

CANADA REMEMBERS TIMES

Veterans’ Week Special Edition — November 5-11, 2025

CANADA AND THE NETHERLANDS

The Second World War ended 80 years ago. More than one million Canadian soldiers, sailors and aviators served around the globe. The Liberation of the Netherlands was one of the most important chapters of Canada’s military history.



Local children on a Canadian tank in Harderwijk, Netherlands. April 1945.

Germany invaded the Netherlands in 1940. Four years later, the Allies were fighting hard to push the enemy back across Northwest Europe. Canadian forces were given the tough job of helping free the Dutch people.

Opening battles began in the fall of 1944, but bad weather soon brought the Allied attacks to a halt. That winter was a terrible time for the Dutch. Food and fuel supply reserves were gone. People ate tulip bulbs and scavenged through garbage to survive. Thousands starved or froze to death.

Early in 1945, the Allies were on the move again. Their goal was to liberate the rest of the Netherlands and finally end the war in Europe. Canadian troops were cheered as they freed one town after another. The Liberation of the Netherlands was a proud achievement for our country—but it came at a great cost. More than 7,600 Canadians lost their lives.

The Dutch people have never forgotten the help Canada offered in their time of need. Our countries remain close friends today. They remember and so will we.



Service members celebrating in Vancouver. August 1945.

PEACE AT LAST!

The Second World War raged from 1939 to 1945. It was the deadliest conflict in human history. The end of the war was publicly celebrated on two important dates:

V-E (Victory in Europe) Day

The defeat of Germany was officially marked on May 8, 1945. People filled the streets in communities around the world to celebrate the end of fighting in Europe.

V-J (Victory over Japan) Day

Fighting in Asia and the Pacific continued for months following V-E Day. The Japanese finally gave up and V-J Day was marked on August 15, 1945. After almost six years of bitter fighting, the Second World War was finally over.

Canada’s armed forces in the Americas

Veterans have performed many important duties around the world over the years. In 2025, we are shining a spotlight on Canadian military efforts in our own country and across the Americas.

From Prairie floods to East Coast storms and ocean rescues. From the Halifax Explosion to earthquakes in South America. From defending the Arctic to North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) efforts and peacekeeping missions in Central America. The service and sacrifice of our Veterans has kept us safe, sovereign and strong—and made sure Canada remains a good neighbour.

One example of how Canadians have helped during tough times happened

in 2010. A devastating earthquake struck the Caribbean country of Haiti. Thousands of residents died. So did two Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers who were serving as peacekeepers there.

The Canadian Armed Forces immediately launched Operation Hestia. They sent army, navy and air force personnel to assist the people of Haiti. More than 2,000 Canadian service members helped in the recovery efforts. They offered medical services, humanitarian aid and other support.

This year is the 15th anniversary of Operation Hestia. What better time to say thank you to the Canadian Veterans who have done so much to help others?



Canadian soldier helping in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake.

WE ❤️ MILITARY FAMILIES

Serving in the military can be very challenging. But sacrifices are not just made by the person who wears the uniform.

Canadian Armed Forces members can be sent far from home for long periods. They can be asked to put their lives on the line for their country. Sometimes, they get sick or suffer injuries to body or mind.

Military family members are proud of their relatives who serve. But imagine your mother, father, sister or brother

being away for six months or longer. Imagine worrying if they are staying safe. For many young people in our country, this has been a tough reality.

So this Veterans’ Week and Remembrance Day, let’s remember everyone who has paid a price for our peace and freedom—including Canada’s military families.



Canadian military families – yesterday and today.



Photo: LAC / DND

A POPPY HELPS US REMEMBER

Millions of people around the world wear a poppy on Remembrance Day. The origins of this tradition date back to the First World War. Did you know a Canadian helped make poppies a symbol of Remembrance?

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae was a doctor with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. In May 1915, he was serving near Ypres, Belgium, where he spent day after day trying to save wounded soldiers. He was devastated when his friend, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, was killed in action. Alexis was buried in a war cemetery nearby. Red poppies grew between the crosses marking the graves there. After speaking at Alexis’ funeral, John took a few minutes the next day to quickly write a poem capturing his feelings.



John McCrae in France.

This year is the 110th anniversary of John’s writing of *In Flanders Fields*. Today, it continues to be a major part of many Remembrance Day ceremonies. Do you know its opening verse?

*“In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.”*



Explore *In Flanders Fields* in English, French, Michif, Cree, Inuktitut, Chinese (Traditional), Arabic and other languages.

DID YOU KNOW?

A Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League team will hit the ice in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, in the fall of 2025! It is called the **Newfoundland Regiment**. The name and logo are a tribute to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment – a proud part of the province’s long military heritage.

What animal is shown in the new team logo? Why do you think it was chosen?



Answer: It is a caribou. It is the symbol of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Check out our online content!

Head to our website when you see these symbols. You will find Veteran interviews, historical videos and other multimedia content relating to the stories!



CANADA AND THE GULF WAR

The Gulf War began in August 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. A coalition of over 35 countries soon came together to respond to this act of aggression.

More than 4,000 Canadian Armed Forces members took part in the Gulf War. Three Canadian warships and CF-18 jets deployed to the Middle East. Medical personnel, an infantry detachment and headquarters staff also served there. It was difficult but our brave men and women in uniform helped the Coalition forces liberate Kuwait.



Canadian service member arming a CF-18 jet during the Gulf War.

Photo: DND

We will mark the 35th anniversary of the end of this conflict in February 2026. How will you remember?

Looking out for us

The Canadian Armed Forces perform many roles. Some of their most important jobs involve helping out here at home.

Canada is a huge country and our climate can be extreme. Members of our military are sometimes asked to help when severe floods, blizzards, wildfires or hurricanes hit. Their assistance has been vital in the aftermath of natural disasters. These have included the Red River Floods of 1997, the Great Ice Storm of 1998, fighting recent wildfires and much more. Through it all, the Canadian Armed Forces has been there for many communities when they needed aid the most.

Canadian service members also swing into action during search and rescue operations. This includes everything from plane crashes in remote areas to ships in trouble at sea. Imagine being a military pilot flying into the centre of a terrible storm. Or a search and rescue technician being lowered from a helicopter above the ocean. They put their lives on the line to help others when things are at their worst.



Canadian Armed Forces members fighting wildfires near Jasper, Alberta, in 2024

Photo: DND

In his own words



Duncan Miller at sea during the Gulf War.

Submitted photo

Vice Admiral (Retired) Duncan “Dusty” Miller was commander of the Canadian Naval Task Group during the Gulf War. He proudly remembers our country’s contributions there:



“It was probably the most successful naval and naval air deployment in Canada’s history. We went over, we did the job, we went through dangerous situations. We were in the war and we took care of each other and we all came home.”

IF A PICTURE COULD TALK...



Photo: LAC

What do you think these two Canadian soldiers were doing during the Korean War?

Winters can be freezing in Korea. January 1952—when this picture was taken—was particularly cold. Canadians had to be creative to keep warm on the front lines. These soldiers are showing off a homemade stove they made from an empty ammunition box and used shell casings. Stoves like this were popular but they could be unpredictable. Sometimes they even exploded!



Hear Canadian Veterans talk about the harsh weather during the Korean War.

DID YOU KNOW?

Five years ago, the COVID-19 pandemic turned life upside down in Canada and around the world. Our country worked hard to keep its people safe. The Canadian Armed Forces launched Operation Laser to help respond to this challenge.

Thousands of Canadian service members supported their communities during this uncertain time. They assisted at long term care homes, and traveled to First Nations and other remote communities. They provided aid, delivered personal protective equipment, and helped many Canadians get vaccinated. We remember how they put their own health on the line for the good of others.

Did he have freckles?

25 years ago, a Canadian service member who had died almost a century earlier returned home. Today, Canada’s Tomb of the unknown soldier is an important symbol of loss.

In May 2000, a solemn ceremony dedicated a new monument at the base of the National War Memorial in Ottawa. It contains the remains of one Canadian soldier who died in France during the First World War and whose identity is not known.

Not knowing who is buried there makes Canada’s Tomb of the unknown soldier a universal symbol. It represents each of the more than 120,000 Canadians who have died in service—and those

who may lose their lives in the future. Even though science and technology might now tell us who this person was, we will never try to discover their identity. If we did, the tomb would lose its special meaning as a symbol.

But not knowing doesn’t mean we can’t imagine! Thinking about who the person in the tomb might have been helps us understand that those who served in uniform more than 100 years ago were just like us.

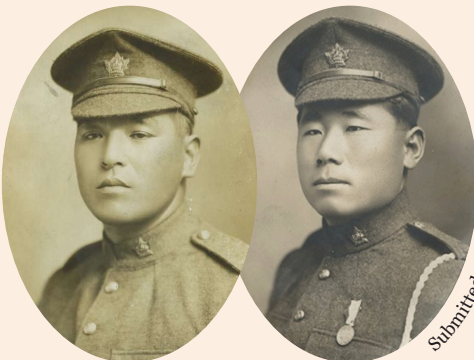


The Tomb of the unknown soldier in Ottawa.

Photo: VAC



A memorial tells a story



Hikotaro Koyanagi (left) and Kazuo Harada (right) during the First World War.

Submitted photos

Memorials are not artifacts frozen in time. Sometimes the efforts of people today can bring changes. One example of this is Debbie Jiang—an educator from Richmond, British Columbia. Debbie was doing research on the more than 200 Japanese Canadians who served in

the First World War. She discovered as many as 16 of these brave soldiers had not been commemorated by her community due to their race. Debbie put on her investigator’s hat! By digging through historical archives, she was able to gather concrete evidence that two of these men had lived in Richmond.

Thanks to Debbie, the City of Richmond added the names of Private Hikotaro Koyanagi and Private Kazuo Harada to their war memorial in May 2024. 102 years after the monument’s dedication, the names of these forgotten soldiers now rightfully appear where they belong among their fallen comrades.



Émilie Létourneau in uniform.

Photo: DND

I AM A VETERAN

Lieutenant (N) (Retired) Émilie Létourneau served in the Canadian Armed Forces for more than a decade. When she left the military, she struggled to see herself as a Veteran.

Émilie was only 17 when she left Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec, to join the Canadian Armed Forces in 2006. As a member of the Navy, she spent lots of time on a ship—from the frigid waters of the Arctic to the warm Caribbean Sea. Émilie became an officer on board HMCS Ville de Québec and commanded an engineering team. She left the military in 2017 to pursue new adventures.

Despite her successful career in uniform, Émilie struggled to identify as a Veteran. In her mind, a Veteran was an older man at a Remembrance Day parade with a blazer full of medals. Her transition to civilian life was challenging, but sports made her feel like part of a team again. Émilie joined the Ottawa Wolves, part of the International Gay Rugby organization. She credits this with helping her build some of her most meaningful relationships. Émilie came to realize she was proud of her service and had been ready to give her life for Canada. She had earned the right to call herself a Veteran too.



Submitted photo

Chief Joseph Dreaver in his headdress and First Nations regalia.

CHIEF JOSEPH DREAYER

Joseph Dreaver, of the Mistawasis Nêhiyawak First Nation in Saskatchewan, served in two world wars. He made impressive contributions as a soldier, Veteran and leader in the Indigenous community.

Joseph was born in 1891 and joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1916 at the age of 26. He served in Belgium and France during the First World War as a sapper—a soldier who helps build trenches, roads and bridges. Joseph was very courageous and earned the Military Medal for bravery in the field.

He became chief of his First Nation after returning home. When the Second World War broke out in 1939, Joseph was too old for overseas service. That didn't stop him from supporting the war effort. He joined the Veterans Guard of Canada and spent four years in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Two of his daughters and two of his sons also served during the conflict.

Joseph was a leader in his home community for decades. He worked to improve education, health and well-being for all First Nations people. He also fought unjust policies, like the Canadian government's discrimination against Indigenous Veterans.

▶ Watch the video *My Grandpa Joe* to discover what a beautiful painting of Chief Dreaver can teach us about his personal story. You'll also learn more about the proud tradition of Indigenous military service in Canada!

MISSION RECOGNITION

Veterans took part in many missions during their military careers. Now it's your turn!

Canada owes the peace we enjoy today to the millions of men and women who have served in the military to protect our country. But recognizing Veterans can't just be something we think about—it has to be something we do. After all, if we don't show them our gratitude, how can they feel appreciated?

You can:

- ☐ wear a poppy
- ☐ attend a Remembrance Day ceremony
- ☐ say thank you to a Veteran in your community
- ☐ and lots more!



Photo: VAC

A peace tree at the Canada House Pavilion in the Netherlands. May 2025.

Why not build a peace tree and decorate it with *We will remember* maple leaves? Fill your special tree with the names of Veterans or write your own name as a promise to remember. You could create a piece of art, invite a Veteran guest speaker to your school or learn something new about Canada's military history. You can also say thank you by making *Valentines for Vets* or writing a note on a Veteran recognition card.



Make it your mission this year to recognize Canada's Veterans. How will you say thank you?



Photo: DND

Mary Cameron-Kelly in front of an Aurora military aircraft.

CHAMPION OF THE AURORA

▶ Major Mary Cameron-Kelly is one of the most experienced pilots in the Royal Canadian Air Force. She was inducted into Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame in 2024.

Mary was born in Nova Scotia in 1962. She had always dreamed of flying and joined the Air Cadets as a youth. Mary was still a teenager when she became a member of the Canadian Armed Forces in 1981. She trained as a technician and maintained the Aurora – Canada's long-range maritime patrol aircraft. She was a skilled technician, but still dreamed of being a pilot. After taking private flying lessons, the air force accepted Mary for basic flight training. She earned her wings in 1991.

Mary has more than 8,500 hours of flight time in the Aurora and knows that aircraft like no one else. She has a unique combination of air technician and pilot backgrounds. This has made her a perfect mentor to the aviators she has helped train.

Walking them home

More than 120,000 Canadians have died in military service over the years. Did you ever wonder if any of them lived in your community? In Ottawa, a dedicated group of teachers and students from Glebe Collegiate Institute decided to find out! They launched a research project called *Walking them home*. This initiative focusses on local residents who lost their lives during the Second World War.

Students wrote short bios about each person and posted them online. They also created large memorial signs and put them in front of homes where the fallen used to live. QR codes on each sign help those living in the neighbourhood learn more about these local heroes. By remembering those who gave their lives, we can all help keep the torch of remembrance burning.



Submitted photo

Glebe Collegiate Institute students and a yard sign for the fallen in 2024.



CANADIAN VIRTUAL WAR MEMORIAL

Researching those who served is an important way to honour them. Use tools like the Canadian Virtual War Memorial to find photos and information about the brave Canadians who have died in service. Be sure to post new photos you find there so others can learn from them!



Image: DND

Locations of Canadian Ranger patrol groups.

CANADIAN RANGERS ALWAYS ON WATCH

The Canadian Rangers are part of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves. They help patrol Canada's North and other remote areas. Rangers are not regular soldiers and receive special training to do their unique job.

Canadian Rangers keep watch over the land, air and waters in their areas. They report any unusual sightings to their commanders. For this reason, Rangers are often called Canada's "eyes and ears" of the North. They also take part in military training exercises, perform search and rescue activities, and support their home communities in other important ways.

Determined to serve



Photo courtesy of Kathy Grant

Owen Rowe during the war.

Owen Rowe was born on the Caribbean island of Barbados in 1922. When the Second World War broke out, the patriotic teenager was eager to join the fight. After overcoming his worried mother's objections, Owen decided to go to Canada in May 1942 and sign up.

Not many people would be members of both the army and air force during the conflict, but Owen was.

He first joined the Canadian Army and trained as a signalman. He served in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia. Owen was keen to deploy overseas, but fate kept the soldier in Canada. The determined young man then transferred to the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1944. Owen trained as a wireless operator and air gunner. His role was to handle communications on planes and defend against enemy fighters. Owen was posted to Edmonton, but the war ended before he saw action.

He left the military in 1946 with the rank of Flying Officer but decided to make his life in his new country. Owen spent his life helping others. He became a diplomat. He put his Master of Social Work degree to work at the Kingston Prison for Women. He documented Veterans' stories and he even got a plaque honouring West Indian Veterans placed at the Canadian War Museum. Owen Rowe died in 2005.

Happy 115th birthday to the navy!

The roots of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) date back to 1910. It started with just two warships, but it grew and its members played important support roles during the First World War. Expansion of the RCN really took off during the Second World War. Hundreds of its vessels played a key part in the struggle for control of the Atlantic Ocean during the conflict.

Since then, the RCN has remained a major player in Canada's military efforts at home and around the world. Our sailors served in the waters of East Asia during the Korean War and on the North Atlantic during the Cold War. They were in the Middle East during the Gulf War and in the Mediterranean Sea for NATO fleet deployments. Through it all, the Royal Canadian Navy continues to make us proud!



Photo: LAC

HMCS Regina during the Second World War.

ON A DANGEROUS ROAD

Michael Hayakaze was born in Edmonton, Alberta, in 1983. When he was a student, he liked swimming and playing water polo. Michael joined the Canadian Armed Forces in January 2006 and became an armoured vehicle driver. He trained in Texas and Germany before deploying to Afghanistan in October 2007.

Trooper Hayakaze was a skilled and dependable member of the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) armoured regiment. Only days before he was scheduled to return home, he went on a resupply mission in a rural district southwest of Kandahar City.



Remembrance dog tag for Michael Hayakaze.

On March 2, 2008, Michael's vehicle hit a roadside bomb and he was killed. He is one of 158 Canadian Armed Forces members who lost their lives in Afghanistan.



Visit Michael's entry on the Canadian Virtual War Memorial. Find his age and fill it in on this remembrance dog tag. You can also see photos of him with his family.

FROM WOUNDED SOLDIER TO STAR ATHLETE

George Walker served in the First World War. He began cycling to recover from his battlefield wounds and went on to become a top athlete.



George Walker in uniform.

George Walker was born in 1896 in Brackley, Prince Edward Island. He was a farmer before signing up to serve in the First World War in 1915. George saw heavy action and was wounded several times. He was gassed. He suffered serious shoulder and leg injuries. George's hearing was also affected and he lost an eye.

Doctors told George he would have to live with physical limitations for the rest of his life. However, he refused to give up and started bicycling to rebuild his health. Amazingly, he became a top cyclist in the Maritimes, winning many long-distance races. George also racked up medals at track and field competitions. But that wasn't all... he played high-level basketball and rugby, won Scottish dancing competitions and even triumphed in a snowshoe race at the Quebec Winter Carnival.

George Walker was inducted into the PEI Sports Hall of Fame in 1975. He remained active all his life and died at age 98!

Mystery photo!

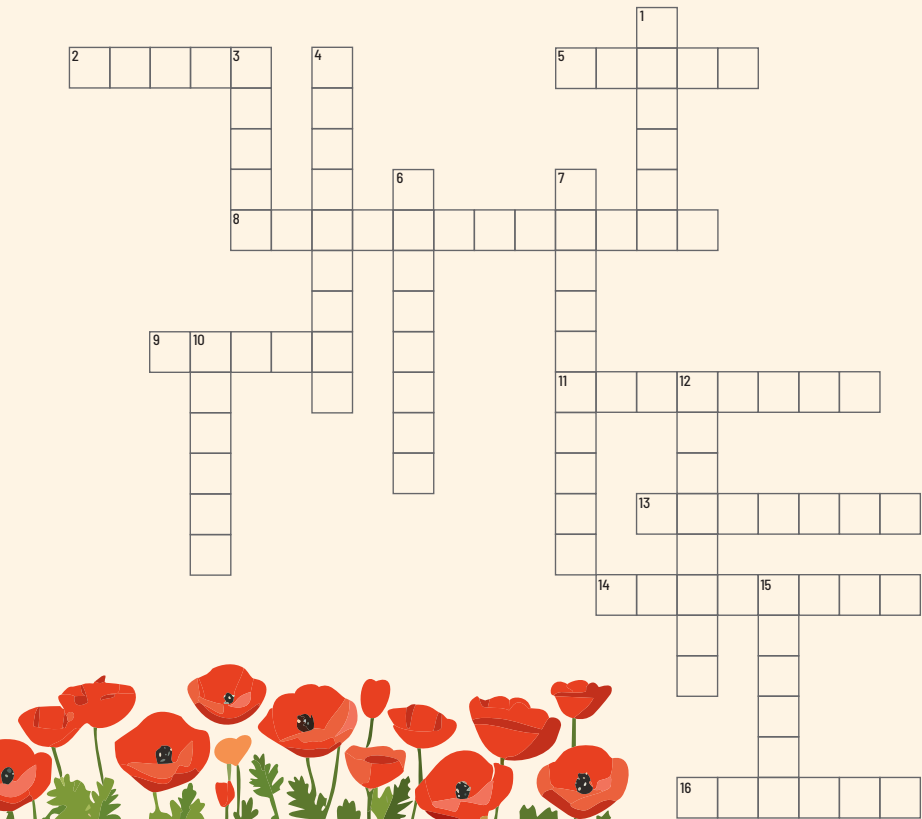
What do you think is going on in this picture?
Is it a scene from an old movie?
Are these employees answering phones at a call centre?
Or gamers competing in an e-Sport event?

Hint: It was taken at a military base in North Bay, Ontario, during the Cold War.



Answer: It is a North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) radar tracking station in 1963. The service members were monitoring our borders against the threat of an attack from the Soviet Union.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Did you read the newspaper carefully?
You will find the answers to these clues in the stories.

Across

- 2. Nickname of Vice Admiral (Retired) Duncan Miller.
- 5. Ottawa neighbourhood home to *Walking them home* project.
- 8. Province where Chief Joseph Dreaver was born.
- 9. Military operation launched in response to COVID-19 pandemic.
- 11. City where two fallen soldiers were recently added to a memorial.
- 13. Emblem of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.
- 14. PEI village where Private George Walker was born.
- 16. Location of Canada's Tomb of the unknown soldier.

Down

- 1. Name of a 2010 Canadian Armed Forces operation in Haiti.
- 3. Place in Belgium where John McCrae served in May 1915.
- 4. Arctic island where CFS Alert is located.
- 6. Country of birth of Flying Officer Owen Rowe.
- 7. Last name of a former navy officer from Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec.
- 10. Type of aircraft flown by Major Mary Cameron-Kelly.
- 12. Last name of Canadian Armed Forces driver killed in Afghanistan.
- 15. Country invaded by Iraq in August 1990.

Tragedies near the North Pole

Alert. This word can be a noun: *Did you hear the alert?* It can also be a verb: *It's time to alert the fire department.* Alert can be an adjective, as well: *The road is icy, please be alert.* Did you know it's also an important place for Canada's sovereignty and our security?

Alert is a military base in the Qikiqtaaluk Region of Nunavut. It is located at the northern tip of Ellesmere Island. This remote site has had great scientific and military significance over the years. In the 1950s, a government weather station was built. It became Canada's most northerly inhabited place.

Getting to Canadian Forces Station Alert isn't easy. There aren't any roads to drive there, so most supplies have to be brought in by plane. Flying that far north can be very dangerous.



CFS Alert signposts in northern Nunavut.

On July 31, 1950, a Royal Canadian Air Force Lancaster aircraft crashed during a supply mission to the station. All nine people on board were killed.

On October 30, 1991, a Hercules transport plane also went down 16 kilometres south of Alert. This time, five Canadian Armed Forces members lost their lives. Miraculously, 13 people survived. The resulting search and rescue missions were incredibly difficult because of a severe blizzard hitting the area. The crash survivors had to wait more than 30 hours in the extreme cold before help heroically arrived.



Astronaut and former CF-18 fighter pilot Jeremy Hansen.

Shooting for the stars

Many Canadian astronauts have also been Veterans. Their specialized training with the military helped prepare them for the unique challenges of space.

Humans have been marvelling at the starry night sky for thousands of years. But travelling to outer space only became possible following the technological advances brought by the Second World War. The "Space Race" of the 1950s and 1960s was an extension of the Cold War. This decades-long struggle involved the United States and other western countries, versus the Soviet Union and its allies.

Canada was not originally a major player in the Space Race. However, our country would go on to make important contributions. Our development of the famous Canadarm (a robotic arm used on the Space Shuttle) was significant. It helped pave the way for further collaboration between space programs in Canada and the United States.

In 1983, Canada assembled its first team of astronauts. Since then, our country has recruited 14 astronauts—and six of them have served in our country's military.

- Ken Money
- Marc Garneau
- Chris Hadfield
- Michael McKay
- Jeremy Hansen
- Joshua Kutryk



Think you have what it takes? Watch a video explaining how Canadian astronauts are selected.

