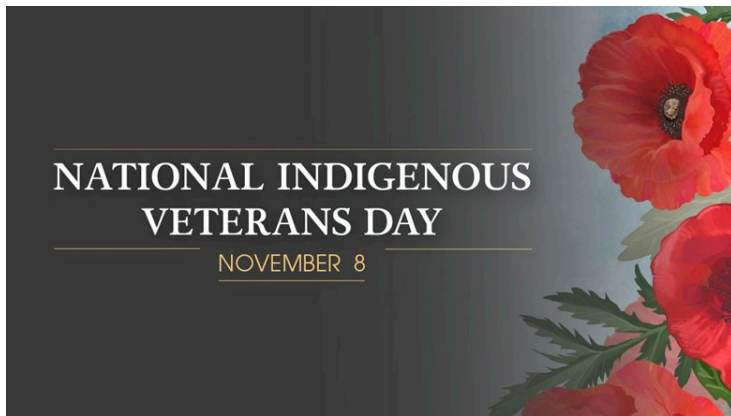




Indigenous Veterans Day

The First Nations, Inuit, and Métis of Canada have a long and proud tradition of military service to our country. While exact statistics are difficult to determine, the rate of Indigenous participation in Canada's military efforts over the years has been impressive. These

determined volunteers were often forced to overcome many challenges to serve in uniform, from learning a new language and adapting to cultural differences, to having to travel great distances from their remote communities just to enlist. The challenges they faced often extended to their post-service life. Many Indigenous war Veterans would not receive equal treatment compared to other Canadian Veterans.

The story of Indigenous service in the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War and later Canadian Armed Forces efforts is a proud one. While exact numbers are elusive, it has been estimated that as many as 12,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit people served in the great conflicts of the 20th century, with at least 500 of them sadly losing their lives.

Honouring Contributions

This rich heritage has been recognized in many ways. The names given to several Royal Canadian Navy warships over the years, like HMCS *Iroquois*, *Cayuga* and *Huron*, are just one indication of our country's lasting respect for the contributions of Indigenous Veterans. This long tradition of military service is also commemorated with the striking National Aboriginal Veterans Monument in Ottawa. This deeply symbolic memorial features a large bronze eagle at its top, with four men and women from different Indigenous groups from across Canada immediately below. A wolf, bear, bison, and caribou—powerful animals that represent "spiritual guides" which have long been seen by Indigenous cultures as important to military success—look out from each corner. Remembrance ceremonies are held at this special monument, including on **Indigenous Veterans Day which is observed each year on November 8.**

Source: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/people-and-stories/indigenous-veterans>