

# The Advance

Royal Canadian Legion  
Branch 641 Barrhaven



Vimy Memorial Bridge  
Photo credit to The Wright Team

Happy New Year!

A Volume 19

Issue 8  
January 2024



## The President's Message

Comrades:

I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season with loved ones. As we ring in the new year, I want to give the branch executive and all our volunteers a "job well done!" – thank you for everything that Branch 641 Barrhaven accomplished in 2023.

I'm optimistic that we will continue to do great things as we serve our community, promoting remembrance, supporting Youth, Seniors and Veteran related causes.

I look forward to what 2024 has in store.

Happy New Year everyone!

"Lest we forget"  
Lyle Brennan, CD, President

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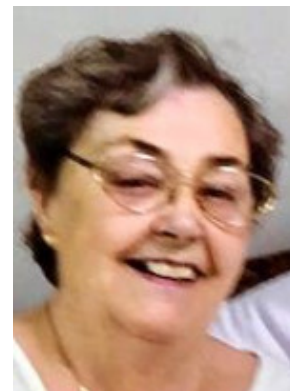
# Last Post

## We Will Remember Them



### Ann Rochford (1935-2023)

With deep sorrow, we, the family of Ann Louise Rochford (MacKenzie), announce her passing in Ottawa on August 22, 2023. Born in Sydney on August 26, 1935, she was the daughter of Don and Marion MacKenzie (Townsend). Ann Louise is survived and will be missed by her husband, Robert Rochford in Ottawa and her sister, Donna Lee Wall (John Daniel Cameron) as well as many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews. Besides her parents, Ann was predeceased by her dear sister, Jean Dawson (Jim) and her special parents-in-law, Daisy and Joe Rochford. Ann Louise will be missed dearly by many friends and family but will always be in our hearts.



### Gertrude (Thompson) Scissons (1941-2023)

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Trudy (Gert) on December 17, 2023.

Trudy was born March 6, 1941, to the late Gabriel & Lucie (Lalande). Beloved wife of Thomas John (Tom) Scissons and the late Clarence Thompson. She was blessed with having a French upbringing and marrying into English speaking families and community. This allowed her to be affectionately known by many names. Gertrude, Gert, Trudy, Mom, Momma, Aunt, ma Tante, Grand-maman, Grandma, Great Grand-maman and even known to a few as Great-Great-Grandma.



She was a loving Mom to Julie (Clif), Anne (Christiane), Robert, and Pam Rose (Kevin). A loving stepmom to Doug (Cathy), the late Shirley & David Thompson; and Dorothy & Tommy Scissons. [Read more . . .](#)

### John Barry Dale (1941-2024)

Barry passed away peacefully at home on Tuesday, January 2, 2024. He was predeceased by his partner Lynne Brown, his parents John and Dorothy Dale, his brother Jim and his wife Lorraine. Barry is survived by his son Drew (late Traci), brother Don (late Pearl) and nephew Jeffrey (Deena). Remembered fondly by Lynne's children Ken (Deana) and Bonney (Terry) and their families as well as Drew's Mom Nancy.



In lieu of flowers, donations to the Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 641 or your local Royal Canadian Legion Branch would be appreciated. [Read more . . .](#)

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## John W. Sielatycki (1935-2024)

Waclaw “John” Sielatycki passed away peacefully on January 5, 2024 at the Queensway Carleton hospital in his 88th year. Special thanks to the nursing staff, for their excellent care in John’s final hours. He was pre-deceased by his parents Jan Sielatycki and Maria Sielatycka (nee Bukowska) born in Wilno, Poland and his brother Zen Sielatycki.

John was born in Feliksowo Poland and after making his way to England was accepted in the Army Apprentice School. He was part of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineer’s Regiment and spent three years in Libya. In 1968 John moved to Canada where he began his career of 29 years at Carleton University as a pipe fitter/plumber.



John was a driving force for many years with the United Way by developing and managing several workplace campaigns. In his role he promoted the United Way through speeches, developed tracking systems while ensuring that all workplaces and volunteers received proper recognition. At the Barrhaven Legion, John responded to senior needs, he was responsible for five retirement homes, and he organized a luncheon for 75 Veterans while supporting the Executive in many capacities.

John is survived by his wife of 59 years, Sheila Sielatycki (nee Harrison), his son Timothy Sielatycki (Nathalie Duchesne) and by his sister Lydia Tomazweska (nee Sielatycka). He was the very proud grandfather of Sidnee, Justin and Jordan with whom he always enjoyed spending time. He was an uncle to four nieces and two nephews, brother-in-law to two sisters and one brother, and was deeply loved by all his family and friends and will be deeply missed.



## Let Us Know

When a comrade or family member passes away, it’s important that you let our chaplain, Margo Whittaker, know. She can then put several things into motion such as advising the president and our executive, connecting with the family, arranging for colour parties and Legion services – all of which fulfill our role to each other as a Legion family. When comrades are ill or pass and we don’t know, we can’t support the member or their family in their time of need.

If a comrade becomes ill, please let our Hospital Visits Chair, Louise Laflamme, know so that she can contact them or the family and arrange a visit. Members love seeing a friendly face when they are sick, especially if they don’t have many family members in town.

Reverend Margo Whittaker  
Chaplain  
[margo.l.whittaker@gmail.com](mailto:margo.l.whittaker@gmail.com)

Louise Laflamme  
Hospital Visits Chair  
[llouisellaflamme1@bell.net](mailto:llouisellaflamme1@bell.net)

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# A Reflection on the Early Days of Branch 641

With the new year upon us, and with a record membership of 761 in 2023, I thought it would be a good time to share with you the history of our branch. Many members don't know what it took to get "our little branch" up and running back in the early 2000s and therefore don't understand why our charter and founding members are so very proud of their vision, their hard work and their steadfast determination to start a new Legion. The following excerpt, written by Dave St Amand, was taken from Volume 7 2011-2012 Issue # 8 January 2012 edition of The Advance. ([Past copies of editions going back to 2012 can be found on our website.](#))

## **"The Original Six – How the "New" Barrhaven Branch 641 Came to Be**

No, this is not a hockey story. Anyone who frequents the Barrhaven Legion has undoubtedly heard the terms "Charter" and "Founding" members, especially if you attend the General Meetings or ride a stool at the bar. I was certain that I knew the correct meaning but was very surprised to learn that I did not. My discussions and research have shown that many others are just as misinformed as me on this subject.

To begin, we need to look back at how and when the Branch was formed. Sometime in the year 2002, Gus Este, Gord Ley and Ray Desjardins suggested to a few fellow members of Branch 593 Bells Corners that they should start a new Legion Branch in Barrhaven. They all agreed it was a great idea. But how, and by whom?

Time passed, and human nature being what it is, nothing got done and this dream was only talk by people in blue blazers. More time passed, and it wasn't until 2004 that Ray Desjardins put pen to paper and started the laborious, intensive process to turn their vision into reality.

There's no manual on how to start a Branch, and initially, there were few who believed it could be done, including Ontario Command. Luckily for us, Ray is a determined individual who doesn't easily accept "NO" for an answer.

To obtain a Legion Charter, there were many obstacles to overcome, including the requirement to have 50 members. In that list of 50, there had to be a minimum of 10 new members who had never previously belonged to any Legion.

Allow me to backtrack for a minute. I incorrectly assumed, as did others, that our "Founding" members were the "Original Six" who had the vision and tenacity to start our Branch.

They were: Ray Desjardins, Gord Ley, Gus Este, Ernie Hughes, Don Phair, Judy Phair

I also incorrectly believed that our "Charter" members were all members at the time we received our charter and officially became Branch 641 Barrhaven. After a lengthy



discussion with Ray, who has all the right answers, I've learned that our Branch has 12 members who are officially recognized as "Charter" members. These 12 were the new, voting members who had not been re-instated or transferred in from another Branch.

They were: Wing Cdr J.D.W. Campbell, F. Paul Charlebois, Larry G. Charlebois, Linda Charlebois, Pierre Deveault, Peggy Johnson, Beverly Schlivert, Greig Schlivert, John Sielatycki, Sheila Sielatycki, Jim Wilson, Sharon Wilson

Our "Founding" members include everyone who was a member in 2005 when our request for a Charter was submitted for approval. At that time, there were four reinstated members, 18 transfers and 32 new members, which included the 12 "Charter" members, for a total of 54 "Founding" members. Ray Desjardins was the branch provisional president and Gord Ley was our first official president.

Since receiving our Charter on April 22, 2005, our Branch has grown steadily from humble, unlikely beginnings. From living room discussions to meetings at the Walter Baker Centre and our first clubhouse on Cedarview, it's been quite the ride. The latest move to Fallowfield has proven to be an unquestionable success by our members and the community at large.

We are now approaching 500 members and have become one of the largest and most vibrant branches in Zone G5. At our present rate of growth, it won't be long before the need for a larger, perhaps permanent facility, will be thrust upon us.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to the "Original Six" who had the vision, energy and determination to create Branch 641 Barrhaven. There are dreamers, and there are doers. We at Branch 641 are extremely fortunate to have both.

Submitted: Dave St. Amand"

Here is some additional background information which has been submitted by Sharon Wilson.

"In the beginning, once we met the criteria needed to "create" a new branch, we were approved to create a provisional executive. This group functioned in an unofficial capacity to get the number of people needed (50 new members, not including transfers from other branches) to meet the requirements to apply for an official charter, along with all the other requirements. Ray Desjardins was the provisional president and the original six were part of this group. Of note, at that time we were the first group in 25 years who were trying to establish a new Legion branch. It's no wonder we were known as the "little branch that could." It is also fitting we got our Charter in 2005, the Year of the Veteran. I hope this adds to the history of our remarkable branch."

[Click here to see our first Scrapbook](#) (2005-2006)

[Click here to see our Second Scrapbook](#) (2005-2007)

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## Executive and General Meeting Reports for January 2024

These documents are now available on our website. Please note these are shown as submitted so please excuse any typos.

Executive Meeting Report for January, [please click here](#).

General Meeting Report for January, [please click here](#).

### Barrhaven Legion 641 is on Facebook

Want to be a part of our private Facebook group? Just go to “Barrhaven Legion 641” on Facebook, send us a friend request, answer the two questions\* to tell us why you want to be a part of our private group, and join in the conversation.

\*If you don't answer the questions, your request won't be approved.

***This is a private, members-only group.***

## Reservations for Friday Night Dinners and Special Events

### Barrhaven Legion Branch 641

**Dinner served from 6-7 p.m.**

**Members: \$25    Non-members \$30**

**For reservations, please contact Ken  
Phone 613-795-2127 or Email [br641reservation@gmail.com](mailto:br641reservation@gmail.com)**

# Ringin' Out the Old and Ringin' In the New at 641

Valour Hall was filled on New Year's Eve with members and guests who rang in the new year with friends and family. Thanks to everyone who attended this event and to our fabulous Hospitality Team for putting on another wonderful celebration. Photos below thanks to Gary Cunningham.



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Then, in less than 12 hours, our miracle Hospitality team turned things around and hosted our annual President's Levée on January 1. Thanks to Jennifer Dunham for her photos of the day.



Thanks to all our volunteers who make Branch 641 the success it is. You know that saying, “It takes a village to raise a child?” Well, our volunteers are the village that makes our branch the success we have grown to be.

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## Branch 641 in the Legion Community



In January 2023, four of our men won the coveted Zone Senior Dart Tournament Championship, allowing Branch 641 to host the 2024 event. Pictured left are Jim Cusik, Bill Carpenter, Terry Claessen and Joe Guitard.

On January 6, 2024, our champs plus a number of other “seniors” took their dart skills to the boards when we hosted the 2024 Senior Zones championships in Valour Hall.



We were proud to send Jeff Benson in singles, Dwayne Hordij and Jeff Benson in doubles and Joe Guitard, Terry Claessen, Jim Cusick and Kevin Brown in teams onto the District finals in Perth.

Our Wednesday-night fun dart group has some excellent players that have been proud representatives of our Branch in Zone darts, both regular and seniors. It's a fun evening of friendship and laughter – and darts of course!





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## 2023/2024 Branch 641 Executive Team

Position	Chair	Position	Chair
<b>President</b>	Lyle Brennan	<b>Honours and Awards</b>	Ed Schelenz
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	Ed Schelenz	<b>Hospitality/Entertainment</b>	Angele Guy
<b>1st Vice President</b>	Mike Harrietha	<b>Housing</b>	Dave Cole
<b>2nd Vice President</b>	Bert Boehme	<b>Leadership and Development</b>	Bert Boehme
<b>3rd Vice President</b>	Angele Guy	<b>Legion Seniors</b>	Richard Lynn
<b>Chairman</b>	Dave Cole	<b>Long Range Planning</b>	Stephane Guy
<b>Treasurer</b>	Diane Craig	<b>Membership</b>	David St Amand
<b>Secretary</b>	Pam Hall	<b>Poppy Campaign</b>	Stephane Guy
<b>Sergeant at Arms</b>	Paul Leadston	<b>Poppy Trust Fund</b>	Bert Boehme
<b>Bar Officer</b>	Dave Sereda	<b>Public Relations (Website, Newsletter)</b>	Debi Sereda
<b>Cadets</b>	Patrick Makinson	<b>Sports/Track and Field</b>	Joe Guitard
<b>Community Liaison</b>	Dave Sereda	<b>Veterans' Service Officer</b>	Anne Cole
<b>Constitution and Laws</b>	Stephane Guy	<b>Ways and Means</b>	Anne Cole
<b>Finance Officer</b>	Bert Boehme	<b>Youth Education/Bursary</b>	Carol-Anne Marleau
<b>Grants and Assistance</b>	Richard Lynn		
Non-Executive			
<b>Bar Manager</b>	Carol-Anne Marleau	<b>Golf Tournament</b>	Jennifer Read
<b>Bingo Team Co-ordinator</b>	Ed Schelenz	<b>Hall Rental</b>	Cathy Pearen
<b>Chaplain for Legion Tributes</b>	Reverend Margo Whittaker	<b>Hospital Visits Co-ordinator</b>	Louise Laflamme
<b>Finance Review Committee</b>	William Read, Lorette Ellis, Kim Krueger	<b>Housing Assistant</b>	Tom Lamb
<div>  <div style="text-align: center;"> E-mail: <a href="mailto:rcl641@bellnet.ca">rcl641@bellnet.ca</a>  October 2023 </div>  </div>			

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## Membership Update

Membership Total for December: 600 active accounts (2023 – 762)

New Members: 1  
Resigned: 0

Transfer in: 0  
Re-instated: 1

Transfer out: 0  
Deceased Members: 2

This will be my last year as Membership Chair. After so many years in this position, it's time to pass on the job to someone new. I will finish my term that runs till the end of May. In the interim, I will train the new person and have them ready to take the reins on the 1st of June. If you are interested in becoming Membership Chair, you need to talk our President Lyle Brennan.

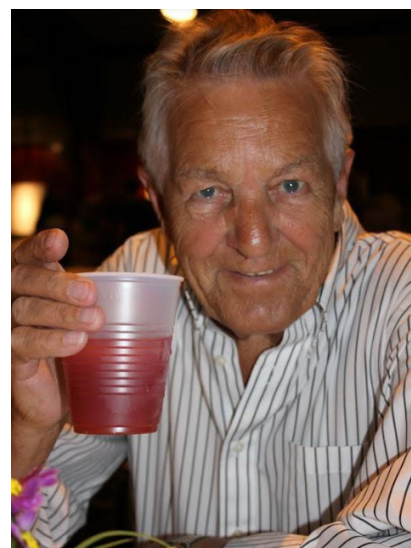
The three winners of a one-year extension to their membership are: Dianne Cusick Ali Mirza  
Sandra Hartley

Finally, our quorum has increased from 36 to 38. Quorum is calculated at 5 per cent of last year's membership total. This number remains constant throughout the 2024 calendar year.

Dave St Amand, Membership Chair

## Farewell to Our Friend John Sielatycki

Many of our members will know and remember John Sielatycki. I wanted to share a few photos of John that were taken at branch events over the past years. John was a kind and gentle man, and he will be missed by many. Our sincere condolences to John's wife Sheila and their family.



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## 2023 Poster and Literary Contest

Judging for the annual contest was completed on November 18, 2023 and the 41 winners in all categories (Posters Colour and Black and White, Essay, Poem) were presented with their certificate and cash prize (ranging from \$25 to \$100) in Valour Hall on January 21. Several entries went on to the next level of the competition.

Here are some of the entries that were received from our local schools. You can see there's a lot of talent in our community. Many thanks to all the students who submitted entries, and of course to the winners. Thanks to the teachers at our schools who help introduce the youth to Remembrance and the importance of knowing our history and celebrating our Veterans. Special thanks go to teacher Jan Birmingham of Mother Teresa High School who has supported our Remembrance program for many years and whose students submitted a large number of entries once again this year. Jan, best wishes on your well-deserved retirement. Our Hospitality Team put on refreshments for our guests which were very well received by the kids and their families. Thanks to all the volunteers who were judges, those who set up the room and helped me with all the work surrounding this contest and the award presentation.

Carol Anne Marleau, Chair, Youth Education and Bursary



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# The Legion Advocates for Veterans' Benefits and for the Wellbeing of Veterans and Their Families

Since 1926, The Royal Canadian Legion has been committed to advocating for the care and benefits of serving and retired Canadian Armed Forces and RCMP members and their families.

To develop our positions and messages to effectively advocate for Veterans and their families, the Legion supports and conducts research, speaks with Veterans and their families, and consults with subject matter experts. Our advocacy is consistent with the approximately 20 other Canadian organizations that make up the Veterans Consultation Assembly.

Veterans served to protect the rights and freedoms we enjoy today, and The Royal Canadian Legion is committed to ensuring they receive the care and supports they deserve.

With a membership nearly 250,000 strong, we advocate through a number of key channels:

- We work with government, military and other Veteran organizations
- We participate in advocacy at the national, provincial, branch and community levels
- We continually invest in research for better Veteran advocacy

## The democratic voice of Legion members and the resolution process

The Legion is uniquely positioned to speak on behalf of our membership, which includes approximately 60,000 Veterans, 140,000 family members, as well as persons who support those who served. We are often asked by the Government of Canada and other organizations to present our position on issues because we are the only Veteran service organization that assists Veterans and their families with representation to Veterans Affairs Canada and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board Canada.

There is no one individual or select group within the Legion that determines Legion policy or direction. The Legion has an established and identifiable membership who shapes our policies and direction in a democratic manner. Resolutions are voted on across all levels of the organization, ensuring the Legion is aligned to meet the needs of Veterans and their families. To find out more about this process, contact our Veterans Service Officer, [Anne Cole](#) or your Provincial Command.

**Canadian Veterans' Crisis Line**  
**1-800-273-8255**

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“Supports RCL Branch 641 Barrhaven and our Veterans”

## Barrhaven Legion Memorial Bricks

If you would like to be a part of the past, present and the future of the Barrhaven Legion, purchase a Memorial Brick. Your brick will be engraved with your name and it will be mounted on our Memorial Wall in Valour Hall.

Bricks are available in three denominations:

**Copper \$250**

**Silver \$500**

**Gold \$1,000**

Purchasing a Memorial Brick is also a great way to honour a family member or friend. For more information, please contact Debi Sereda by email at [debi.foxhill@gmail.com](mailto:debi.foxhill@gmail.com).

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# Improve Your Health and the Health of our Branch

**Get in shape – join the cleaning crew at Legion Branch 641!** You will burn carbs, get your 10,000 steps, lose inches off your waistline and improve your health. You will become a pro in sweeping, vacuuming, mopping and general cleaning. All equipment is provided. This opportunity is free to you and only requires a few hours of your time one day a week.

Not only will you get the satisfying reward that comes with volunteering, your efforts will also greatly benefit your Legion, which benefits your community.

Other volunteer opportunities exist throughout the year. Ask at the Branch how you can help. Remember this is Your Legion and we need your help.

Contact Greg Grimes 613-224-6585 or [grimes428@hotmail.com](mailto:grimes428@hotmail.com)

## Notes from the Editor

Debi Sereda



We had a sold-out party on December 31 as our guests celebrated the end of 2023 and the start of 2024. On January 1 we welcomed everyone to the branch for the annual President's Levée and as always, our delicious Moose Milk was served . . . and enjoyed. We wish all our members a healthy and happy 2024 and thank you for your support in 2023.

We lost a Veteran this month, our friend John Sielatycki. John (along with his wife Sheila) was one of the 12 Charter Members of Branch 641, and over the years, John contributed greatly of his time and enthusiasm to making our Branch the success it is. In his many years as a member and volunteer, he served on the Executive as Seniors Chair and participated in visits to Perley Hospital, took part in Remembrance Day ceremonies, co-ordinated our Poppy Campaign, helped with our Cleaning the Capital and the Santa Claus Parade. John was our volunteer cleaner for many years, and he took great pride in making sure our facility was clean at all times. John was a gentleman and a gentle man, and he will be missed by all of us here at 641. RIP John.

The annual Poster and Literary Awards were hosted once again at the Branch on January 21, and Valour Hall was full of kids and their families as the winners were presented their awards – a certificate and money! A number of entries have gone on to the next level.

Enjoy your branch. Volunteer if you can. Stay safe.

Debi Sereda

[debi.foxhill@gmail.com](mailto:debi.foxhill@gmail.com)