

## **Broadcast from cafe celebrates liberation**

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Forty-five years ago, Canadian soldiers ducked into the Huis de Beurs cafe-restaurant in Groningen in the Netherlands to take refuge from German snipers.

This month, Canadian veterans are back as heroes in the cafe, whose owners have renamed it Club Maple Leaf Up for this month in honor of the country that helped free the Netherlands on May 5, 1945.

"People just go crazy every year when we have these celebrations," said Martin Duisterwinkel, who had the idea of a radio broadcast to let Canadians have a taste of the atmosphere in his country.

On the weekend, Club Maple Leaf Up became a temporary studio for a one-hour live program that was linked by satellite with Toronto's multicultural radio station, CHIN. The broadcast was also heard throughout the Netherlands as well as Canada and parts of the United States.

On Saturday, the Huis de Beurs was filled with Dutch survivors of the Second World War as well as Canadian veterans on a pilgrimage to their old battle grounds. One woman gave an emotional reading from a diary she had kept immediately before and after the liberation.

"It's a pity that it wasn't television," Mr. Duisterwinkel said.

"I am very proud that I could do something back for (Canadians)," said Frits Diderich, the current owner of the cafe, whose grandfather owned it during the Nazi occupation.

Arthur Irvine, a Canadian veteran who now lives in Mississauga, Ont., was in the CHIN studio in Toronto to take part in the broadcast Saturday.

Mr. Irvine, who was one of the soldiers holed up in the cafe in 1945, visited it in 1985 when he was in the Netherlands for the 40th anniversary of the country's liberation.

In an interview, he said that trip was an emotional experience. But he added: "But you don't dwell on the difficult situations. You always remember the good times you had."

CHIN president and veteran Johnny Lombardi said the Dutch loved the Canadians. He remembers how his uniform made him popular during and after the war.

"Everyone I met, as soon as they saw that "Canada" (on his uniform), they couldn't do enough for you."

In the town of Apeldoorn yesterday, the Dutch organized a parade in which 3,000 veterans, including 2,000 Canadians, took part. Army jeeps from the war were used to transport the veterans.

Stephen Magwood, the Canadian co-producer of the radio broadcast, said Canadians should appreciate their contribution to the liberation of Holland.

"All we're doing," he said, referring to the broadcast, "is reminding Canadians what we've done."