

Victims of camps honoured

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A dark part of Vernon's history will be remembered half a world away this week.

On Wednesday, a bilingual (Ukrainian/English) plaque will be unveiled in Kyiv at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Resurrected Christ, recalling Canada's first national internment operations of 1914-1920.

During the Great War, thousands of Ukrainians and other Europeans were imprisoned as "enemy aliens," not because of any wrong they had done but only because of who they were, where they had come from.

In 2008, after years of community effort spearheaded by the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association the Government of Canada provided support for the creation of the Canadian First

World War Internment Recognition Fund tasked with developing commemorative and educational projects recalling this little-known episode in Canadian history.

An interment camp was opened in Vernon in September, 1914 to house the so called enemy aliens. The camp, located in what is now MacDonald Park next to WL Seaton Secondary School, housed hundreds of people.

Eleven men died while at the camp.

The Vernon camp was one of 24 across the nation that confined thousands of people between 1914 and 1920.