



ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION FERGUS BRANCH 275

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THE THISTLE



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Tom Semanyk

Well 2015 ended with a profit and a lot of good times.

Grandpa's BBQ, New Year's Eve party, and the Levee were very well attended. 2016 started off very well with the President's Levee and the fish fry that was sold out. Once again there is a jam session the first Saturday of every month. Feb. 6 is our first cribbage tournament for the year. Good luck to all those that participate. March 12 is our spring Zone Convention that will be held in our branch. Also this year is election year with advanced nominations. Good luck to all. As my second year comes to an end I would like to thank my executive for the fantastic term. All did a great job to help make the past 2 years very good and profitable.

I would like to thank Ray and Elizabeth for picking up the slack when 2 executive members retired and moved away. Also I would like to encourage all members to become involved in and with the new executive and vote to help our Legion prosper.

Thanks to all.

Your President
Tom Semanyk

LADIES AUXILIARY –

The Ladies Auxiliary Branch of 275 made 11 donations in 2015 to the following organizations:

Belwood Lodge

*Big Brothers Big Sisters

*Groves Memorial Community
Hospital

Heart & Stroke Foundation

*Alzheimer Association

*Food Bank

Team Ontario Lacrosse

*Women in Crisis

*Grand Quilt

Arthritis Association

*Centre Wellington District High
School

Submitted by

Cathy Bruder - Ladies Auxiliary Treasurer

Branch 275 and the Ladies Auxiliary of Branch 275 invite you to join the Legion Today!

There are many ways the Legion gives, and by joining you give too!

Please visit the Website for updated information and/or changes

www.ferguslegion.ca

**BRANCH
OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE
2014-2015**

President: Tom Semanyk
Past-President: Greg Manion
1st Vice President: Fred Hiller
2nd Vice: President: Mel Runnalls
Secretary: Marilyn Ferreira
Treasurer: John Campbell
Executive:

Ray Pearse
 Gary Watt
 Jim Darlington
 Conrad Sawyer

Appointed:
Sgt-At-Arms:

Chaplain: Rev. Canon Fran Darlington

COMMITTEES

Bursary/Honours Awards Jim Darlington
Canteen Mel Runnalls
Catering/Hall Rental Mel Runnalls
Liaison with Ladies Auxiliary Fred Hiller
Membership Elizabeth Pearse
Nevada / Poppy Ray Pearse
Property Tom Nicklasson
Public Relations Mel Runnalls
Sick & Visiting Ray Pearse
Sports/Track & Field Gary Watt
Training/Organizing/Development Greg Manion
Veterans Services/Seniors Ray Pearse
Ways & Means Gary Watt
Youth Education Fred Hiller

Audit – Chair Jim Taylor
Bookkeeper Kathy Ladd
Chief Bar Steward Karen Small
Head Custodian Jorja McConnell

**HALL RENTAL AND BANQUETS
Please contact Karen Small**

Tel: 519-843-2345 - Fax: 519-843-7296

E-mail: info@ferguslegion.ca

**LADIES AUXILIARY
OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE
2014-2015**

President: Christine Evans
Past Presidents: Pat Brawley
1st Vice President: Donna Wagenaar
2nd Vice President: Sharon Armitage
Secretary: Frances Hurd
Treasurer: Cathy Bruder
Sgt-At-Arms: Linda Semanyk
Sports Officer: Janine Allan

Executive: Janine Allen
 Joanne Becker
 Lynda O’Sullivan
 Linda Semanyk
 Mary Robson
 Rosemary Skilling
 Helen Stokes
 Donna Wagenaar

BRANCH HOURS

Monday	2:00 p.m. to	6:00 p.m.
Tuesday	2:00 p.m. to	11:00 p.m.
Wednesday	2:00 p.m. to	11:00 p.m.
Thursday	2:00 p.m. to	11:00 p.m.
Friday	1:00 p.m. to	11:00 p.m..
Saturday	12:00 p.m. to	10:00 p.m.
Sunday/Holidays	12:00 p.m. to	5:00 p.m.

**WE HOPE YOU WILL COME OUT AND
SUPPORT YOUR BRANCH.**

**General Meetings on the 3rd Wednesday
of each month excluding summer months.
Please plan on attending to learn about
and support your Branch but most
importantly to have your say.**

The Officers, Executive and Members of Branch 275 extend their sincere condolences to the families and friends of our fallen comrades since our last Newsletter.

Barbara Anne Barfoot
James Cooper
Bryan Dippinto
Stuart Elgie
John Eccles
Jack Giles

Paul Jereb
Harriet MacLean
John S. Mackenzie
Peter Snaith
W. Donald Taylor

**AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN
AND IN THE MORNING
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM**

A VERY SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT –

COMRADE GRIFF JACKSON



Griff Jackson a World War 2 Veteran has been awarded by the order of the President of the Republic of France, the rank of Knight of the French National order of the Legion of Honour. It is in gratitude of France for his involvement in the Liberation of France.

On Sat. March 26, 2016, the Consul General of France Mr. Marc Trouyet will be coming to Fergus to present this to Comrade Jackson. It will be from 2-4. Our local MP & MPP plus local dignitaries plus Legion Officers of Zone & District Command will be in attendance. Please plan to attend to congratulate Griff Jackson on this well-deserved honour.

The Legion of Honour, France's highest decoration, is awarded by the Republic of France to those who helped to liberate the country during the Second World War. Over 600 Canadian Veterans have received France's Legion of Honour.

The Ladies Auxiliary will be providing food refreshments.

POPPY REPORT – Ray Pearse – 519-843-5297

We would like to thank all the citizens of Fergus and area, all the merchants who displayed Poppy Boxes, all our sponsors in the Industrial Park and the St. Andrew Street Businesses. A special thanks to Beauty Crest Hair Styling, Made in Holland, and I Love Chocolate for their wonderful window displays. As well, a big thank you to our 149 canvassers and the Air Force, Army and Navy Cadets, who gave their time to support the Poppy Campaign. A special thanks to the Air Force, Army, Sea Cadets who did the serving at the Nov. 11th dinner and also the Scouts of Canada who manned the Cloak Room.

Through your generous support of our 2015 Poppy Campaign, we were able to raise \$33,000.00.

Approximately 20 million poppies are distributed by Veterans, Legionnaires and Cadet Corps across the nation annually. The proceeds are placed in trust to be used for the benevolent support of veterans and dependents. Through these Poppy Fund donations the Legion provides:

- Financial assistance to serving current and former Canadian Armed Forces members and their families who are in financial distress. Grants are available for food, heating costs, clothing, prescription medicines, medical supplies and equipment, essential home repairs and emergency shelter;
- Socials for our local Veterans;
- Youth Education (Legion Literary and Poster Contests);
- Our Youth of Fergus in the form of Bursaries;
- Groves Hospital;
- Air, Army and Navy Cadet Corps.

In addition to the Prime Objectives of Service to our Veterans and their dependents, Branch 275 is also involved in helping organizations in our community.

The Centre Wellington District High School
Spina Bifada Association of Canada
Scottish Festival Shuttle Bus
Relay for Life(Cancer)
Big Brothers Big Sisters
Fergus Pipe Band
Belwood Lodge & Camp

*District “C” Track and Field
*Golf Tournament
*Scottish Festival Parade
*Cause for the Cure
*Crime Stopper Child’s Fund
*Fergus Brass Band
*Mustang Girls Hockey

*Fergus/Elora Seniors Trans Corporation

VETERANS SERVICES / SENIORS – Ray Pearse 519-843-5297

A reminder to all veterans. Every year the rules change for receiving assistance from V.A.C. and the V.I.P. Please check with me to see if you qualify.

I can schedule an appointment for you with our Legion representative to meet with you here at the Legion or in your home.

HONOURS & AWARDS & BURSARY – Jim Darlington - 519-767-2110

Fifty nine members qualified for service pins in 2015. Please note that while a Fall membership renewal may show you are entitled to receive a new service pin, that award will not be available until the following the Remembrance Day. Twelve, 90th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion, medals were purchased.

Three new Bursary applications were completed, Two renewals were submitted for approval. Bursary application forms are available at the bar.

YOUTH EDUCATION – Fred Hiller – 519-843-2343

Winners from *Zone C-3 Youth Education Awards Competition*

Another successful year with a good response of entries in the poster poems and essays for our local nine schools with judging complete at our local branch of 285 entries, 12 first place winners went on to zone for judging with results of zone Fergus Branch had 2 first place winners and they have gone on to District besides that we had 4, 2nd place winners.



Winners of the Zone level were presented at the January 20, 2016 Branch General Meeting to receive their certificates and awards.



For the 2nd year we have 1 contestant who is taking part in the Public Speaking and she gave her speech on January 20th at the General Meeting and we wish her well as she goes on now to the Zone in February.

Branch #275 will be hosting the District Public Speaking Contest at the Branch in the Branch Hall on April 2nd, 2016. Everyone is welcome

Fred Hiller

Youth Education Chairman

CANTEEN REPORT- Mel Runnalls- 519-787-2333

Comrades the Club Bar is providing a great service due to the hard work of all the Bar Stewards. We have been conducting bar inventories and in the most part the counts have been improving, especially the Draft Beer count. Starting about a year ago we've been weighing the kegs with a scale and have found a great improvement.

Please remember Comrades the Club Room is available to all the Members at no cost for small Private Functions or rent the Hall at the Members rate. Come and enjoy the Comradery.

HALL RENTAL AND CATERING REPORT- Mel Runnalls- 519-787-2333

The Hall Rentals have been amazingly good in 2015.

We went to a Bridle show in Fergus last February and had great interest. Our Hall can accommodate up to 330 guests and offer many advantages, including fully licensed bar with Smart Serve Volunteer Staff. It is a Handicap accessible building, wireless Internet and microphone and Podium, display tables and full kitchen facilities. For weddings and other functions we offer a decorative curtain along the Main Hall Wall. If you're planning a Wedding, Stag and Doe, Birthdays, Anniversaries, Retirements or Business events The Fergus Legion would be pleased to accommodate your needs. For further information and pricing, contact our Chief Bar Stewart, Karen Small, during Legion business hours at 519-843-2345

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT- Mel Runnalls- 519-787-2333

The Royal Canadian Legion's mandate through Public Relations is that an exerted effort be made to provide accurate and update information to its Members and the News Media, such as Legion Programs, policies and activities.

Even though we have a great relationship with the local media and our Web Site Manager, it's very important the Executive **and** the Membership continually inform the public all the good things the Legion does and offers the community.

Therefore I ask the Membership of the Fergus Legion to be Ambassadors and continually promote this Excellent Organization. The Legion Magazine is a great information piece. I suggest that after you've read your issue that you drop it off at any business in town, like your Doctor's and/or Dentist's office, Hospitals. Or any other facility that has waiting rooms so the public can read and be informed.

CHAPLAIN'S REPORT - The Reverend Canon Fran Darlington, Anglican Church of Canada

It has been and remains a great honour and pleasure to serve Branch 275 as your chaplain. Though I do not live in Fergus, I do my best to be available to respond to requests for a variety of services, such as participation in various activities, Legion Funeral Services and regular Funeral Services, and offering prayers when called for at Legion celebrations. Planning and leading the Remembrance Day Service at the Fergus Cenotaph, and Decoration Day at Belsyde Cemetery, are great privileges. With considerable military family history, and as I was a child in London, England, during WWII, I consider myself a "veteran" of sorts, with my own memories of those years, and sincerely appreciate conversations with veterans of any conflict. I look forward to continuing affiliation and service with RCL Branch 275.

TRAINING/ORGANIZING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT – Greg Manion – 705-429-2619

Comrades Ontario Command is currently revising the TOD program. The goal is to better understand how we can get new members and get them involved in the Branch.

Over the past term your executive have attended many levels of Legion conventions and have networked with my attending from other branches. I have worked hard advising the current executive of the correct ways to operate and their responsibilities and feel we have done a tremendous job.

This year will be an election year. At the suggestion of a branch member we have developed a new nomination process which should improve the election meeting process.

I encourage all members to take time to consider joining the executive or volunteering to help with the many events we hold. The sole purpose of these events is to help keep the doors open at the branch.

Our mission is not to be a private club where you can get a cheap drink. We are here for the many Veterans and their families that have given so much and at times need our assistance.

Please remember the business at the branch is not conducted in the Club Room, it's at a General Branch Meeting. Show you care about Branch 275 and the Royal Canadian Legion by attending these meetings.

Regards

Greg Manion
Branch T O D Chairman

NEVADA REPORT – Ray Pearse – 519-843-5297

The Branch raises funds to support community sports and events throughout the year. The Nevada Committee and the Branch Executive review the many requests from the various organizations requesting financial assistance. Following are some of the groups who received support from the Branch:

Fergus Legion Branch 275 Support to the Community in 2014-2015:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Centre Wellington fund raising campaign
- Relay for Life plus *the Ladies Auxiliary donated \$500.00 for a total of \$1,500.00.*
- Fergus Pipe Band
- CWDHS Proficiency Award
- Centre Wellington Food Bank – Food cycle Ride
- Spina Bifida Association
- District Track & Field.
- Swim to Survive
- Scottish Festival Shuttle Bus and Thursday Parade
- Ontario Box Lacrosse
- Special Needs Soccer Festival
- Food Cycle Ride

A complete list will be provided on request.

SICK & VISITING –

We visited members and sent *Get Well*, *Thinking of You*, and *Sympathy* cards to members and family members.



I along with Branch Representatives and Fergus Brass Band & Santa visit veterans and members confined to area senior residences and nursing homes during the Christmas season.

“Thinking of You” and “Get Well” cards are sent to members and “Sympathy” cards are sent to family members. If you know of a member who is not well please advise as every effort is made not to miss anyone.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Elizabeth Pearse 519-843-5297

The winners of the 2016 Early Bird Campaign Draws for a free membership were: Linda Semanyk, Ruth Monaghan, Tillie Welsh, James Belamy and B. E. Starkey. **Winner of Draw for \$500.00: was Doug Sherwood.**

A big thank you to all members who took part in the Early Bird Campaign.

Our dues are: \$52.50 per year over age 65
\$57.50 per year under age 65

Please remember your 2015 Membership Card expired December 31, 2015.

You will no longer receive the Legion Magazine, be entitled to vote, or take part in any sports or tournaments sponsored by the Legion.

As of January 30, 2016 we have 50 Members who have not paid their 2016 dues.

At a Membership Seminar I attended, one Legion reported posting late payers names on their bulletin board. I will not be doing this but do hope you will pay your 2016 dues as soon as possible.

As of July 2015, we had 449 Members.

Since September 2015 we have had 12 people become members;

- 1 transfer in
- 2 transfer out
- 3 deaths
- 2 members brought their membership up to date.

We are always trying to recruit new members. Please promote our Legion to you family and friends.

PLEASE if you move, let me know right away, as I have to send this information to Command. Also if you change your telephone number please let me know.

Elizabeth Pearse - Membership

MESSAGE FROM ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION ONTARIO COMMAND DISTRICT “C”

Calling all Knitters and Crochets

Canadian Military are looking for recruits to help with a specific skill. They want you to help knit National gift of Peace, the Izzy Doll”. For the past two decades, Canadian Soldiers and Health Care Workers have given out more than 1.3 million tiny toys to children in war torn countries and regions affected by nation disaster.

What is the Izzy Doll?

When Mark Isfeld was serving on Peace Keeping Missions, he saw that the children of the countries had no toys. His Mom knitted him little dolls that he could give away to the children he met and his Dad named them the Izzy Dolls.

Mcpl. Mark Robert Isfeld was killed 21 June 1994 removing land mines in Croatia. He was with 1 Combat Engineer Regiment. His Mom carried on the tradition of knitting the little dolls until her death. His sister is now carrying on the tradition. They are made small for several reasons: they must be light in weight so the soldier can carry several of them in his/her pocket. They are made without metal, or plastic or anything sharp or abrasive.



**The Izzy Doll
National Gift of
Peace**
100,000 dolls
already been given
away.
Need 12,000 dolls
every year



Knit, crochet or
simply purchase a
toque to support
Homeless
Veterans during
the cold winter
months.

You can get the pattern on the internet just by typing in Izzy Dolls or picking up a pattern sheet from the Legion. If you are interested in making the little dolls please contact me at 519- 843-5297. We will gather the little dolls & ship them to the proper place.

Elizabeth Pearse

EARLY BIRD CAMPAIGN

SEPTEMBER 1 to FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30

**Membership Dues \$52.50 per year over 65 years of age
\$57.50 per year under 65 years of age**

BE AN EARLY BIRD and RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP DURING THE *EARLY BIRD CAMPAIGN* BE ENTERED INTO THE SIX DRAWS FOR A FREE MEMBERSHIP – DRAWS THE END OF SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER

Your Membership Card expires December 31st, 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

FERGUS BRANCH 275 - GOLF WILDWINDS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

Every Wednesday 2016

18 holes of Golf with Cart - \$40.00 per person

9 Holes of Golf with Cart - \$28.00 per person

JAM SESSION

FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH – October to May, 2016

2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

(Excluding long weekends)

Join us for an afternoon of friendship – a variety of entertainers



EVERYONE WELCOME



HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

IRISH STEW (Beef) - 6:00 TO 7:00 P.M

SATURDAY, MARCH 19th, 2016,

\$12.00 – Advance sale only

Please purchase your tickets at the bar



Dance the night away with Graham & Bowie



EVERYONE WELCOME

GRAMPA'S BEEF BBQ
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22nd, 2016

5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Roast Beef Dinner

Ladies & Gents please bring desert if you can

EVERYONE WELCOME

\$15.00 ticket (tax incl.) (over 10) \$7.00 (tax incl.) Child (ages 6-10) 5 under free

Please let Gary Watt know of attendance at (519) 843-3087

CRIBBAGE TOURNAMENT

OCTOBER 15TH, 2016 - 1 P.M. SHARPE

ACTIVITIES AT THE BRANCH

MONDAY	SENIOR EUCHRE	-	7:30 p.m.
TUESDAY	CRIBBAGE		7:30 p.m.
TUESDAY	DARTS		7:30 p.m.
THURSDAY	L.A. BINGO		7:00 p.m.
SUNDAY	CURLING		9:00 a.m.

REGALIA:

Please check the Regalia Display in the Club Room when visiting the Branch. There are commemorative pins, car magnets, caps, T-shirts - many items are available for purchase.

Quotable Quote:

“In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Dates to remember – Please check Club Room Bulletin Board and Website for updates and or date changes

2016

March 5	Saturday	Jam Session
March 16	Wednesday	General Meeting
March 19	Saturday	St. Patrick's Irish Stew
April 2	Saturday	Jam Session
April 20	Wednesday	General Meeting
May 7	Saturday	Jam session
May 20	Wednesday	General Meeting
June 4	Saturday	Jam Session
June 12	Sunday	Decoration Day Belsyde Cemetery
June 16	Wednesday	General Meeting