In 1984 the Canadian Labour Congress declared April 28 as a National Day of Mourning to recognize and remember workers killed or injured on the job. This day has been observed in New Brunswick since 1985, and has been marked with a Day of Mourning monument in more than 100 countries around the world.

In 1990, the Canadian Labour Congress, in partnership with the New Brunswick Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress, began a project to mark the Day of Mourning in six communities within the province. Since then, local labour councils have worked with their communities to create monuments as a public site of remembrance for workers killed or injured on the job.

The monuments are designed to honor the sacrifices of workers and to remind us of the dangers that exist in the workplace. They are located in Place de l'Hôtel-de-Ville in Edmundston, Bore Park in Moncton, and Restigouche Street in Atholville. The monuments include a symbolizing grief and compassion, and an image of a canary, an open honour roll, and an inscription adapted from the words of Mother Jones. The monument in Edmundston includes the wooden beams of fishing wharves, and scars that are welded into the standing sheets of steel to represent the working class of the Chaleur region. The monument in Moncton includes the image of a canary, an open honour roll, and an inscription adapted from the words of Mother Jones. The monument in Atholville includes the wooden beams of fishing wharves, and scars that are welded into the standing sheets of steel to represent the working class of the Chaleur region.

The Day of Mourning is observed on April 28th, and includes a ceremony that traditionally closes with a minute of silence and the placing of flowers. A personal statement by a survivor of a workplace accident is also read, and the canary symbolizes the days when coal miners took their lives into their own hands.

Visit www.lhtnb.ca to learn more about the Day of Mourning and the New Brunswick Labour History Project.