# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter from the Chair</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter from the Executive Director</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vimy Pilgrimage Award</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient Testimonial</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaverbrook Vimy Prize</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient Testimonial</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encounters with Canada</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events &amp; Commemorations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vimy Ridge Day</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remembrance Day</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibit &amp; Centennial Speaker Series</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vimy Foundation Centennial Park</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ridge</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vari Gate</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenues &amp; Expenses</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you partners and donors</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At Vimy, 100,000 Canadian soldiers fought together for the first time to secure a rare and stunning victory for the Allied forces. Arguably, for the first time ever the world paid attention to something that our young country had done.

From Vimy, the emboldened Canadian Corps went to a string of victories starting with Hill 70, followed by the taking of Passchendaele, finished by the never to be forgotten final “100 days” when Canadian forces became the spearhead of the entire British Imperial war effort in Europe.

We recall these events to remind Canadians of what we can do as a nation when faced with enormous challenges. By the end of the war, over 600,000 citizens had served in the Canadian Armed forces out of a population of 8 million. We had lost 60,000 soldiers, had 170,000 physically injured and countless suffering from what we now call PTSD.

No one could have foreseen how our young, sparsely populated country could muster such an effort of blood and material – and yet we did.

The Vimy Foundation, through its experiential education programs and commemorative initiatives like the Visitors Education Centre and the Vimy Foundation Centennial Park, works daily to ensure that Canadians never forget the nation-building effects of the First World War on Canada.

Christopher Sweeney,
Vimy Foundation Chair
It has been a privilege for me to have led the Vimy Foundation through the 2019 year. Getting to know the programs, the fantastic young people who participate, and our generous donors has been a pleasure.

2019 was an introspective year for the Foundation as we recommitted to our vision, interrogated what we wanted the Foundation to become, and welcomed our 14th cohort of Canadian students. From our time spent thinking about our role, we arrived at a new motto for the Foundation: Building the Future, Inspired by the Past.

It was also the first full year of activity for the newly opened Vimy Foundation Centennial Park in France. The oaks have settled in to grow and the park is slowly becoming a part of the local communal space; visitors take photographs of the wild flower field and spend time on one of the benches to contemplate the Canadian National Vimy Memorial. I am privileged to be able to learn more about the purpose the park serves and to help ensure that its future sustainability is assured.

I would like to thank all of the people who have supported me in my first year as Executive Director, the Board, the staff, and the donors. I am so excited for what comes next!

Best wishes,

Caitlin Bailey,
Vimy Foundation Executive Director
The Vimy Pilgrimage Award

After six consecutive years of the Vimy Pilgrimage Award (VPA), the 2019 program has been the best to date. It seems inconceivable that the VPA program can improve exponentially from one year to the next, but over the past two editions we have achieved this success in no small part due to Scotiabank’s continued support, the excellent team of chaperone educators who are on the ground with the students for the entirety of the program in Belgium and France, and the outstanding Award winners themselves.

The twenty students selected from across Canada exemplified altruism and a commitment to improving their communities. During the program these incredible young people travelled to Europe to learn about the First World War by touring former battlefields, tunnels and trenches, and historical sites. They visited cemeteries and museums, engaged in thought provoking discussions, and participated in special commemorative ceremonies.

The 2019 VPA recipients take part in a group discussion.
Recipient Testimonial

After learning about the war and these battles in school, I clearly knew nothing about what the war truly was, until now. This program shed light on the truth about war, debunking common myths. I feel as if this program changed the way I think. It has taught me what it is to think critically, something that isn’t learned in school.

This was an important experience for me to truly learn and be at sites that are so important to Canada. Words cannot be expressed to sum up how thankful I am for being able to have this experience.

Elizabeth Gagné, Regina, SK
2019 marked the final major milestone of the First World War with the centennial anniversary of the Treaty of Versailles signing. Moving beyond the Great War’s milestones, the Beaverbrook Vimy Prize (BVP) is instrumental in ensuring today’s youth are aware of the defining events that changed the world a century ago, and their effects on the world we live in today.

With support from the Beaverbrook Canadian Foundation for the tenth consecutive year, the Vimy Foundation was able to provide top level educational programming to 16 deserving youth from across Canada, France, and the United Kingdom. For two weeks in August, the students had the unique opportunity to participate in an intensive and rewarding learning experience in Belgium and France, where they studied Canada’s role in the First and Second World Wars, and the relationship between Canada, the United Kingdom, and France during the war years.
As the leaders of tomorrow, we must study the effects of our past actions and learn from them in order to grow, not just as individuals but as a community. In my school curriculum I finished learning about the First and Second World Wars but I feel I only skinned through the subjects; this experience allowed me to learn so much more than I would ever be taught at school.

Through all the visits, discussions, and presentations, I have truly learned a profound amount. My knowledge of the First and Second World Wars proliferated through each activity and has helped me gain a broader perspective of the wars.

Nathan Yee, Vancouver, BC
From April 7-13, one hundred youth from across the nation attended the tenth edition of our Vimy: Canada’s Coming of Age program week at Encounters with Canada to learn about Canada in the First World War.

Sponsored by the Vimy Foundation during Vimy week, the program introduces students to Canada’s role in the Great War, the achievements made, and the international recognition gained. Students come away from the program with more knowledge of their history, a greater sense of their shared Canadian identity, and a stronger desire to become active and engaged citizens.

Young Canadians learned about the causes of the war, why Canada became involved, and the battles we were involved in. They took part in historical thinking modules such as examining censorship letters, propaganda posters, and the role of women in the war among others.
On April 9th, 2019, dignitaries, business leaders, elected officials, members of the Canadian Forces and students gathered under the patronage and in the presence of the Ambassador of France to Canada Kareen Rispal for the ninth annual Vimy Reception. Supporters were on hand to help raise awareness of the Vimy Foundation’s work, commemorate the 102nd anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, and celebrate the strong relationship between France and Canada.

Special guests, including Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans Affairs, Stéphane Lauzon, the evening’s guest speaker R.H. Thomson, veterans and currently serving members of the Canadian Forces, and alumni of the Vimy Foundation student programs, helped commemorate Vimy Ridge Day, celebrate the work of the Vimy Foundation, and unveil photos of the new Vimy Foundation Centennial Park, which opened in Vimy, France in November 2018.
November 11th, 2019, marked the hundredth anniversary of the first Remembrance Day held to commemorate the armistice agreement that ended the First World War. Vimy Foundation program alumni attended ceremonies across the country laying wreaths in memory of those fallen in service to Canada. Awareness campaigns were also published in newspapers across the country and shared on the Foundation’s social media platforms.

In the week leading up to Remembrance Day, digital display ads reached thousands at Billy Bishop airport, in Toronto. The Vimy Foundation also co-hosted the opening of After the War, the Canadian Centre for the Great War’s travelling exhibit, at the Manège des Fusiliers Mont Royal.
Exhibit & Speaker Series

The Great War in Colour: A New Look at Canada’s First World War Effort - 1914-1918

The Vimy Foundation’s travelling exhibit of colourized First World War images started 2019 on display at the War Museum in Ottawa. The exhibit traveled to Milton, ON, in March and to the Toronto Zoo in the lead up to Remembrance Day.

First World War Centennial Speaker Series

On March 12, 2019, historian and curator Carla-Jean Stokes and expert digital colourist Mark Truelove spoke with guests at the Vancouver Public Library about photography during the First World War.

On March 26, 2019, historians Marie-Eve Chagnon and Guillaume Marceau spoke with guests at the Chateau Ramezay in Montreal about Propaganda during the First World War.
After opening in 2018, this year was the first full operational year of the Vimy Foundation Centennial Park. We welcomed visitors, both international and local, for 365 days, and watched as the area settled in to become what we had hoped it would be: a welcoming space for reflection and a living memorial. During the year, we installed 10 more Centennial Benches, with the support of our donors, and confirmed the construction of a new water feature in the centre of the park.

We would like to thank the Love Family Foundation for their commitment to making the water feature a reality; and the George and Helen Vari Foundation for their contribution toward the Vari Gate, in memory of Mr. George Vari.
The Vimy Foundation and the Love Family Foundation are proud to announce a joint effort to commemorate the legacy of the Battle of Vimy Ridge - *The Ridge: To Venerate A Buried History*. The Vimy Foundation Centennial Park in France, an established living memorial, will soon be home to the water feature, which was commissioned after a competition with entrants from Canada’s leading design universities.

The winning team combined the talents of three Thesis Level Masters of Architecture students: Scott Normand, Kevin Complido, and Brendan Dyck. In their proposal, the team states: “the intention driving the project is for this theoretical interaction to be tranquil and thought-provoking and for it to reinforce the dialogue of peace and remembrance.”

The proposed design is to be realised in 2020 and unveiled in the fall.
The Vimy Foundation and the George and Helen Vari Foundation are proud to unveil a new name for the entrance to the Vimy Foundation Centennial Park - *The Vari Gate*.

The gate embodies both core missions of the Park; delineating a reflective space for remembrance of those Canadians who served and were killed at Vimy Ridge (and other sites during the First World War) and standing as well as a symbol of Peace and Reconciliation.

“We are excited to highlight the philanthropic legacy of the George and Helen Vari Foundation, and to create a memorable entrance to the park”, says Vimy Foundation Chair Christopher Sweeney.

The project will be constructed in 2020 and unveiled shortly afterwards.
**Revenues & Expenses**

**Revenues:** $687,426 total

- Restricted: 82%
- Unrestricted: 16%
- Merchandise sales: 2%

**Expenses:** $610,246 total

- Programs: 63%
- Operations: 32%
- Administration: 4%
- Merchandise: 1%

*for the 2019 fiscal year*
Thank You

Program Partners
Beaverbrook Vimy Prize
The Beaverbrook Canadian Foundation
Vimy Pilgrimage Award
Scotiabank

Travel Partner
Air Canada

Special Mention
Greg Latre moille
Nathan and Lily Silver Foundation

Media Partners
Post Media
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Vimy Reception Partner
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Centennial Park Donors
Vari Gate
The George and Helen Vari Foundation

The Ridge
The Love Family Foundation
Centennial Benches
The Black Watch of Canada
The Calgary Highlanders
Fasken
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The Miner Family
The Peter Cundill Foundation
The Province of Alberta
The Province of Manitoba
The Province of Ontario
The Rocky Mountain Rangers

The 2019 Vimy Pilgrimage Award sponsored by Scotiabank
Thank You

**Vimy Oaks (France)**
The Greenberg, Greene, Hindo and Westeinde Families
The City of Halifax
Landscape Ontario
No Stone Left Alone Memorial Foundation
Le 22e Régiment, le Régiment de Maisonneuve et les Fusiliers Mont-Royal
The Royal Canadian Chaplain Service
Cliff Sweeney in memory of Barbara (Glica) Sweeney
The Tattersall Family and Heathbridge Capital Management
University of Toronto

**Vimy Oaks (Canada)**
All Saints High School (Kanata, ON)
Great Lakes Forestry Centre Arboretum
Park Lawn Corporation
Cathy Ramsay
Michael Ross
Royal Canadian Legion, Orleans Branch 632
Selwyn House School (Montréal, QC)
Joanne R. Sutherland
Max Talbot

The Vimy Foundation would like to thank the Vimy Oaks Legacy Corporation for their continued support in caring for the Vimy Oaks in Canada and France.
The Vimy Foundation is very fortunate to have dedicated men and women who have devoted their time and efforts to furthering the Foundation’s goals. They each bring an impressive slate of experience and skills to oversee the management and the major policy decision-making of the organization.

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William Stavert (1934 – 2017)

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