



Dr. C.B. Lumsden  
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Royal Canadian Legion  
*founded 1944*

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Sgt at Arms Donn Mills pays tribute after leaving a wreath at the grave of Dr C.B. Lumsden M.M.

## NEWSLETTER

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# THE RE-BIRTH OF THE WOLFVILLE LEGION 2017-18

*This first Newsletter has been put together to celebrate nothing less than the re-birth of the C.B. Lumsden Wolfville Legion Branch!*

Only 18 months ago our Branch looked as though it was on the edge of collapse. Membership had declined drastically. Investment funds were almost exhausted. The Legion building was in great need of repair and repainting. Meetings had a hard time reaching a quorum. Bar sales were in free fall.

Our Branch in fact was experiencing what many Legion branches all over the country have been going through. Veterans from WW2, who had provided the lifeblood of the Association, were gradually dying away. And younger veterans were not seeing their local Legion as a place where they could find comradeship. Legions had opened up membership to anyone who wished to join, and these civilian members did a great deal to keep their branches going. But they too were

getting older, and looking for a new generation to take their place.

In July 2017, after two membership meetings had been unable to go ahead for lack of a quorum, a group, led by Michael Bawtree, proposed that a Committee be set up to look into the current state of our Legion branch, and report to the membership in early September. This was approved, and a Special Planning Committee was formed, made up of comrades Doug Spencer, Donn Miles, Bruce Wellwood and Michael Bawtree. They were to examine five areas: 1) The status of the land owned by the Branch south of H'way 101; 2) Membership; 3) Leadership; 4) Finances; 5) The state of our building.



*The Planning Committee at work*

The Committee reported back to a Special General Meeting on September 21st, 2017. They had studied the land, and although it had been a fine vision in the 1990s to consider building a new Legion home there, the majority of the Committee felt that we were now simply not able to pursue the vision, and that we should abide by a vote passed the previous year, in which it was agreed to sell the land.

The Committee had also engaged the accountant Greg Miller, *pro bono*, to develop a spreadsheet reflecting our financial status since 2017, which showed steadily declining income. They had also brought in an architect, Michael Harvey, to examine the building - also *pro bono*. And they had discussed the problem of membership and leadership -- membership stood at 125 in 2012, but had now shrunk to 66. With declining numbers there were fewer and fewer members to serve on committees or on the Executive.

The Special Meeting was attended by as many as 25 members, and the Committee wound up by asking the simple question:

Given the results reported by the Committee, do you want the Branch to

continue, or shall we wind it up?

The result was unanimous: everyone voted that the Branch should continue.

Through the Fall the Legion managed to run a successful Poppy Fund Campaign, once again under the leadership of Comrade Hubert Sullivan and his family and with the assistance of Vera Thomson and Paul Allen. A successful banquet was held on Remembrance Day, catered as in previous years under the leadership of Vera Thomson.



*Before renovation*

In December a new Executive took over, determined to move a reviving agenda forward, which included the sale of the land, and using the funds to refurbish the present Legion building, which was seen as a necessary first step in attracting new members. Doug Spencer became president, Lawrence MacIsaac 1st Vice, Michael Bawtree 2nd Vice and Donn Miles Sergeant at Arms.

In February and March, through a combination of circumstances, we lost the services of two presidents in quick succession. As Acting President Michael Bawtree nominated Ellen Hunt for the position. She accepted the nomination, and was elected in April.

It was also agreed that without a dynamic Membership Chair, we would have a hard time re-building our membership. Here we were in luck.

In February Paul Murphy, recently retired from the RCAF after 35 years in the service, joined the Legion. He was immediately seen as a potential new Membership Chair, and was appointed to the role. He at once began organising our membership records, and getting in touch with individual members. At his suggestion a coffee get-together was organised to run from 10 to 12 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This has been a good success, and still continues.



*Paul Murphy*



There was also a movement to consider closing down the Legion's three Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs), which were netting less and less money for the Legion. The Atlantic Lottery Corporation (ALC) had previously run a program of taking back their machines and paying \$10,000 per machine, and as soon as they announced a renewal of this program, a motion was put forward by Michael Bawtree that the videos be returned. It was a lively discussion, but the vote carried, and ALC picked up the machines in June, with \$30,000 deposited into the Branch's accounts.

Meanwhile, the sale of the land was put into the hands of Comrade Lawrence MacIsaac, who worked as a realtor out of the offices of John MacKay. Both MacKay Realty and Comrade MacIsaac gave their services *pro bono*. After one or two informal offers were rejected, a formal bid came in in late July. Three new Trustees were elected (Hubert Sullivan, Lawrence MacIsaac and Terry Aulenbach) to validate the sale and in late September the land was sold for \$155,000, adding a very useful sum of money to our funds. The Trustees then invested the sum of \$100,000 in a five-year program, leaving the balance in General Funds.

At the same time, a Renovations Committee was formed to develop a plan for the renovation of the facade of the building, and of the Legion Hall. Paul Murphy, Donn Miles, Ellen Hunt, Michael Bawtree and Garnet Kennedy made up the Committee. Therese Harvey of Harvey Architects was invited to become our Design Consultant, and agreed to help us *pro bono*. Once a specification was developed, it was put out for bids. The proposal included a new wheelchair-accessible front door, a new flagpole, the repair and repainting of the front facade, and new signs. Brooks Levy was contracted to undertake the repairs, and University Painters to complete the exterior painting. The Legion Hall was also to be re-painted, with a new baseboard and chair-rail installed, and with wall-paper connecting the two. Work began. The wallpaper was installed by Comrade Peter Thomson. The new trim was expertly installed by carpenter Chad Lutz, his time donated by Roscoe Construction. The walls were painted by Comrade Larry Spencer, and the trim and doors by Comrade Keith Morton. Fresh tables and chairs were procured for us by Comrade Paul Murphy at very reasonable cost. The exterior signs were created by Autotrim of Centreville. The goal was to complete these changes by Remembrance Day, and the crew from Brooks Levy managed to do this, with the striking Legion sign put in place just before 5 pm on Friday November 9th.

Through Paul Murphy's initiative the Legion had applied to Accessibility Nova

Scotia for a grant towards the costs of installing the wheelchair-accessible front door, and in early December the grant was approved, for \$7,500. The Legion also benefited from a generous gift of \$2,500, given by Geri McKay, in memory of her late husband, longtime Legion member Victor McKay, towards the costs of purchasing and installing the new flagpole, which was erected November 9th.

*Erecting the new flagpole*



Members of the Executive Committee were also concerned that the legacy of C.B. Lumsden, after whom the Branch was named, had almost passed out of the memory of the Legion. Work was done to research his career, and our Design Consultant Therese Harvey offered to paint a portrait of Dr. Lumsden, which she presented to the Branch on November 9th, in time for it to be hung in the Legion Hall for the Remembrance Day Banquet. His grave in Willowbank Cemetery was located, and a wreath placed on it for Remembrance Day.



*Dr. C.B. 'Bill' Lumsden*



*The newly renovated Legion Hall, ready for the Remembrance Day banquet*



*The exterior of the Legion building, after renovation*



## OTHER NEWS

### BOB REGAN



**Our loyal Comrade Bob Regan passed away suddenly in Halifax on November 29, 2018, at the age of 72. ‘Bob’ Reg was born in Wolfville on 5 August 1946, the son of the late Frank and Annie Regan. Bob was a graduate of Wolfville High School, where he was a member of the Cadet Corps, serving as an instructor. On leaving school Bob joined the Reserve Force as a member of the West Nova Scotia Regiment. He later moved to western Canada. While there he enlisted in the militia as a member of the 20th Field Artillery Regiment of the Royal Canadian Artillery, based in Edmonton. He received the Canadian Forces Decoration for twelve years of military service, and was released from the Forces in 1992.**

**Bob worked for many years with Dominion Stores in Wolfville, among other jobs. But from the moment he returned to the Valley he joined the Wolfville Legion, which became a central part of his life. He served twice as president of the Branch, in 2002-3 and 2010-11, and for many years as Sergeant at Arms. In recent years he also worked as volunteer Bar Manager, enabling the Branch to stay open five days a week, six hours a day, and soon becoming the Branch’s most familiar figure. On Remembrance Day 2018 he received his 30-year pin as a Legion member.**

**Bob leaves behind a brother, Don, and a sister, Anita.**

**A funeral service was held for Bob at the Wolfville Legion on Saturday, December 8th. It was very well attended: our President Rev. Ellen Hunt officiated. Donations in Bob’s memory may be made to the Dr. C.B.Lumsden Legion, Branch #74, Wolfville.**

# THE WOLFFVILLE LEGION'S ARCHIVES

One other initiative during this time needs to be recorded. Michael Bawtree approached Acadia University's archivist Wendy Robicheau, to see if she could recommend someone to help the Legion sort and categorise its records, which for many years had been accumulating in disorderly piles and on every available wall of the Branch. Ms. Robicheau came back with a better idea. She was planning an archive course for the Fall of 2018, and proposed to use the Legion's records as the material for the course. The plan was approved, and twenty third- and fourth-year Acadia students worked once a week at the Legion, sorting and compiling photographs, artefacts and documents. They completed their work with an exhibit at Acadia library, a presentation to members, and a list of recommendations.



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1st Vice-President: Michael Bawtree  
Past President: Paul Allen  
Treasurer: Vera Thomson  
Secretary: Susanne Winters  
Sergeant at Arms: Donn Miles  
Chaplain and Service Officer: Ellen Hunt  
Committee Chairs -  
Bar: Terry Butler  
Entertainment: Harold Hunt  
Finance: Michael Bawtree  
Building and Property: Garnet Kennedy  
Membership/Honours and Awards: Paul Murphy  
Sports: Garnet Kennedy*

**Since January 2018 the Branch's membership has increased from 62 to 98**

*Newsletter #1 Editor: Michael Bawtree*