

History of the  
Sir Guy Carleton Branch  
United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada

The United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada undertook in 2014 to publish a book commemorating its One Hundredth Anniversary. The book contains a brief history of each of its Branches, current and past. A history of the Sir Guy Carleton Branch was prepared for this publication. The following text builds on that history.

Members of the Sir Guy Carleton Branch are proud that their branch bears the name of Lord Dorchester, who on 9 November 1789 created the honour of United Empire Loyalist. The Branch has a copy of the letter dated 21 March 1962 with nine signatures of those requesting establishment of a new branch in Ottawa. The first members came from the Bay of Quinte, Governor Simcoe and Toronto Branches. The first executive consisted of President, E. John Chard; Vice President, Lt. Col. Knox K. Thomson; Secretary, I. June Forgie; Treasurer, David Webster and Genealogist, Howard Warner. The Charter was granted on 14 April 1962. The beautifully illuminated document was officially presented to the Branch by Dominion President, Mr. H. S. Honsberger, on 20 June 1962. Mr. Chard was instrumental in the formation of 15 branches of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC).

Dedicated volunteers have served both the Branch and the executive of the Dominion organization. Three Branch Presidents were Dominion Presidents: E. John Chard (1966 - 1967), Howard Warner (1972 - 1973) and Frank Cooper (1988 - 1992). Branch President, Marg Hall, served as Councillor (2002 - 2004) and Vice President (2004 - 2006) for the Eastern Central District. The annual meeting of the Dominion Council was hosted by the Branch in 1972 at the National Library and Archives, and two Annual Conferences were hosted in Ottawa; in 1981 at Carleton University and in 1992 at the University of Ottawa.

In 1964 Branch members were enthralled by a special speaker at a joint meeting with the Ottawa Historical Society and the English Speaking Society. Lt.-Col. Sir John Paley Johnson, 6th Bt. of New York in North America and Lady Johnson paid a visit to Ottawa. Sir Johnson spoke of the charming home of his ancestors, their journey up the Mohawk Valley into Upper Canada and the regret still felt at the loss of their land and property.

Loyalist heritage has been honoured in many different ways over the years. The Dominion of Canada Rifle Association (DCRA) Loyalist Cup and Ranger Cup for long range black powder competition were donated in 1975 and 1977 respectively by Branch President, Major Don Holmes (1977 - 1978). He won the competition for the Loyalist Cup given for precision long-range black powder marksmanship in 1977. In 1989 the Branch created the UEL Trophy Fund, the interest from which was used to buy medals for presentation to the winner of the competition for the Loyalist Cup.

Educating students about Loyalist history has been a long-standing priority for the Branch. In 1977, in collaboration with the Ottawa Board of Education, a secondary school level Loyalist Studies Program was developed and members spoke to Grade XIII history class students about the richness of Loyalist fact and cultural heritage. In keeping with the theme of education

the Branch launched its newsletter, "The Ottawa Loyalist", in the spring of 1983 under the leadership of the President Ivan Mitchell who produced the newsletter until 1991. The newsletter carried many articles on the Loyalists written by frequent contributor John Ruch.

To celebrate the 1984 bicentennial of the landing of Loyalists in what would be come Canada, Lt. Col Frank Cooper arranged for the Armorial Bearings of the UELAC to be printed in full colour on 500 envelopes. The Loyalist commemorative stamps issued that year were placed on the envelopes which were then cancelled as First Day Covers by the Post Office. The covers were available for sale to members of the UELAC.

The Branch undertook a Bicentennial Project in 1984 known as "The King's Names Project" to index the British Headquarters Papers, New York 1774-1783 (the Carleton Papers). It was chaired by John Ruch who worked hard to obtain support and funding for student assistance from many sources; government departments, universities and other UELAC Branches. When funding wasn't available, Branch members coordinated by Jaye Jarvis and Ivan Mitchell stepped in to complete the task of data extraction and preparation of index cards. Edward and Elizabeth Kipp and George Anderson provided valuable technical assistance in creating a computer database and Edward prepared the final Compact Disks (CDs). The project took 14 years to complete with the first CDs produced in 1998. The index is a database of 54,567 records related to Loyalist soldiers, civilian refugees (white and black), and many British and German soldiers who were on Manhattan Island or the adjacent mainland areas dominated by the British during the American Revolution. It is invaluable for Black History as it contains names of Loyalist soldiers, and freed or enslaved civilian refugees previously scattered throughout the documents. It also includes "Carleton's Book of Negroes", a register of 2,831 refugees of colour. Funds raised from the sale of the CDs supported several initiatives. A portion was given to Brock University to purchase microfilm of Land Petitions for its Loyalist Collection. The Branch also made arrangements with Carleton University in 1998 to award an annual Bursary to a deserving second-year student going into third year in the Canadian Studies Program. In 2008 the fully funded John Ruch Memorial Scholarship was established at Carleton University with the interest awarded annually to students of Canadian History.

Other projects undertaken by members include indexing of the McNiff Maps by Edward Kipp and George Anderson. The maps, also known as "The Loyalist Maps", were surveyed by Patrick McNiff in 1786 and covered the Townships of Lancaster, Charlottenburgh, Cornwall, Osnabruck, Williamsburgh and Matilda. The index was published as a CD in 2007. Member Norm Crowder published "Early Ontario Settlers: A Source Book", "Loyalists and Nepean", "William Crowder, Loyalist" (with Ruth Crowder), "British Army Pensioners Abroad, 1772-1899" and "Upper Canada Naturalization Registers 1828-1850" (with Sharon Bowman).

In 1998 and again in 2006, a Loyalist Rose was planted at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa. This pale pink rose was said to have been brought by a crusader to Scotland from Damascus in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century. John Cameron and his wife Mary took a scion from Scotland to the Mohawk Valley, NY in 1773. They then brought cuttings of the rose with them to Cornwall (New Johnstown) during the American Revolution. A monograph on the history of the rose by Duff Mitchell is in the Library of the Sir Guy Carleton Branch.

To celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's reign and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Branch, a Loyal Salute concert was organized at the Centrepointe Theatre, Nepean, ON on 4 October 2002. The programme included the 50 voice Nepean Choir, the Central Band of the Canadian Forces and dancers from the MacCulloch School of Dancing.

In honour of the 1997 Act declaring June 19 as United Empire Loyalist Day in Ontario the Branch officially presented a Loyalist flag to the City of Ottawa on 18 June 2003, which would be flown the following day from City Hall. The flag was presented to Nepean Councillor Rick Chiarelli by Lt. Col Frank Cooper. Members of the St. Lawrence Branch participated. Many of those in attendance wore period dress.

The original monument to Loyalist Lt. Jeremiah French and his wife Elizabeth, which had fallen into disrepair, was restored and rededicated in 2005 in a joint project of the Recreated Royal Regiment of New York, the St. Lawrence Branch and the Sir Guy Carleton Branch. The monument dedication took place at Maple Grove Cemetery with the participation of local federal and provincial members of Parliament, representatives of area historical societies and descendants of Jeremiah French from across North America including George Anderson of the Sir Guy Carleton Branch.

Speakers and tours have been regular features over the years, along with annual movie afternoons and picnics. Tours have included the National Archives and Library, the War Museum and Kingsmere, home of the Speaker of the House of Commons. From 1997 to 2010 the Branch participated with other Branches in organizing four genealogical research bus trips to the United States, visiting the Montgomery County Archives, Fonda NY, New York State Archives, Albany NY and the New England Historical and Genealogical Society, Boston MA. Eleven historical bus tours to the Mohawk and Hudson Valleys, NY were organized by branch members Edward and Elizabeth Kipp, and George and Janet Anderson. Participants came from across Canada and the United States. The tours were financially successful with proceeds contributed to Dominion Headquarters and the organizing Branches. Sir Guy Carleton Branch added its share to the John Ruch Memorial Scholarship at Carleton University.

In 2010 members of Sir Guy Carleton Branch were among other Loyalists invited to attend a tree planting ceremony by Queen Elizabeth II at Rideau Hall. The Hon. John Baird, himself a Loyalist descendant, represented the Prime Minister.

The Branch has hosted information tables at annual Gene-O-Ramas of the Ottawa Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society, City of Ottawa Heritage Days and Open Doors Ottawa. On one memorable occasion in 1985, 50 Branch members and their spouses were invited to an evening at the home of the American ambassador by the Victoria Chapter (now the Bytown Chapter of Ottawa) of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

As the Sir Guy Carleton Branch begins the year of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada our 78 members are engaged through a newsletter three times each year, two social lunches with speakers as well as a tour or other event. The 800 volume Branch library started by Genealogist, Velma Rust, is accessible to members, researchers and the public at the City of Ottawa Archives. The current executive consisting of President, Lynne Webb; Past President, Sylvia Powers; Vice-President, Shirley Charbonneau; Secretary, Penny Minter; Treasurer, Robert Adair and Genealogist, Gary Bagley, continue to maintain the high standards of those who have so ably served in the past.

Dorothy Meyerhof

Contributors: George Anderson, Gary Bagley, Margaret Hall, Edward Kipp and Sylvia Powers  
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