



News release

For immediate release

The Vari Gate is officially inaugurated at The Vimy Foundation Centennial Park in Vimy, France.

April 8th, 2022 – Vimy, France – The Vimy Foundation

On April 8th, 2022, The Vimy Foundation inaugurated The Vari Gate, in the Vimy Foundation Centennial Park, in the presence of the Vari family, and French and Canadian dignitaries, including [names]. Part of the park's exterior wall, a perfect circle that symbolises unity, the gate is the main access to the Centennial Park for thousands of Canadian and European yearly visitors.

The Vimy Foundation Centennial Park, opened in 2018 to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War, is a reflective space for visitors to Vimy. It was built on formerly private farmland, purchased by the Vimy Foundation in 2016, and designed by notable Canadian landscape architect Linda Dicaire. The park is home to 100 “Vimy Oaks”, the descendants of acorns that were brought back from France by a Canadian soldier at the end of the war and planted in Scarborough, Ontario.

Donated by the George and Helen Vari Foundation, the Vari Gate is an important architectural element of the Centennial Park. It also highlights the history of the Vari Family, who distinguished itself by major contributions to several causes, including veterans and education. Helen Vari is also a long-time partner to the Vimy Foundation, which she has supported for many years, notably as honorary co-chair of the 2017 centennial of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

As a Grand officer of the Ordre national de la Légion d'Honneur, she also tirelessly advocated for the Canada-France friendship. This commitment to a Canadian-owned commemorative park in France follows along the same line.

George W. Vari, born in Hungary, arrived in Canada in 1957. “We came to Canada with nothing, Canada gave us everything” he once said. Mr. Vari and his wife, Helen, gave significantly to Canada.

Quotes

“When you step for the first time on Vimy soil, you are filled with emotion. You see all the beauty and sadness that permeate this place. And you know you are among friends. People who today reside in the area still remember what happened at Vimy and are thankful of what Canadians achieved there. You can imagine how proud we are to contribute to this very important historical cause.”

- Helen Vari, Grand officier de la Légion d'honneur, President of the George and Helen Vari Foundation.



“The Vimy Foundation Centennial Park is dedicated to memory, reflection and peace. The Vari family really shares these values and understands the importance of transmitting them to the next generation, who will inherit all of our shared history. Not only through memorials but also through education, to which the Vari family, as we all know, devoted considerable energy over the last decades. That is why we feel privileged to count the Vari Family among our contributors, once again.”

- Christopher Sweeney, chair, The Vimy Foundation.

About The Vimy Foundation

The Vimy Foundation is a leading voice on the First World War in Canada. The Foundation works to preserve and promote Canada’s ongoing legacy of leadership as symbolised by the First World War victory at Vimy Ridge in April 1917, a milestone where Canada came of age and was recognised on the world stage.

About the George and Helen Vari Foundation

Born in Hungary in 1923, George W. Vari studied law, economics and engineering before migrating to Canada in 1957. He always stayed grateful to those who risked and sacrificed their lives to enable others to live free and prosper. Along with his spouse, Helen, George Vari was an exceptional example of generosity and philanthropy. “The World can only be saved through education”, he often said. This passion for education and research led them to become patrons of numerous knowledge institutions in Canada and France.

For further information and photos, contact us at info@vimyfoundation.ca

The Vimy Foundation

514-904-1007 x 2

<https://www.vimyfoundation.ca>