



MEDIA RELEASE

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Exhibition highlights the unsung contributions of Canadian and European women in the Second World War



Allied victory during the Second World War would not have been possible without the women who made a difference by volunteering, serving in the military, working, undermining the enemy and holding on to hope. *Great Women During the War, 1939–1945*, a new exhibition at the Juno Beach Centre, pays tribute to some of these women. Through 16 stories, the exhibition acknowledges their many contributions —

often unpaid and underappreciated, and sometimes at great risk to themselves and their families. The exhibition was developed by the Canadian War Museum, in partnership with the Juno Beach Centre.

“Women supported the war effort in many ways, from volunteering and working in factories, to serving in the military or joining the Resistance,” said James Whitham, Acting Director General of the Canadian War Museum. “This exhibition tells these women’s stories in their own voices, demonstrating how they threw their energies into the Allied victory, often while grieving loved ones and risking their own lives.”

“For the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Normandy, the Juno Beach Centre is proud of its partnership with the Canadian War Museum for the creation and presentation of a temporary exhibition about women during the Second World War,” Nathalie Worthington explained. “Through this homage, the Juno Beach Centre continues to act as a link between history, memory and contemporary society. The stories of these women during the war and the civic values they represented offer important lessons and are a source of inspiration for today and tomorrow.”

Divided into four thematic zones, the exhibition uses artifacts, images, audiovisuals and archival materials to delve into the personal stories of 16 women from Canada, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany and Austria. Visitors will meet women like Mary Adelaide Cooney, a Canadian military nurse; Sonya D'Artois, a British spy; Mary Holland, a mother of four who knitted much-needed items for military personnel; and Louise Boitard and Madeleine Verly, members of the French Resistance. The exhibition also includes the poignant stories of women who waited for loved ones to come home, as well as those who lost their own lives during the war.

Together, these stories paint a picture of how women in different countries experienced the war, and how they responded to hardship and danger with perseverance and great courage.

Great Women During the War, 1939–1945 will be presented at the Juno Beach Centre in Courseulles-sur-Mer, France, from March 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020.

The Juno Beach Centre was established in 2003 as a permanent memorial to all Canadians who were part of the Allied victory in the Second World War, and to preserve this legacy for future generations through education. The Centre in Normandy, France, pays homage to the nearly 45,000 Canadians who died during the War, of which 5,500 during the Battle of Normandy and 359 on D-Day. A decade and more than 750,000 visitors later, the Centre has been designated a site of national historic significance to Canada. It is owned and operated by the Juno Beach Centre Association, a charitable organization based in Burlington, Ontario, Canada.

The Canadian War Museum is Canada's national museum of military history. Its mission is to promote public understanding of Canada's military history in its personal, national, and international dimensions. Work of the Canadian War Museum is made possible in part through financial support of the Government of Canada.

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