

HERALDRY FOR THE HEREAFTER

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With the modern development of heraldry in Canada all Canadians can petition for a grant of arms regardless of gender. And with the evolution of Canadian heraldry and the establishment of the Canadian Heraldic Authority (CHA), all Canadians have an opportunity to pass an honour from our Sovereign onto their children and future generations. A quick check in the Public Registry of the CHA shows an amazing array of arms that include cadet shields as armigers look to include arms in their heritage and legacy. While future generations may enjoy the inheritance of arms, and their continuance, your arms can also continue to be seen after you are gone.

Dating back several centuries, arms for the departed can be seen in “hatchments”. A 16th century derivation of the word “achievement”, these are diamond-shaped boards that display the arms of the late armiger. These arms have been displayed at the doorway of the armiger’s residence and at their church. The black background of a hatchment can also have white divisions to indicate a surviving spouse.

While not a common practice in Canada, examples can be found throughout the British Isles. Historical examples of hatchments used in Canada include the ones in Saint Paul’s Anglican Church in Halifax Nova Scotia. The church was built in 1750; prior to the American Revolutionary War and a century before Canadian Confederation. In the photograph of the church you can see several hatchments on the church interior; easily identified by the lozenge shape. The hatchment in the dexter chief of the photograph is that of Brigadier-General Charles Lawrence (14 December 1709 – 19 October 1760), a British military officer who also served as the Lieutenant Governor and subsequently Governor of Nova Scotia. The hatchment says “Governor Charles Lawrence” and simply dated “1760”.



Hatchments hung in Saint Paul’s Anglican Church, Halifax NS.
Photo credit: www.stpaulshalifax.org



Hatchment of Captain T.C. Pullen
Artwork by Gordon Macpherson CM, FRHSC, FRSA,
FSA (Scot) Niagara Herald Extraordinary

A modern example of a Canadian hatchment is that of Captain Thomas Charles Pullen, O.C., D.S.C., C.D., R.C.N. Captain Pullen was the 4th President of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada. His hatchment was unveiled in Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa ON, on 27 October 1991 during a special service on the 25th anniversary of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada.

An example of a hatchment of a fellow Branch member is that of another naval officer, Commander Evan Petley-Jones, C.D., R.C.N. Evan was a very keen member of the Society; both his sons as well as his grandchildren are armigerous. A tree of his family arms is very impressive and an exciting example of the use of Canadian cadet arms; but that's another story. Evan's hatchment can be seen in Saint Paul's Anglican Church in Nanaimo BC.



Hatchment of Commander Even Petley-Jones
Artwork by Laurie Patten FRHSC, SHA and Steve Cowan CD, UE, LRSHC, SHA.



Hatchment of Commander Even Petley-Jones displayed in Saint Paul's Church, Nanaimo BC.
Photo by Steve Cowan

For armigerous couples the background of the hatchment has a different design. Local BC member, Major Alex Greenwood passed away in 2012. Alex was a very dedicated member of our Society and his wife, Shirley Greenwood, F.R.G.S., F.R.H.S.C., is also armigerous and another hard working Branch member.

Their marshalled arms were the first arms of a couple impaled by the Canadian Heraldic Authority. For a concept hatchment for Alex the

background is per pale Sable and Azure; to sinister in the Argent division of the surviving spouse with the arms of Shirley. And Alex's achievement is shown in the centre; the RHSC arms to dexter in recognition of his membership with our Society.

One practice the BC/Yukon Branch has enabled is to show a hatchment for our late armigerous members. This can be seen online at the Branch website at <http://bc-yukon.heraldry.ca/black-arms.php>.

While you may or may not have a church where your arms can be seen, you can rest in peace assured that your hatchment can be seen online and available to everyone.

This would make an interesting project for the Society to have a hatchment as part of the national members roll. And having a hatchment ready may be part of your estate planning; an item in your will.



Hatchment of Major Alex Greenwood
Artwork by Laurie Patten FRHSC, SHA and Steve Cowan CD, UE, LRSHC, SHA.