

## Royal Canadian Legion and the Ladies Auxiliary

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The Royal Canadian Legion is an organization that was founded over 90 years ago, in 1926. It first was known as the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League (BESL). It is a result of several small associations of former soldiers who, over the course of the First World War, decide to come together.

After the Second World War, the organization worked on the return, often difficult, of veterans to civilian life. It counselled them on pension plans and other advantages offered by the Federal government. It also participates in numerous activities, especially in remembrance activities and in the organization of the Remembrance Day Ceremony. In each province, the association is organized into commands, totalling 300,000 members<sup>1</sup>. Today, it is the largest community service organization created by and for Canadian War Veterans.

### **The Quyon Branch no. 231**

The local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, the Quyon Branch no. 231, received its charter on July 4, 1956. It was established by seven veterans of the municipality (including Joseph Lebrun and Ronald Renaud) and the first president was Bruce Ayearst. He was succeeded by Jamie Amm, B. O'Hara, Steve McCann and Ernest Marion.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Quyon Legion have on their part, received their charter in 1961. Their objective is to assist the veterans of the Royal Canadian Legion in their activities. It is thanks to their efforts that the building on Saint-John Street was acquired and that the mortgage was quickly paid<sup>2</sup>. The building previously housed a school (on the second floor) and a funeral home.

In 1975, the Quyon Branch had 174 active members in the community and in amateur sport. The previous year, the Legion sponsored a fast ball team (under the management of Gilbert Fraser) who not only won the Quyon championship, but also the district championship. It also sponsored (in 1975) a children's league, the Little League Ball Teams of Quyon and the district. In 2000, the organization had 133 members.

### **The Legion today**

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information consult the [Royal Canadian Legion](#) site.

<sup>2</sup> "Quyon Legion Branch 231 burns their mortgage", *The Equity*, October 17, 1963.

Usually, the Legion holds fundraising events for its numerous activities, but also to help support the community. Closely associated with Remembrance Day, in the year 2000 the Legion installed a monument in honor of the Veterans of World War II and of the Korean and Gulf wars<sup>3</sup>. The land on which the cenotaph was built was purchased by the Quyon Women's Institute in 1956.

The premises of the Quyon Branch is also an important social area for villagers. In fact, euchre and cribbage tournaments are held from time to time, as well as musical entertainment.

Today, the members of the Legion are not all veterans or members of their families. Anyone who wishes to help support the many services offered to veterans, to active duty military personnel, to the members of the RCMP and their families, can become a member of the Canadian Legion.

Ivan Dolan is currently the president of the Quyon Branch.

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<sup>3</sup> « Royal Canadian Legion, Quyon Branch No. 231 », in *Quyon-Onslow, 1875-2000. Souvenir of the Millenium*, 2000, p. 33.