

CANADIAN PEACEKEEPING VETERANS ASSOCIATION



AIDE MEMOIRE

WREATH-LAYING

AIM

1. The purpose of this instruction is to describe the protocol and etiquette for the laying of wreaths at cenotaphs and memorial monuments during commemorative ceremonies.

SCOPE

2. This instruction applies to all military, paramilitary, civic or civilian organizations wishing to lay wreaths to honour of our fallen comrades at a Cenotaph or similar Memorial Monument. It shall be used as a general guide by all CPVA chapters.

RESPONSIBILITY

3. The Master of Ceremonies is responsible to determine the order of precedence for the laying of ceremonial wreaths and coordinate the ceremony with the designated Sergeant-at-Arms at the Cenotaph.
4. The responsibility for purchase and laying a wreath lies with each participating organization.
5. Veterans may be required to assist dignitaries who have no deputy assigned to them.
6. The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for the arrangement of wreaths and stands before the ceremony. He shall supervise the movement of wreaths during the ceremony and shall recover all wreaths and stands afterwards.
7. The Band Master shall have the band play appropriate music during the wreath laying ceremony. Music recordings may be played in lieu of a band. The Piper shall play « Lament » after the « Silence » and before « Reveille ». During the laying of wreaths, the band plays musical pieces such as « Amazing Grace » or « Danny Boy ».

OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION

8. The following are the official wreath laying parties in order of precedence.
 - a. Guest of Honour;
 - b. Politicians;
 - c. Veteran's Affairs Canada;
 - d. Veteran's organizations;
 - e. Canadian Forces;
 - f. Royal Canadian Mounted Police;
 - g. Police forces; and
 - h. Cadets.

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UNOFFICIAL REPRESENTATION

9. Unofficial parties of civic organizations and the general public may lay wreaths upon the termination of the official wreath-laying ceremony at the invitation of the Master of Ceremonies.

PROCEDURE

10. The etiquette for the laying of ceremonial wreaths is as follows.
 - a. Wreaths shall be lined up on tables near the Cenotaph in order of precedence by the Sergeant-at-Arms before the ceremony.
 - b. The Master of Ceremonies shall call upon each organization to come forward in order of precedence to lay a wreath and then invite all other parties who wish to lay wreaths.
 - c. Each party shall come forward to recover their respective wreath from the Sergeant-at-Arms in the order of precedence as called by the Master of Ceremonies.
 - d. Only two persons at a time may come forward to lay a wreath at the foot of the Cenotaph.
 - e. Each wreath party shall approach the Cenotaph, the dignitary on the right with his or her deputy on the left carrying the wreath in the left hand, following one pace behind the dignitary. Both shall halt and salute together.
 - f. The dignitary in the party shall take the wreath from his or her deputy and then lay the wreath, assisted by his or her deputy if required.
 - g. The dignitary shall take one step back; both shall salute at the same time, then make a sharp right turn to the right and march off at the same pace.

PAYING RESPECTS

11. Persons not in uniform or not wearing headdress shall not salute; they should make a short bow instead. Men wearing civilian headdress shall remove it and place it over the left breast to bow, and then replace their headdress immediately after the bow.

AUTHORITY

12. The Master of Ceremonies is the final authority on the laying of wreaths.

PRECEDENCE

13. The Master of Ceremonies shall determine the order of precedence for each group in paragraph 8 according to official government and military protocol references in accordance with the nature of the ceremony.

POSITIONING OF WREATHS OR FLOWERS

14. There is no order for the positioning of wreaths at the cenotaph. Wreaths shall be placed facing outwards. Flowers may be deposited instead of wreaths.

By Karl O. Morel CD: July 2009