

# THE BRANDON LEGIONNAIRE



## NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2020 VOLUME XL: 7

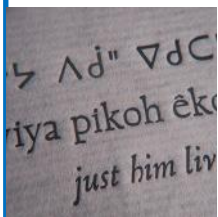
### The story of Canada's code talkers



*Infantrymen from the Loyal Edmonton Regiment wait for information to come in on the No. 18 wireless (radio) outside Regimental Headquarters in Ortona, Italy (1934). Wireless messages could be easily intercepted by other armies, so it had to be in code. (Photo by [Library and Archives Canada](#) licensed [CC BY 2.0](#))*

You may have learned or heard about American code talkers, but the story of Canadian code talkers is mostly unknown.

### What is a code talker?

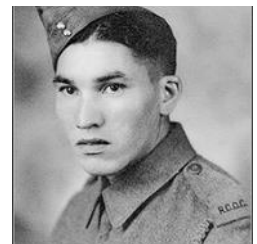


*The English sentence was translated into Cree before it was read out — you can see a sample of Cree syllabics (letterforms) and how they are pronounced right below them. (Photo by [Ferrous Bülter](#) licensed [CC BY-SA 2.0](#))*

Code talkers were First Nations soldiers in World War II who spoke Cree. They were the Canadian military's secret weapon: when the military needed to communicate sensitive or secret messages, they would use code talkers to send the message in Cree to another code talker who would translate it back into English. If the message was heard by the German army, they wouldn't be able to understand the message because they had no idea what language the code was in!

### Who were the code talkers?

Because the code talkers were sworn to secrecy about their jobs, no one really knows much about who they were. But the most famous Canadian code talker was a man named Charles Tomkins, whom everyone called Checker.



Checker was a Metis man from Alberta who spoke Cree. He joined the military in 1940 and after six months of training, was sent to Britain. One day, he was summoned by the Canadian High Command and not even his commanding officer — his boss — knew why! Checker was told about a top secret, new mission that they wanted him to be part of — The Cree Code Talker Program for the Air Force.



*Charles' brothers, Smokey and James Tomkins. (photo provided courtesy of Cree Code Talker / Tomkins Family)*

The Cree language didn't have words for things like tank or machine gun so new words had to be made up. Like calling a *Mosquito bomber* a *sakimes* (Cree for *mosquito*). Code talkers were so top secret that their own families didn't even know what they were doing! Checker didn't tell anyone (including his brothers) until he was interviewed about it at the age of 85.

**Note:** the information for cover page was taken from : <https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/the-feed/the-story-of-canadas-code-talkers>



*They shall grow not old,  
as we that are left grow old.  
Age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun,  
and in the morning,  
We will remember them.*

**Your Royal Canadian Legion is committed to making a difference in the lives of Veterans and their families, providing essential services in our communities, and remembering the men and women who sacrificed for our country.**



## *Membership MATTERS!*

### *Yesterday--Today--Tomorrow*

**Anyone can join the Legion** Members make a difference in the lives of Veterans and their families. Join us and you can, too.

## **How your membership supports Veterans**

Your membership allows the Legion to improve the lives of those who served, give back to our communities and ensure Canada never forgets. Join now to help us provide:

**This is your Legion** Thanks to members like you, the Legion helps thousands of Veterans and their families each year, and ensures Canada never forgets.

**Thank you for your support** Every day, Legion members across Canada help improve the lives of Veterans and their families by volunteering time, raising money and showing their appreciation. Thanks to you, we are able to give those who served the support they deserve.

## **How Your membership supports Veterans**

Allows the Legion to improve the lives of those who served, give back to our communities and ensure Canadians never forgets by helping us provide:

- ◆ **Free services, supports and financial assistance for Veterans and their families**
- ◆ **Free advocacy to help Veterans get their deserved disability benefits**
- **National remembrance and commemorative initiatives**
- ◆ **National Veteran outreach to identify and support Veterans in need**
- ◆ **Youth education and community programs**
- ◆ **Legion Branch operations to support Veterans and their families**

**BRANDON BRANCH #003 ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION**

**2020 Executive**

**PRESIDENT, C. Stumme**

**1st VICE PRESIDENT, C. Gammack**

**2nd VICE PRESIDENT, D. Wilson**

**SGT-AT-ARMS, F. Pritchard.**

**Deputy Sgt-At-Arms, R. McDonald**

**SERVICE OFFICER, M. Tallant**

**CATERING, E. Stumme**

One Year Term: L. Biel, R. Burgess,

Two Year Term : T. Shand, R. Garcia, L. Wakefield, A. Addison



*Linda Biel*  
*Roberto Garcia*  
*Albert Addison*



# **LEGION BRANCH 003**

**President Cindy Stumme & Executive WELCOME MEMBERS & GUESTS**

**to Legion Lounge on**

**Friday SEPTEMBER 18**

**&**

**SATURDAY, September 19, 2020**

**Open - 3pm Close - 9am**

**Please!**

**Bring & wear a mask**

**Sanitize & wash hands often**

**Social distancing is a MUST**

**in our Lounge**

**Follow the steps to ensure you & your commrades are**

**Safe from Covid-19 !**

***This opinion piece by Dominion President Thomas D. Irvine, CD was recently published in [The Guardian](#)***

I am witnessing extreme stress across the country over the possibility of Legion Branches disappearing, one by one. The federal government is dragging its heels in providing promised assistance. I will continue to do everything in my power and on behalf of The Royal Canadian Legion to ensure we do not lose any of our current 1381 locations.

How we got to this point is confounding. During this time of financial distress, the federal government quickly announced help for many sectors, but the Legion's essential work was forgotten. Now after months of waiting, we need an assistance program to be expedited immediately.



The Legion's outreach for help started with my two letters to the Prime Minister, one in April, the other in June. I received radio silence. More recently, I met with Minister MacAulay of Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and we briefly discussed the situation. He understood the Legion's plight, though made no direct funding commitment at that time.

Since then, a spark of real hope came after a major TV network updated their story on this topic. Thankfully, our media have paid attention to the Legion's dilemma. We did then receive confirmation from VAC that something was in the works, welcome news at last! But with a time estimate of "soon" and no details, we wait, while more Branches teeter on the brink of permanent closure, not knowing whether the promised aid package will even hit the mark.

Originally, we were pleased to learn the federal government was set to release an emergency fund designed to support not-for-profit organizations. As a volunteer-based organization, we expected Branches would be eligible for help. However, we quickly learned the terms of the program essentially disqualified most of them. Those that have managed to access federal assistance have done so primarily through the federal emergency loan program for businesses. It is a welcome short-term measure to be sure. But none of us knows what the future will bring and like any loan, it must be repaid. While a portion will be forgiven, unless a particular Branch can recover, it is a potentially risky undertaking at this time.

The Royal Canadian Legion is a 95-year old institution whose primary focus is to support Veterans, their families and our communities. We organize and hold the yearly National Remembrance Day Ceremony in Ottawa and countless other Remembrance activities across the country. Our work is profound and our volunteers number in the tens of thousands. They have continued their work as best they can despite these difficult circumstances and I salute them all.

For almost 100 years, we have prided ourselves on being self-sufficient, and plan to remain so. A pandemic was not in our forecast and our Branches need an unprecedented level of help. We realize that sorting this out takes time, but how long must we wait? I remain optimistic our federal government will follow through with its promised assistance not only for our Branches, but for other organizations left in the shadows.

Lest we forget it is our Veterans' sacrifices that laid the very foundations of this fortunate society we call Canada.

*Thomas D. Irvine, CD  
Dominion President, The Royal Canadian Legion*

September XX, 2020

Mr. / Ms. **(Insert your MP name here)**, M.P.  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

**Re: Federal Support for Royal Canadian Legion Branches**

Dear Mr. / Ms. **(Insert your MP last name here)**:

I am writing in support of Branch 123 in **(Community)**, and all Royal Canadian Legion Branches across our country.

Many Branches were hit hard by the COVID-19 outbreak, yet federal relief programs released to date cannot help most of them pay their operational bills. There is a federal loan option, however not all Branches qualify and some cannot take the risk. If we do not help suffering Branches weather this situation, it could mean the end of their critical work to support Veterans and communities. I do not want that to happen. I hope you feel the same way.

I ask you to help ensure federal leaders fulfill their promise to provide an aid program that will include Legion Branches and help them with operational costs. Our Dominion President Thomas D. Irvine, CD, has explained the situation to the federal government more than once; in June, the Prime Minister stated that they were *"...working with the Minister of Veterans Affairs and other officials to try and ensure that we're supporting these organizations that are so important, not just for Veterans but for their communities as well."* Veterans Affairs Canada told us that an aid package is in the works - but weeks later, the Legion is still waiting to hear back.

Soon after this pandemic began, Provincial Commands and Branches accessed temporary relief through the Legion's national reserve funds, but those are running out. Some Branches started *GoFundMe* initiatives and other temporary and unsustainable measures to raise funds. Understandable restrictions on Branch re-openings means fewer dollars raised from events, hall rentals and food service. Many Branches, unfortunately, have simply had to remain closed.

Despite extreme challenges, our members continue to do amazing work, such as preparing and delivering meals to Veterans and seniors, reaching out to homeless and near homeless Veterans and their families to provide immediate financial assistance and support, helping Veterans apply for benefits and organizing remembrance-related events. If a community loses a Branch, it loses all of this.

Contributions donated yearly during the Legion's National Poppy Campaign are not a source of operational revenue and must only be used to help support Veterans, families and communities. Our Legion Branches need help now. The situation is already dire for some that are on the brink of failure. A Branch in Ontario, open since 1927, recently closed its doors indefinitely, unable to make ends meet. How many more will follow?

**(Continued on page 8)**

I ask you to please be a voice in Government to help expedite a federal aid package that will work for our Branches, one that allows them to survive this pandemic and continue to help our Veterans and communities.

Sincerely,

(Member name)

The Royal Canadian Legion (Branch) (Community)



## LADIES AUXILIARY 2019 EXECUTIVE

President : Linda Leckie 204-724-5041  
Past President: Betty Persian 204-725-2691  
1st Vice President: Susan Klyne 204-717-0123  
2nd Vice President: Marg Melnyk 204-726-8188  
Sgt-at-Arms: Suzanne Cartier 204-922-4512  
Treasurer: Pat Simmons 204-727-4591

**Royal Canadian Legion Brandon Branch #3**  
**560—13th Street EAST**  
**Brandon, MB R7A 7C1**

**OFFICE:** Todd at 204-728-5026 [Office.Admin@rclbrandon003.com](mailto:Office.Admin@rclbrandon003.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Royal-Canadian-Legion-Branch-003-Brandon-MB/>  
**Brandon Legionnaire Branch #003 Editor - Linda Wakefield please submit articles or pictures s to [mrswakes@mts.net](mailto:mrswakes@mts.net)**



## POPPY TRUST FUND ADMINISTRATION

The Poppy Campaign is organized and run by local Legion volunteers at over 1400 branches across Canada and abroad. Poppy Funds are held in trust at every level of the Legion and the use of these trust funds are strictly controlled, with appropriate approval processes. Branch executives are accountable for Poppy Fund expenditures and are required to inform the public through local media of the results of their campaign, including contributions received and disposition of funds.

To Volunteer for the Brandon Branch #3—2020 Poppy Campaign please call Brandon Legion Office at 204-728-5026 and leave a message regarding the upcoming campaign or email [Office.Admin@rclbrandon003.com](mailto:Office.Admin@rclbrandon003.com)