

# THE JAMAICA LEGION POPPY APPEAL FUND

## BUY A POPPY AND HELP THOSE WHO HELPED YOU

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE POPPY



The areas of the northern France known as Flanders and Picardy saw some of the most concentrated and some of the bloodiest fighting of the First World War.

There was complete devastation. Buildings, roads, trees and natural life, simply disappeared. Where once there were homes and farms there was now a sea of mud, grave for the dead where men still live and fought.

Only one other living thing survived: The poppy, flowering, each year with the coming of the warmer weather it brought LIFE, HOPE, COLOUR and REASSURANCE to those still fighting.

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918, the First World War ended. Civilians wanted to remember the people who had given their lives for peace and freedom. An American War Secretary, Moina Michaels, inspired by John McCrae's poem began selling poppies to friends to raise money for the Ex-Service community. And so the tradition began.

She wrote "And now the Torch and Poppy red, wear in honour of our dead."

"The poppy is a symbol of remembrance for those who died in battles. The emblem was chosen because of the poppies that bloomed across some of the worst battlefields of Flanders in World War 1, their red colour an appropriate symbol for the bloodshed of trench warfare."

Dr. McCrae serving the Canadian Armed Forces in World War 1, deeply inspired and moved by what he saw wrote these verses:

#### In Flanders' Fields

"In Flanders' fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place: and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high,  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders' fields."

-John McCrae, 1915

The first actual POPPY DAY was held in Britain on November 11 1921 and it was a national success. Support the **Jamaica Legion**, so that it may support our heroes, our veterans who fought for freedom, our freedom.

## The Jamaica Legion

### "Service Not Self"

The **Jamaica Legion** is an affiliate of the Royal Commonwealth Ex Services League and was established in 1949. While the Government of Jamaica provides an annual subvention there are also donations from organizations and individuals in both cash and kind which assist the **Legion** in caring for our veterans.

The **Jamaica Legion** is recognised as the custodian of **Remembrance**. It safeguards the welfare, interests and memory of ex- servicemen and women, not only those who served in the World War but also those involved in conflicts since the inception of the **Jamaica Legion** including members of the Jamaica Defence Force.

Each year the Nation expresses its unequivocal support of the **Legion's** charity work through the "National Poppy Appeal Drive", one of the means of financial support. Across Jamaica today there are over one hundred ex- servicemen/women and widows who are the beneficiaries of financial, medical, optical and dental assistance provided by the Jamaica Legion in addition to provisions made for those domiciled in Curphey Home.

The Executive body of the Jamaica Legion are:

Grand President: HRH The Duke of York, KG

Grand Patron: HE The Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen, ON GCMG, CD, KTSJ

Vice President Rear Admiral Antonette Wemyss Gorman, OD, ADC, JP, MSc, psc(n) Chief of Defence Staff, JDF

Chairman: Island Council Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Andrew F. Sewell, JP

Vice Chairman: Mr. Errol Mckenzie, JP

Honorary Treasurer: Mr. Samuel Cohen,

General Secretary: Lt. Col. Michael A. Anglin, JP

## The West India Regiment

At the outbreak of World War 1 in August 1914, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion West India Regiment was stationed in Freetown where it had been based for two and a half years. A detachment of the Regiment's signallers saw service in the German Cameroons. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion returned to the West Indies in 1916.

The West India Regiment (WIR) was an infantry unit of the British Army recruited from and normally stationed in the British Colonies of the Caribbean between 1795 and 1927. It was comprised of men from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana. The regiment differed from similar forces raised in other parts of the British Empire in that it formed an integral part of the regular British Army that fought in World War 1.

The Second Battalion was sent from Kingston to West Africa in the second half of 1915. They took part in the battle which was aimed at capturing Yaounde in January 1916. Other battles that the West India Regiment took part in were Mombassa in Kenya (against German Colonial Forces) Dar es Salaam, Nyangao and The Palestine Campaign, which were all important battles in World War 1.

Subsequent to The Palestine Campaign, General Allenby sent the following telegram to the Governor of Jamaica: "I have great pleasure in informing you of the gallant conduct of the machine gun section of the first British West Indies Regiment during two successful raids on the Turkish trenches. All ranks behaved with great gallantry under heavy rifle and shell fire and contributed in no small measure to the success of the operations."

## World War 11

World war 11 began in September 1939 when Britain and France declared war on Germany following Germany's invasion of Poland. Led by Adolf Hitler, Germany's plan was to conquer the world and impose their will. As it was in World War 1, Britain deployed with not only British troops but also men from Jamaica. These men served gallantly, not only for their freedom but also for the freedom of the world at large. They are heroes and must be honoured and treated as such. World War 11 ended in May 1945 with the surrender of German forces.

## Curphey Home

Quite a number of Jamaican servicemen never made it back home, but for those who survived and were in need of a resting place to live out their twilight years in dignity, Curphey Home, founded in 1958 in the quiet hills of Newport, Manchester, was the place to be.

In the early years, the Home (situated on 54 acres) was occupied by a mixture of persons who had seen action in both wars, but by 2004, there were only a few veterans of a World War living there. There is no survivor from World War 1 in the Home at this time.

Curphey Home derives its name from the late Colonel, Sir Aldington George Curphey and falls under the purview of the Jamaica Legion, a body that was established in 1949, just over three years after the end of the Second World War.

Some of the services provided at the Home on a daily basis include the security and nursing care of Ex-Servicemen in residence. There is a resident Superintendent and two nurses among the staff who dedicate themselves to the highest level of service they can bring to our veterans to whom we all owe so much.

## Participate

When you wear a Poppy, you not only participate in this world wide effort but you are showing the rest of the world that you are just as concerned about the cause for which your countrymen and women fought.

**PROCEEDS IN AID OF JAMAICAN EX SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN.  
YOU MAY CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY THROUGH SCOTIA BANK,  
ACCOUNT # 20492 "POPPY APPEAL" OR CALL 926-2381/82 JAMAICA  
LEGION FOR ADVICE.**