

Editorial



If there weren't any volunteers, there wouldn't be any Legion. Just about everything we do around the various branches requires volunteers. The volunteers organize all of the events, and raise the funding for various charities and also to keep the building going.

It's really wonderful how people volunteer their time. Sometimes I wonder if they realize how important they are. We have a lot of caring people in our branch who want to give, and volunteering for the Legion gives them a great opportunity to do just that.

Volunteers are the strength of this organization, we couldn't operate without them, and we always need more volunteers. Our branch has a strong membership, but proportionately, only a small number of them do volunteer work, so we need more input from more members.

I spoke with Ted Whan (one of our newly elected Provincial Vice Presidents) at the Provincial convention in Cambridge in May, just before he was elected. I asked him if there was a certain Chairmanship that he would prefer if elected. His answer was "I will perform whatever duties the newly elected president asks of me."

To no ones surprise he was elected because the delegates that voted for him knew that he cares about our veterans, he cares about the Legion, he is dedicated and he leads by example. That is what leadership and being a volunteer is all about. We have many new, dedicated individuals who have stepped in this year that are doing a great job, and many more in reserve waiting for their chance next year.

On another note, while our financial picture looks bright right now, economic restraints have to be put in place in the way we run our day to day operations, with regards to overspending in many areas, and the rising cost of utilities. What appears to be a rosy picture today can change very quickly. A few other branches in Zone F1 will attest to that.

Times are changing, and awareness of those changes have to be understood and dealt with. I realize a few members will be upset with even minor adjustments, but we have to institute a plan for the future survival of the branch. If there is any way possible that many of us can discard our personal differences and all work together, we will be a very strong organization for many years to come.

Bruce Sharpe
Public Relations Officer
Canteen Chairman



Ladies Auxiliary



Wow, it's September already and summer is coming quickly to a close. Hope everyone had a good one and enjoyed their holidays.

The Ladies Auxiliary had a quiet summer as we took a break from the Senior Luncheons but we are ready again to start back with our next Senior Luncheon on Tuesday, September 13th.

I would like to thank those that were involved in the preparation of food for the 80th birthday party for Tom Veitch. The party was a huge success.

We will have the opportunity to host the Zone Euchre on Saturday, September 17th and we will be holding a Craft & Bake sale on Saturday, October 22nd.

Not much else had been planned but I'm sure as the weeks go by we will be back to being very busy as usual.

In closing, enjoy the remainder of your summer and we look forward to the fall.

Yours in Comradeship

Wendy Clark

President Ladies Auxiliary



Colour Guard



Comrades, I would first of all thank our American friends that ventured up here from Cayahoga Falls Ohio. Their involvement and support of our Warrior's Day Parade and ceremonies at the CNE this year was greatly appreciated.

On a sad note we participated in the funeral service of Comrade Allan Appleby, a 23 year member of the Canadian Armed Forces.

We will be holding our annual Colour Guard Yard Sale on October 15, at 31 Admiral Road starting at 8 am. Anyone interested in donating items for this event please contact myself or Marlene Wilson. Come on out and get some great buys, while supporting the branch.

Gary Whelan

Commanding Officer



Membership



Comrades, we have 1261 paid up members, 161 outstanding 2005 memberships. At the moment we have approximately 1422 members. It's that time of year to remind all of our members that our Early Bird Membership Drive will be commencing on September 1st until November 30th. For those members who have not paid their 2005 dues, "it is not too late." Pay now and you will not lose your year of service.

Remember, without membership the Legion will not survive. If you know of anyone who is thinking of joining and is 18 years of age and older, bring them in or get them an application form from the bar.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new members, and also to remind all of our members, to please get involved with the Poppy Campaign. A couple of hours a year is not really too much to ask.

Just a reminder that you must be a voting member of Branch 322 to "Propose" or "Second" a Membership application, and also please make sure that the applicant that you are sponsoring completes the application correctly and in full.

In matters pertaining to behaviour or dress code in the Clubroom, the bar steward is the ultimate authority.

When signing people into the Clubroom, please only sign in a person or persons that you know well. You are responsible for their behaviour in the Clubroom and on the premises.

Janet Kaminsky
Membership Chairman



"Thank God for Poppies"



Their official CD can be purchased from our Branch through Dominion Command. Rick Hughes and Belinda Wilson will be performing the song here on Sunday October 16th, from 3pm. to 7 pm. Come on out, listen to some wonderful



Ernest “Smokey” Smith

“I was never afraid to shoot, that’s what I was paid for.”

Private Ernest “Smoky” Smith who died on August 3rd in Vancouver at 91, was Canada’s last living recipient of the Victoria Cross, the Commonwealths highest award for valour. He was also the kind of hellraiser who drove superior officers in the Seaforth Highlanders to distraction during their long, deadly campaign through German-occupied Italy. On many of those days, a hellraiser was just what was needed.

The citation describes his defence of a vital bridgehead across Italy’s Savio River during a furious enemy counter-attack on October 21-22, 1944. Using a Tommy gun, anti-tank weapons and whatever else he could scrounge, he wiped out two German self-propelled guns and a Panther tank, killed four attacking soldiers, repelled six others, carried a wounded comrade under fire to medical aid, then returned to guard the road until reinforcements arrived hours later.

After the war he returned to a hero’s welcome in his hometown of New Westminster, B.C. He married photographer Esther Weston in 1947 and re-inlisted during the Korean War. The couple raised two children and operated a travel company in Vancouver. Esther died in 1996.

The following are excerpts from his final interview with Macleans magazine Bureau Chief Ken MacQueen.

Why did you enlist in the army?

I first tried the air force. They accepted me, but said I had to wait six months. I said in six months the goddamn war will be over. I figured the Seaforths were going somewhere, so I joined and was gone in a week. I figured the war would be over in three months and I’d see Europe without paying for it. Six years later I was still seeing Europe.

You were a wild man, right?

Oh yea, I didn’t take orders. I didn’t believe in them.

Boy, you were in the wrong job.

I was in the right job. I’ve met some fine officers, but some weren’t worth a damn.

Did you feel that your actions that day would earn you the Victoria Cross?

I just knew we were going into action. I didn’t know what it was. I was with my crew, guys I knew I could trust, and we took up our positions and stayed there, all night and all day, killing Germans and knocking off tanks. Fun and games.