

# Remembering the fallen: Cemetery tour highlights local veterans



The grave of veteran Vernon Patterson (1917-58) at the Glen Leslie Church and Cemetery on Saturday. Peter Shokeir / Daily Herald-Tribune

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The inaugural Remembrance Tour ran this weekend at the Glen Leslie Church and Cemetery on Saturday.

The tour allows participants to visit the graves of six veterans and learn about their achievements.

“I think we really need to be reminded of the sacrifices that have been made so we could enjoy the freedom and the lifestyle that we do now,” said organizer Wanda Zenner.

Zenner explained that she originally wanted to host the tour during Remembrance Day on Nov. 11.

“Weather in Alberta isn’t very conducive to be doing that so I thought, why don’t we have it at the end of September?” she said. “Typically, it’s very pretty here, the leaves have changed

colour. However, it's a little chiller than what I would but I told everybody that if you're coming today, make sure that you bundle up."

The tour presented on six local veterans who never made it home and were buried overseas.

"It amazes me how they look after these graves in Europe," Zenner said. "They really appreciate all the allies have done for them so they could be free again too."



Organizer Wanda Zenner presents on veterans who have passed during the Remembrance Tour at the Glen Leslie Church and Cemetery on Saturday. Peter Shokeir / Daily Herald-Tribune

According to Zenner, around 60,000 Canadians died during World War I, which is close to the population of Grande Prairie. She also noted the high local enlistment rate during World War II.

"Per capita, there were more people that actually enlisted from this Peace area than there was anywhere else in the British Empire," Zenner said. "When there was the call to duty, everyone certainly loaded up and left to protect our freedom that we've joined today."

The graves visited were Norman Leslie (1888-1972), Vernon Patterson (10972-1958), John Wales (1916-1985), Roy Robideau (1889-1984), Raymond Boyer (1924-2012) and Bertha May (1919-1986). All served in either World War I or World War II.

The tour concluded with country gospel signing from Christensen and Friends followed by refreshments.

The Glen Leslie Church and Cemetery is located east of Grande Prairie along Highway 670.

By: Peter Shokeir

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