



OCCUPATIONAL FIRST AID ATTENDANTS ASSOCIATION NEWS

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**Newsletter
contributors
needed**

National Day of Mourning – the Story

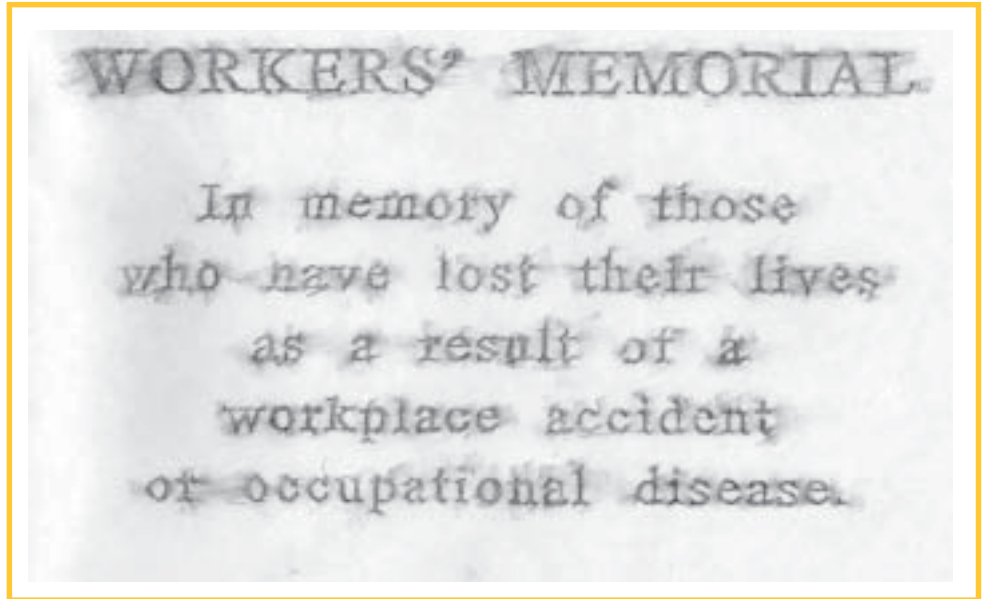
By Allan Zdunich

On Thursday April 28th workers throughout British Columbia will be asked to honour workers who have died as a result of injury or occupational disease. Workers, survivors and others gather at memorial sites throughout BC (please read story page 2) or stop for a moment at their workplace to show their respect.

Workers in Sudbury and elsewhere in Canada in the 1970's and '80's had been honouring the anniversary dates of those killed on the job. In BC, Ironworkers, and others, marked the 17th of June 1958 anniversary of the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge.

First Aid Attendants sometimes are in the tragic position of giving first aid, and despite our best efforts losing a co-worker. We are also workers, and as Attendants we are at risk of injury ourselves, and this issue of the Newsletter honours First Aid Attendants. On April 28th, we can think of our colleagues, other First Aid Attendants, when we think of workers killed or injured on the job. We tell you about Terry who despite being badly injured had to direct his co-workers how to care for him (please read his story pages 4 & 5).

April 28th was formally selected by the Canadian Labour Congress in Canada in 1984, as the National Day of Mourning. April 28 was chosen by the CLC because it was the anniversary of



This rubbing was taken from the Memorial in Hastings Park, Vancouver

by: A. Z.

third reading of Canada's first comprehensive Workers' Compensation

"On April 28th, we can think of our colleagues, other First Aid Attendants..."

Act (Ontario, 1914).

The federal government recognized April 28th by passing a private members bill; Bill C223 the Workers Mourning Day Act, which received assent 1 February 1991. Parliament specified that it honours those killed or injured in the workplace, and the government symbolically flies the flag at half-mast.

The government of BC recognized the date in 1987 and designated it as a special day in 1992 for similar reasons. In Saskatchewan the Members of the Legislature honour the deceased by reading their names into the record if the House is in session.

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Day of Mourning

Each year the CLC has a theme for the National Day of Mourning but the theme for this year is not yet available (March).

The symbol of April 28th as the date to honour workers has been adopted by the AFL-CIO in the United States. As the concept of the day of mourning spread to the United States and Europe the emphasis shifted in 1996 to officially include injured workers, and the ceremony included the practice of burning candles and incense at the United Nations that year. It has also been adopted by workers in more than one hundred countries throughout the world.

The themes established by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) for this year, the 10th anniversary International Commemoration Day (ICD) for Dead and Injured Workers is: “Prevention through Employer Accountability” and “Safe and Healthy Work for All”.

A three day conference will be held in Toronto April 29th to May 1st sponsored by “Thread of Life - the Workplace Tragedy Family Support Association”. This conference, through speakers and workshops will offer help and hope to those who lost a loved one or experienced life-altering injuries or diseases. It is open to all Canadians affected by workplace incidents.

Comments are invited.