



Royal Canadian Legion

Brock Branch # 141

90th Anniversary

1929-2019

70th Anniversary

Ladies Auxiliary

1949-2019

Prepared by the Sunderland & District Historical Society

Sunderland Legion

The Royal Canadian Legion Brock Branch 141 was formed in 1929, and the first President was Comrade J Stanley Miller. He also ran the Legion during WWII from 1939 until 1945. During this time the Legion ran many fund-raising events to help support the war effort. In 1945 a special reception was held at the Brock House Hotel to honour the local veterans from both World Wars. In 1947 under the leadership of Comrade J A Anderson plans were made to build the recreation Centre in Sunderland. The Legion Ladies Auxiliary were formed in 1949. In 1958 the Legion purchased the home of Dr. Robert Grierson on River Street, and this house was on the site of the current building.

The new Legion building was built in 1973 and downstairs in the club room is a collection of artifacts dating back as far as the War of 1812. There is a British Officers Sword with a Gothic Hilt that was found in a local barn from about 1822 and many items from World War 1 and World War II. Down the street at the Cenotaph by the Sunderland Town Hall is a statue of a soldier built in 1922 to honour those who died for Canada. In 2009 a commemorative Legion calendar was printed to celebrate 80 years of service by legion members and 60 years of service by the Ladies Auxiliary to the Sunderland Area.

Two New Horizons Grants were also obtained to modernize the Legion to help promote the various service activities for the surrounding community.

Local artifacts include a picture of Lt. John James Doble of Sunderland who was killed at Vimy Ridge. A story about Cam Glover of Blackwater who was killed when the ship Caribou was sunk in Canadian waters by a German U-boat. There is also a picture of "Tiger" George Arthur Welsh who was a veteran of both World Wars, a MPP and Cabinet Minister, and a Sheriff of Ontario County. Many of the local soldiers were in the picture of the 30th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and the 116 Battalion.

HISTORY OF RCL BRANCH 141 - SUNDERLAND, ONT

This is a condensed version of the history of the Branch as compiled by Comrade Joan Redhead assisted by Comrade Don Christie.

Late in 1928, several ex-servicemen decided an organization was needed to assist aging veterans. Sixty people attended a banquet in the Brock House where Mr. A Shields of Provincial Command explained the workings of the legion. A motion and a vote was taken to form the Brock Branch to include the Township of Brock, and the villages of Sunderland and Cannington.

The first officers of the newly formed Branch were:

Honorary President	Col. C.F. Bick	Cannington
President	J.S. Miller	Sunderland
1st Vice President	F. Scott Brandon	Cannington
2nd Vice President	Dr. L.L. Stouffer	Manilla
Secretary/Treasurer	M.C. McLean	Sunderland
Executive Committee	Louis Prentiss	Manilla
	C.J. McKay	Cannington
	Lorne Beatty	Cannington
	Robert McNeely	Sonya
	Sam. McCully	Blackwater

Seventeen applications for membership were received and in due time a charter was applied for. On May 17, 1929 the Charter was presented. Membership fee was \$2.00 per year.

October 1930, the problem of holding meetings alternately between Cannington and Sunderland was discussed and it was decided to divide the Township at the 8th concession and a new Branch form in Cannington. Sunderland would retain the name of Brock Branch.

During the 1930's the most popular of raising money was by Street Dances. A number of these were held on the nice new pavement that came to Sunderland the same year as the Legion. The most common name of band leaders for the dances were: George Wade and his Cornhuskers and Billy Hole and his Live Wires.

1939 and the Second World War came along and things got a lot more busy for the Branch. Auction sales, salvage collection dances, card parties, bingo were all held to raise money to help British War Victims Fund, and send smokes to the boys overseas. The Branch helped in the formation of the Brock Red Cross Society, Sunderland. The Branch allso helped to try to get a new Post Office by writing to the Federal Government.

1945 and the boys are returning home. Several "Welcome Home" parties were held for the returning soldiers and airmen and naval personnel. It was decided to work toward a Brock Memorial Recreation Centre. Russ Creighton and his Variety Band supplied music for a Barn Dance in Jim Smith's new barn. Len Hoys service Station was also the site for a big dance. All proceeds went to the recreation centre. The Legion moved from the Town Hall to rooms in the McDermott Block.

Comrade J.A. Anderson, the local druggist' was Sec.treas. of the Branch and he contacted all the former residents that could be remembered in regards to financial assistance toward the building of the Memorial Centre. The Brock Memorial Recreation Centre was finally a reality. After the March meeting the Branch moved to its new location in the arena. September 12, 1948 the memorial plaque was unveiled with the Late Comrade Rev. Sidney Lambert the guest speaker.

September 7, 1949, the Auxiliary was formed with Comrade Jessie Allin the first President of the Auxiliary. Comrade Allin's husband Jack happened to be the President of Brock Branch that year. Santa Claus parades were formed with the help of local merchants. Also, Hallowe'en Jamboree was held. Bingo and dances were still the way to raise money for these functions.

During the 1950's financial assistance was given to Cubs, Minor Hockey, Minor Baseball, as well as the regular commitments of Santa Claus Parade, Hallowe'en Party and Christmas Cheer boxes. A new form of money making came into being, with the co-sponsorship with the Lions Club, with Donkey Baseball. The Branch also decided to buy a house for a future home and a bid on the Grierson house was accepted August 1958.

In 1965 one of the Branch's hardest working member, Comrade Stan Miller' received the Meritorious Service Medal. A very deserving award to a dedicated member. Donations to the Lion's Club Music Festival and the Artificial Ice Fund for the arena became an annual item. The Branch sponsored a boys trumpet band lead by Floyd Purvis. Plans for a new Legion Building on our own land were being looked into. November 1970 the go ahead was given to the building committee to build the new building. The Grand Opening for the new Legion Hall took place in June 9, 1973.

The Branch along with the Beaverton and Cannington Branches sponsor Air Cadets. The Legion Hall became the home for the Blood Donor with co-sponsorship with the Lion's Club. when the Brock Memorial Recreation Centre was condemned and had to be replaced, the Lion's Club took over. The Branch was in the process of building it's own hall so funds were pretty well tied up. Thanks to the Lion's Club the building was replaced and the Brock Memorial Recreation Centre carried on.

Ten years after the building of the Legion Hall a Mortgage Burning Nite was held. The Branch is still very active supporting hospital building drives, C.A.T. Scan machine in Peterborough. Also a receiver of a sizeable gift was the Salvation Army.

Our new Officers for 1989-90 have been elected and Comrade Mac Armstrong has been re-elected as President. I'm sure our new Officers and Executive will come out with renewed vigor, and many more prosperous years are to be expected.

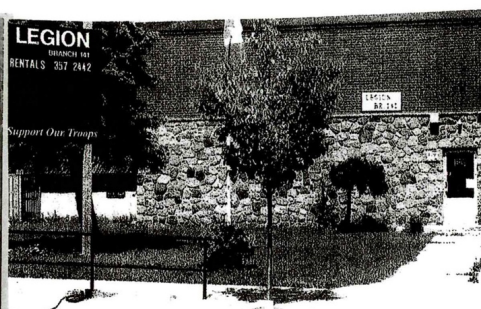


Memorial Arena 1948 – Sunderland, Ontario Canada

The time span for 2009 to 2019 was a period when the Legion expanded its original mandate of caring for the needs of veterans and their families. It is now a multi-use facility providing a huge variety of activities to serve the entire community. Bingo, dancing, euchre, shuffleboard, luncheons, and open mic nights are just a few of the weekly events. The Legion also helps community groups with anniversary celebrations, meeting sites, retirements, fund raising events, youth dances, and group registrations. The Ladies Auxiliary continue to provide delicious meals monthly for seniors, and yearly for a variety of clubs within and beyond the township. Annually the Legion participates in the Maple Syrup Festival Pancake Breakfast and has displays at the Sunderland Fair. All this time the members have been maintaining and improving this almost 50-year-old building. New furnaces, stoves, a chair lift, new flooring, bar renovations, painting, and now a major repair of the roof are all part of the efforts of long-term President Barry McClure and his team of volunteers for this last decade. Truly this is a wonderful time to celebrate the dedication of our Sunderland Legion in making this town and the Township of Brock a better place to live.



Top Left to Right
George Arthur Welsh
Veteran WWI & WWII
Legion 1958
John James Doble
Killed at Vimy



Bottom Left to Right
Cenotaph Built 1922
Legion after 1973
Stanley Miller
Charter President 1929