

# The Acton Legion receives a "Tank Buster" monument

By: Dawn Brown

It's taken three years, but on Thursday, October 22 the Acton Legion received a new monument; an M-109 self-propelled 155mm howitzer—or "Tank Buster" as called by the artillery because of the unit's range, destructive power and accuracy.

After being demilitarized—which renders the unit unable to fire, drive, or move, as well as welding all doors closed—the unit was shipped from Montreal to the Acton Legion then hoisted into position on a concrete pad by crane at the rear of the building. The installation of this new monument is a way to honour

members of the Canadian Armed Forces past, present and future.

"It was an awful lot of emails and phone calls to get this all put into place," said Br-197 Special Projects Chairman, Wes Kutasienski. "This has been a labour of love."

Former Branch President George DeRabbie sent a request to the Department of National Defense (DND) for a piece of military equipment back in the fall of 2012. Kutasienski took over the project after DeRabbie moved out of province and decided to search for a larger unit.

"I had to be certified to receive the equipment, which means security clearances and all

sorts of wonderful things," Kutasienski said, explaining why the entire process took three years. "We were slated one year ago, but they had a problem with contractor, with security clearance, so it was put back another year."

Thanks to local contractors and volunteers helping with the installation, as well as Acton Precast Concrete supplying pads at no charge, the entire cost of the installation was only \$1100—\$100 for the security clearance course Kutasienski had to take, and \$1000 for the crane to move the equipment.

"I did not accomplish this alone," Kutasienski said. "My friend and comrade, Les Bentley, has assisted in more ways than I care to count, and was always ready and willing to convince other members of the community to pitch in with their labor and equipment."

The unit itself was built in the United States in 1976 and was shipped to the Combat Training Centre in Gagetown, New Brunswick in 1977 where it was used for artillery training. In 1981, the unit was moved to the Royal Canadian Heavy Artillery (RCHA) in Shilo, Manitoba

where it continued to be used for training before being shipped to RCHA in Petawawa in 1992. Again the unit was used for training until it was retired from service in 2002.

Kutasienski hopes to add

more monuments in the future. He would like to add something from the Navy like a ship anchor, and expects to receive an M1-13 armoured personnel carrier in the near future.



Sharon Graham photo



Traci Gardner photos

## LEGION NEWS

By: Sharon Graham P.R.O. ~ Branch 197



Our Poppy Blitz is this weekend, we are looking for members to cover the streets. Please, if you can help distribute poppies, come to the bar and tell them the street you would like to do. They will add your name to the list.

Last Thursday we received our M-109. It was a huge event since we have waited for it since 2012. This was a work in progress starting with a past president George De Rabbie. George started the ball rolling and he moved away and gave the special project to Wes Kutasienski and Les Bentley. Wes had to go through so much paper work calling to see when the M-109 would finally arrive. We just heard a few weeks ago that it would be here on October 22 and sure enough it was. St. Joseph school children were waiting by the fence to see the tank being put into place. We needed a crane to lift the M-109 onto it's pad. A special thank you goes out to former Defence Minister the right Honourable Peter MacKay,

and his office for all the help getting this started and expediting the paper work, George De Rabbie, Wes Kutasienski, Les Bentley, Dave Parker and Acton Precast who donated the pads. Also, thanks to the crane operator who had never lifted a very large tank before. This was his first time and said it all ran very smoothly. Thank you to the members who came out to watch this special event. It was pretty amazing.

Last Sunday our President Peg Graham, First Vice President Julie Carney and our Ladies Auxiliary Liaison, Dave McLean had the privilege of attending a celebration dinner with our LA to help them celebrate 70 years of service to Branch 197. The Branch presented the ladies with a plaque to thank them for all of their years of dedicated service. The remainder of the executive were the cooks and servers for the delicious meal. Entertainment was provided by a Patsy Cline impersonator and the performance was excellent.

Remembrance Day parade is on November 7. We will be marching from the Olde Hide House to the Cenotaph. Please meet up at the

Hide House by 10:15 a.m.

On November 29 your Bar Supervisor will be having a Smart Serve course starting at 12 noon sharp. You must be a paid up member in good standing. If you are interested in the course, please leave your name at the bar and a phone number.

Remember, we are always looking for volunteers for our meat draw on Saturdays. The sign up sheet is on board.

You can pay your 2016 membership dues now and become an early bird before November 30, 2015.

Anyone who wishes

to participate in the laying of a personal wreath at the Remembrance Day Ceremony is asked to leave your name and phone number with the Legion Bar Steward at 519-853-0910.

The next general meeting is on November 9 at 8 p.m. sharp.

### Acton Christmas Hamper Committee

Acton Rotary Club  
The Salvation Army Family Services  
Knights of Columbus Acton Council 8050  
St. Vincent Charities of St. Joseph Patron of Canada

### Food & Toy Hampers

Those struggling to meet family needs this Christmas season can apply at

**The Salvation Army Community Church**  
114 Mill Street East, Acton

10:00 a.m. - 12 noon	Tuesday, November 3
	Wednesday, November 4
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Tuesday, November 10
10:00 a.m. - 12 noon	Tuesday, November 17
	Wednesday, November 18
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Tuesday, November 24
	Wednesday, November 25
10:00 a.m. - 12 noon	Tuesday, December 1
	Wednesday, December 2

Applications must be completed in person.

Applicants need to bring identification for all family members and current proof of residency.

Food hampers will be distributed on:  
**Saturday December 19 at**  
**St. Joseph Patron of Canada Church**  
64 Church Street East.

## Royal Canadian Legion Branch 197

### Remembrance Day Parade Saturday, November 7, 2015



The parade will muster at the Hide House parking lot at 10:15 a.m. and the march to the Cenotaph for the service.

*The Veterans Dinner will be served at the Legion Branch 197 starting at 1 p.m.*

*At the 11th Hour on the 11th Day of the 11th Month, we remember those who risked, and lost, their lives for the freedoms we enjoy today*

**There will be a Legion Service at the Cenotaph on November 11, 2015 at 11 a.m.**