

**AMERICAN PILOT AND CANADIAN ARTIST**  
**UNITE TO MEMORIALIZE 9/11 HEROES AND 9/11 FAMILIES**

*By Lisa J. Werring*

September 11, 2001 is a date that will forever resonate with incomparable sadness. There is not a person on earth who could not tell you where they were when they heard the terrible news; it was a life-altering event on a global scale. Out of the ashes of that devastation was borne a unique organization dedicated to honoring the memories of those who were lost on that infamous day. The WORLD MEMORIAL Foundation was founded by American Airlines pilot and decorated Desert Storm veteran, Brus Messinger. The mission of the Foundation is to honor the sacrifice of our fallen heroes; to serve as an educational facility promoting tolerance and truth among all nations and finally; to design a lasting monument so that future generations may have a place of quiet reflection to visit where they may pay their respects to the fallen and experience the healing necessary for closure.

Brus Messinger is no stranger to acts of heroism. As a rescue pilot, he saved 78 lives, including 63 Vietnamese refugees plucked from the turbulent waters of the South China Sea. His distinguished civil service career encompassed duties in Special Operations and mission coordination for the CIA, FBI, DEA, DAO and the Secret Service. A commercial pilot since 1992, Brus has flown B-767 aircraft throughout the United States. It comes as no surprise then, that following the 9-11 tragedy Brus felt compelled to find some way to contribute to the healing process. Inspired by the old adage, "Those who forget the lessons of the past are condemned to repeat them," Brus dedicated his efforts toward the preservation of the artifacts of the destruction so that they may be exhibited as a vital part of world history. To this end, his organization intends to found a 9-11 museum and education centre which will not only honor the memories of those who perished, but will serve to educate future generations and open the door to communication and tolerance in an effort to prevent such tragedies in the future. In addition to the creation of the museum, the Foundation is supporting the efforts of artists and musicians across the globe in their efforts to capture the spirit of brotherhood that was generated as people throughout the world were united in their grief. One such artist Brus discovered, is Canadian-South African, Kathleen

(Katon) Tonnesen, who united her community and created the Canadian Gifts of Healing to America *Release of Souls Memorial Sculpture* and *Release of Souls Symphony Concert*.

The WORLD MEMORIAL Release of Souls Symphony Concert of International Healing, is a non-profit event intended to honor 9/11 Families, the courageous men and women who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, while serving as emergency services personnel, 82 Countries and those who continue to serve in harms way. It is a salute for Liberty. Deeply moved by the horrific events of 9/11, Kathleen was inspired to create the Release of Souls interactive memorial sculpture, which is the magnificent centerpiece for this remarkable event.

The Release of Souls memorial sculpture incorporates two artistic mediums, sculpture and painting, in a unique and deeply moving manner, which allows its viewers to actually walk through the artwork. In a sense, the piece is representative of the healing process itself; audience members report feeling a myriad of emotions, from sorrow to reflection and finally to hope and remembrance as they pass through the piece. The sculpture, which stands 18 feet high and is 23 feet square, was created by Kathleen with the assistance of designer Louis Louw, structural engineer Brian Lytton and metal fabricator Dave Rouleau. The twin paintings are symbolic of the Twin Towers just prior to collapse, the two empty metal structures in front of the paintings are representative of the now empty space once filled by thousands of souls. The 5-sided base pays homage to the attack on the Pentagon building in Washington D.C., including the keystone state of Pennsylvania at its center. The aluminum superstructure in the foreground represents the jagged metal columns that are all that remain of the two towers and symbolizes the only survivors of this horrific act – the surviving metal WTC columns.

Finally, as viewers move around the piece to the rear of the paintings, they discover a wall of remembrance engraved with the names of each emergency worker who lost their lives. The entire structure can accommodate a number of people and offers several contemplation stations for private reflection.

**Please contact: Tour Exhibit Logistics, Fire Fighter/Paramedic, Vice President, MITCH MENDLER 1**  
**Pager: 619-331-5000 Cell: 619-944-7011 Toll Free Phone: 1-866-286-1312**  
**Email: [ros@publicsafety.net](mailto:ros@publicsafety.net) OR [WorldMemorial@aol.com](mailto:WorldMemorial@aol.com)**

Beginning in 2002, the Release of Souls memorial sculpture had already had an indelible impact on a great number of talented individuals. One such person is Vancouver based singer, Fiona Blackburn who wrote a song to honor Kathleen's vision. Composer Miles Black was subsequently inspired to write a complete symphonic accompaniment to Fiona's lyrics. As word of the project spread, other groups including The Pipes and Drums of The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, The 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regimental Band and the Maple Ridge Symphony Orchestra came together to create an evening of music and remembrance in tribute to the fallen heroes of September 11, 2001.

The success of that first concert inspired the Release of Souls team to create a tour of the presentation. In addition, the presentation has the support of the Canadian Armed Forces, which has graciously offered the services of its military bands in future presentations. With this in mind, the concert will be performed at select locations across Canada and the United States en route to its final destination in New York City where, with the assistance of the WORLD MEMORIAL Foundation, the sculpture will make its permanent home as a gift from the people of Canada to the people of the United States.

The remarkable men and women who serve in emergency response units everywhere bravely and unselfishly put their own lives in harms way to protect us all. The vital work of the WORLD MEMORIAL Foundation and the Release of Souls Concert Presentation provides a method by which we can all express our appreciation for their unfailing dedication and courage.

The unselfish efforts and dedication of people like Brus Messinger and Kathleen Tonnesen inspire all those they come into contact with to lead better lives and find some way to contribute to a more peaceful and tolerant world. If we were all to follow the example of everyday heroes such as these two, we would inevitably create a world where bigotry and ignorance were replaced with understanding and acceptance; and terrorism was a thing of the past.

What a wonderful world that will be....

*Author Lisa J. Werring, resides in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada.*

[www.releaseofsouls.org](http://www.releaseofsouls.org)

**Uniformed Public Service Silent Honor Roll**, in respect to those who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty while trying to unselfishly save others. Engraved on the memorial are the names of the FDNY, Port Authority, NYPD, E.M.T.'s, Paramedics, Court Officers, Pentagon personnel, Flight Crews, Explosives Detection Dog, Sirius, and Search and Rescue Dog Bear. Other sworn Peace Officers will be added at the next ROS event.

**Civilian Family invitation to attach a brass NAME plate:**

Vancouver, 07 November 2003 – With ROS brass engraved name plates, Canadian 9/11 Widows, Maureen Basnicki and Tanja Tomasevic attached their husbands names to the ROS memorial, we were honored to facilitate this healing gesture and hope that more Family members will come forward and personally attach their loved ones name to the ROS memorial. WORLD MEMORIAL respectfully requests a \$40 donation in order to defray the cost and shipping of the individual NAME plate.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP**

The WORLD MEMORIAL Federal 501c3 Charity Foundation, All donations are tax-deductible, EIN #48-1292008 is seeking financial assistance and Goods and Services in Kind, to help cover the non-profit costs of the 9/11 Families and Uniforms only -

**September 10, 2006, New York** 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 9/11 memorial 2-hour signature *Release of Souls* (ROS) Symphony concert, hosting original, uplifting music. Beginning in British Columbia with the 15th Field Artillery Regiment, ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY Band, this performance showcases Canadian Composer Miles Black, world-renowned Guest Composer Bechara EL KHOURY from Lebanon, International musicians, world-debut recording from London Symphony Orchestra, pipers from all over the country and New York's very own Cantor Joseph MALOVANY - in honor of 9/11 Families, 82 Countries and those who continue to serve in harms way. It is a salute for Liberty.

**New York 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 9/11  
WORLD MEMORIAL *Release of Souls*  
Symphony Concert of International Healing**

Date: **September 10, 2006**  
Time: **6:30pm – 9:00pm**

Free Concert for 9/11 Families and Uniform Personnel

**Please contact: Tour Exhibit Logistics, Fire Fighter/Paramedic, Vice President, MITCH MENDLER 2**  
**Pager: 619-331-5000 Cell: 619-944-7011 Toll Free Phone: 1-866-286-1312**  
**Email: [ros@publicsafety.net](mailto:ros@publicsafety.net) OR [WorldMemorial@aol.com](mailto:WorldMemorial@aol.com)**