

Poppy Campaign running now until Nov. 11

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As Remembrance Day draws nearer, community members will once again see veterans and volunteers out in Shelburne offering poppies in-person.

"It feels like we're starting to get back to normal," said Dean Schroeder, vice president and chair of the Poppy Fund for the Shelburne Legion.

Last year, the local legion drastically scaled back their fundraising efforts for the poppy campaign, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as a result donations were gathered through drop boxes placed throughout the town.

Returning to in-person interaction, the Shelburne Legion will also be introducing a new touchless tap and give donation box, which will allow people to donate without using cash. Roughly 1,000 of the digital boxes that allow the donor to give either a \$2, \$5, or \$10 donation, were distributed to legion branches.

While collecting donations for the 2020 poppy fund, the Shelburne Legion saw one of the poppy boxes, with an unknown amount of cash inside, stolen from the Circe K convenience store on Main Street in Shelburne. Schroeder said the digital box provides a little bit of security.

"It's easier to control with the money going right into an account, if the box is stolen they can shut it off," said Schroeder.

Although the poppy chair says the new boxes will allow for easy donations in some cases, he notes that the Shelburne Legion will continue with cash donations to allow those to donate what they can.

The Poppy Fund goes directly toward aiding veterans in the local community. Some of the many ways the donations are used include providing assistance to needy veterans, purchasing construction materials or providing maintenance for housing and facilities of elderly and disabled person, bursaries, and getting service dogs for veterans.

This year is also marking a significant milestone, with the 100 year anniversary of the poppy. The poppy became a symbol of remembrance after Madame Anna Guerin, inspired by John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields", had the idea to distribute the poppy on Armistice Day as a way to raise money for veterans' needs and remember those who died during the First World War. In July of 1921 the Great War Veteran Association, which unified with other veteran groups to form the Canadian Legion in 1925, adopted the poppy as the flower of remembrance.

With Remembrance Day a week away, the Shelburne Legion is still looking for volunteers to help canvass for poppies in front of local businesses. Signup sheets are available at the branch.