

## Education Programming Category (CMA AWARD 2007)

**Project Title: Vimy Ridge Education Project**

**Institution: Calgary Military Museums Society (CMMS) in Calgary Alberta**

When the CMMS learned that the Crowfoot Gee Force Bantam Hockey Team was scheduled to participate in a tournament in Fusen, Germany, it entered into a series of partnerships whose goal was to “immerse the 14-year-old boys in a vital part of Canada’s military history.” Thanks to the efforts and planning of the CMMS, the boys and their escorts visited not only the facility in Calgary but also Vimy Ridge, Dachau, several Canadian War Cemeteries, and participated in the moving “Last Post” ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres’ Belgium. Each individual researched one of the Canadians killed overseas and was asked to prepare a letter of thanks to be placed at their grave. Diary entries detailing several days of trench life and other related assignments were all designed to create an emphatic relationship with those lost so long ago.



Working with the team and their educators, the CMMS set an outstanding example as to how the ubiquitous hockey trip or student exchange can be used as a foundation to promote in-depth understanding of heritage or other museological themes to new and non-traditional audiences.

When a museum initiative can inspire the following from an adolescent prairie hockey player, we should all take note:

***You probably wondered when you were wet and cold in your bunker if it really mattered. Well it did! Canada is a beautiful and free country. The sacrifice you and your buddies made has allowed my buddies and me to travel to Europe, even to Germany, as proud, free Canadians.***

