



HOMELAND STORIES

The IODE in WWII: "... the betterment of life itself"

Character Education

- Form opinions about the roles service clubs and volunteer organizations serve in society
- Appreciate the many ways in which individuals may contribute to their country
- Select role models and ideals they would like to emulate

Facts

- Across Canada there were 35,000 women in 952 chapters of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, IODE, during WWII
- During the WWII years the IODE spent approximately \$6,400,000 on behalf of the war effort, not counting knitting, sewing and serving in canteens. They spent over a million dollars to ship field comforts overseas; over a million for British war relief, \$925,284 on seamen's needs and \$299,830 for Polish relief
- The IODE raised \$100,000 (equivalent to almost \$1.5 million) in one month in 1940 to purchase a Bolingbroke bomber and presented it to the Canadian government; they sent \$50,000 to Australia for a fighter plane
- IODE chapters adopted 350 Royal Canadian and British Navy ships to which they sent comforts, books and even appliances
- The IODE distributed nearly 3 million books, a million magazines and well over 10,000 games, cards, records and magazine subscriptions to hospitals, ships, port libraries and PoW camps

Before the Reading

- List service clubs or organizations and indicate what types of service they offer. Do you know of any modern women's service clubs or organizations?
- Whenever there are natural disasters such as the tsunami in Asia, Hurricane Katrina in the New Orleans

HOMELAND MINUTES



Rufus Isaacs, 1st Marquess of Reading and his wife Stella Charnaud Isaacs, Marchioness of Reading
www.thepeerage.com/p19188.htm

Stella Charnaud: Lady Reading, the Dowager Marchioness of Reading, GBE

In 1938 the British government asked the much travelled Lady Reading to organize the 100,000 strong Women's Voluntary Services. By war's end, Lady Reading had mustered a million volunteers of whom 400 were killed on active service. The volunteers distributed everything from clothing to powdered milk (the Canadian Kinsmen sent 40.4 million litres of powdered milk) and served in every capacity from manning shelters and canteens to doing cadaver detail to place remains in sacks.

The Dowager Marchioness came to Canada in 1946 on a two month tour to thank Canadians for their generous support. Below are excerpts from speeches and articles about her:

"The women of Britain have come to know the IODE with affection, regard and respect. Never before has there been a closer friendship—as real a friendship—as exists between our two countries today.



Canadian women can well be proud of their contribution during a time of world suffering, for it is one thing to face emergency when close to it, and another to accept responsibility, rise to it, maintain it faithfully at long distance ... to give children a future to make up for a past they must forget. War has taught us dreadful things, but it has also taught us how to laugh, to see how fine the other woman is and how great men are. Difficult times lie ahead, but we have learned to know our friends”

“... Of all the wonderful things the IODE sent, the quilts ... were the most wonderful. They were of every colour, kind and form and were used all up and down the country after the blitzes. In rest centres after the raids their

gaiety cheered and their warmth comforted many a poor old woman whose eyes would fill with tears at the thought ‘That anybody who doesn’t even know us should do this for us—all those stitches!’”

“The wedding dresses for war brides meant so much too. With starchy diets our brides are a little bigger than yours, but they held their breath, gladly, to get into them. Afterward each dress went to the cleaners (which took seven weeks) to be ready for the next bride.”

It was a very human, heart-warming story, told with so much humour and appreciation that every IODE war worker must have gone away very happy to have made her small contribution to that big contribution, which, as Lady Reading said, “means the betterment of life itself”.

area or the earthquake in Haiti, who steps in to assist with recovery?

- What have you learned about the roles that women played in Canada in support of the WWII effort?
- If you were called upon to support disaster relief or a Canadian war effort, what skills do you have that you might contribute?

Reading



Margaret Poulson Murray

The service organization, today known as the IODE, was started in 1900 as Canada was about to send troops to South Africa for the Boer War. Margaret Smith Murray (nee Poulson) of Montreal called on women across Canada to support the troops, promote patriotism and to build an ethos of service. The mayors of Canada’s major cities

passed Mrs. Murray’s telegrams on to the prominent women of the day who eagerly heeded the call. The first chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) was formed in Fredericton, New Brunswick, January 15, 1900.

In the 110 years since its founding, IODE, has built up an incredible record of service unparalleled in Canada for its breadth of service.

Even before WWII, the ladies of the IODE erected war monuments and sustained graves, joined the fight against tuberculosis with the running of sanatoria and preventoria (fresh air institutions to prevent tuberculosis), raised funds for motor ambulances for WWI, built a home for naval nurses at Spithead in England, furnished a hospital for officers and a club for Canadian nurses and provided educational bursaries for the children of WWI veterans.

With the beginning of hostilities in 1939 the IODE chapters across Canada revved up their volunteer efforts to an astounding level of service. The short readings with this lesson taken from IODE scrap books and minute books in the National Archive in Ottawa show the grateful responses they received.

During WWII the IODE was seemingly EVERYWHERE. For one fundraiser the RCAF chapter of the IODE even sold shares in Mary Pickford’s purse at the CNE. Chapters adopted 2,200 families in Great Britain and supplied them with monthly food parcels. Committees were set up to welcome and care for women and children evacuated from Britain—“British War Guests”. The IODE gave these guests monthly financial allowances.

To this day the IODE provides bursaries and scholarships, book awards and a variety of much needed social services.



Lt. Col. Alice Sorry and Lt. Col. Isobel Cronyn, unpacking wedding dress sent by an anonymous donor for the use of Canadian Women's Army London, England 23 Feb. 1945
Karen M. Hermiston/DND Collection PS-139938

The IODE sold War Savings Stamps and calendars and held dances to raise money. They manned canteens and hostels, supported the Christie Street Hospital and the IODE hospital in Haileybury. They ran a blanket fund and campaigns for PoWs, libraries, gold

and silver and even wedding gowns. They sent 87 wedding gowns to Women's Service Headquarters in Britain in 1944. When the National Council of Jewish women erected a Central Library in Camp Borden, the IODE supplied them with 300 books.

Clippings and IODE Records from 1939 to 1946

Knitting and Sewing

Evening Times Globe, Saint John, New Brunswick, January 17, 1946

"IODE NATIONAL PRESIDENT OUTLINES POST-WAR PROGRAMME"

"It is the sewing and knitting of our members which is the greatest need of today", states Mrs Ryland H. New, national president of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire ..." The IODE Post-War Service Programme is designed to point the way to directing our labour and resources on behalf of those so desperately in want. With shortages of supplies in ready-made clothing, it is the sewing and knitting of our members which is the greatest need of today."

The Evening Telegram, Toronto, September 6, 1945

"AMERICAN REBEL VALUES SOUVENIR"

Nearly every service man or woman returning from overseas has tucked away in a kit bag some souvenir of travel, like a revolver, camera, wisp of lace or a Nazi flag ... but a young US lieutenant has a pet memento of RCAF service, two pairs of Canadian-made striped pyjamas.

The local IODE was surprised to receive the following letter from Arthur B. MacLemore of Randolph Field, Texas: "This is the first 'fan letter' I guess I'll ever write, but I have felt for a long time that you should know just how much you helped me—as well as so many others overseas.

I was formerly a member of the RCAF, and flew with them for several years in England before making a transfer to my own American Air Force. I am now about to retire from the services for medical reasons and just had to thank you first.

If it hadn't been for the pyjamas the IODE made for the RCAF, most of the boys would not have had any. I still use two pairs you sent over in 1941. They are a bit threadbare, but I think I'll always keep them. Sometimes I even flew missions to Germany in them, especially during the winter months, and they've kept many a bad cold from coming my way.

You've done a grand job and I want you to know that one American rebel in the RCAF appreciates it."

"IODE KNITTERS TO SEND MORE ARTICLES OVERSEAS"

Canada's 35,000 IODE members whose knitting dexterity turned out 234,631 garments for overseas during the last year of the war, will direct a large percentage of their knitting efforts this year toward Canada's Save the Children Fund ... Announcement of the arrangement, which will speed up delivery of desperately needed clothing to the millions of destitute children in Europe, was made by Mr. Justice J.C. McRuer, National Chairman of the Fund.

Mr. McRuer said the decision of the IODE to work in

co-operation with the Save the Children Fund may make the difference between life and death to thousands of European children. National post-war convenor, Mrs. H. Angus, Toronto, described the warehouse with a good supply of wool on hand and said that it was available for chapters across the Dominion.

"The wool on hand is suitable for making afghans, articles for layettes, socks, sweaters and all types of knitted garments", said Mrs. Angus, "and we feel that the local chapters will continue to exert their energies with the same enthusiasm that placed the IODE second only to the Red Cross in the amount of comforts sent overseas during the war."



Prince Albert Daily Herald, Saskatchewan, April 30, 1946

"CONTINUED ASSISTANCE BEING SENT TO POLAND"

There is no delay in shipment and distribution of Polish relief clothing, say the officers, as free shipping is provided and distribution made by the Polish Red Cross. At present shipments are consigned to the Polish Red Cross at Osnabruck in British liberated areas. A greeting card printed in the Polish language is enclosed in each box. Only clothing in good condition is sent, and a great deal of repair work is done at provincial headquarters. The first clothing received by Polish people liberated from internment and slave labour camps in Germany was that provided by Canadian IODE chapters. National headquarters has received many personal calls and letters from Polish representatives expressing sincere appreciation of this humanitarian work.

The Bolingbroke Bomber



I.O.D.E. PRESENTATIONS: A Bristol Bolingbroke given to the Royal Canadian Air Force by the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire was recently handed over at Ottawa. Present at the ceremony, and seen from left to right in the photograph, are Wing Cdr. McLeod; Princess Alice; Mrs. W. B. Horkins, I.O.D.E. President; the Earl of Athlone, Governor-General of Canada; and Air Comdre. L. S. Breadner, Chief of Air Staff, R.C.A.F. The Bolingbroke, it will be remembered, is a Canadian variant of the long-nosed Bristol Blenheim. Like the Blenheim it is powered with two Mercury VIII engines and has a top speed of nearly 300 m.p.h. at 15,000 ft. The armament consists of one forward-firing gun mounted in the port wing and one free gun in a retractable power-operated turret situated mid-way on top of the fuselage.

www.flightglobal.com/pdfarchive/view/1940/1940%20-%20202370.html

Report of Bomber Campaign, September 4, 1940 IODE Executive Council

Mrs. Horkins gave a brief report on the progress and successful conclusion of the campaign to raise \$100,000 for a Bolingbroke Bomber as follows: It will be remembered that at the Annual Meeting in Saint John permission was given to the National Head Office to send out a letter directly to the Primary Chapters from the National President, an appeal to them to support the campaign to raise \$100,000 for a Bolingbroke Bomber to be presented by the Order to our fighting forces. A radio broadcast by the National President was most successful and the public in both Canada and the United States responded with great generosity. Many touching gifts were received from all parts of Canada, and well within the month our fund was growing both through individual contributions and from the Chapters. When we were assured that the full amount was in sight we contacted the Fairchild Company in Canada, where these Bombers are manufactured, and were informed that as all output of these aircraft had been commandeered by the Government it would be necessary to get permission from the proper authorities to secure this plane. This permission was granted and we were able to have

*Letter from Minister of Finance, J.L. Ilsley
read into minutes of IODE Executive Committee, September 4, 1940*

Dear Madam,

The departmental officers have sent in to me the formal documents relating to the receipt of the donation of \$100,000 received from your Order for the purchase of a Bolingbroke Bomber. This gift is so notable, so considerable and represents so much in the way of work in collection and sacrifice in giving that I feel impelled to write to you saying how deeply I appreciate it.

The task of financing the war will become increasingly arduous as time goes on. We devise taxes and safeguards against their evasion and unless we are careful, are likely to develop a mental attitude toward the Canadian people which is just a little false. We are likely to think of them as reluctant to give. Incidents such as your donation show how generous ... thousands perhaps hundreds of thousands of our citizens are. As Minister of this Department, I thank you with profound sincerity.

ear-marked for our Order the next Bomber to be completed. The Fairchild Company put the crest of the Order Daughters of the Empire and "For King and Empire" on both sides of the nose of the plane. The Royal Canadian Air Force authorities considered our gift to be so outstanding that they asked if they could be permitted to have a ceremony of presentation and have Their Excellencies and Air Force officials present. This presentation ceremony took place at the Rockcliffe Airport Ottawa where the Bomber had been flown from the factory. The National officers went to Ottawa for the ceremony. Her Royal Highness, Princess Alice, as our Honorary National President accepted the cheque for \$100,000 from the National President and presented it on behalf of the Order to the Chief of Air Staff – Vice-Marshal Breadner. The Members of the Order privileged to attend the ceremony were treated to an exhibition of the Bomber in flight. Immediately following the presentation, the Bomber was flown to the east coast and for a short time put into service convoying the troop ships and merchant vessels 900 miles out to sea (the reason for this being the shortage of Bombers of this size). Then it was to proceed overseas.

Adoption of Ships

Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, Saskatoon, May 28, 1946

WOMEN'S PAGE: "IODE CONVENTION NOTES"

by Emily Gould

The IODE had 350 adopted ships during the war and still had 70 under adoption, the others having been decommissioned. Members felt they had played a part in helping to make Canada a navy-minded nation for they had stimulated a real concern in both ships and men. There had been some wonderful associations, many of the members residing as some of the larger Canadian ports getting to know their ships and officers personally and being invited to functions on board.



*Aerial shot showing HMCS Sioux sailing into St. John's, Newfoundland.
Photo courtesy of Naval Museum of Alberta*



*Canadian Battle class naval trawler HMCS Arras
www.navy.gc.ca/project_pride/photo_archive/photo_archive_e.asp?section=1
National Defence / H-549*

Ships Adopted by IODE chapters

HMCS *Sea Pride II*, Beamsville; HMCS *Glendyne*, Brantford; HMCS *Sioux*, Chatham and Kent; HMCS *Wolf*, Delhi; HMCS *Quatsino*, Fort Erie North; HMCS *Columbia*, Fort William; HMCS *Georgian*, Meaford; HMCS *Interceptor*, Grimsby; HMCS *Universe*, Guelph; HMCS *Haro*, Haileybury; HMCS *Eastore*, Hamilton; HMCS *Ripple*, Hamilton; HMCS *Algonquin*, Hamilton; HMCS *G.V.1*, Hanover; HMCS *Glenside*, Kitchener; HMCS *Mitchell Bay*, Kitchener; HMCS *M/L125*, Port Arthur; HMCS *Strathadam*, London; HMCS *Dawson*, Niagara Falls; HMCS *Ross Norman*, Simcoe; HMCS *Cancolim*, North Bay; HMCS *G.V. 9*, Ottawa; *M.L 105*, Ottawa; HMCS *Perth*, Perth; HMCS *Outarde*, Port Arthur; HMC *LQ064*, Port Elgin; HMCS *Reaper*, Rosedale, Toronto; HMCS *Mahone*, Sarnia; HMCS *Minas*, St. Catherines; HMCS *Standpoint*, St. Thomas; HMCS *Venetia*, St. Thomas; HMCS *Nipigon*, Sudbury; HMCS *Whitethroat*, Toronto; HMCS *Lisgar*, Toronto; HMCS *Llewellyn*, Toronto; HMCS *Glenfield*, Toronto; HMCS *Arras*, Toronto; HMCS *Wasaga*, Toronto; HMCS *Marlis*, Welland; HMS *Thane*, Windsor; HMCS *Woodstock*, Woodstock

Royal Navy ships adopted: HMS *Cape Argona*, Brockville; HMS *Raja*, Brantford; HMS *Aspirant*, Hamilton; HMCS *Cataraqui*, Kingston; HMS *Evenlode*, Oakville; HMCS *Carleton*, Ottawa; HMS *Inver*, Preston; HMS *BYMS 47*, St. Mary's; HMS *Cape Mariato*, Toronto; HMS *Findhorn*, Toronto; HMCS *Hunder*, Windsor; HMCS *York*, Toronto



*HMCS Woodstock / circa 1943 - 1945
www.navy.gc.ca/project_pride/photo_archive/photo_archive_e.asp?section=1
National Defence / HS-0299-2*

Book Campaigns

Minister of National War Services Stresses Need for More Books!

In a recent letter to the I.O.D.E., Major-General L. R. LaFleche, Minister of National War Services said: “. . . At a meeting in my office, the three Services made known to me the great need for books for their personnel. As the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire is the official distributor for these supplies, I again turn to you for an even greater number of books than heretofore. I make this request keeping in mind how willing and ready you have been in the past to meet the requirements of our fighting men . . .”

The Gloucester Northern Light, Bathurst New Brunswick, April 11, 1946

“SENDS THANKS TO IODE”

January 21st, 1946—This is a letter of thanks to the IODE on behalf of the 12 missionaries, Oblate of Mary Immaculate, sunk on the Zam Zam in 1941 and interned in Germany till the end of the War. Almost all of us have received during our captivity, while we were acting Padres of different camps in Germany and Poland, letters and extra comforts from your wonderful association. At a meeting of these 12 ex-PoWs held lately in Ottawa a resolution was voted to the effect that an official letter of thanks be sent to you to express their gratitude. I am glad to fulfil this pleasant duty as I, myself, have been largely favoured by your generosity when I was the acting RC Padre of the Allied Naval Prisoners in the Camp of Marlag and Milag Nord.

“Officially then, and without censorship this time, I want to tell you how much we appreciated the letters and numerous parcels you sent us while we were behind the barbed wire. It was a tremendous help to know that we were not forgotten at home. It was great to be a Canadian and it seemed remarkable that you were able to see just exactly what was so helpful to us” Robert Barsalow

Toronto Daily Star, Toronto, December 21, 1945

“REPATS PRAISE IODE FOR GIFTS OF BOOKS”

“Train car No. 438 conveying a large party of British liberated prisoners of war from Japan, en route from San Francisco to Halifax, N.S., for repatriation to the British Isles, passed through your city. I understand from the train commander that your organization provided generous supplies of books which did much to make the men comfortable on their long journey home, after enduring so much in Japanese hands. I cannot express the feelings of these men, but you may be sure that the courtesy and kindness displayed at Toronto will ever remain in their memories. Please convey my sincere appreciation to your voluntary workers whose efforts on behalf of servicemen cannot, in my opinion, be too highly commended.

A.W. Henderson, Lieutenant-Colonel,
Assistant Director of Transportation Movements

The Evening Telegram, Toronto, November 5, 1945

“DISTRIBUTE BOOKS AMONG SERVICES”

New and used books are being sought daily by military hospitals, troop ships, troop trains and release depots, according to Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire service libraries.

Tons of reading material, supplied by voluntary contributions and various chapters across Canada, has been distributed by the Order among navy, army and air force personnel.

Not less appreciative of books are Veterans Guard of Canada details often stationed miles from civilization.

The libraries' department received the following letter from a veteran, “My guard and myself had a twofold pleasure today. While we were out in the bush rounding up four prisoners who escaped over a month ago and were brought back to camp, the boat arrived with your books, so now we can relax a little.”

Advertising copy for 1945 campaign called "Camp Libraries: Story No. 1"

Advertising copy for 1945 campaign called "Camp Libraries: Story No. 1"

From Timbuktu to Kiska, from Jamaica to Iceland, and all points in between on land and sea wherever Canadian men and women of the Services are fighting, training, on guard or hospitalized, there you'll find the world's best reading sent by the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire; and provided by the warm-hearted generosity of the Canadian people.

There's Still a Job to Be Done

Over a million books have been sent to the Forces by the I.O.D.E. already more than 234,000 last year alone. Still more are still urgently needed. Still more will be required in military hospitals long after the war. You can help this important work by making a cash donation. You can help throughout the war, too, by donating books from your own library.

**BOOKS
NEEDED
Now....**



for SHIPS AT SEA... MILITARY HOSPITALS
... NAVY, ARMY AND AIR FORCE
ESTABLISHMENTS IN CANADA AND OVERSEAS

One lot of IODE books found its way to a prison camp in far Timbuktu where it was received with amazement and great joy by a group of our fellows who had been shot down over the desert, or taken prisoner during desert campaigns. The boys were released when the Americans landed, and when Flying Officer William Campbell, who was one of the prisoners, returned to Canada on leave he came personally to the IODE to thank them and to tell them how much the books had meant to the boys. "You can imagine how much a book in their own language would mean after months of isolation, how it would help to make bearable the long hours of boredom and lonesomeness. They were read and re-read, again and again."

After the Reading

- Locate the community nearest to where you live that had an IODE chapter that adopted a ship during WWII. Research the history of "your" ship to present to your class
- In your opinion which part of the IODE's WWII service is the best role model for you today?
- List all the different areas in which the IODE has been active since 1900. Compare this record with other service organizations

Extensions

- Locate the nearest IODE chapter to your community and interview one of its members about their current activities
- Investigate the story of the WWII IODE Bolingbroke Bomber and the one currently in the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum
www.iode.ca/IODE-Canada-War-Effort-Contributions.aspx
www.warplane.com/pages/restoration_boly_update.html
- *Gathering our Heroes* is the name of a Chatham-Kent IODE project to locate those from their area who served in WWII. The project seeks to catalogue and preserve information about local veterans in a series of Remembrance Books for their local museum. Start such a project in your own community

Sources

- Library and Archives Canada, *Armed Services Library Campaign* n.d. 1943-45 5. Q5-13869
- MG28 I 17, volumes 6, 19, 23, 31 and 36, IODE Fonds National Archives of Canada, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca
- "Our History", IODE Canada, www.iode.ca/OUR-HISTORY.aspx
- "POLSON, MARGARET SMITH (Murray)" www.iode.ca/OUR-HISTORY.aspx
Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online
www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?Bioid=41983&query=