

Heritage Matters... in Markham

Honouring Our Veterans – Street Name Signage



In 1998, the Town of Markham began to honour war veterans who gave their lives in the first and second World Wars by naming local streets in their honour.

Who initiated this concept?

The Markham District Veterans Association contacted Markham Council in January 1998 with a request to name future streets in the municipality after Markham veterans whose names appear on the Honour Roll Plaque in the Great Hall of the Markham Civic Centre. There are 69 names on the Honour Roll representing Markham residents who gave their lives during the first and second World Wars. Markham Council endorsed this concept in July 1998.

How does the program work?

Markham Council agreed to introduce a pro-active policy that requires the names of Honour Roll veterans to be used on streets in new development areas. Markham's policy is that a minimum of one street on each new plan of subdivision that has more than five streets be assigned a name from the Honour Roll. In addition, Markham encourages the use of both the given and family names on the signage.

Of the 69 names on the Honour Roll, only 49 were found to be suitable for street names. Due to similarities with existing street names in the Town or within York Region, the remaining 20 names could not be used. To honour these individuals, it was decided that their names would be considered for use in future parks, pathways and civic/community facility names, as appropriate.

When was the poppy introduced on street name signs?

In 1999, staff introduced the concept of using the poppy symbol on street name signs honouring the veterans. The Markham District Veterans Association offered its full support for this initiative indicating that "the symbol of the poppy will serve to remind residents of the freedom they enjoy and will perpetuate the memory of those who gave so much".

What about honouring veterans who survived?

Markham staff has also been compiling a list of veterans from Markham who survived and returned home. These names have been added to the list of veteran names to be considered for street names once the original list of veterans who served and died in the wars is exhausted. In consultation with the Markham District Veterans Association, it was considered appropriate that street name signs honouring surviving veterans would also be marked with a poppy symbol.

"Heritage Matters...in Markham"
is a series of information brochures
on heritage planning topics.

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