



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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100 Back Street, Unit 200 Thunder Bay, ON P7J 1L2
Tel: (807) 623-8228 Fax: (807) 623-7730

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAN TO HONOUR MOST HIGHLY-DECORATED INDIGENOUS SOLDIER OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

THUNDER BAY, ON: Representatives of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) will join with First Nation leaders, military and municipal officials for the unveiling of a monument commemorating Charles Henry Byce, Canada's most highly-decorated Indigenous soldier of the Second World War, in Chapleau tomorrow.

"We are proud to honour the distinguished service of Charles Byce, who overcame the injustices of the Indian Residential School system to become our most highly-decorated Indigenous warrior during the Second World War," said NAN Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. "Many of our warriors have come to the defence of Canada and its interests during world wars and conflicts around the globe. This proud tradition is carried on in the spirit of Charles Byce by our members who serve in the Canadian Forces, police services and the Canadian Rangers, who put themselves in harm's way in the defence of others."

Charles Byce was born in Chapleau. His father, Harry Byce was a highly decorated veteran of the First World War and his Cree mother, Louisa Saylor, was from Moose Factory.

Charles Byce is one of the few Canadians to be awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) and the Military Medal (MM) for gallantry and valour. His father earned the same distinctions, earning them a unique place in Canada's history as the only father and son to receive these honours during two World Wars.

According to his citation for his actions during the Rhineland Campaign in 1945:

"The magnificent courage and fighting spirit displayed by this NCO (non-commissioned officer) when faced with almost insuperable odds are beyond all praise. His gallant stand, without adequate weapons and with a bare handful of men against hopeless odds will remain, for all time, an outstanding example to all ranks of the Regiment."

The commemoration will be held on Saturday September 17 from 1-3 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, Harry Searle Branch No. 5, at 33 Young Street, Chapleau, Ontario.

For more information please contact: Michael Heintzman, Director of Communications – Nishnawbe Aski Nation (807) 625-4965 or cell (807) 621-2790 or by email mheintzman@nan.on.ca