



# *MERCHANT NAVY VETERANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE*

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# *NEWS RELEASE*

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**Merchant Navy Veterans Day  
Ceremony at the National War Memorial  
Sunday, September 7, 2014**

**Ottawa** –Royal Galipeau, Member of Parliament for Ottawa–Orléans, on behalf of the Honourable Julian Fantino, Minister of Veterans Affairs, was joined by Veterans today for a wreath-laying ceremony at the National War Memorial to commemorate the contributions and sacrifices of Canadian and Allied Merchant Navy Veterans.

This was the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Merchant Navy Veterans Day, which recognizes the individuals who, on behalf of Canada and allied nations of the world, were the mainstay of the Allied Forces victories during both the First World War and the Second World War.

During the Second World War, a total of **25,343** merchant ships, with **164,783,921** tons of cargo on board, sailed from North America to Britain. The Canadian Merchant Navy suffered the highest losses, losing one seafarer in eight of the **12,000** who served in the crews of the Canadian, British, and Allied merchant ships—only (approximately) **1,000** remain. In total, **70** Canadian merchant ships were sunk, with more than **1,700** Merchant Navy personnel losing their lives due to enemy action.

“It is an honour today to recognize Canada’s Merchant Navy. Let us take the time to remember the bravery and contributions made by these men and women who played a crucial role in these wars.”

*The Honourable Julian Fantino, Minister of Veterans Affairs*

“On behalf of all Canadians, I would like to say thank you to those who served in the Canadian Merchant Navy. We will not forget the sacrifices made on behalf of our great nation.”

*Royal Galipeau, Member of Parliament for Ottawa–Orléans*

September 3, 2014, marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration of the Second World War. This led to the tragic sinking of the Montréal-bound British passenger ship the S.S. *Athenia*, torpedoed by a German submarine on the evening of September 3, 1939, and the first Canadian casualty of war, Montréal stewardess Annah Baird.

“All too often, the valour and sacrifices of Canada’s Merchant Navy Veterans go unheralded. This Day of Remembrance is an opportunity, on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Second World War, to reinforce just how crucial their contributions were to the war effort.”

*Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy*

Let us now stand united, without hesitation, and demonstrate our unwavering support to the remaining men and women of the Canadian and Allied merchant navies. No human being is beyond owing them their due recognition. Let Canadians and members of the international community come together, and show our Veterans how much we appreciate our freedom, and that we are eternally grateful to them for ensuring its preservation.

For more information on the Canadian and Allied Merchant Navy, please visit [alliedmerchantnavy.com](http://alliedmerchantnavy.com).

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