‘Lest we forget’: Remembrance Day at MES

MABLE HASTINGS

Remembrance Day marks the anniversary of the end of the First World War on Nov. 11, 1918. This war resulted in the loss of lives both civilians and members of the military. Remembrance Day, also known as Armistice Day and Poppy Day, commemorates those who lost their lives.

At Mansonville Elementary School, the hallways and classrooms in the school were lined with poppies and a reminder to all, “Lest we forget,” as the school staff and students respectfully remembered the lives lost and those who served their country.

John McCrae, the Canadian doctor who penned the poem In Flanders Fields, would surely feel proud to witness how since his tribute was written, the poppy (a hearty flower) that once grew in graveyards where soldiers were buried and was the blood red flower that often blossomed on battlefields, has become a symbol of remembrance.

In preparation for their Remembrance Day ceremony, Mansonville elementary pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and Cycle 1 students made a nice handprint wreath to bring to the cenotaph. In Art class, students painted fields of poppies to remember those lives that were lost.

The school staff and students went up the cenotaph at 10:30 a.m. on Nov. 11th and stood around the monument that honors all the fallen heroes. In Flander’s Fields was read by teacher Dan Aucoin and the lives of some of the “home-town” heroes related to the students were described.

“We were lucky enough to have a piper, Michael Darney, with us who played Amazing Grace,” said MES secretary Tara Wighton. “Even our mayor, Louis Veillon, and David Oliver from the St. John’s Masonic Lodge were present for the ceremonies,” she added.

O Canada was sung in both official languages and a moment of silence was observed at 11:11 a.m. in memory of such great men and women. The students laid their wreath and left their poppies at the cenotaph as a way to show their admiration and respect. The piper followed the students back to the school playing the entire way.

“Remembrance Day is always an emotional day for me as my father and great-grandfather were in the war,” explained Wighton. “There is not a day where I don’t stop and say thank you to the heroes that gave their lives for my freedom,” she continued.

“As the secretary of Mansonville Elementary School and in memory of my beloved father and all the soldiers that fought with him, I feel a great sense of pride in the staff and students at MES who take time to remember with respect for all of those who fought for our freedom. I feel that it is important to keep the spirit of Remembrance Day alive. In my opinion, it should be a part of every school’s curriculum.”

By Claudia Villemaire

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Cougars looking to repeat

Both teams advanced to the title game by virtue of road wins over the top-two seeded teams. Vieux-Montreal needed overtime to defeat Campus Notre-Dame-de-Foy 26-19 while Champlain demolished Vanier 64-18, a win that gives them a chance to defend the provincial championship they won last year.

“It is good to be back,” Joncas said with a smile. “We played well against Vanier, we had a lot of big plays and we were able to answer anytime they scored.” I think it showed the character that this team has, we didn’t stop after they scored but we kept grinding and we did that all year.”

Vieux-Montreal and Champlain met once in the regular season, back in September, when the Cougars recorded a 38-28 road victory. In that game all-star running back Cedric Joseph ran for 120 yards and scored two touchdowns and he is coming off another strong performance against the Cheetahs when he accumulated over 200 yards in total offence. However the Cougars are by no means a one-dimensional team; they have a big-play passing attack featuring quarterback Michael Arruda and receivers Marc-Antoine Pivon, Yanic Lessard, Bechir Janafo and Guillaume Conraud.

However it football adage the defence wins championship and the Cougar D has been excellent during the playoffs allowing just 27 points in their two post season games. They are led by a trio of 2013 all-stars, Adam Auclair, Kevin McGee and Fredrik Ribiaille.

Kick off is set for 3 p.m. at CEGEP St-Jean.