

Princess wowed by school's Canada Day

HER Royal Highness the Princess Royal attended events to mark Canada Day in Bramshott and Liphook – as schoolchildren recalled sacrifices made during two world wars.

HRH Princess Anne read from the Bible during the Remembrance service in St Mary's Church in Bramshott, before laying a wreath at the Cross of Sacrifice in the churchyard.

More than 90 pupils from Liphook CofE Junior School also laid a single maple leaf on the graves of individual Canadian soldiers whose lives they had researched that term. There are 318 Canadian soldiers buried there, as Bramshott Common was a vital training ground for Canadian troops during both world wars.

The Princess then travelled to Liphook CofE Junior School where those same 90 Year 4 pupils presented the story of Canadian servicemen Ernest and Ronald Ede in an impressive drama, song and video presentation.

She also presented a CAN\$5 coin to nine-year-old Bellamy Budd, chosen because he had demonstrated significant learning from the three-month Canada Day project. He had researched a soldier called James Arthur Campbell, who died of Spanish flu in October 1918 – and was so inspired that he began to research his own family tree.

"I didn't know that I would be the one that the Princess would give the medal to," he said. "I felt quite excited. It was good to be paying



Top: HRH Princess Anne is introduced to the Rev Val Inglis-Jones outside St Mary's Church, Bramshott; below: pupils from Liphook CofE Junior School prepare to place maple leaves on graves of Canadian soldiers in the churchyard

tribute to these men, it felt quite respectful."

And his mum Becky said: "It started by looking at the two world wars, but he decided that going back two generations wasn't enough. The G Budd on the war memorial is a relative, and so every evening he would do research into our family

too. He traced back branches of the family from all over the world and back to the 1500s."

Hundreds of guests, including veterans from the Royal British Legion, the High Commission of Canada, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and families of those Canadians buried in the



churchyard joined local residents, as well as governors and parents from the school for the two events. It began with a service at St Mary's Church, which included a parade of standards, the Bible reading, poems read by children from Liphook CofE Junior School, and a sermon by the rector, the Rev Valentine Inglis-Jones.

He said: "We were honoured that our friends from Canada came far from home and gave everything for us who are here today. We honour them with our most precious gift – our children – who every year research about a specific soldier so that we and they can remember those stories."

Dignitaries processed to the special plot in the churchyard maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, where the Canadian soldiers are buried. Each of those laying a wreath was flanked by two children from the school. There was then an Act of Remembrance, including a one-minute silence and the Kohima Exhortation read by pupils from the school.

At Liphook CofE Junior School, HRH Princess Anne was presented with the Fourth Clasp to the Canadian Forces' Decoration by Brigadier-



Top left: Bellamy Budd is presented with the \$5 coin; top right: HRH Princess Anne is flanked by Liphook CofE Junior School pupils as she lays a wreath; above left: the presentation by Liphook pupils of Canada's involvement in two world wars; above right: Ernest Ede, a Canadian veteran of the First World War

General Dwayne Parsons. Then in the main hall, the pupils presented their moving tribute to the service of Canadian Forces during the two world wars.

Dressed in wartime outfits, they told the story of Ernest Ede, who was born in Bramshott in 1891, emigrated to Canada in 1912, and enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1915. He found himself in the Bramshott camp in 1916 and was sent to France, fighting in the battle of Passchendaele. He was injured and discharged.

He returned to Bramshott church where he married Winifred in 1920, and eventually moved back to British Columbia in 1924. But his connection to Bramshott survived through his son Ronald, who served in the Second World War.

Headteacher Jacky Taylor said: "This work is a reflection of how

our children learn from the past. They don't just remember, they understand. They have each researched the history behind an individual buried in the churchyard, walking in their shoes for the past three months."

During the First World War, Bramshott was one of the largest Canadian military camps in the UK. Many who passed through Bramshott served in France and Flanders. Since 1942, the village has hosted an annual Canada Day service, which has helped to develop lasting bonds between the village and Canada. Maple trees are planted in St Mary's churchyard and along the nearby A3 as a tribute.

And for the past 20 years, pupils from Liphook CofE Junior School have recalled those sacrifices in a variety of ways. Find out more on www.portsmouth.anglican.org/canadaday