



For immediate release – May 23, 2015

**ENDOWMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS OF
THE CANADIAN FIRST WORLD WAR INTERNMENT RECOGNITION FUND
MEET AND ATTEND REDEDICATION CEREMONY IN VERNON, B.C.**

On May 22 and 23, 2015, the Endowment Council of the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund (CFWWIRF) held a meeting in Vernon, British Columbia, site of the central permanent internment camp of British Columbia, which once imprisoned hundreds of so-called “enemy aliens” during Canada’s first national internment operations of 1914 to 1920.

Earlier today, the Endowment Council of the CFWWIRF also took part in a Rededication Ceremony organized by the Vernon & District History Society (VDHS) and funded by a grant of the CFWWIRF to honor the eleven internees who died while interned in the Vernon Internment Camp during the Great War. A commemorative marker was unveiled in the Pleasant



Valley Cemetery before a group of over a hundred people by the Honorable Jason Kenney, Minister of National Defense and Minister of Multiculturalism, Jerry Thompson, the President of the VDHS, and Ivan Grbesic, the Chair of the CFWWIRF.

Speaking on behalf of the Endowment Council of the CFWWIRF, the Chair, Ivan Grbesic, said: “We gathered today to recall Canada’s first national internment operations, when thousands of men, women and children were rounded up and transported to 24 camps across our country, including one of the longest operating camps, that at Vernon, whose gates did not close until 1920. We have also provided a voice to those who perished at the Vernon Internment Camp. This was a historic injustice and one that forms an integral part of the historical narrative of Canada.”



About CFWWIRF

The Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund was established to support projects that commemorate and recognize the experiences of all of the ethno-cultural communities affected by Canada's first national internment operations of 1914 to 1920.

8,579 so-called "enemy aliens", including women and children, were interned, including Ukrainians, Alevi Kurds, Armenians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Ottoman Turks, Polish, Romanians, Russians, Serbians, Slovaks, and Slovenes, among others, of which most were Ukrainians and most were civilians.



For more information on the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund contact the Program Manager, Andrea Malysh, toll free at 1-866-288-7931.

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