



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto – January 30, 2026

Mount Pleasant Group Marks 200 Years of Compassionate Care and Choice in Toronto

Year-long anniversary program features public art installations and '200 stories' of people, places and events that shaped the city and the nation

Toronto, ON — Mount Pleasant Group of Cemeteries (MPG) officially marks its 200th anniversary on **January 30, 2026**, commemorating two centuries of service, remembrance, and community connection. Founded in 1826 – and *older than the place we call Canada today* – MPG's bicentennial program tells not only the story of the organization, but also the story of Toronto and the nation.

Anchored in the anniversary theme of **Yesterday. Today. Forever.**, the year-long program invites communities across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to explore, engage, and reflect on the history, people, and places that have shaped the region for generations.

A Legacy Rooted in Toronto's Earliest Days

MPG's origins date back to 1825, at a time when residents of the Town of York could only be buried in Anglican or Roman Catholic church cemeteries. That year, a group of town residents petitioned the Province of Upper Canada for permission to establish a non-denominational "general burying ground" open to all – a groundbreaking act of inclusion for the era. The legislation received Royal Assent on **January 30, 1826**, formally establishing the organization that would evolve into the Mount Pleasant Group.

Today, MPG operates 10 cemeteries, nine funeral centres and four cremation centres across the GTA. The funeral and cemetery operator provides perpetual care for more than **700,000** deceased individuals, and continues to support communities through compassionate service and choice in death care.

Honoured to have Earned and Kept Toronto's Trust

"For two centuries, Mount Pleasant Group has been woven into the lives of the communities we serve," said John Monahan, President and CEO. "Our 200th anniversary program is not only about honouring the people and stories that built this city and this country. It's also our way to recognize and express our sincere gratitude to people across the Greater Toronto Area – both past and present – for trusting us to take care of them and their loved ones dealing with death, loss and grief. We invite everyone across the GTA to join us in reflecting on, exploring, and sharing in this historic milestone."

Introducing the 200 Stories Project – A Digital Showcase of Untold Histories

At the heart of MPG's anniversary program is its **200 Stories Project**, a digital storytelling initiative that brings forward remarkable people and histories resting within MPG cemeteries. Available now at mpg200.ca, the stories highlight historical monuments within MPG cemeteries as well as cultural icons, artists, activists, innovators, honoured veterans, political leaders, and everyday heroes who shaped the GTA and Canada. Many are widely known; others are seldom told. All of them have helped to weave the fabric of the city's past and present.

Just a few of the notable stories include:

- **Oliver Milton Martin**, Educator, decorated soldier and the first Indigenous provincial magistrate in Ontario (Pine Hills Cemetery).
- **Lois Lilienstein**, beloved member of *Sharon, Lois & Bram*, whose music brought joy to generations (Mount Pleasant Cemetery).
- **William Lyon Mackenzie**, leader of the 1837 Rebellion in Upper Canada and Toronto's first mayor (Toronto Necropolis).
- **Annie "Nance" Horwood**, Brampton's first female mayor (Meadowvale Cemetery).
- **William Lyon Mackenzie King**, Canada's longest-serving prime minister (Mount Pleasant Cemetery).
- **Tim Horton**, legendary Toronto Maple Leaf and co-founder of the iconic Canadian coffee brand (York Cemetery).
- **Henry "Box" Brown**, abolitionist and freedom seeker whose escape from enslavement became one of North America's most dramatic acts of resistance (Toronto Necropolis).
- **Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna**, the last Grand Duchess of Imperial Russia whose extraordinary journey ended in Toronto (York Cemetery).

Immersive Art Installations Across the GTA

MPG has also engaged local artists and other community partners to develop and rollout a series of immersive art and educational installations at select cemetery locations over the coming months. The installations are designed to bring history and memory to life in unexpected and inspiring ways, offering new ways for visitors to experience art, nature, and reflection within some of Toronto's most beautiful green spaces.

Inviting the Community to Participate

MPG's bicentennial is an event for the entire GTA. Everyone is invited to participate in three key ways:

- **Visit one or more [MPG locations](#)** throughout the anniversary year. MPG's cemeteries and green spaces have long been open to all – welcoming visitors seeking places of remembrance, connection, quiet reflection and nature. While visiting, MPG requests all guests to respect [cemetery by-laws](#) and to remember that its owned cemeteries and properties are, first and foremost, places where families come to grieve, remember and honour their deceased loved ones.
- **Experience the Anniversary Installations and Events:** Anniversary-themed installations will start to rollout in the coming months. MPG invites all of Toronto to visit its cemeteries to experience immersive art installations and partake in enhanced community programming - including tours, educational experiences, commemorative services, and seasonal events.

Check mpg200.ca for installation details prior to your visit and throughout the year for anniversary program and events updates.

- **Explore the 200 Stories Project:** Visit mpg200.ca to read, share, and engage with the 200 stories. Prepare to be inspired by many of them.

Learn More & Get Involved

- Visit: mpg200.ca
- Follow MPG on social media: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [YouTube](#)
- Share your stories using **#mpg200** and **#200yearsofcare**

Mount Pleasant Group's 200th anniversary program runs throughout 2026.

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About Mount Pleasant Group

Mount Pleasant Group (MPG) is a non-profit organization that has been serving the Greater Toronto Area with care and compassion since 1826. As one of the oldest and most respected providers of cemetery, funeral and cremation services, MPG is committed to honouring the diverse needs of the communities we serve. With a network of 10 non-denominational, non-sectarian cemeteries, nine funeral centres and four cremation centres, we provide comprehensive and personalized services that respect the traditions, values and wishes of every family. www.mountpleasantgroup.com