



CANADA

# Debates of the Senate

---

2nd SESSION

• 39th PARLIAMENT

• VOLUME 144

• NUMBER 21

---

## QUEEN'S YORK RANGERS AND AURORA ARMOURY

**Statement by:**

**The Honourable Vivienne Poy**

**Thursday, December 6, 2007**

## THE SENATE

Thursday, December 6, 2007

### QUEEN'S YORK RANGERS AND AURORA ARMOURY

**Hon. Vivienne Poy:** Honourable senators, on November 7, 2007, I had the privilege of attending a ceremony in Aurora, Ontario, in which the Ontario Heritage Trust and the Queen's York Rangers unveiled a plaque to commemorate the armoury's long and historic association with the Queen's York Rangers.

The armoury was built in 1874 as a drill shed for the 12th Battalion of Infantry which is the predecessor of today's Queen's York Rangers. It is the oldest purpose-built armoury still used by the military in Ontario. It was built to train civilian soldiers recruited from local communities.

• (1345)

The Aurora drill shed, as it was called, was one of many similar structures built from the 1860s onwards. Civil defence training facilities for volunteer militia were seen as crucial in a period of border insecurity, particularly with the withdrawal of the British Army garrisons by 1871.

The Aurora Armoury allowed volunteer militia units to train during inclement weather and in the evening, when there was no natural light for outdoor drills. It was part of the early

development of Canada's defence capabilities during the period around Confederation, with the young country's growing concern for its increasing vulnerability.

The Queen's York Rangers, also known as the 1st American Regiment, have a remarkable history. In 1885, they served in the Riel Rebellion. Some of its members also volunteered in the South African Boer War of 1899-1902. The Queen's York Rangers contributed members to the Canadian Expeditionary Forces during the First and Second World Wars, both overseas as well as in Canada, as part of the home defence force. Today, Rangers volunteer in Afghanistan, and the regiment remains a vital element within the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps.

One hundred and thirty years after its creation, the Aurora Armoury remains a thriving facility, home to part of the Queen's York Rangers. It also serves the 2799 Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps, which provides citizenship and leadership training for our youth within a military environment.

It was a great honour for me to attend the plaque presentation at the Aurora Armoury, which serves to remind us of an important period in Canadian history.

---