



MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT



PETER GOLDRING

The annual Heroes Highway Ride, to show support for Canada's troops, is the largest single location motorcycle ride in Canada. Member of Parliament Peter Goldring, as chair of the Ride to Remember from Parliament Hill to Trenton, which included many Heroes Highway Ride bikers, was asked to participate in the 2012 event at CFB Trenton and Toronto and has this report.

The Heroes Highway Ride is an annual event that began in June 2009. Organizer Lou Devuono got the idea for the ride in the Fall of 2008 while he was standing on a bridge, along with hundreds of other Canadians, waiting for the motorcade that would escort some of Canada's fallen soldiers on their last ride home, a solemn journey, along the Highway of Heroes between Trenton and Toronto. Waiting on the overpasses of Highway 401 to pay tribute in that fashion has become a tradition for many

area residents, which led to the renaming of that section of the highway as thousands of people would gather in a grassroots demonstration of public support and grieving for the loss of one of our troops and an acknowledgement of the greater loss suffered by their families.

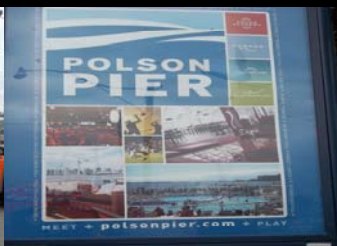
On that day Lou asked himself "what about the troops that are deployed, or the troops that have served their tour, or the soldiers injured during the course of carrying out

their duties? Where was the outpouring of support for them? On the surface it appears that, perhaps we have become somewhat complacent about their sacrifices or losses? Regularly, men and women volunteer for the Canadian Forces, knowing full well that they may be deployed to the one of the various hotspots around the world. They leave behind family and friends in order to

serve and represent Canada while proudly wearing the Maple Leaf on their sleeves



Mr. Goldring, speaking to thousands at Base Trenton, is seen with MP Rick Norlock making a special presentation of a flag from Parliament Hill to Base Commander Col. Friday.



and in their hearts.”

After those reflections Lou and his friend Graeme Hume began organizing not only a ride but a rally, an event to pay tribute to our Canadian forces both past and present. They believed that many Canadians felt as they did, and would take the opportunity to join them in this sincere expression of gratitude to our troops for their commitment, perseverance, compassion and courage. The event has grown each year, with more than 5,000 motorcyclists taking part in 2012. That number means that the first bikes are arriving at the rally location in Toronto before the last riders have left CFB Trenton!

The ride and rally (at Polson Pier in Toronto) are free events, although participants are encouraged to support WoundedWarriors.ca, a charity that directly assists soldiers injured during military operations and the Tony Stacey Centre for Veterans Care.

I was asked by organizer Lou Devuono to take part when he heard about the work I was doing organizing the “Never Again” Holocaust remembrance ceremony on Parliament Hill. Since the riders of the Jewish Motorcycle alliance and the Christian Mission of Hope riders would be passing through Tren-

ton two days before the 2012 Heroes Highway Ride it made sense to many of the riders to take part in both events.

I spoke to the bikers on Parliament Hill, in Bain Park in Trenton and at Canadian Forces Base Trenton the morning of the main ride before they left CFB Trenton and at that time also made a presentation to Colonel Sean Friday, the base commander. To

show appreciation for his leadership I had obtained a flag that was flown over the East Block of the House of Commons for him to fly whenever he felt it to be appropriate and for him to take with him into retirement as a souvenir of his distinguished service to Canada.

Below is the text of my speech meant for delivery at the begin-



Following his address to thousands of bikers on Base Trenton, Mr. Goldring stands with the mother of a Canadian soldier who paid the ultimate price for Canada in Afghanistan.

ning of the Ride.

Sixty-seven years ago, peace came at last to a Europe engorged for six long years with war. A war so cataclysmic that tens of millions perished at the blade of the war sword and in the gas chambers designed by Hitler’s mad men.

Victory in Europe was a celebration for a continent, but a pause on the road to a world free of war.



For over 80 years Base Trenton has been witness to air transport in warfare and in peace, even today, as the men and women of Canada's armed forces are on a mission to bring lasting peace and freedom to the worn torn country Afghanistan, but at great cost.

One key difference to previous wars is that today our fallen are returned home.

More than 100,000 fallen in wars past of South Africa, World War I, World War II and Korea did not.

The sole exception was borne to Ottawa aboard an Air Force plane that I was on board with some 200 others, in May 2000.

To a man, to a woman on board, the mission was of the utmost importance. We were returning to Canada, to Ottawa, with the remains of Canada's Unknown Soldier, to rest at the National War Memorial.

The flight from Vimy Ridge, France to Ottawa was somber – reflective.

Today I can only imagine the sense of great solemnity as Captain(Crew) and passengers wing their way to Trenton at 30,000 feet with the presence of their fallen comrade on board, slipping through space and time.

**High Flight : *Where Neither Lark nor even eagle flew and, while with silent lifting mind, I've trod the high untrodden sanctity of space, put out my hand and touched the face of God.***

This year the *Highway of Heroes Ride* is joined by riders from United States, Great Britain, Australia and Israel. This *Highway of Heroes Ride* commemorates the journey taken by 158 to date, from the aircraft ramp ceremony here in Trenton to Toronto where after a short stop on to their families and homes across Canada.



Mr. Goldring, after taking pictures from the highway of those assembled on the bridge at Grafton, then stopped to talk to them and thank them for demonstrating their respect and support.

As the procession slips silently by and under bridges of the 401 Highway, the McDonald-Cartier, the Highway of Heroes, thousands gather above to give final respect. They

are firemen, police, housewives, men, women, and children waiting hours, mostly strangers, waving flags and giving silent prayer in the passing of the procession.

Today, we are united as one to stand here to give our greatest of respect to:

To those who have fallen

To those who are suffering grievous lasting injuries to body and soul

To the families of all who share in the duty of service and who bear the grief of lost members and friends

Those that serve or have served.

We thank you for your service for our country, for your service to humanity around the world.



A photograph of a portion of the procession of bikers heading towards CFB Trenton.

**UPDATE:** For more information about the ride and the planning for the 2013 edition please go to [www.heroeshighwayride.ca](http://www.heroeshighwayride.ca)

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*This brochure series is intended to highlight special issues that Member of Parliament, Peter Goldring, has been involved in. If you wish to comment, please take a moment to fill out the survey below, write or call to the address above.*

**Your Opinion Matters...**

**Question #1** Do you feel Canadians do enough to honour those serving in our military?

Yes  No

**Question #2** Should a similar ride take place in Edmonton?

Yes  No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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