

Find the Poppy!

Enter to WIN!

Locate the black & white Poppy, hidden in this Blazer, for the chance to win a \$50 prize! Click the button below to enter.



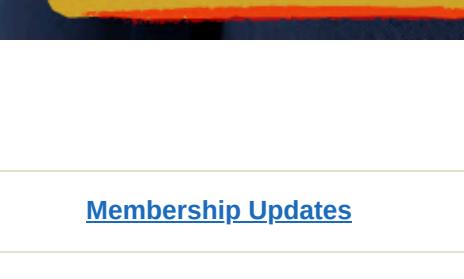
Enter the Contest

Find the hidden Poppy in this month's Blazer for the chance to win up to \$50 worth of gifts from the Poppy Store!

Congratulations to last month's winner, Denise Y.

Contest Details: No purchase required. Fill out the four-question survey and enter to win by clicking the button above. One entry per email address.

Deadline: January 25, 2026. Winner Contacted: January 26, 2026.



#503 - 17665 66A Ave, Surrey, BC V3S 2A7
T: 604-575-8840 TF: 1-888-261-2211
F: 604-575-8820
info@legionbcyukon.ca

The BC/Yukon Blazer

January 2026

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Monthly Spotlight

Branch #7 Britannia Helps Produce Replica of Historic War Banner

The Story of the Great War Banner

Victoria High School is the oldest high school west of Winnipeg, opening August 1876. During the First World War (then called the Great War), over 650,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders served, among whom were several alumni of Victoria High School. Following the war, a memorial service was held on the grounds of the school, remembering those who served and gave their lives.



Pictured above: The original Great War Banner.

A large banner, made of heavy wool and measuring 11 x 30 feet, was unveiled at the front of the school in 1920. The banner was covered in hand-sewn maple leaves, symbolizing teachers, students, nurses, and other members of the community who served in the First World War, totalling 466. The red maple leaves—three at the top, and 53 at the centre—represent the teachers and students who gave their lives. "Each leaf tells a story of courage, service, and sacrifice, inspiring us to remember and honour our past," wrote Irene Harrison, Branch Recording Secretary. "The 53 red leaves are in the shape of an elongated shield, similar to the Plaque of Honour on the Memorial tablet in the school's main hall, where the names of the fallen are listed."

For several years, the banner was displayed annually, honouring those who served and fell. The banner was then moved to storage until its rediscovery in 2004. Unfortunately, when it was found during building renovations, the banner had become deteriorated and could no longer be displayed.

Pictured above: Irene Harrison, Branch Secretary, presents cheque to Helen Edwards, Chair of Victoria High School Alumni.

Pictured above: Irene Harrison, Branch Secretary, and Keith Yow, Branch President, present cheque to Anne Boldt, Collections Manager of Victoria High School's Archives & Museum.

The Story of the New Banner

Last year, the Britannia Legion made a donation of \$2,500 to Victoria High School, covering the cost of replacing the Great War Banner with a new replica. Later that same year, the Britannia Legion made an additional donation to cover the cost of equipment necessary for displaying the banner once again. Overall, the Britannia Legion contributed \$3,750 to the project.

In early November, the completed replication, this time made of flag material, was displayed in the school auditorium just in time for the annual Remembrance Day Service. To learn more about the Great War Banner and Britannia Legion's assistance in bringing the replica to life, click the button below to read the Times Colonist article.

Read the Times Colonist Article

Important Dates

January

January 1 - New Year's Day - *Stat*

January 19 - Blue Monday (CAMH - Mental Health Awareness) - *3rd Monday of January*

January 24 - First Dominion Convention in Winnipeg (1927)

January 27 - Holocaust Remembrance Day

Membership Renewal Reminders

February

Black History Month

February 14 - Valentine's Day

February 15 - National Flag of Canada Day (1965)

February 16 - Family Day (BC) - *Stat*

February 28 - Gulf War Ends (1991)

Lapsed Member Reminders

Upcoming Branch Training

New Branch Executive Training (Part II)

Date: Tuesday, January 13, 2026

Location: Zoom

Time: 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Topics: Branch financial management, introduction to developing policies, procedures and house rules, followed by Q&A

New Branch Executive Training (Part II)

Date: Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Location: Zoom

Time: 10:00am - 11:00am

Topics: Branch financial management, introduction to developing policies, procedures and house rules, followed by Q&A

Legion Training (in-person)

Date: Saturday, February 7, 2026

Location: Legion Branch #10 Nanaimo - 129 Harewood Rd, Nanaimo, BC

Time: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

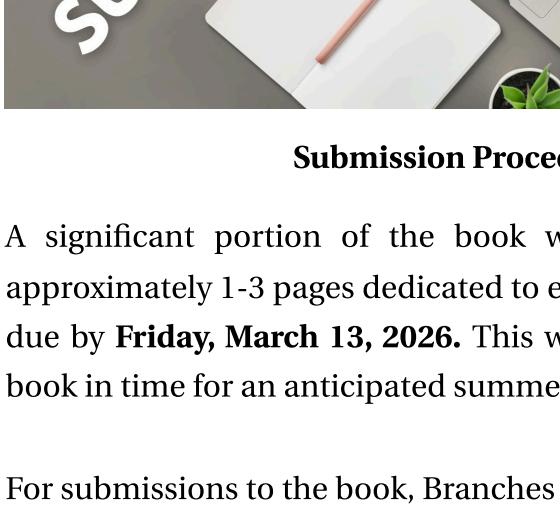
Topics: Branch Operations and Service Officer Training

How to Register

All workshops are free and open to all Legion members. To register, please email info@legionbcyukon.ca to confirm your spot.

If you have any questions, or would like to suggest an idea for a future training topic, please contact the BC/Yukon Command office directly at (604) 575-8840 or via email info@legionbcyukon.ca.

January Branch Anniversaries



Branch #29 Creston - *Celebrating 100 Years!*

Branches #15 Abbotsford, #25 Vernon, #26 Kelowna, #32

Agassiz, #40 Penticton, #57 Mission City, #63 Bulkley Valley, #75 McBride, and #83 South Burnaby - *Celebrating 99 Years!*

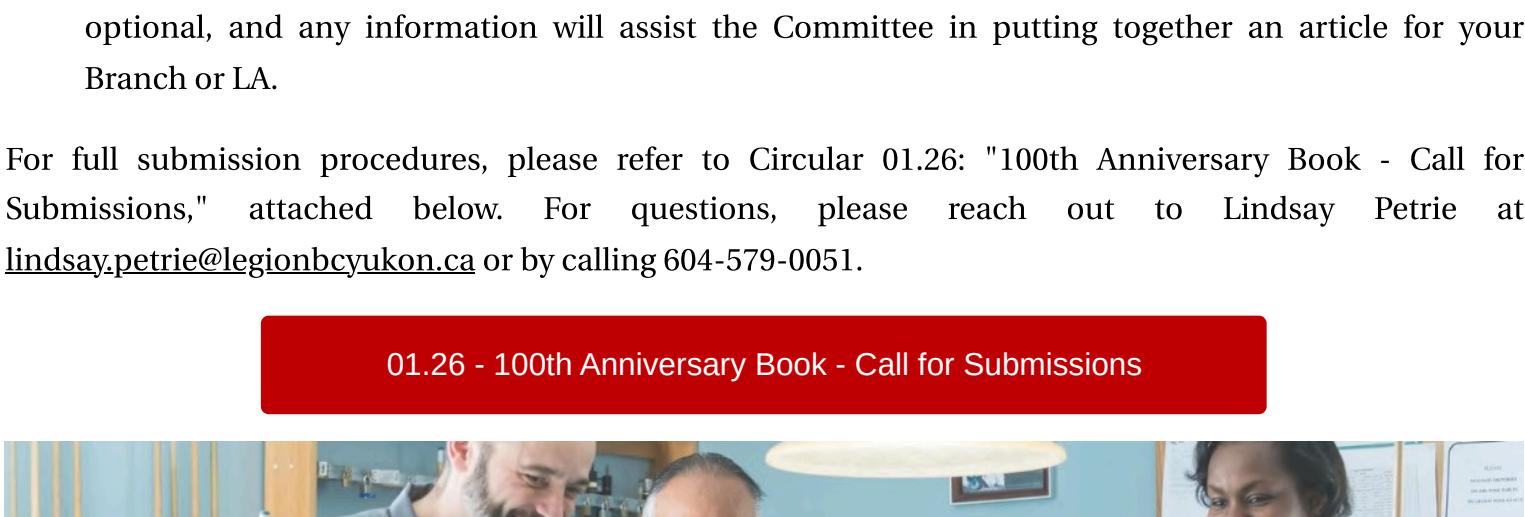
Branch #277 Diamond Head - *Celebrating 95 Years!*

Branch #154 Quadra Island - *Celebrating 88 Years!*

Branch #128 Wells & District - *Celebrating 87 Years!*

Branch #217 Salmo - *Celebrating 79 Years!*

Branch #229 Whalley - *Celebrating 78 Years!*



BC/Yukon Command 100th Anniversary Book



The Provincial Centenary Committee is excited to announce a major provincial project for our commemorative year: the BC/Yukon Command 100th Anniversary Book, which will be available in both paperback and digital.

The commemorative collection will highlight our collective history as a Command, highlighting substantial milestones and initiatives, and illustrating 100 years of service to our Veterans and commitment to the Legion's mission.

Submission Procedures for Legion Branches & Ladies Auxiliaries

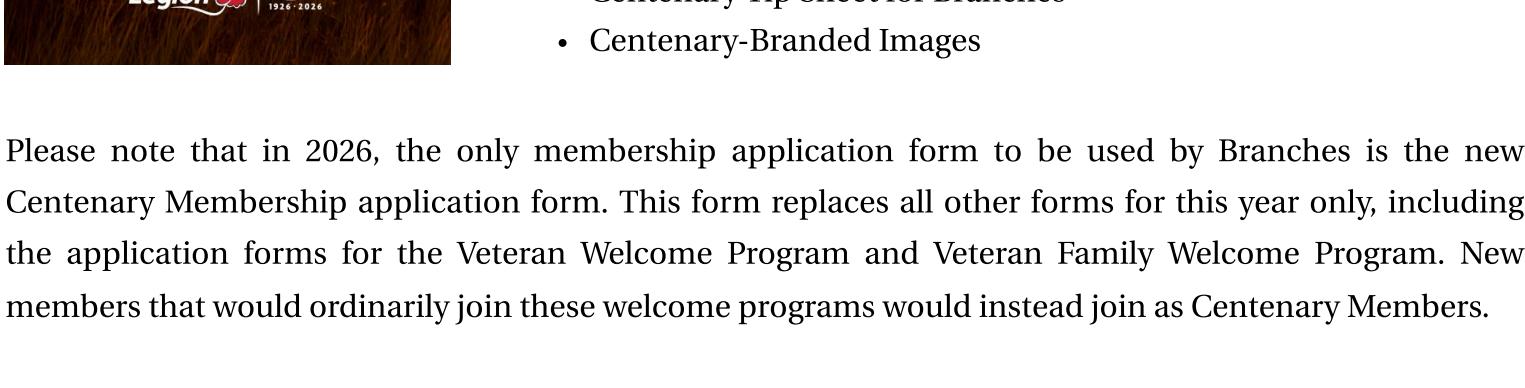
A significant portion of the book will focus on each Legion Branch in BC and the Yukon, with approximately 1-3 pages dedicated to each Branch and corresponding Ladies Auxiliary. All submissions are due by **Friday, March 13, 2026**. This will give the Committee time to format, proofread, and publish the book in time for an anticipated summer release.

For submissions to the book, Branches and Ladies Auxiliaries have two options:

- **Option 1:** Email a personalized article to Lindsay Petrie, Marketing & Communications Assistant (lindsay.petrie@legionbcyukon.ca).
- **Option 2:** Fill out the online survey: <https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/BjBR9v>. All questions are optional, and any information will assist the Committee in putting together an article for your Branch or LA.

For full submission procedures, please refer to Circular 01.26: "100th Anniversary Book - Call for Submissions," attached below. For questions, please reach out to Lindsay Petrie at lindsay.petrie@legionbcyukon.ca or by calling 604-579-0051.

01.26 - 100th Anniversary Book - Call for Submissions



Centenary Membership Campaign

The Legion's Centenary Membership Campaign officially launched on January 5, 2026. From now until the end of the year, all new members get their **first year free** at the Legion. The Membership Portal has been configured accordingly, and all Centenary resources for Branches can be accessed here: <https://portal.legion.ca/centenary-2026>

By following the link above, Branches can download:

- Centenary Membership Application Form
- Centenary Branch Logos
- Centenary Posters & Social Media Graphics
- Legion 100 Win Big Posters & Social Media Graphics
- Centenary Tip Sheet for Branches
- Centenary-Branded Images

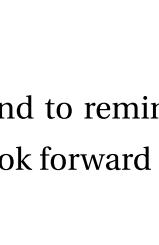
Please note that in 2026, the only membership application form to be used by Branches is the new Centenary Membership application form. This form replaces all other forms for this year only, including the application forms for the Veteran Welcome Program and Veteran Family Welcome Program. New members that would ordinarily join these welcome programs would instead join as Centenary Members.

To assist Branches with membership growth and retention, the Provincial Membership, Marketing & PR Committee has created new social media graphics, which can be accessed by clicking the button below. These and other materials, such as membership flyers and brochures, can also be accessed on the Marketing & PR page on Branch Corner: <https://legionbcyukon.ca/branch-corner/marketing-and-public-relations/>

Centenary Social Media Graphics

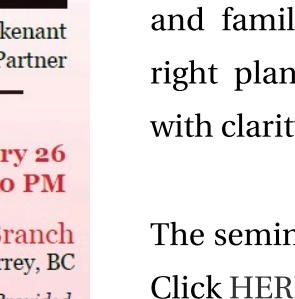
Reports and Statistics

As of January 6, 2026, BC/Yukon Command has obtained the following reports for membership:



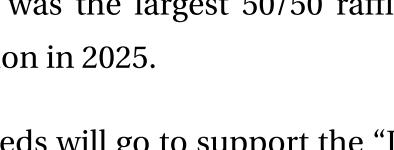
- New Memberships: 14.18% (1,353 New Members) - *In just less than one week!*
- Paid Memberships: 60.40% (30,794 Paid Members)
- Renewals: 57.75% (29,441 Members Renewed)

We encourage Branches to spread the word about the Centenary Membership Campaign, and to remind new members to select their Branch from the dropdown menu when signing up online. We look forward to welcoming more new members across BC and the Yukon throughout this milestone year!



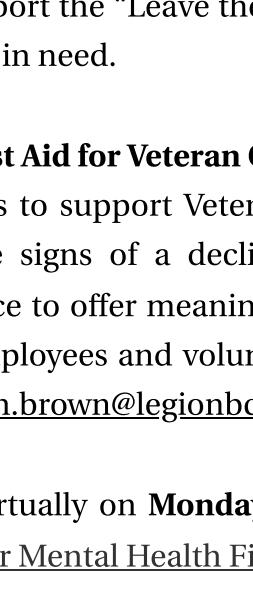
Legion Foundation Seminar Series: Wills & Estate Planning

Legion Foundation Seminar Series



WILLS AND ESTATE PLANNING

Gain valuable insights on **estate and incapacity planning** so the right decisions are made when it matters most.



Ken Volkenant
Lawyer, Partner

Thursday, February 26
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Cloverdale Legion Branch
17567 57 Ave, Surrey, BC

Tea, Coffee, and Snacks Provided

PharmaSave

A huge thank you to the team at PharmaSave Cloverdale, who donated backpack supplies for the "Leave the Streets Behind" program.



Frosty 50/50 Raffle

Congrats to Deidre C. who won \$2,630 in the Legion Foundation's latest online draw, the Frosty 50/50 Raffle! It was the largest 50/50 raffle for the Legion Foundation in 2025.

All proceeds will go to support the "Leave the Streets Behind" program, providing Comfort Backpacks and Apartment Kits to Veterans in need.

Course: Mental Health First Aid for Veteran Community

Build confidence and skills to support Veterans with compassion and understanding. This course helps participants recognize the signs of a declining mental well-being or mental health crisis, providing practical tools and guidance to offer meaningful support in challenging moments. This course is open to Royal Canadian Legion employees and volunteers who work directly with Veterans. For questions, please email Lauren Brown (lauren.brown@legionbcyukon.ca).

The course will be held virtually on **Monday, March 16 from 9:00am - 5:00pm**. Please register early, as space is limited: [Register for Mental Health First Aid: Veteran Community](#)

Supporting Veterans who are Homeless

As the weather turns cold, more Veterans in need are reaching out to Legion Branches and Branch Service Officers for help. The Legion Foundation has three main ways to support Veterans who are homeless or are at-risk of homelessness:

1. Operation: Leave the Streets Behind

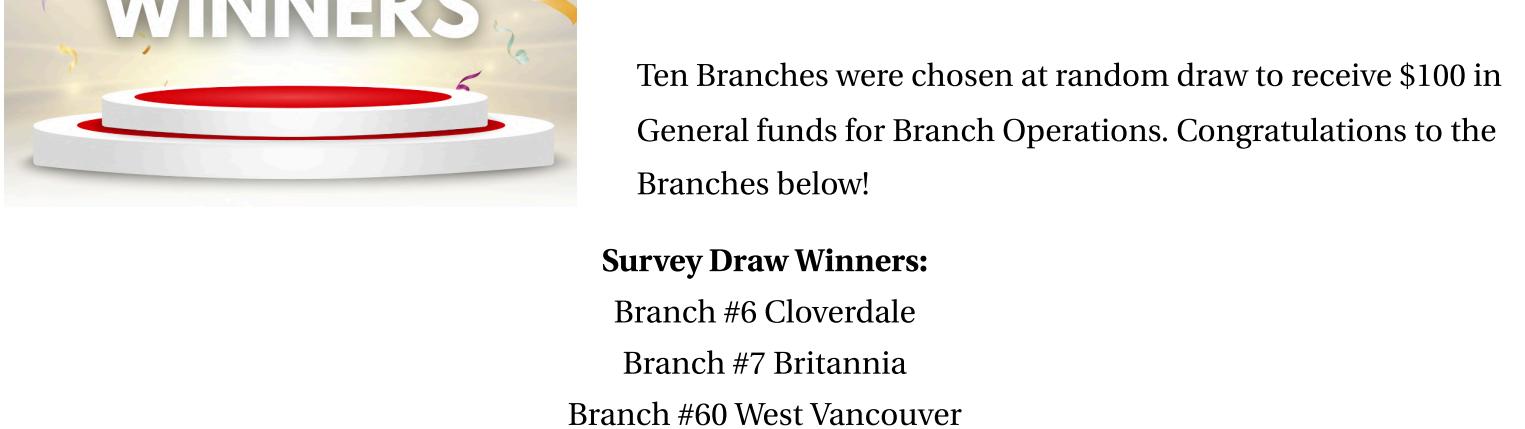
- Provides Comfort Backpacks and Apartment Kits to Veterans in need
- Contact: [Amber Stewart](#) or visit the [Legion Foundation website](#)

2. Veterans House Victoria

- Provides supportive, transitional housing for Veterans in need
- Contact: [Terri Orser](#) or visit the [Legion Foundation website](#)

3. Veteran Homelessness Program

- Provides rent supplements, rent deposits/arrears, housing searches and other supports to Veterans experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness
- Contact: [VHP Email](#) or visit the [Legion Foundation website](#)



Branch Banking Survey: Winners of the Draw



Thank you to all Legion Branches that participated in our Branch Banking Survey in November and December. Your feedback will assist BC/Yukon Command in negotiating a commercial banking package that can best support Branches across BC and the Yukon.

Ten Branches were chosen at random draw to receive \$100 in General funds for Branch Operations. Congratulations to the Branches below!

Survey Draw Winners:

Branch #6 Cloverdale
Branch #7 Britannia

Branch #60 West Vancouver

Branch #88 Maple Ridge

Branch #92 Salt Spring Island

Branch #127 Public Service
Branch #142 West Point Grey
Branch #254 Whitehorse
Branch #276 Slocan Valley
Branch #281 Port McNeill

Branch #71 Windermere District - Invermere Launches New Courtesy Van Service



The Windermere District - Invermere Legion is pleased to announce the launch of a new transportation service for Veterans and community members: the Legion Courtesy Van.

Formerly known throughout Invermere as Katie's Van, this fully wheelchair-accessible vehicle has been refurbished and prepared for service through the dedicated efforts of Legion volunteers.

Extensive repairs and safety updates have been completed to ensure the van is reliable, comfortable, and secure for all passengers.

The Legion Courtesy Van will be offered **free of charge** to **Veterans and community members** who require accessible transportation. The service is designed to support Veterans in attending hospital visits, medical appointments, and recreational outings—an essential initiative that has been long anticipated within the region. While the service is free, the Legion Courtesy Van gratefully accepts donations, which will help cover ongoing maintenance costs and eventually support the replacement of the vehicle, ensuring the program's sustainability.

This initiative reflects the Legion's continued commitment to honouring and supporting Canada's Veterans by removing barriers to essential services and enhancing community connection. For more information, or to inquire about use of the Legion Courtesy Van, please contact Windermere District - Invermere Legion by calling 250-342-9517.

Branch #91 Prince Edward - Langford Veterans Share Stories with Students



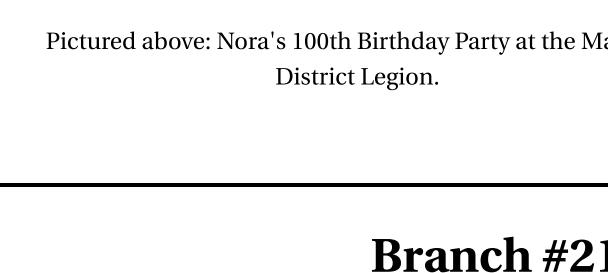
In late October, ten Veterans of the Prince Edward - Langford Legion visited Grade 8 students at Ecole John Stubbs School. They sat with the students, sharing stories of their service and discussing the importance of Remembrance. The students were able to speak with each Veteran in small groups, gaining a broad spectrum of knowledge. Students asked questions, some sharing poetry they wrote for this year's Youth Remembrance Contests. This was Ecole John Stubbs' third consecutive year hosting this event.

Pictured above: Warrant Officer Ret'd Terri Orser.

The week prior, Veterans from the Branch also met with local Sports Academy student athletes, Grades 8-12. At Veterans Memorial Park in Langford, these Veterans spoke on Remembrance and the park's tributes to Canadian Armed Forces from WW1, WW2, and the Korean War.

Both events provided meaningful experiences for both students and Veterans. "Branch #91 is grateful for the administrators, teachers, and support staff of these schools who champion Remembrance and the significance of CAF service and sacrifice, past and present," writes Norm Scott, Branch President. "Of course, we thank our Veterans for assisting with the mission to ensure our youth learn about and gain understanding of the importance of Remembrance. Lest We Forget."

Branch #134 Malahat District Celebrates 100th Birthday of Life Member



Nora Smart, Life Member of the Malahat District Legion, celebrated her 100th birthday last December. To mark this remarkable milestone, the Branch hosted a surprise party for Nora during the final Meat Draw of the year. That day, Nora arrived to find a reserved table decorated with three large "100" balloons, along with a professionally-designed sign highlighting key events from the year she was born.

In advance of the celebration, the Branch arranged for official congratulatory messages to mark Nora's centenary, in keeping with federal and provincial programs that recognize Canadians reaching milestone birthdays. Nora was invited to sit at the front of the hall as these birthday greetings were read aloud by Bob Cleroux, Vice President.

Nora received letters of congratulations from Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada; Mary Simon, 30th Governor General of Canada; and King Charles III.

Pictured above: Nora Smart with her proud son, Darryl.

Jeff Kibble, MP for Cowichan-Malahat Langford and himself a Veteran, attended the celebration. He shared a personal story of Poppy tagging with Nora at the local Country Grocer, recalling how Nora completed her full two-hour shift with an impressive pace and cheerful heart. At the party, Jeff Kibble presented Nora with a signed message of congratulations from Pierre Poilievre, Member of the House of Commons of Canada.

Nora's dedication to the Legion spans over five decades. She first joined the Esquimalt Branch in 1974 and transferred to Malahat District Branch in 1988. Over the years, Nora has demonstrated an enduring commitment to service through her weekly volunteer work in the kitchen, where she prepares and serves meals for seniors, and through her ongoing donations of food and other resources to the Branch. "Her generosity and steady presence have made her a cherished part of the Malahat Legion family," writes Jeff Lydiatt, Executive Member. "We wish Nora continued good health and happiness, and sincerely hope she will be with us, inspiring members and guests alike, for many years to come."

Pictured above: Nora's 100th Birthday Party at the Malahat District Legion.

Pictured above: Isabelle Hammer, Branch President, presents birthday greeting from King Charles III. Also pictured: Jeff Kibble, MP; Nora Smart; and Bob Cleroux, Vice President.

Branch #210 Lake Cowichan Installs Memorial Sidewalk for Veterans



In the heart of Lake Cowichan, a simple idea grew into a powerful tribute. The small town on Vancouver Island came together to honour the brave men and women who have served our country with the Veterans Memorial Sidewalk: a beautifully-painted crosswalk and lasting tribute to their courage and sacrifice.

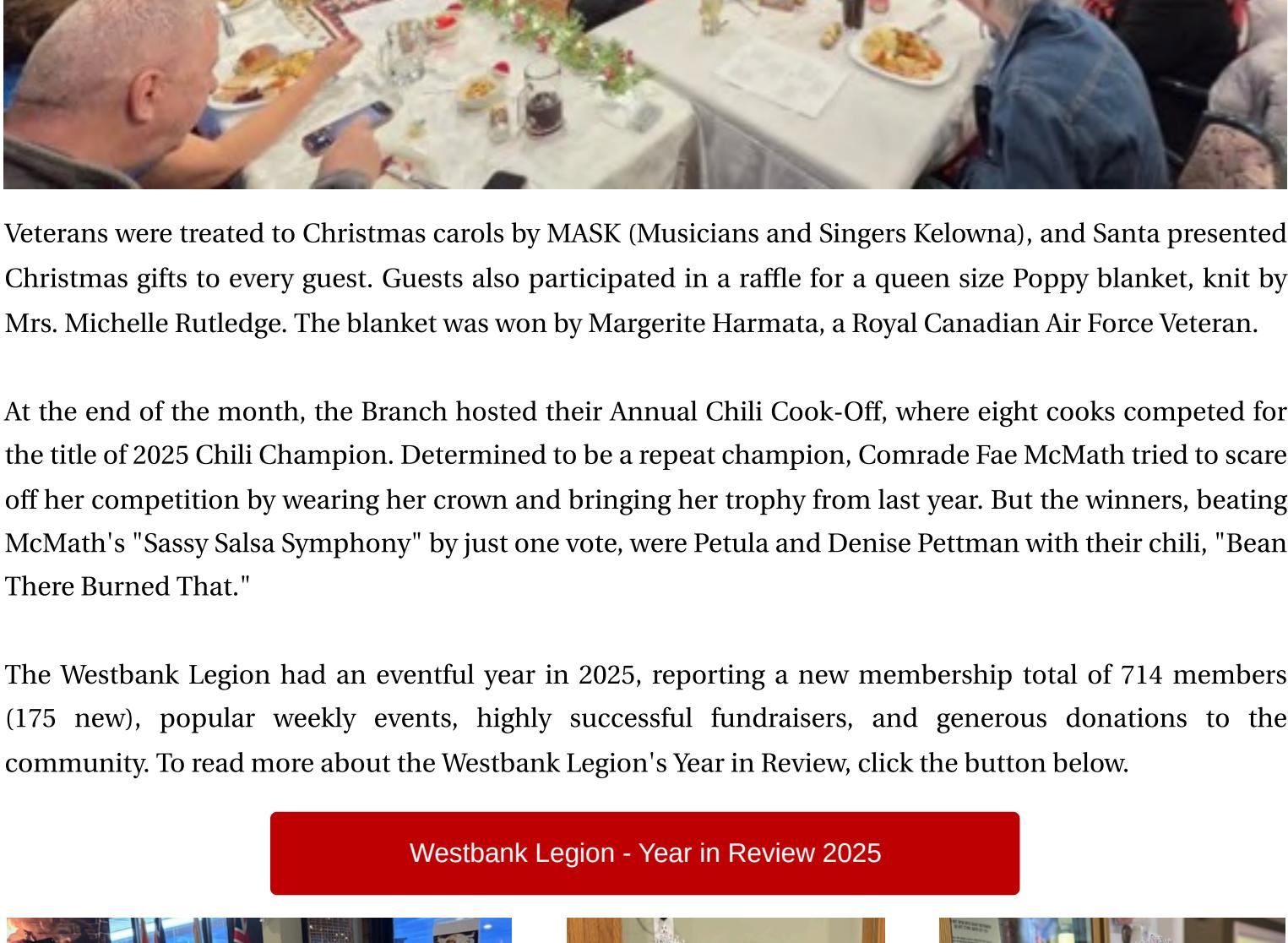
"The response from the community has been incredible," said Sam Jones, Lake Cowichan Branch President. "Every act of support, every word of encouragement, showed how deeply people care about honouring our Veterans."

The Lake Cowichan Legion is profoundly grateful to the Town of Lake Cowichan, especially the Town Hall, and to every member of the community who embraced the project so wholeheartedly.

Branch #288 Westbank: November Highlights and Year in Review

At the Westbank Legion, November began with several members signing up to do Poppy tagging ahead of the annual Remembrance Day Ceremony in West Kelowna. The Branch's Colour Party also made an appearance at the Westwood Retirement Home Remembrance Day Ceremony, and again at the city parade a few days later.

That month, the Branch also hosted their 3rd Annual Long-Term Care Home Veterans' Christmas Dinner. Each year, Veterans and spouses of deceased Veterans are invited to this special holiday event. The dinner, sponsored by Gorman Bros. Lumber Ltd, welcomed honoured guests such as Captain John Senez, a Second World War Veteran; Gord Milsom, Mayor of West Kelowna; JoAnn and Lonny Kubas, Founders of Heart to Home Meals; and Nicole Arkle of Gorman Bros. Lumber Ltd. During his speech, Mayor Milsom expressed that he, his council, and the Westbank community "are extremely proud of all who wore a Canadian Armed Forces and RCMP uniform and who served our country." He also recognized the contributions of family members, stating that their support "has been and continues to be so vital."



Veterans were treated to Christmas carols by MASK (Musicians and Singers Kelowna), and Santa presented Christmas gifts to every guest. Guests also participated in a raffle for a queen size Poppy blanket, knit by Mrs. Michelle Rutledge. The blanket was won by Margerite Harmata, a Royal Canadian Air Force Veteran.

At the end of the month, the Branch hosted their Annual Chili Cook-Off, where eight cooks competed for the title of 2025 Chili Champion. Determined to be a repeat champion, Comrade Fae McMath tried to scare off her competition by wearing her crown and bringing her trophy from last year. But the winners, beating McMath's "Sassy Salsa Symphony" by just one vote, were Petula and Denise Pettman with their chili, "Bean There Burned That."

The Westbank Legion had an eventful year in 2025, reporting a new membership total of 714 members (175 new), popular weekly events, highly successful fundraisers, and generous donations to the community. To read more about the Westbank Legion's Year in Review, click the button below.

Westbank Legion - Year in Review 2025



Pictured above: Necole Belanger, Vice President, presents Veteran Margerite Harmata with Poppy blanket.

Pictured above: Petula and Denise Pettman, 2025 Chili Cook-Off

Winners.

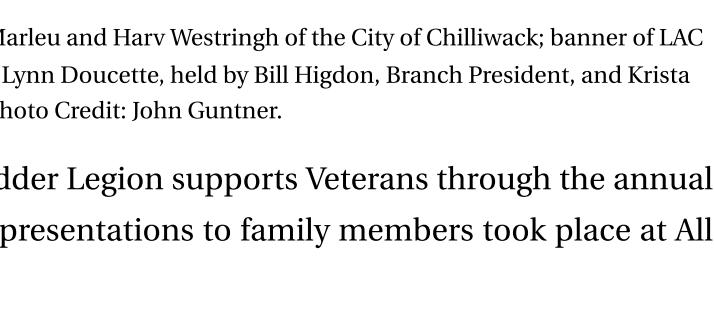
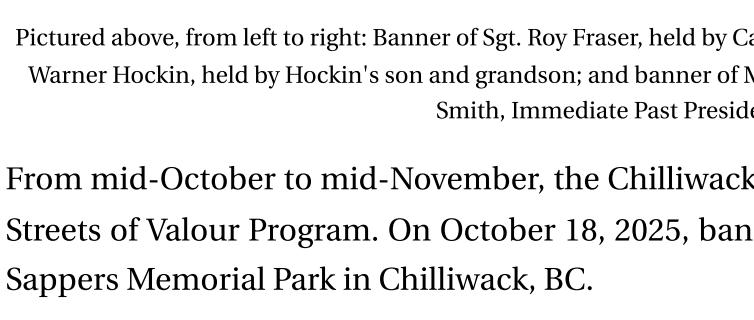
Pictured above: Fae McMath, 2024

Chili Cook-Off Winner.

Branch #293 Alberni Valley in November

In November, the Alberni Valley Legion awarded a 50 Year Medal to Legion Member Harold Malcolm Kraus. The medal was presented by Roy Buchanan, Branch President, and Willem Groeneveld, Sergeant at Arms.

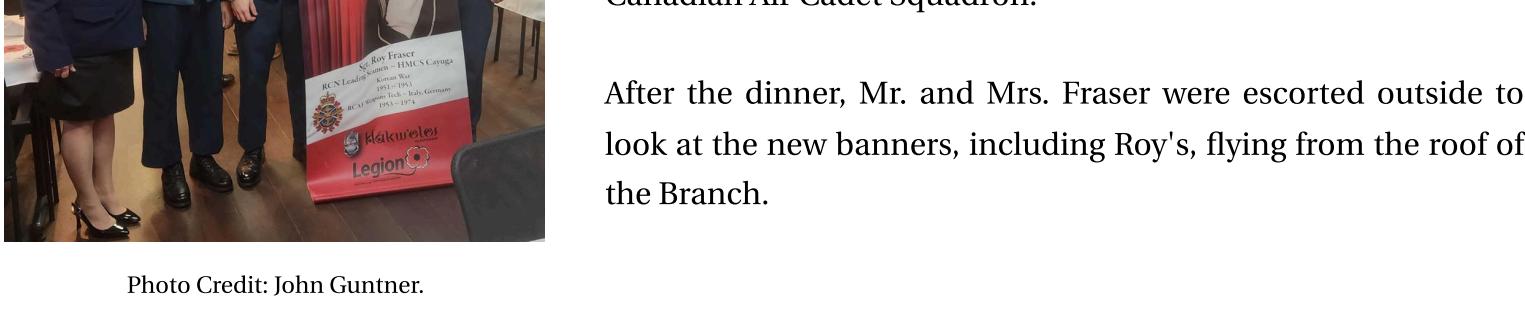
That month, members of the Branch also paid a special visit to the gravesite of a First World War Veteran. Roy Buchanan and Tim Murphy, Sergeant at Arms, saluted the gravesite of a fallen soldier recently discovered at the Catholic Cemetery on Falls Street. A wreath was laid on the headstone, dedicated to Pte. William F. Clark, 7th Battalion, C.E.F. Clark was born in 1897 and enlisted in Port Alberni in 1915. He was killed in action in May of 1916. Legion members learned that Clark's body was never repatriated, and the gravestone was raised in Clark's memory by his family.



Pictured above, from left to right: Roy Buchanan, Branch President; Harold Malcolm Kraus, Legion Member; and Willem Groeneveld, Sergeant at Arms.

Pictured above: Roy Buchanan, Branch President (front) and Tim Murphy, Sergeant at Arms (back) salute the gravesite of a First World War Veteran.

Branch #295 Chilliwack-Vedder Honours Veterans with Streets of Valour Program



Pictured above, from left to right: Banner of Sgt. Roy Fraser, held by Carol Marleau and Harvey Westringh of the City of Chilliwack; banner of LAC Warner Hockin, held by Hockin's son and grandson; and banner of Major Lynn Doucette, held by Bill Higdon, Branch President, and Krista Smith, Immediate Past President. Photo Credit: John Guntner.

From mid-October to mid-November, the Chilliwack-Vedder Legion supports Veterans through the annual Streets of Valour Program. On October 18, 2025, banner presentations to family members took place at All Sappers Memorial Park in Chilliwack, BC.



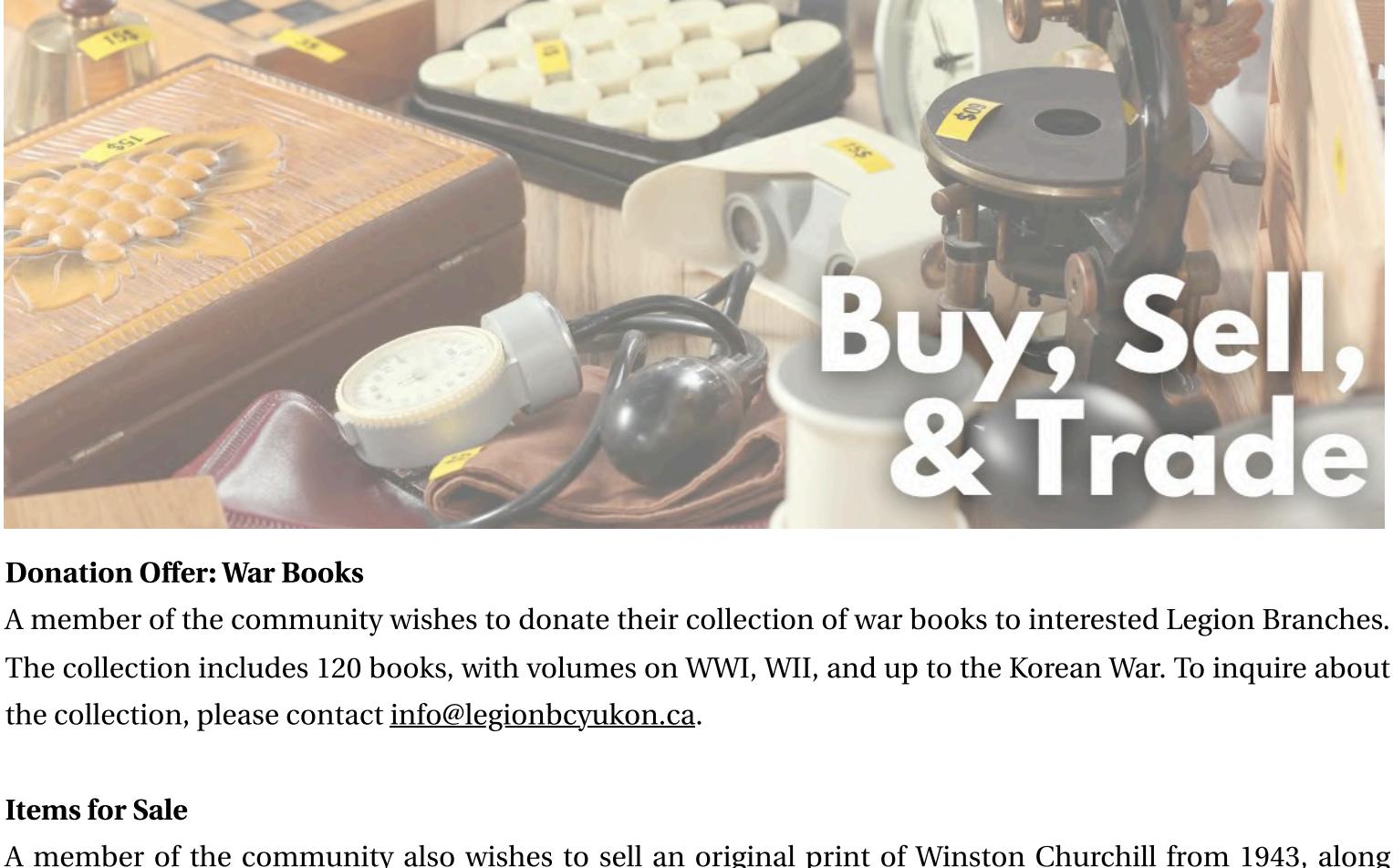
Photo Credit: John Guntner.

The next day, the Chilliwack-Vedder Legion held their annual Veterans Dinner. Sergeant Roy Fraser and his wife, Lee, were presented with Roy's banner for this year's the Streets of Valour project. The banner was presented by Immediate Past President Krista Smith, along with three members of 147 Airwolf Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron.

After the dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Fraser were escorted outside to look at the new banners, including Roy's, flying from the roof of the Branch.

Want to see your Legion Branch in our next newsletter?

Ask a Branch Executive to email lindsay.petrie@legionbcyukon.ca with photos and stories you'd like to share in the next edition of the BC/Yukon Blazer!



Buy, Sell, & Trade

Donation Offer: War Books

A member of the community wishes to donate their collection of war books to interested Legion Branches. The collection includes 120 books, with volumes on WWI, WWII, and up to the Korean War. To inquire about the collection, please contact info@legionbcyukon.ca.

Items for Sale

A member of the community also wishes to sell an original print of Winston Churchill from 1943, along with a set of four books all written by Winston Churchill. For further inquiries, and to make an offer, please also contact info@legionbcyukon.ca.

Memo Summary

November

- 64.25 - Poppy Campaign Update #4
- 65.25 - Remembrance Day Message from the Prime Minister
- 66.25 - 2025 Military Service Recognition Book - Available Now
- 67.25 - Branch Centenary Logos Update
- 68.25 - Legion Commercial Banking Package - Survey
- 69.25 - Ladies Auxiliary Membership Renewal 2026
- 70.25 - Upcoming Branch Executive & Service Officer Training

December

- 71.25 - Poppy Assessment and Statement Deadline Reminder - January 31, 2026
- 72.25 - Centenary Updates - Membership, Media Kit & Giveaway
- 73.25 - Reminders: Portal Closure and Per Capita Tax Increase
- 74.25 - Legion Magazine Update: 2026 Submission Procedures
- 75.25 - Command Office Holiday Closure

[Download Memos from Branch Corner](#)

The BC/Yukon Command acknowledges it carries out its work on the traditional territories of Indigenous nations throughout British Columbia and Yukon.

We pay our respects to the Elders, past and present, descendants and custodians of these lands. We honour

the knowledge keepers and the continuing relationships with Indigenous peoples in BC that develop through our work together. The BC/Yukon Command is grateful to the sqəc̓i̓yaʔɬ təməxʷ (Katzie), sc̓əwaθenaɬ təməxʷ (Tsawwassen), Kwantlen, Á,LENEĆ ETE (WSÁNEĆ), Semiahmoo, S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō), and Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla First Nations, on whose traditional territories we operate our main office.

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Our mailing address is:

BC/Yukon Command of the Royal Canadian Legion

Unit 503 - 17665 66A Avenue

Surrey, BC

V3S 2A7

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