



# The Lacombe Legion



2009 January to June

District 4 - B

## Greetings Comrades



I hope the year 2008 was a good year for everyone.

These are difficult times and it is good to have a caring organization such as the Legion in the community. We strive to

maintain the Royal Canadian Legion "Mission Statement" of serving the veterans and the community. We can do this only with the support of the community and the participation of our members. The Legion is recognized as the foremost organization promoting veteran support.

The freedom we enjoy came at a great cost in human life. We remember and assist the veterans who formed this organization. Although they survived in serving Canada and preserved the freedom we enjoy, they live in silence of their injuries and memories of the horrors of war.

Enjoy your freedom and also, be an active member and supporter of the Legion! It is here for you, your family and friends to enjoy!

*Jim Pratt*  
*President Lacombe*  
*Branch #79*



## Branch Elections



Nominations are being accepted at the General Meeting to be held on June 4, 2009. Voting will follow the June meeting.

All Officer and Executive positions are open.

Please attend the meeting and vote for the person(s) who will give the Branch leadership and good management.

## Community Support

### Donations to Our Community (Year 2008)

- Canada Veterans Hall of Valour
- ECLCHS - Political Thinking
- FCSS - Home Support
- FCSS - Meals on Wheels
- Irish Dance Association
- Kidney Foundation
- Lacombe Dolphins Swim Club - medals
- Lacombe Foundation (\$5,000)
- Lacombe Hospital and Care (\$6,600)
- Lacombe Minor Hockey
- Lacombe Municipal Ambulance
- Lacombe Musical Festival
- Lacombe Outreach School
- Lacombe Ringette
- Legion Polio Fund
- Legion Bursary Awards (4 students)
- Legion Track and Field
- RCEL (Caribbean Veterans)
- Troop Morale Fund
- Salvation Army
- Lacombe Palliative Care Society
- FCSS (Coats for Kids)
- Mother Goose Play School
- LCHS Student Award (1)
- Santas Anonymous
- Lacombe Library
- Various Youth Groups

**Total 2008 Donations**

**\$35,347.03**

## Seniors' Week

**June 1 - 7**

### Musical Entertainment

Proceeds from the raffle will go towards the purchase of a small bus for the Seniors Lodge in Lacombe

Date	June 3
Time	2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
2 different raffles	
Local musicians	
Treats available	
No charge	

## Lacombe Legion Branch #79

### Branch Hours

(Monday only - lounge is open until 7:00 p.m.)

Monday to Saturday inclusive 3:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

### Weekly Activities

Monday	Bingo	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday	Youth Council	4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	Cribbage	7:00 p.m.
Friday	Meat Draws	6:30 p.m.
Thursday		Open
Saturday	Meat Draws	4:30 p.m.
1st Saturday	Court Whist	7:00 p.m.
3rd Saturday	Military Whist	7:00 p.m.
Phone	Ruth Hoppus	782-5365
	Marie Long	782-2186

### Meetings

#### Lacombe Branch #79

General Meeting	1st Thursday	7:30 p.m.
Executive Meeting	Last Thursday	7:30 p.m.

#### Ladies' Auxiliary

General Meeting	1st Thursday	7:00 p.m.
Executive Meeting	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m.

### Royal Canadian Legion

5138 49 Street  
Lacombe Alberta  
T4L 1J2

Phone (403) 782 6441  
Fax (403) 782 2077  
Kitchen (403) 782 7888



### An Urgent Request!

**Are you related to,  
or know a veteran?**

The Lacombe Legion Service Officer is compiling a list of the names and phone numbers of local area veterans and corresponding "crisis persons" having close ties to them.

This request definitely includes non-Legion veterans! Should the need arise, this information is important for providing available assistance for the veteran and the immediate family. The military service number of the veteran is important.

*Please notify the Branch of veterans entering a hospital, or other "Care Giving" facility.  
Leave the information at the Lacombe Legion!*

## The year to June, 2009

Following a successful year, the Lacombe Legion Branch is continuing its community obligations and social events.

In February, the Social Committee held a Celtic evening with a Ceilidh party held in the Branch. The musical group of St. James Gate provided the music for listening and for dancing. The Red Deer Legion Pipe Band and Highland Dancers provided a very special touch for the guests. The event was sold out weeks in advance!

The seniors' bus trips continues to be very popular. Unfortunately, the price for this event will be increased.

The lower level renovations have been completed. The washrooms and kitchen are now more functional and handicap accessible.

The windows in the main hall have been replaced. Lighting improvements are now being considered for upgrade. Other additional improvements are "in the works".

The Sunset Legion Campground continues to be a successful venture for the Branch.

We appreciate the way Joan and Brian operate and maintain the campground.

Thank you, Barbara Burnett and the others who assist you in these social events. Thanks also to members who donated the food and helped in other ways.

Tom and Florence Morrow would like to thank all those who participated in the Wednesday morning coffee-breaks. Due to health reasons, Tom and Florence reluctantly discontinued this popular event. The Branch members are appreciative of their generous time and effort.

A special thanks to Tom, Florence and all others who donated the "sweets" that went with the coffee. Thank you to these long-time volunteers for a job well done.

St Patrick's Day party was held on March 14.

Following a traditional Irish Dinner, we sat back and enjoyed a time of Irish Entertainment. The guests thoroughly enjoyed themselves and recommended a repeat for next year!

**Watch the Bulletin Board for coming events!**

## Ladies Auxiliary

Year 2008 was another busy and successful year.



The Ladies Auxiliary of the Royal Canadian Legion Lacombe Branch #79 continues to be very active - both within the Branch and in the community. New members are always welcome!

Some of our activities include the following :

Five Bingos at the Seniors Lodge with prizes and treats for the residents.

Bingo and birthday party at the Nursing Home with gifts and treats; also entertainment.

Gifts for all residents at the Nursing Home at Christmas.

Worked with ladies from the Branch for Vimy Night supper.

In May our ladies worked hard to make the Zone/District Rally a success.

Veterans Night in May was also a success with a good attendance. All enjoyed the food, visiting with their comrades and the entertainment. Their numbers are dwindling!

Seniors Week in June we hosted an afternoon of music.

Thanks to some of our local talent who so willingly participated. We served coffee and sweets to a house-full.

A few of our ladies assisted at the Garden Party during Seniors Week.

We enjoyed decorating a float and entering it in the parade for Lacombe Days on July 1st. We were honoured to have WWII veteran Ron Cousins ride with us.

Many auxiliaries joined us to celebrate our 60th anniversary in October. Several dignitaries joined the festivities. It was a fun time.

Two of our charter members, Marg Simpson and Vera Brick, received their 60-year membership pin. Congratulations to both and many thanks for their leadership and contributions to the Branch and the community! They are still very active!

Annual Bazaar in November. Again a success.

On Remembrance Day, November 11th, we continued with our tradition of supporting the Branch. We prepared and served sandwiches, donuts and pop to the parade participants and the veterans. We served the pot-luck supper to the many guests in the Branch during the evening festivities.

We hosted a dinner in December again for the CNIB. There was a good turn out.

Two of our ladies presented bursary awards to two high school students from veteran families. This is an annual event.

We catered to about 18 funeral lunches for bereaved families.

Through our bazaars and other functions, we donated over \$2500.00 to the community.

Two of our members passed away this year. We will miss them. Our condolences to the families.

We installed one new member.

We have 22 active members. We appreciate every one of them, and how hard they work to keep our auxiliary going.

*Madam Joyce Robak,*  
1st vice - President,  
Ladies Auxiliary,  
Lacombe Branch #79

## Definition of a Veteran

There has never a definition of a veteran, prior to year 2000 for the Legion and year 2001 for Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). Even the Pension Act did not have a definition for them!

Accordingly, at the 26 of November 1999 Sub-Executive meeting, a motion was introduced to adopt a definition of a veteran which reads as follows:

*“A veteran is any person who is serving or who has served in the Armed Forces of Canada, the Commonwealth or its wartime allies or; who has served in the Merchant Navy or Ferry Command during wartime”.*

This was eventually drafted into a resolution, approved by the Dominion Executive Council DEC and the 38th Dominion Convention held in Halifax in June year 2000.

As for the Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), they adopted a definition of a veteran in year 2001 which read as follows:

*“VAC and the Department of National Defence (DND) have extended veteran status to former Canadian Forces members and Reserve Force members who: meet DND’s Military Occupational Classification requirements (MOC qualified); and have been released from the Forces with an Honourable Discharge*

## Change-of-Address

***Please*** let the Branch Membership chairman know of your new address. This is important for the Legion to keep in touch with you.

The number to call is (403)782-6441.

## Award Presentations

### Lifetime Membership Award

Comrade Swen Odland was presented with the Life Membership Award for his many years of dedicated service to the Lacombe Legion Branch and other branches in Alberta. He was recognized also, for his strong community support.

**Congratulations, Swen!**

## Membership Service Pins

<b>Ordinary Members</b>				
<b>5 year pin</b>	George Badger			
<b>15 year pin</b>	Ronald Barnes		.	.
<b>20 Year pin</b>	Wayne Holley	J.A. Johnson	Melvin Ness	.
<b>25 Year pin</b>	Ron Cousins	.	.	.
<b>30 Year pin</b>	Jim Cloverdale	.	.	.
<b>35 Year pin</b>	E.T. Jones	Robert Cameron	C. Duffy	.
<b>40 Year pin</b>	Norman Soucy	.	.	.
<b>55 Year pin</b>	Robert Evans	J.A. Lepine	.	.
<b>.Associate Members</b>				
<b>5 year pin</b>	Dwight Baird	Kelly Davick	Ted Davick	Robert Dorn
	Leo Flynn	Carol Meyer		
<b>10 Year pin</b>	Pauline Oberg	Gregory Alstad	Lionel MacPherson	Joan Hanford
.	Doug Hanford	Arnie MacAskill	Maureen MacAskill	.
<b>15 Year pin</b>	Lloyd Towns	Shealagh McClelland	Tom Morrow	Victor Halberg
.	Lee Smith	Dana Vanstone	Darcy Whitaker	Shirley Hallgren
<b>20 Year pin</b>	Madeleine Babiuk	Daryl Friesen	Gwen Jones	Stanley Jones
.	Pearl O Gorman	.	.	
<b>25 Year pin</b>	A. Plunkett	Bryan Pollard	Sharon Pollard	Robert Wilson
<b>35 Year pin</b>	J. Brannen	Tom Callin	Calvin Swarbrick	G. Thiesen
<b>.Affiliate Members</b>				
<b>5 Year</b>	L.K. Popow	T. Szwagierczak	Muriel O Hagan	.
<b>10 Year</b>	Jim Brimacombe	Val Brimacombe	John Geigle	Glen McDonald
	Elsie Sebry	Art Oldford		
<b>Sim Yampolsky, Publicity</b>				

**Ecole Secondaire  
Lacombe Composite High School  
(ESLCHS)**



Ecole Secondaire Lacombe Composite High School (ESLCHS) has a history of recognizing the contributions of the military to our way of life and of respecting and honoring our veterans. As a part of this philosophy, when the school underwent a multi-million dollar renovation, it decided to create, at its entryway, a military Memorial Wall. The school celebrated the grand opening of its Memorial Wall on March 11, 2009.

The idea for the Memorial Wall originated from a campaign, spearheaded by the ESLCHS Social Studies Department, for the purchase of bricks to honor and represent Lacombe veterans in the Juno Beach Centre in France. The entire school got involved in the project, with individual departments conducting fundraisers throughout the school year to support the cause.

In addition to the purchase of bricks for the Juno Beach Centre, ESLCHS also purchased replica bricks to place on the Memorial Wall in its newly modernized entrance. The wall is black granite, with the replica bricks set in, and with engravings of, among other things, Canadian soldiers in the various fields of war in which Canada has been involved.

Sgt. Wayne Forster, a Canadian soldier currently stationed in Ottawa and recently repatriated from Afghanistan, cuts the ribbon to officially open the Memorial Wall at Ecole Secondaire Lacombe Composite High. The Armed Forces flew Sgt. Forster to Alberta for the grand opening.

The grand opening of the Memorial Wall was and will always be considered a major event in the life of ESLCHS. "

*Note: The Lacombe Legion Branch #79 provided considerable information and also, provided the colour guard for the Memorial Wall dedication.*



**Lest We Forget  
Veterans**

- Martin Kaufmann**
- Russ Creasey**
- Frank Lacey**
- Jack Thompson**
- John King**
- Stewart Knight**
- David Vickerman**
- Chester William Fannon**
- George William Elliott**
- Gordon Manson**
- John Robinson**
- Mikeal Ostapowich**
- William Leslie Mullins**
- Reginald Knight**
- Robert Spencer**
- John (Jack) Bruns**

Lacombe Branch #79 offers heartfelt condolences to the families..

The Branch apologizes for errors, or omissions.

**LEST WE FORGET**

**Sunday Morning Breakfast  
( 9:30 am to 1:30 pm )**

Bring your friends and family to the Lacombe Branch and enjoy a special Sunday breakfast! Come before church or after!

<b>January X</b>	<b>February X</b>	<b>March 8</b>
<b>April 5</b>	<b>May 24</b>	<b>June 14</b>
<b>July (no breakfast)</b>	<b>August (no breakfast)</b>	<b>Sept 13</b>
<b>October 18</b>	 <b>November 11</b>	<b>December 13</b>

## D-Day

### **On June 6, 1944, about 21,000 Canadian troops led by its 3rd Infantry Division stormed Juno Beach at Normandy.**

June 6 is the anniversary of the D-Day Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied continental Europe, at Normandy, France.

The long coastline in Normandy is strewn with rocks throughout and edged with high cliffs.

The British area of responsibility included Gold, Juno, and Sword Beaches and the Orne River.

Immediately to the west were the American areas of responsibility, which included the Cotentin Peninsula and Omaha and Utah beaches.

The Canadian 3rd Infantry Division of the First Canadian Army got the call for Juno Beach. It was about six miles wide and straddled both sides of a small fishing port known as Courseulles-sur-Mer, a resort town and marina. The Canadians were in the center of the British front and were to cut through and form a link between the two British beaches.

The Canadian 3rd Division under the British Second Army was given the responsibility of taking Juno Beach. Juno Beach stretched from St Aubin-sur-mer on the east to half way between the towns of La Riviere and Courseulles-sur-mer on the west.

Juno Beach was divided up into two sectors Mike and Nan. Sector Mike was on the west and Nan sector was on the east. The 7th Brigade supported by the 6th Canadian Armored Regiment (1st Hussars) were to land and control Mike Sector. The 8th Brigade supported by the 10th Canadian Armored Regiment (Fort Garry Horse) landed on Nan sector. The 9th Brigade was to be left in reserve.

Bagpipes played their eerie sound as the Royal Highland Regiment left the harbour in England. They played the pipes on the transports as the waves rocked them to the shore. The bagpipes howled as the Black Watch hit Juno Beach. The bagpipes gave the message to the Germans defending Juno Beach that we may be crazy, but we are coming.

After all the delays, and a night suffering from the rocking boats, the ramps dropped and the Canadians charged to the beach.

It would have been helpful if things went as planned! All the Canadian assault teams were to land following the tanks hitting the shore. An assault team was fortunate to have armoured tank support on the beach. In many cases

the tanks did not land until after the Canadians had cleared the seawall and were engaged in street fights in the nearby towns.

“B” Company of the Highland Regiment were fortunate to find the fortifications destroyed by naval fire and were able to move off the beaches quickly and with few casualties. Other regiments of the assault force were not so fortunate.

The Regina Rifles Regiment lost about a half of their fighting force before they got to the beach. The Winnipeg Rifles Regiment assault teams found the German defenses intact and ready for an attack. They suffered dearly for every step they took to get off the beaches. German defenders cut down Winnipeg's “B” Company to one officer and 25 men by the time they finally reached the seawall (a company has about 150 officers and soldiers).

One of the bravest acts was accomplished by a soldier in a Winnipeg platoon, in an attempt to get off the beach. A pioneer platoon in the Winnipeg infantry was trapped behind barbed wire with no means to get through the wire. One soldier in that platoon threw himself on the barbed wire so the men in the platoon could walk on his back and get to the safety of the seawall.

led with stories of men crawling through minefields and barbed wire, under heavy fire so they could toss a couple grenades into pillboxes. Sergeant Sigie Johnstone of the Winnipeg Rifles Regiment is quoted, "Very few publications ever get the truth of what our Winnipeg infantry faced and did." This applies to all regiments involved in this Juno Beach invasion.

In the first hour of the assault on Juno Beach the Canadian forces would suffer conditions and casualty rates almost identical to what the Americans would suffer on Omaha beach. Once the Canadians cleared the seawall (about an hour after jumping off the transports) they would start to advance quickly inland and have a much easier time subduing the German defenses than the Americans at Omaha Beach.

Once the beaches were secure the Canadians started to steadily move inland. Each platoon was assigned sections to secure. Some of the platoons found little or no resistance in the area while others spent the entire day trying to liberate the towns along the beach.

*(Continued on page 7)*

By noon the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division was on the beach and used the momentum of the morning to push Germans back. The Winnipeg and Regina Regiments along with tank support penetrated several kilometres inland and gained control of the bridges over the river Seulles.

The North Shore (New Brunswick regiment) faced the day in heavy street fighting trying to capture St Aubin. St Aubin was finally secured by the North Shore regiment by 4:00 p.m.

After an hour of street fights and silencing enemy guns Courseulles and Bernieres comes under allied control. Later that day the Highland regiment would push ahead of the Winnipeg Rifles to capture Colombiers-sur-seulles.

A 1<sup>st</sup> Hussar Armored Troop was the only unit in Normandy that had reached its objectives. It had pushed 15 km inland and crossed the Caen-Bayeaux highway. This troop had reached the day's objective but were forced to pull back because they had passed the supporting infantry. Without the infantry support the tanks would not have been able to defend against a German counter attack.

At the end of the day the Canadian troops dug in and prepared for a counter attack. A 4 to 7 km gap separated the British on Sword Beach and the Canadians on Juno. The next day the German panzer division that had kept the British on Sword Beach busy would counter attack the Canadian and British forces through the gap.

At the end of the day the Canadian 3<sup>rd</sup> Division was able to join up with the British forces on Gold Beach. Also the Canadians would push farther inland on D-Day than any other army that landed on the Normandy shore. As John Keegan said, "At the end of the day its forward elements

## Memories Recovered Project

As time passes, we tend to forget the history of the struggle for freedom. You have the opportunity to share your personal stories with others who risked their lives so that we may be free.

Please remind us of your experiences by personal interview.

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**THE MEMORIES RECOVERED PROJECT ASSOCIATION**

**JIM RICH**  
Co-ordinator

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Innisfail, AB

"Keeping History Alive"

On Camera Interviews with Veterans

e-mail: silfox@telusplanet.net

[www.memoriesrecoveredproject.com](http://www.memoriesrecoveredproject.com)



World War II / RCAF and RAF Vets



Vet's Night Band