

Ukrainian War Veterans Association of Canada
Українська Стрільцька Громада Канади
Association des Vétérans de la Guerre Ukrainiens du Canada



Шановні делегати та гості - Христос воскрес!

In January 2021, the Ukrainian War Veterans Association of Canada completed 93 years of continued presence and leadership in the Ukrainian Canadian community. Today, UWVA's mission not only remains true and consistent with the principles articulated by Colonel Konovalets but also has adapted to the evolving needs of the Ukrainian Canadian community, Ukraine and our members. Today's mission includes:

- Fostering the relationship between the Canadian and Ukrainian militaries and the Ukrainian Canadian community
- Supporting military-related projects of interest such as veterans' programs, and;
- Building awareness of our military heritage and history

The UWVA also performs a special duty in looking after the upkeep and maintenance of Col. Yevhen Konovalets' grave in Rotterdam (Netherlands). It has done so proudly since 1938 when he was assassinated by a Soviet agent.

The past two years (2020-2021) have been a difficult period for our organization. The COVID-19 pandemic has effectively halted our general meetings and in-person events. In addition, several of our long serving elderly members have passed away. Though their passing was not pandemic-related, it did prevent members of the UWVA and the Ukrainian Canadian community from attending their funerals and saying their final farewells. The list includes:

- Mr. Jurij Shanta (1918-2021), who took an active part in the battle for the Carpatho-Ukrainian state in 1939 (2021)
- Jakiw Holubizkyj who was a forced labourer in Germany during World War II
- Денис Волинець (1921-2019) who fought for Ukraine's independence during WWII and who presented for many years at the annual Remembrance Ceremony in Toronto, and
- Wasyl Burbela veteran of the French Foreign Legion and long time UWVA ceremonial flag carrier.

Вічна Їм Память.

We hope that by the fall of 2021, we can re-start some of our in-person events and general meetings, as there is much work to be done.

Reflecting on the past 3 years, in spite of the challenges presented by the pandemic and the small size of our organization, I am pleased and proud to report that the UWVA made some remarkable contributions to Canada and Ukraine in the execution of its mission.

I would like to briefly highlight some of these accomplishments.

In June 2018, we took the time to honour the Canadian Armed Forces for their contributions to Ukraine as part of Operation UNIFIER. This event was attended by 300 people including Canada's Ambassador to Ukraine, Ukraine's Ambassador to Canada, Ukraine's Defence Attaché to Canada, 3 Members of

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Parliament, numerous community and military leaders from the GTA and a contingent of Canadian soldiers who had recently returned from operations in Ukraine.

In November 2018, the UWVA celebrated its 90th anniversary with an emotional and uplifting dramatic and musical performance. The UWVA also took the time to properly honour a great leader of Ukraine and supporter of our organization, Colonel Yevhen Konovalts. Anastasia Baczynskij played an instrumental creative role in making this a memorable and impactful event.

In early 2019, the UWVA marked the 100 years of the declaration of the short-lived Ukrainian independence, Акт Злуки, with a concert in Toronto and also helped sponsor the Bobersky Exhibit at the Oseredok Museum in Winnipeg by showcasing 43 recently-uncovered images of World War I battles in Ukraine.

In June 2019, the UWVA honoured the 75th anniversary of the Allied D-Day landings in Normandy, France that started the end of German occupation of western Europe. Our newest member, Taras Jackiw, gave an overview of the Canadian operation based on his recent visit to the France. The UWVA also presented parting gifts to a senior Ukrainian Marine officer who was in Canada attending a year-long advanced security course at the Canadian Forces College. The UWVA has supported several Ukrainian officers over the years that have attended this year-long course.

In September 2019, the UWVA launched its awareness campaign on Ukrainian Prisoners of War. It reminded Canadians that Russia continued at the time, to illegally detain 24 Ukrainian Navy sailors and 76 political prisoners. Though the 24 sailors were released shortly after the start of this campaign, the UWVA continues to remind all of us of the numerous other Ukrainians that continue to be in captivity.

In November 2020, the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre, with leadership and support from the UWVA, completed and screened for the first time the film documentary “A Canadian War Story.” Spanning continents and generations, the film recounts the remarkable Ukrainian Canadian odyssey from eastern Europe to Canada to the battlefields of World War II in Europe and Asia. The film was covered extensively in the Canadian media.

As we begin to head into our next 3 years and complete almost a century of service, I would like to thank the UWVA Executive and our brothers and sisters in the Ukrainian National Federation, Ukrainian Women’s Organization (UWO) and the Ukrainian National Youth Federation (UNYF) for their support and commitment to the UWVA over the past 3 years.

I would also like to thank our key sponsors, the Ukrainian Credit Union Limited, the UNF Foundation and the Ukrainian Canadian Veterans Fund (at the Shevchenko Foundation) for their unwavering financial support to our organization that allows us to take on these unique and important projects.

I shall end my report, with a 1929 quote from Col Konovalts to members of the UWVA:

“Будьте і Ви гідними носіями тої ідеї на канадському ґрунті, держіть Ваш прапор високо і єдняйте під ним усіх, хто не словом, а чином хоче добувати українському народові кращої долі.”

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Ці слова і далі сьогодні залишаються потужними і актуальними.

Наша місія ще не завершена. The mission of the of UWVA is not yet complete.

As we evolve and prepare for the start of our next century of service, we look forward to working with you and other organizations and individuals to partner on initiatives where we can leverage our UWVA brand and military network.

Дякую. Pro patria.

Капітан А. Соханівський CD
Президент
УСГ

