

## West Kildonan Horticultural Society Plants Vimy Ridge Oak Tree in Public Arboretum

By Roswitha Nowak

As part of the celebrations for Canada's Birthday, and recognition of the Battle at Vimy Ridge, the West Kildonan Horticultural Society, in partnership with the Legion Branch #30 (Hartford Ave. and Main St.) planted an Oak tree at the Arboretum on Partridge and Andrews.



MaryAnn Mihychuk, M.P. obtained this rare tree for the dedication which was held on September 14, 2017. After a colour guard, military band, the dignitaries spoke about Vimy Ridge, Canadian participation in war and peace, as well as setting a living tribute for the future.

M.P. MaryAnn Mihychuk, M.L.A. Nic Curry, and city councillor Ross Eadie spoke, before the official planting and laying of the wreath. The event was covered by CTV, with interviews and history shared multiple times.

The Vimy Ridge Oak tree is a grafted oak sapling obtained from Ontario. After the battle at Vimy, a Canadian soldier, Leslie Miller gathered a handful of acorns. The trees had all been destroyed with the battle, so all that remained was the acorns found on the ground. He sent them back to his farm in Ontario, and grew these oaks. Efforts to propagate and return the oaks to Vimy were unsuccessful. Instead efforts were made to graft onto Canadian oak trees, which was successful. The oak trees were offered to mark the anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge, and made available to special groups.

The tree for the public Arboretum took the efforts of our M.P. MaryAnn Mihychuk to complete the paperwork, pay for the tree and its transportation, and it arrived special delivery, in time for our dedication on Sept. 14. It completes the need for our seventh oak at the West Kildonan site, recognizing the Seven Oaks historic importance of the area. The foliage of this tree is very unique, and leaves are in clusters. A granite marker will be placed to memorialise this event.



The West Kildonan Horticultural Society tends this public space, having planted a perennial bed, butterfly garden, rose bed and members regularly tend to the upkeep. Our Society holds its annual plant sale in this area every spring. It is situated close to a personal care home, many apartment buildings and residential houses. It has benches, tables and is a welcome refuge for many individuals.

This tree is carefully tended to by a committee of volunteers, and whenever our members drive by, everyone checks to see how it is doing. The arboretum on Partridge and Andrews is a wonderful nook of interesting plants and an asset to our community and history. Please drop in and check out the tree and plants. Our society takes great pride in this park and welcomes visitors. For further information please visit our website

[www.wkhorticultural.ca](http://www.wkhorticultural.ca)

