



Editorial
Bruce Sharpe



You know the type. Every Legion has at least a couple. You can't spot them by their looks, but they follow a common pattern. They are the spoilers, the second-guessers, and sometimes even a small part of the old guard who want things to stay the same. They stay in the background while the groundwork is being formed, yet want to reap the benefits if things work out for the better.

While the decisions are being made, they swing into action. They demand minor changes . They find fault with small points. They point fingers and want answers. They rehash issues that have already been voted on and settled. They question conclusions. They challenge assumptions. They defend their stand in the name of constructive criticism and improvement. They are even on the different Legion committees and often contribute responsibly.

Unfortunately, a few of them have perfected the art of nit-picking so competently that they feel compelled to demonstrate their skill whenever the opportunity presents itself . Nit-pickers are always noting what is wrong with something and someone rather than what is right. They are full of questions. They are constantly reminding us of the uncertainty of things, and not infrequently they make them appear much more uncertain than they really are. They just love stirring the pot.

Most of them I would go as far as to say, are fairly intelligent. But, too often the value of their contribution is outweighed by the destructive, side effects produced. They inhibit creativity. They dampen enthusiasm. They demoralize certain members. Some can't deal with change, while others are always lobbying for changes to be made. They create uncertainty and it's about time they took a look in the mirror. Come on you know the type... "If I hit a nerve, is it because the shoe fits? "

What's that your saying? "Takes one to know one." Your absolutely right. That's the reason I wrote this article and used it in the Ajax Hunter News Magazine. Let's call it a kind of therapy or self-confession or admission of guilt. At least I'm admitting it.

Anyone who feels they need help, form an organized therapy class? Call it "The Legion Instigators" The first step to recovery is that you must give your name, to whoever is in charge at your branch and it must be entered in the next edition of your respective newsletter, stating that you admit that sometimes in the past you have been a nuisance, and that you will make every effort to make amends. Sign up quickly and be saved while there is still time.

Form your own "**Legion Instigators Rehabilitation Group.**" today.

I am sure an avalanche of members will come forward in most branches,
so get in early and beat the rush!!!

Bruce Sharpe
Zone F1
Public Relations Officer



***The Royal Canadian Legion
Dominion President
Mary Ann Burdett***



The Royal Canadian Legion is a self-funded, a political, non-partisan organization of 400,000 members from coast to coast in Canada that has two major priorities, the care of our veterans and the perpetuation of Remembrance.

The latest movement by the government of the day to introduce legislation to the benefit of those who have served in the military forces of this nation is in danger of being lost because of the political uncertainty that surrounds us all. And it is a shame.

It means our veterans will suffer, as has been the case for years in this country as many can tell you. But let me first clarify the point of what constitutes a veteran in our eyes. And I do not mean war veteran as defined by those who took part in World War I, World War II or the Korean War.

As far as we in the Legion are concerned today, it means anyone who has volunteered for military service and has been sworn in as a service person. It simply means one who is willing to go where the government decides he or she is most needed.

Make all the arguments you wish about training, postings or whatever, but don't try to tell a mother or a father these days about who is entitled to what designation if their son or daughter has been to the Gulf, Pakistan, the Middle East, numerous African nations and places around the world of which many of our citizens have not heard. They have all earned the title they so richly deserve. But what do they get in return ?

In the past few years successive governments of Canada have tried to keep up with the changing requirements brought on by military service under the current legislation. The result has been a lack of availability of certain services because the rules in place are not in line with what is happening or what is required.

They do not take into account the differences that have come into being since the last war veteran served in Korea. But there are numerous differences as we have brought forward to the government's attention many times over the past years.

We, along with other veterans organizations, responsible government agencies and many other Canadians have worked long and hard to bring change to bear on this situation. And now that we are within arm's reach of having legislation put in place to protect those who protect us, politics rears its ugly head again and threatens to kill all of the work and sacrifice made to ensure our greatest Canadians get what they deserve.

If there is one ounce of decency in the combination of parties and people we call Parliament they all owe it to our veterans, old and new, to make every effort to pass the legislation now in play as proposed by Veterans Affairs Canada. To do less would be to indicate to every Canadian veteran that their sacrifices for this nation were a waste of time and personal energy.

Regardless of what has happened and what may happen in the government of the day, one major issue stands out. Our veterans are not being treated with the respect and honour they deserve, especially from the political parties of this nation that would see them once again denied benefits for the sake of the few who would rather access a position of power than pay appropriate tribute to those who ensure their right to so do.

The proper tribute - the placement of the New Veterans Charter into the laws of this land now. Those in power and those who can wield the balance of power have the opportunity to do just that. And they must, or prove that they have already forgotten our men and women who give so much for so little other than the title "Canadian veteran".



***The Royal Canadian Legion
Immediate Past President
Ontario Command
Erl Kish***



The Royal Canadian Legion is not just a collection of halls in every little town in Ontario, 428 to be precise. Today, it is a thriving non-profit organization dedicated to community service. “Our youth programs are second to none,” says Erl Kish, Immediate Past President of the Ontario Command and a member of the Limestone City branch in Kingston.

The Legion’s charitable foundation has budgeted \$600,000 for it’s hockey, baseball and track and field programs across Canada. It also sponsors essay, poetry and public speaking contests, as well as handing out grants to deserving students. And naturally, the elderly, particularly veterans, are another of the Legions priorities. Some \$600,000 more is slated to go to hospitals and nursing homes.

At the individual branch level, volunteers provide transportation for seniors, take isolated veterans out of institutions for meals, and one branch even provides a summer camp for veterans who are patients at Sunnybrook.

All of this comes out of the \$1.9 million, raised through membership dues and fund raising initiatives at the branches.

On the subject of poppies, Kish insists the Legion does not care if people give them money or not. “We just want everyone to wear a poppy to remember our veterans.” Kish is a United Nations peacekeeper. He became a legion member in 1963. Since then, the legion’s mandate has changed, it now has three aims. To keep alive the memory of those who fought and died for their country, to provide care for needy veterans, and to do good work in the community.

When the Legion was formed in Winnipeg in 1926, all members were veterans of the Boer war or World War 1. At the end of World War 1, there were 15 independent veteran’s groups helping returned service men. By 1925, they had banded together under the banner of the Dominion Veterans Alliances, out of which the Canadian Legion evolved. Once formed the Legion immediately lobbied for improved pension legislation for veterans, resulting in the passage of the 1930 War Veterans’ Allowance Act. The act provided financial assistance to thousands of men who had not been eligible for disability pensions despite being incapacitated by war service.

During World War 1, 61,663 Canadians died and 174,623 were wounded, out of a population of fewer than 8 million people. In total, 120,000 Canadians were killed in 20th-century wars. In the 1970s, The Legion opened membership to spouses and children of servicemen. Four years ago, “people without blood ties” and “of good character” were also invited to join.

Unlike the established churches and the YMCA, the Canadian Legion is not property rich. Each of the 428 Ontario commands, is autonomous and owns and maintains its own building. Most of the “halls” are pre-World War 11 vintage and range from humble four-wall, one floor structures to a few mansions like the Legion Hall in Pembroke.

John Supple, a lumber baron, built the home of the Pembroke Command, in 1885. The town of Pembroke purchased his grand house in 1945 for the Legion’s use. Unfortunately, all that remains of architectural interest is the stone façade, an iron fence and two of the original 14 Victorian fireplaces. In 1957, the Legion added on a square games room to the original three story building. Reputedly the Supple House has a resident ghost – the classic woman in a white dress.

Legionnaires are very sensitive about the public perception of members as red-nosed drinking men. But the days of the raucous parties and brawls are gone, Kish says. “We had a lot of booze-and-mingle events, as we are a non-profit organization and they were a way to raise money,” he says. “We were criticized for that, so there are no more parties – just service and friendship.”



***Zone F1 Convention
Port Perry Legion
Branch 419
September 11, 2005***

“Zone Officers”



(l-r) Zone Secretary Marilyn Roach, Host Branch 419 President Lucy Wilson, Zone Treasurer Orville Downs, Zone Commander Cyril Best, Zone Chairman Jim Connell and Deputy Chairman Peter Puleston

“Branch Presidents”



(l-r) Oshawa Branch 637 Victor Shorey, Oshawa Branch 43 Emil Baumgartner, Port Perry Branch 419 Lucy Wilson, Bowmanville Branch 178 Jim Connell, Brooklin Branch 152 Don “Sully” Vipond, Ajax Branch 322 Mike O’Hara, Pickering Branch 606 Wayne Aston, Whitby Branch 152 Ira Peters, & Uxbridge Branch 170 Jack Ballinger