Volume 4, Issue 7 NEWSLETTER October 2018

The Royal Canadian Legion
Colonel R.H. Britton Br. 92
55 King Street East, Gananoque, On K7G 1E8
Tel: (613) 382-3023 Fax: (613) 382-5208
E Mail: rclbr92@bellnet.ca

subscribe to our free monthly newsletter at www.rclbranch92.com

Gananoque and the First World War

By Bill Beswetherick

One hundred years ago, on 11 Nov 1918, Germany signed armistice terms that amounted to her complete surrender to the Allies. The First World War was over.

The war claimed the lives of over 61,000 Canadians, including 58 men from the Gananoque area. The dead included three sets of brothers and a recent graduate of Queen's University Medical School. One family lost a son in the final weeks of the war. His brother would be killed in Normandy during the Second World War.

Well over 500 men and women from the Gananoque area enlisted during the war. Virtually all were volunteers as Canada did not introduce conscription until the end of 1917, and draftees did not make it into the front lines until the final weeks of the war.

Because there were few ways to check the accuracy of what a volunteer claimed, three of the local men who lost their lives had enlisted under the minimum age of 18. One of them, William Dailey, joined at age 14 and was killed at age 15. The maximum age for volunteers initially was 35 but as casualties mounted it was raised to age 45. John Boucher of Gananoque was allowed to enlist in early 1917 despite giving his age as 49. He actually had enlisted at age 72 and would serve eight months in France in a railway construction battalion before his true age was discovered and he was released. The day the war started, Canada had an army of 3,110 men The first battle fought by the Canadians during the war was 22-24 Apr 1915 when Germany used poison gas for the first time in warfare. Among the 1,850 Canadian dead were area men: William Deir and Charles Watson. The most costly fighting for local men occurred at the Battle of the Somme where 12 were killed in just two weeks. The final one hundred days of the war that brought victory were very costly for Canada, 11,882 killed and 35,756 wounded out of a Canadians Corps of men. Although most of the 58 men who enlisted and lost their lives were single, 14 were married and left behind 35 children.

Of the 58 Gananoque men who lost their lives only one, who died in hospital soon after the end of the war, is buried in Canada. Forty war dead are buried in military cemeteries in Britain, France, and Belgium. Seventeen, however, have no known graves and are commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing in Ypres, Belgium, and on the Vimy Memorial, France. In 1919 a tree was planted in the Town Park for each of the area war dead. Many of those trees are still alive. In December 1920 the Gananoque war memorial was dedicated.

2018 Bells of Peace Initiative

On November 11, 1918 at 11am - The eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month, "the war to end all wars" came to an end. The guns finally fell silent, bringing to a close four long years of unspeakable war.

November 11, 2018 will mark the monumental gathering in France and Belgium on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the end of the Great War, the final events which will bring to a close four years of Remembrance and reflection-a centenary that will also no doubt include various events and ceremonies that will take place across Canada.

The Bells of Peace Initiative to honour through Remembrance the Armistice of 1918 derives from the use of bells as a celebratory announcement that the war ended. The Legion's intent is to have every bell in every community across Canada ring in unison or independently (within each community) 100 times at sunset on November 11th 2018 starting at sunset by a group or youths.

If you would like to be part of this in your community please contact Zone G2 PRO Janet Gaylord at 613 659-3105 or email jgaylord@1000island.net

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OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2018

Saturday Oct 13th, 9am-3pm - Ladies Aux. Craft Fair

All are welcome

Friday October 26 October 5:30 - 7pm - MEAT DRAW

Sunday October 28th, 1 - 5pm - LUNCH & DANCE - Entertainment 'The Reasons'
- $10 per person. ***Open to the Public - everyone Welcome***

November 4th, 9 am to 12:30 pm - Monthly Sunday Brunch - Your Plate FULL
- Adults $10 includes Age 6-10 $5, Under 6 free
eggs, sausage, bacon, pancakes, home fries, beans, and so much
more, along with all the condiments like tomatoes, jam, coffee, juices, etc.
Children welcome, so bring the whole family and enjoy.

Sunday November 11th - Remembrance Day Ceremonies in Town Park
100th Ann. of the end of First World War - Veterans Parade and much more

Saturday November 10th -Legion Poster, Essay & Poems Contest
- Drop off all Posters, Essays & P to be judged and displayed at the Legion for Remembrance Day
- **NOTE** all school student entries will be picked up at Gananoque Schools on Friday Nov 9th
- See Branch Web Site for details (entry form to be attached)

Sunday November 18th, 1 - 5 pm LUNCH & DANCE - 'Tim Hallman & Terry Hoffman'
- $10 per person. **open to the *Public - all welcome***

LEGION GENERAL MEETING - TUESDAY OCTOBER 9th , 7 PM

LEGION AUXILIARY GENERAL MEETING - TUESDAY OCTOBER 16th ,

2018 ZONE SPORTS

November 3rd - Cribbage - Seeley's Bay
November 24th - Darts (regular) - Delta
Dec. 12th - Senior Darts - Gananoque
www.rclbranch92.com - sports for details

WEEKLY EVENTS IN JUNE

Wednesday - Euchre 1pm
Thursday - LA Bingo evening
Friday - Fun Darts (registration before 7pm)

for more information go to : www.rclbranch92.com
contact us at: rcl92@bellnet.ca or 613 382-3023