. Here enjoy a performance of "Sons of '17" by Mike Ford and Murray Foster.

Picnic lunch at Talbot House

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15.30 Transfer to Ieper (Ypres)

Check-in at Hotel Tearoom New Regina with dinner

20.00 Menin Gate – Ceremony to lay down a wreath (organized by our group). The Menin Gate Memorial is dedicated to the missing from the outbreak of WWI through to August 15, 1917. 54,896 names of soldiers are displayed on the gate designed by Sir Reginal Blomfield.

Saturday May 3, 2025 Ieper (B, D)
Breakfast at our hotel.

Depart for a short ride to the Essex Farm Cemetery

Individual visit of the Essex Field Dressing Station and Essex Field Cemetery. Essex Farm got its name from a small cottage nearby. From 1915 - 1917 the concrete bunkers found here comprised a dressing station. Canadian Medical Officer John McCrae served here. In 1915 he wrote the war's most well-known poem, 'In Flanders Fields'. 1,200 service men of which 103 are not identified are buried or commemorated in the Essex Field cemetery

We then return to Ieper for:

A guided visit of the "In Flanders Fields Museum" (IFF)

Visitors are invited to reflect on the major historical events but also experience the personal stories of individuals. The Museum shows how the First World War affected the lives of thousands of people of many different involved nationalities.

Open for lunch at the Museum cafeteria or Market Square and balance of the afternoon is open before we enjoy an evening dinner and performance of “McCrae in the Mirror”.

Sunday May 4, 2025 Ieper / Utrecht (B)

Breakfast at our hotel and check-out

8.30 Transfer to Passchendaele

9.00 Visit the Memorial Museum Passchendaele. This is an ‘open museum’: everything learned during our museum visit is reflected in modern Zonnebeke and the landscape. We make a direct link to the vast war heritage of the surroundings. The descriptions we will receive with these relics in the museum help to increase our understanding, just like the information found at the locations themselves. Besides the MMP1917 and the chateau park, which houses the museum, there are two important war sites in Zonnebeke: Tyne Cot Cemetery and the Polygon Wood

11.00 Transfer to Zoonebeeke

Short stop at the Tyne Cot Cemetery for individual cemetery visits

12.00 Transfer to Ghent

Open lunch

13.30 Walking tour in Ghent. Ghent is a port city in northwest Belgium, at the confluence of the Leie and Scheldt rivers. During the Middle Ages it was a prominent city-state. Today it’s a university town and cultural hub. Its pedestrianized center is known for medieval architecture such as 12th-century Gravensteen castle and the Graslei, a row of guildhalls beside the Leie river harbor.

16.00 Transfer to Utrecht

19.00 Check-in at Hampton by Hilton Hotel in Utrecht

Dinner

Monday May 5, 2025 Groesbeek – Apeldoorn – Utrecht (B, L)

Breakfast at our hotel

9.00 Transfer to Groesbeek

10.30: Stop at the Canadian War Cemetery of Groesbeek. Light lunch at the Freedom Museum. After, tour through the museum that tells the cross-border and multi-perspective story of War and Freedom. Here enjoy a performance of “Lived, Felt Dawn, Saw Sunset Glow” by Mike Ford.

Light lunch at the Freedom Museum. After - tour through the museum that tells the cross-border and multi-perspective story of War and Freedom

14.30 Transfer back to Utrecht

Open afternoon and evening

Tuesday May 6, 2025 Utrecht / Amsterdam (B, D)

Breakfast at our hotel

9.00 Transfer to Amsterdam by train

Today is an open day in Amsterdam for individual exploration and discoveries

16.00 Transfer back to Utrecht

Farwell group dinner and musical presentation by Mike Ford and Murray Foster.

Wednesday May 7, 2025	Departure	(B)
Breakfast at our hotel. Final transfer to Amsterdam' Schiphol Airport		
Amsterdam	May 07	Air Canada 809
Toronto		
	depart:	12:15
	arrive:	14:20

SPECIAL INCLUDED FEATURES:

Fully escorted by Guelph Museums staff and Bev Dietrich is retired Curator of Guelph Museums

Mike Ford and Murray Foster (MF2) performances

IMPORTANT NOTE:

This tour includes moderate physical activity, including walking on uneven ground through cemeteries and on cobblestone sidewalks.

ITALY TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Deluxe private motorcoach and driver
- Road taxes, parking fees and special permission to enter the cities
- English-speaking Tour Escort from the first until the last day of the tour
- Accommodation in semi-central Tourist Class Hotels (3***)
- Accommodation City Taxes, hotel taxes and service charges
- Buffet breakfast (B) daily in the hotels
- 2 lunches (L) and 2 dinners (D) according to the program
- Visits with an English-speaking local guide in Cassino, Ortona and Ravenna

NORTHERN EUROPE INCLUSIONS:

- Bus transfer in a modern coach
- 10 days English speaking tour guide Mathilde
- 9 x Accommodation / breakfast at good middle class hotels (4 locations)
- 5 x Dinner at hotel or restaurant
- 4 x Light lunches
- Entry and visits: Juno Beach Centre, Talbot House, In Flanders Field Museum, Memorial Museum Passchendale, Freedom Museum Groesbeek
- City tours in Boulogne-Sur-Mer and Ghent

NOT INCLUDED IN EITHER TOUR:

- Personal travel insurance
- Gratuities to tour managers, drivers and step-on guides
- Meals other than what has been indicated
- Any additional sightseeing not specifically indicated as included
- All items of a personal nature including cost for passport and visa*

** Starting in 2025 there WILL LIKELY BE a requirement to obtain ETIAS travel authorization for Europe which is linked to your passport. The projected cost is 7 Euros (approx. \$11) and you must obtain it yourself. For more details visit the EU website:*

<https://travel-europe.europa.eu/>

We will advise when this is in place. At the present time, it has NOT BEEN implemented.

Air fares:

We have included air costs in our program. We also offer the option of handling your international air separately. The land-only cost includes the one-way flight from Bologna to Paris on April 28.

Terms and Conditions

Tour cost per person twin / double:	\$ 8,985 Canadian
Single Surcharge:	\$ 1,310 Canadian – Very limited
Land only per person twin / double:	\$ 7,785 Canadian**
** includes Bologna to Paris flight	

Deposit Requirement at booking:	\$ 1,500 Canadian per person*
Final payment due:	February 7, 2025

Cancellation penalties:

From date of booking to January 22, 2025	\$200 per person
From January 23 to February 6, 2025	loss of deposit paid
From final payment date to departure	100% non-refundable

SPECIAL NOTES:

A) * A higher than normal deposit is required due to the term and conditions of our local tour companies.

B) In the event that a confirmed traveler finds a replacement OR one is available from waitlists between date of booking and 31-days prior to date of departure, a flat \$50.00 p.p. + hst administration charge will be assessed. Within 31-days prior, we regret that all payments become non-refundable with or without a replacement. We do not guarantee a replacement for any cancelled passenger.

Full tour information on our web site: worldwide.on.ca/guelph2025

Exclusive reservations through:



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About MF² Musicals

Mike Ford and Murray Foster first partnered with Guelph Museums in 2016 for a production of Sons of '17 at McCrae House Backyard Theatre. They have since become close creative accomplices of the Museum, writing and performing engaging musical shows that explore history from new and unique perspectives. Providing the soundtrack for past Guelph Museums tours, Ford and Foster return with performances of Sons of '17 and McCrae in the Mirror, and will debut two new shows for this tour –

one centered on Canada's involvement in the Italian Campaign during the Second World War, and another described as a poetic and impressionistic journey through the heart of the universal soldier - the heroics, the tragedy, the hopelessness and the hope held within the human spirit.

Ford and Foster have collaborated on many projects since their early days as members of Canadian '80s band Moxy Fruvous, while also achieving success as independent solo artists. Foster is an accomplished musician, songwriter, playwright, and teacher, well-known as bass player for Great Big Sea and as the founder of the Toronto Songwriting School. Ford is an educator and Juno-nominated Franco-Ontario solo artist who has released several acclaimed albums of Canadian-history inspired songs.



About Bev Dietrich

Bev Dietrich is retired Curator of Guelph Museums which includes McCrae House National Historic Site, birthplace of First World War poet John McCrae of In Flanders Fields fame. She is internationally recognized for her ongoing research and expertise on the life, service, and writings of Lt. Col. McCrae.

Bev was special guest in Belgium in 1995 for the 80th anniversary of the writing of the poem "In Flanders Fields" and has since shared her expertise during our special tours commemorating the 100th anniversary of

John McCrae's passing and the 150th anniversary of his birth.