



Welland Canal  
Fallen Workers Memorial

A PLACE TO REMEMBER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Unifor Local 4212 donates \$25,000 to memorial honouring fallen workers who built the Welland Canal**

April 28, 2017 – Unifor workers on the Welland Canal have donated \$25,000 to the memorial honouring the men who built the canal nearly a century ago.

Members of Unifor Local 4212 and family members of lost workers presented a cheque to Mayor Walter Sendzik and the Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial Task Force at a ceremony marking National Day of Mourning on April 28.

The Mayor thanked the workers and family members for the donation.

“As we gather for National Day of Mourning, we remember the fallen workers injured or lost on the job, and we reflect on past generations who helped build our community and create safer workplaces for all,” stated Mayor Sendzik.

Unifor is the largest private sector union in Canada with members in every major sector of the economy. Local 4212 represents operations, maintenance and clerical employees of the St. Lawrence Seaway in Niagara and Cornwall.

Local 4212 Chairperson Rory Dempsey spoke about the importance of the Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial to current workers and family members who have lost loved ones in the workplace.

“On behalf of the present-day canal workers and the friends we have lost, we are proud to honour the men who died during construction of the fourth Welland Canal. The memorial will recognize all of the workers who lost their lives building this truly amazing engineering marvel. We are proud to honour their hard work and sacrifice,” said Dempsey.

While working conditions have improved dramatically since the canal was constructed in the early 1900s, workplace injuries and deaths continue to impact families. Each year, National Day of Mourning is a time to remember the fallen workers and reflect. At the ceremony, Lou Gazzolla, a current worker on the canal spoke about the loss of his father John, who died in a workplace accident.

“On behalf of the Task Force, I’d like to thank Unifor Local 4212 and family members of the fallen workers for the thoughtful donation in honour of our fallen workers,” stated Mayor Sendzik.

**TASK FORCE CHAIR**

Walter Sendzik  
Mayor St. Catharines

**CAMPAIGN CHAIR**

Greg Wight

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Canadian Canal Society

Niagara Folk Arts  
Multicultural Centre

Welland Canals Foundation





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The fundraising goal for the memorial and parkette is approximately \$1 million. Through funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, marine industry businesses and organizations, as well as the labour community, the Task Force has raised more than \$700,000 to date. The Task Force is continuing to seek donations to build and unveil the memorial later this year. For more information or to make a donation please visit [www.stcatharines.ca/CanalWorkersMemorial](http://www.stcatharines.ca/CanalWorkersMemorial).

### About the Task Force

The [Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial Task Force](#) is a volunteer group established to finance, design, build and install a memorial to recognize workers who died while building the Welland Ship Canal between 1914 and 1932. Members of the Task Force include representatives from all Welland Canal communities, Niagara Regional Council, the federal government, the marine industry, local historians, the labour community, and community partners from the Canadian Canal Society, the Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre and the Welland Canals Foundation. Administrative and project support is provided by the City of St. Catharines.

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*Members of the Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial Task Force receive a cheque from Unifor Local 4212 on April 28 to mark National Day of Mourning.*

*Pictured left to right: Councillor Carlos Garcia, Gerry Miele Task Force, Rebecca Cann, Task Force, St. Catharines MP Chris Bittle, Mayor Walter Sendzik, Chair of the Task Force, Lou Gazzolla Unifor 4212, Rory Dempsey, Unifor 4212 Chairperson, Councillor Mike Britton, Niagara Centre MP Vance Badawey.*