



CONTACT!

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President's Report

Another Remembrance Day and Poppy Drive has passed. Thank you to all of the volunteers who worked so hard and long to make this a success.

Special thanks to Moira Green as our Poppy Chair and to all of the Table Captains for their organizing and long hours to ensure their areas were well manned.

The parade this year was well organized thanks to the parade Commander, Andrew Nellestyn, and parade WO, Angie Jacklin. As usual the Colour Party and Pipe Band did an excellent job. The MC, Dan Knighton, kept things moving along nicely. Two flypasts this year were arranged with RCAF 427 Sqn and Vintage Wings Ottawa. Unfortunately both were cancelled at the last minute due to inclement weather.

The reception after the parade was attended by approximately 150 people. Thanks to the L.A. on a great job catering. Thank you to Allan from Sobeys on March Road for donating the food and for the fantastic cake. Thanks to Gord McCaskill for arranging for the food. The Bar staff did their usual great job.

Thanks to George Pollock and Gerry Dore who had one of the hardest jobs in organizing and filling the Poppy Boxes for the table Captains.

Special thanks go to Don Raven and his counting crew who counted and deposited the money from the campaign.

The veteran services held at the Kanata retirement residences and nursing homes were conducted by our Padre, Fr Craig, and Moria Green. Thank you to both and to the Branch Members who attended along with them.

Youth Education Chair Brenda Grant has delivered the packages to all of the schools and is in the process of setting up the judging team.

A special thank you to John Gooch who turned over the role of Cenotaph Chair to me and helped me to organize the activities at the Cenotaph and thanks to the crew who set up and took down when the parade was over

The Cenotaph was dedicated by the city of Kanata on September 20, 1998. For 15 years it has been a place for people to gather, reflect, pray or just spend a few moments in remembrance of those who gave their lives so that we might live in peace and freedom.

In 1996, John Gooch was appointed chair of the committee that would plan and find a suitable site. The site at Colchester Square was selected and the Park was named

Village Green Memorial Park. It was approved in July 1997.

During 1997 and 1998 work was done to complete the grounds; a flagpole was bought, trees were planted, a stone with a suitable inscription was erected.

On September 19, 1998, the Canadian flag was raised for the first time. The next day, September 20, the dedication of the Cenotaph was conducted with attendees from local, regional and national governments along with military and public guests.

The Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces provided the music for the ceremony. There was a fly pass of two Canadian Forces helicopters during the sounding of the Last Post. It was a touching ceremony followed by a reception at the Branch.

The West End Learning organization has been using our Branch to help seniors learn about various subjects. We have been providing coffee, cookies, donuts and fruit to this group of approximately 125 in number. They have 3 sessions per year 6 Tuesdays in a row. Lynn and Dave McPherson have been providing this service for the last several sessions. Lynn and Dave are moving so we require two volunteers to take over. If interested please call and leave me a message. Thanks Lynn and Dave.

Once again, we had a good number of people attending our Remembrance dinner with a large number of veterans in attendance. Brigadier General David Kettle, one of our newest members, gave a presentation on "Remembrance", which was informative as well as moving. It touched on the hardship of soldiers, as well as the loved ones, especially during both world

wars. It was an evening enjoyed by all. The meal was great and the company even better. Moira did a great job of organizing the evening.

We are giving some thought to starting a weekly morning drop in for coffee. We are hoping to start in the New Year. More info will follow.

The November Birthday Party will be held on the 24th. Everyone is welcome to attend and have coffee and cake.

New Year's Eve tickets are on sale at the bar.

John Cher
President

From the First Vice

(December issue)

From the Second Vice

POPPY AND REMEMBRANCE CAMPAIGN 2013

Our wind up meeting will take place Tuesday, November 26, at 7 30 p.m., at the legion. It's a "what to do better next year" meeting. After that occurs I will write a full report to be presented at the exec meeting and published in next month's CONTACT. In the interim, thanks to ALL.

Sincere thanks to the following comrades who supported our 9 Remembrance Services visits to local seniors; residences and nursing homes:
Bob Thomson, Brenda Grant, Harry Needham, Dan Knighton and Bob Murray (Sage Kiwanis) our piano player. Also supporting the venues were Sue Mclean, Garry and Lydia Fancy and Vivian Thomson.

Thanks to Padre Craig Bowers and his stand-ins, Ven. Can John Bridges and Rev. Canon Bill Prentice, all of whom represent St Paul's Anglican Church, Hazeldean, Kanata.

Yours in service,

Moir

**Veterans who attended the legion remembrance service
at The Royale Residence in Kanata**



Back (left to right) LCdr John Cottle, 1st Lt Tom Gorman, F/sgt Frank Moran, Cpl Allan Joynson, LGen William Carr, Gen Ramsey Withers, Col Don Pruner, L Col Michael Ruscher, Lt Tom Matthews, Cpl Ronald Reid, LCol Garth Methvan, Cpl George Tostowaryk

Front (left to right) FO Jack MacKenzie, Capt(N) George White, LCol Herbert Graves, Capt Conti Hewitson, RCAF-WD Dorothy Atkins, WO William Dawn, WO Geoff Irving



**BRANCH 638 REMEMBRANCE SERVICES
AT KANATA LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES
AND RETIREMENT HOMES
(November 4 to 8)**

As in past years, members of Kanata Branch 638 held Remembrance Services in the following Kanata care and retirement residences: Garden Terrace, Stonehaven Manor, Kanata Retirement Home, Empress Kanata, Chartwell, Forest Hill, Walden Village, Fairfield Manor and the Royalton.

This year Comrade Moira Green took over from the ailing John Gooch. As well as providing a service to the residents, these visits gave an opportunity for Branch members to meet and greet and converse with our wonderful ever-aging military veterans. My wife and I have enjoyed participating in these visits for a number of years, and I always come away with an even greater feeling of respect and admiration for our veterans. Following are some recollections of these visits.

WALDEN VILLAGE

William "Uncle Bill" Gregory served in the merchant marine, enlisting at the age of 14 years (yes, that's not a typo). He served in probably the most dangerous and unenviable environment in the war, crewing on tankers bringing desperately needed aviation fuel across the Atlantic to England. He crossed the ocean many times, sailing into the net a hundred of U-boats, strung across the North Atlantic, whose prime targets were these tankers, many of whom were blown up. If the crew were not immediately killed in the ensuing explosion, they were incinerated in the burning fuel in the water, and no stopping to pick up survivors. Only by a miracle did Bill Gregory survive. Several other veterans, attended, including Mary Johnston, ex-RAF parachute-packer and later casualty clearing assistant, Juergen Duewel, a member of a German Anti-Aircraft regiment, (yes although on the "other side" he too is a veteran, for as so many of our own Canadian veterans said; "they were only doing their job, just as we were", Harry Loewen, and Murray Riach.



Walden Village Veterans,
Murray Riach, William Gregory (with medals)



Walden Village Veterans
Harry Loewen, Juergen Duewel, Mary Johnston
(with medals)

THE ROYALE

There were several rows of distinguished veterans assembled for the service, including 92 year old Jack MacKenzie, whom I had met in previous years. Jack was a navigator with Ferry Command, the command tasked with ferrying aircraft across the oceans and everywhere else. One might assume this was a relatively safe occupation, away from enemy action. But not so, many factors caused fatal aircraft accidents, mainly due to aircraft icing, which brought the aircraft and crew down into the freezing North Atlantic, never to be heard from again. Fully fifty percent of all Ferry Command aircrew perished during the war! Jack was one of the lucky ones. He holds the Guinness World Record as the oldest person to ski to the North Pole. He was almost 78 when he and eight others reached the Pole on April 28, 1999. His travels have taken him to all seven continents and he's explored everything from routes of the Northwest Passage to Easter Island to China. He was one of the architects of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and its first executive director.



Royale Veterans
(Jack MacKenzie front row extreme left)

with emotion, that he could not contain his tears, remembering his fallen comrades.



F/L John Dixie, DFC and Bar
(taken 3 years ago)

GARDEN TERRACE

Veterans assembled included F/L John Dixie, a humble and failing little man strapped to his wheel chair. Hard to believe that some 70 years ago, this same man was strapped to the pilot's seat of a mighty Lancaster bomber, loaded with bombs and fuel, taking off in darkening skies for the terrible flight into Germany's industrial heartland. One other little fact about F/L Dixie; he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar. The first DFC was for bringing his Lancaster back after a mid-air collision with another Lancaster that tore off most of his tail section and killed the tail gunner. Another

FAIRFIELD MANOR

Here we met at least two veterans, and another unique lady who took all the risks of a military veteran, for she surely would have been executed if captured. This diminutive, elderly Italian lady fought in armed conflict against the Fascists in her Italian village.

Thanks to Comrade Moira Green (and her crew) who made all this possible and did a fine job acting as Master of Ceremonies.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!

Garry Fancy



Photo of the cake donated by **Sobeys**, March Road, for the reception after the parade.

Thanks also to **Sobeys** for all the supplies of food donated to feed the 200 people who participated after the Remembrance Service at Colchester Square.

The Ladies Auxiliary and Branch 638 appreciate your ongoing support. Thank you.

Nancy Medynski

Colour Party
at the start of the
Santa Claus Parade in Kanata
November 16.

Photo by Tom Flood

Submitted by Bob Thomson



From "TABLE CAPTAIN-WALMART"

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my crew once again for your wonderful support in this year's Poppy Campaign. Your dedication and support made my job very easy. Thank you again, and hope to be able to assemble my team again next year.

Our vets are counting on us.

George Medynski

BAR REPORT

Once again November 11 has come and gone, where we had a successful day at branch, as we served our military refreshments to honour their services. Thanks go to "bar staff" for their help on this busy day, as they do throughout year, at rental and branch functions. Hopefully we will be purchasing new shelving for the cooler, and we will be seeking help to "wash down" walls and install new shelves. And finally, **I am seeking help to take on my duties in my absence over the winter months.** This includes scheduling for events, purchasing of supplies, etc. If interested, please contact me at 613 839-5465. Thank you.

George Medynski

THIS MONTH'S DONATIONS

This month's donations from Bingo and Nevada revenue, total more than in any month to date. With 50/50 draws replacing Nevada, we expect to have more money available in the future to support good causes in the community. This month's \$1450 will be distributed as follows:

DONATIONS

\$250

1. Kanata Food Cupboard
2. Hospice Care Ottawa
3. Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre
4. Shepherds of Good Hope Foundation
5. Parkinson Society Eastern Ontario

\$100

6. Canadian Association for Disabled Skiing
7. Stephanie Bertrand

Stephanie is a young Stittsville woman facing lengthy and expensive rehabilitation, following surgery. Legion branches throughout the Valley are supporting her and a winter sports workshop to be held in February by CADS.

POPPY TRUST FUND

Counting the money donated through this year's campaign is well under way. With what the seven of us counted on Nov. 15, our total nears \$60,000 - and we still face at least four more mornings of counting AND some very heavily-packed boxes from COSTCO, the Sens games and others.

We should know the exact total in the Poppy Trust Fund by mid-December and, as people seem to be curiously preoccupied with other things the last two weeks of December, the PTF Committee will meet early in January to agree on the recommendations we will present to YOU, at the first possible general meeting in the New Year, for your approval. I expect that the total available to us will exceed last year's amount.

Submitted by
Harry Needham

Remembrance Dinner



A message from the Ways & Means Committee

The Ways & Means Committee will be hosting a second round of **Electronic Waste Disposal Days** on April 11 and 12, 2014. Please consider holding onto your E-Waste items until then. {Vacuums, Fans, Computers, Radios, Phones to mention a few)

On Saturday, May 10, 2014, the Ways & Means Committee is planning to host a **Fashion Show and High Tea**. A fun way for women to spend time together the day before Mother's Day - Mothers and daughters, sisters, friends, etc. and support the Kanata legion!

Please watch for further details to follow in months to come. Thank you!

How will you celebrate New Year's Eve this year?



**Consider the Kanata Legion's
Annual**

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY!

Great food!
Great Music!
Loads of Fun!
...at a good price!

Catered by: *Leatherworks Catering*

**Roast Beef Buffet: Roast Top Sirloin,
Southern Fried Chicken, Beef Stroganoff,
Vegetarian Penne Pasta & much more!**

DJ Music by: *Bytown Boogie!*

Door prizes! Party Favours!
ONLY \$40.00/person
Everyone is welcome!

**Advance tickets only before
Dec. 23, 2013, on sale now!**

Reception 6:00 p.m.
Dinner 7:30 p.m.
Dress Code: Smart Casual

**Kanata Legion
70 Hines Road
off of Solandt Road
off of March Road**



**The Best
New Year's Eve Celebration
in Kanata!**

2014

Ladies' Auxiliary



**Sunday
November 24**

A variety of activities to choose from at the Kanata Legion all in one day!

Legion members! Ladies' Auxiliary members! Family, Friends, Neighbours! Everyone is welcome!

Fun! Comradeship! Good Food! FREE!

Bingo 12:45 – 3:00 p.m.

November birthday and anniversary celebrations!

2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Cake served at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Decorate the legion for Christmas and pot luck dinner

3:00 p.m. / 3:15 p.m.
Decorations provided!
Bring something for the pot luck dinner!

Grey Cup Party

3:30 ish p.m.
Wear your team colours!

And it's FREE!

We only ask that if you are planning to stay for the pot luck dinner, that you **bring some food and to call the branch at 613-591-5570 to sign up!**

Hope to see you then!

**Ladies' Auxiliary's
Christmas Dinner Party
Fri. Nov. 29, 2013**

Everyone is welcome!

Reception: 5:30 p.m.
Dinner: 6:15 p.m.
Menu: Roast Turkey Buffet with all the trimmings!
Catered by: The Ladies' Auxiliary!

The Ladies' Auxiliary is pleased to announce music entertainment will be provided by **Debra McCann** of the local McCann family; singing music for your listening, dancing and sing-a-long pleasure.

Door Prizes!

Cost: \$15.00/person.
Pay at the door, but reserve early to guarantee a seat! Please reserve by getting your name on the **sign-up** sheet at the Branch on or before **Nov. 22.**

**PLEASE BRING A DONATION
FOR THE KANATA FOOD BANK!**

Walking Among the Fallen

By Harry Needham

My father, as the Royal Marine lieutenant colonel who chaired my officer selection board so sensitively put it, "fell into the period between the wars", so my uncles had all served in what was still known, when I was a boy, as "The Great War." Miraculously, they all came home, though one, gassed at 2nd Ypres, spent most of his life in sanatoria as a result.

I have always wondered what greeted them when they eventually died. Were they faced by lorry loads of their old mates who had not made it home, calling to them "Come on, George - or Jack - or Bill! What took you so long? Hop on!"

I have walked among the graves of those fallen comrades, and their later comrades, in France and Flanders, and I still marvel at what beautiful, peaceful places they are - in such striking contrast to the hell that faced their last moments on earth.



I remember St. Julien, where the French and Commonwealth graves lie side by side, separated only by a wide grass pathway. On the Commonwealth side, the graves of the Unknowns are scattered among their named comrades. The French have placed their Unknowns front and centre - thirteen or fourteen long rows, each stone marked simply "INCONNU". The named graves are behind them, in obvious deference to their comrades who had lost even their names.

I remember the ossuary at Verdun, dug into the ground, filled with bones and fragments of men.

I remember walking down to the cemetery in Y Ravine at Beaumont-Hamel, where the mud during the battle was deeper than a man is tall, and



watching the bluffs around the ravine crowding out the sky, imagining them crowded with German machine guns, as they were the day the Newfoundlanders advanced into that hail of fire - a day that ended with so many Newfie families in mourning.



I have been to Vimy - and Hill 70 - and have stood under the loom of the Menin Gate at Ieper, when, at 7 PM every evening, the police stop traffic and local buglers from the fire department perform the Act of Remembrance, as you gaze at the thousands of names engraved on the inside of the arch, unit by unit. On the British retreat to Dunkirk, young Bob Metcalf of the Green Howards, our late comrade, was wounded a stone's throw from the Gate.

But none of these can really hold a candle to the massive sorrow of Tyne Cot, largest Commonwealth cemetery of the Great War, with its sheer number of graves and the endless columns of names on the tall walls around the cemetery.

Each family was allowed to add a line to the headstone. I was overwhelmed by the number that said simply "Well done, son". It was when I reached the stone that said "Thank you, my brave daddy", that I had to turn and leave the cemetery. I couldn't take any more and I'm not ashamed to admit it.



I have only visited three Second World War cemeteries - one Canadian, one American and one German.



The first was the Canadian cemetery at Beny-sur-Mer, where our D-Day fallen are buried. It is a lovely place, within sound of the beaches on which the first of them had died. The inscriptions are very different, much longer. On one was a bible quotation, on another the Boy Scout promise. I paused a long time beside the grave of a young Chauvière that said simply, "Brave soldat, qui donna ta vie pour la patrie."



The American cemetery near Bayeux is quite different, much larger, more open, like a vast stadium, but fronted by a unique and beautiful (and educational) memorial. I prefer the intimacy of the Canadian cemetery.

Strikingly different, too, is the one German cemetery I visited, down the road from the U.S. cemetery. Here the known fallen are buried in rows head to head, with a small flat stone marked with a Maltese cross and their particulars as a double headstone. There aren't many graves in the rows, but behind them is a mound, concealing a

large mass grave, surmounted by another such cross. What is strange is the dark, brooding atmosphere that seems to hang over the place - not unlike the invisible shroud that hangs over Gross Ile in the St. Lawrence, where so many would-be immigrants, particularly the Irish of the "coffin ships", lie. I am told this atmosphere is also characteristic also of the Great War German cemeteries, with their huge mass graves.



One need hardly go to Europe to find war graves. At the Canadian headquarters of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, in an office tower on Slater Street is a large wall map, with coloured pins showing the location of every known war grave in Canada for which the Commission is responsive. It is an awe-inspiring map, especially when you remember that the Commission is required to inspect every one of those graves every five years, including those in isolated spots in the sub-arctic and arctic. I have visited one such tiny cemetery, on a hill overlooking the decayed trench systems of Camp Hughes, a Great War training area in what is now an isolated part of CFB Shilo, Manitoba. There are few lonelier graveyards.

If you are going to Western Europe - or Hong Kong - or any other place where Canadians have died, take the time to visit the Commission's office here and buy the marked map for the area you intend to visit. Our comrades deserve a visit from those who have benefitted from their self-sacrifice.



CONTACT! is published monthly by the Kanata Branch 638 in Kanata, Ontario. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors or the editor, and not necessarily those of the Royal Canadian Legion or Branch 638.

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