

DEFINING MOMENTS DÉTERMINANTS CANADA

TORONTO, Ontario – (January 15, 2020) – *Defining Moments Canada/Moments Déterminants Canada*, a heritage education organization, announced today its partnership with the *Juno Beach Centre Association* and *The Canadian Research and Mapping Association (Project44.ca)* to lead the 2020 national commemorative project to share the stories of Canadians' contributions to the Liberation of Holland and Victory in Europe (V-E Day).

“**VEDay75 – Normandy to Netherlands**” will spotlight the stories of Canadians from across the country seen through their experiences in 6 key cities where Canadians fought in Northwest Europe during the “Victory Campaign” from autumn 1944 to spring 1945.

Drawing from extensive research and digital archives curated by *The Canadian Research and Mapping Association (Project44.ca)*, *Defining Moments Canada* will host a bilingual national commemorative project on its website to inspire young Canadians to discover the lives and contributions of those who participated in some of Canada's most important battles from Normandy to the Netherlands.

“We are excited to collaborate with *Defining Moments Canada* to share the unique stories of Canadians that served in the Northwest Europe Campaign 75 years ago, said Nathan Kehler, Executive Director of *Project 44*. “Using the Project 44 web map, aerial imagery, war diaries as well as original interviews with Veterans, Canadian educators can take historical studies to the next level. From the classroom to the fields of Europe – learning will be virtual and experiential.”

Beyond the stories of those veterans who participated in the relief and liberation of Holland, the project seeks to commemorate Canadians whose contributions in French, Belgian, Dutch and German cities and towns were essential to defeating Nazi Germany and ending the Holocaust.

This initiative is supported in part by Veterans Affairs Canada in the amount of \$100,000 through its Commemorative Partnership Program. With this funding, *Defining Moments Canada* will develop educational resources designed to guide students in the creation of commemorative projects that examine Canadian stories of service and sacrifice that built the better world we inhabit today.

“Seventy-five years after the end of the Second World War, we are telling the stories of men and women who served Canada and learning about their achievements and sacrifices. The *VEDay75 – Normandy to Netherlands* initiative will connect Canadian youth with the Canadians who served during the Second World War. It is vital that we continue to remember and honour those who served and to keep their memories alive.” - *Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence*

The project will also be supported by extensive contextual research from the *Juno Beach Centre Association (JBCA)*. “The Juno Beach Centre Association is excited to partner with *Defining Moments Canada* on **VEDay75 – Normandy to Netherlands**,” says President Don Cooper. “This project, with its focus on telling stories and connecting today's youth with yesterday's heroes, forms an integral part of the *JBCA*'s V-E Day educational offerings. This is an excellent opportunity for youth across the country to engage in the remembrance and commemoration of one of Canada's great defining moments, and builds upon our successful ‘Juno75’ collaboration with *Defining Moments Canada* in 2019.”

“**VEDay75** will also be supported by the Museum of the Royal Canadian Military Institute (RCMI) in Toronto,” added Ryan Goldsworthy, RCMI Museum Curator. The RCMI holds one of Canada's largest and most complete collections of uniforms and militaria. “The **VEDay75** project is an excellent opportunity for the museum to showcase many of its incredible artefacts and the personalities behind them, and we look forward to continuing our long-standing collaboration with Neil Orford and his team at *Defining Moments Canada*.”

“At the heart of **VEDay75 – Normandy to Netherlands** are Canadian stories from 6 key cities along the ‘Road to Liberation’ 75 years ago. However the stories we will profile are just the beginning,” says Neil Orford, program leader at *Defining Moments Canada*. “We want students to share the stories they discover, so that we can honour these untold stories from unheard voices. Our collaboration with the exciting new digital story-mapping tools from *Project44.ca* makes ‘**VEDay75**’ a revolution in how Canadians understand and share their history.”

Defining Moments Canada/Moments Déterminants Canada is the shared vision of Neil Orford and Blake Heathcote, creators of a new and innovative way to teach and commemorate Canada's history using twenty-first century digital tools and storytelling skills. It has previously carried out a National commemoration of the 1918-1920 Spanish flu pandemic in Canada, and the 75th anniversary of D-Day – ‘Juno75’.

For more information, digital images or to set up an interview, please contact:

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