Harold Greydon Kent: 75 Year Club Member of Royal Canadian Legion 1945-2020 Oldest/Only Living Charter Member of Branch 374



Harold Greydon Kent, 1943, age 18 (enlisted) Royal Canada Air Force (RCAF), 1943-1945

Harold Kent, d.o.b.: September 8, 1925

Harold Greydon Kent:

75 Year Club Member of Royal Canadian Legion 1945-2020 Oldest/Only Living Chartered Member of Branch 374

Military Service (1943-1945)

As soon as Harold Kent turned 18 years old in September of 1943, he could not wait to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). Harold spent the next twenty months in military training at air bases in Southern Ontario and Quebec. He took his Initial Training School (ITS) and War Emergency Training Plan (WET-P) while stationed in Toronto, Ontario, and in Quebec at LaChine (Depot) and Victoriaville. He took several courses to be a bombardier in Ottawa and graduated in spring of 1945. Because WW2 was coming to an end, Harold never had the opportunity to serve overseas, and his RCAF status was later transferred to the Reserves.

Royal Canadian Legion Service (1945-2020)

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 325 (Hilton Beach)

1945. Member of Branch 325. In the spring of 1945, when Harold came home from the RCAF, his uncle Mike (Earle Kent) who had served in WWI, encouraged him to join the Legion, a branch of which had recently started in Hilton Beach. Harold joined the St Joseph Island Branch 325 in the spring of 1945. A year or so later branch members from Richards Landing and Hilton Beach split and Harold transferred to the branch in the Landing in 1946. Hilton Beach kept the Branch number 325 and Richards Landing started a new Branch 374. Shortly after that, Mrs. Orrell bought the hall in the Landing and gave it to Branch 374 so they could have a place to meet. In 1969, Branch 325 surrendered their charter and the remaining members joined Branch 374.

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 374 (Richards Landing)

1946, Charter Member Branch 374. In 1946, Harold joined as a charter member of Branch 374 of the Royal Canadian Legion, newly established in Richards Landing, Ontario.

Active Member. In addition to executive positions, Harold did electrical and plumbing work for many years for the old Legion Hall and helped wire the new Legion Hall with his son Lynn. Some of the other areas of Legion member involvement were:

Community Night. Harold helped with Community Night for many years, working in the kitchen, helping to make the fries and in charge of making the coffee. One other service he provided was wiring the lights and booths for community night on the evening before.

1967, Syrup Festival. Harold has been an active member in the Legion Syrup Festival since it started in 1967 and could be found making pancakes in the kitchen (Royal Canadian Legion, 2017). Kent Bros., (1919–2019) have supplied much of the syrup for this successful annual event (Kent-Wilkinson, 2019) since this successful Legion fundraiser began.

1990–2015, **Bingo Caller**. Harold called Wednesday night Bingo for the Legion for about 25 years from about 1990, until 2015. At age 90, he stepped down from this position.

2020–Current. Harold continued to attend some of the Legion events as an active and reliable member: Monday night Euchre; Tuesday night Crib; Wednesday night Bingo in the summer, Thursday night general Legion membership meetings (until it started to conflict with Thursday night choir practice); and Friday night Meat Draw at the Legion.

2020, 75 Year Member. In June of 2020, Harold Greydon Kent served 75 years as a member in the Royal Canadian Legion. Harold has been the longest serving and only surviving charter member of Branch 374, for some time.

Executive Positions 1950s-1980s

Harold served as president of Branch 374 for a one-year term in the mid-1950s and secretary/treasurer for two years 1961-1963. For over twenty years he served as treasurer in the 1950-1970s, and again in the 1980s for a while, until 1986 when the new Legion Hall opened at its new location.

Honours & Awards

Harold has received many awards and honours over the last 75 years for his commitment and service to the Legion:

1990 Life Membership. In 1990 Harold was honoured as a Life Member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 374. As a Legion member, he was recognized for his over and above service, contribution and dedication to the Legion, receiving the Award of Life Member.

1995 October, Certificate of Merit. In 1995 Harold was granted a Certificate of Merit for service rendered to, or on behalf of the Legion.

1995, 50 Year Club. In 1995, Harold became a member of the 50-year club having served in the Legion since 1945. Harold Kent is in possession of the "chest" which is a tradition established around the 50-year club.

2000, 55 Year Club. In 2000, Harold became a member of the 55-year club having served in the Legion since 1945.

2005, 60 Year Club. In 2005, Harold became a member of the 60-year club having served in the Legion since 1945.

2009 September 24, President's Recognition. Awarded to Harold Kent, in recognition of his longtime dedication and untiring efforts to ensure the welfare of Branch 374 of the RCL and for always being available without reservation to give advice and assistance when requested.

2010, 65 Year Club. In 2010, Harold became a member of the 65-year club having served in the Legion since 1945.

2015, 70 Year Club. In 2015, Harold became a member of the 70-year club having served in the Legion since 1945

2020, 75 Year Club. In 2020, Harold became a member of the 75 Year Club having served in the Legion since 1945. Due to restrictions of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic the Annual Legion Honours and Awards Dinner in the spring was cancelled. Harold Kent attended the Remembrance Day Services, November 11, 2020, as he does yearly, and was presented with a wreath to lay with his name on it honoring his 75 Year Club membership at the flag pole and cenotaph outside the Legion Hall, Richards Landing. Following the Remembrance Day Services, Harold was presented the "75 Year Club" bar and lapel pin from John Hooper, Chair of the Honours and Awards Committee; Steve Fresch, District Commander; and by David Pearse, President of Branch 374. The event was witnessed by a limited number of Legion members.

Harold Kent: Family, Community Service, and Business

Harold Greydon Kent (d.o.b.: September 8, 1925)

On September 8, 1925, Harold Greydon Kent was born in the Red Cross Hospital in Richards Landing. The hospital was known then as the Barton House (Kent, Emily, 1949) at a cost of \$20.00 for a two-week stay (Stevens, Elsie, 1998). Harold was the second oldest child of the six children to his parents Elva and Greydon Kent.

Marriage 1947- 2017 (almost 70 years)

In 1947, Harold (1925-) married Edith Jane (Boyle) Kent (1928–2017) and bought Maple Ridge Farm from his father Greydon. Harold still resides at Maple Ridge Farm, at 2704 A Line where he has lived all of his life. We all miss mom who is no longer there with dad.

Family Patriarch

In addition to being a husband to the late Edith Jane (nee Boyle) for nearly 70 years. Harold is the father of **5** children, grandfather of **12**, and to date, great grandfather of **12**.

Father to 5: Glen, Arlene, Brenda, Lynn and Cindy. Grandfather to 12: Tania, Sam (late), Amy (step), Kent, Grey, Tyler, Jeff, Jennifer, Hillary, Patricia (Trish), Lauren, and Ariel. Great grandfather of 12 to date: Cassandra, Beckie, Josie, Jake, Theodore (Theo), Jack, Jake, Hudson, Keaton, Chase, Pierce, and Reid.

Community Service

Harold is an active member of his community. In addition to being a proud charter member of the Royal Canadian Legion for 75 years (1945-2020); Harold has long-time commitments to other community endeavors. For example:

Community Dances

As a young adult, Harold Kent played guitar with his brother Fred and sister Leona for local dances on the Island, mostly at the Orange Hall at Kentvale, and at the Dew Drop Inn on the Island. Freddie Kent, who debuted at the Orange Hall (Kent, Art H., 1993, p. 85), went on to fame with having his own TV show in the 1960s: 'Fred Kent and the Northernaires'. Although Harold did not stay on long as a member of the family band, Fred continued to play for dances up and down the North Shore and in the Soo until only recently.

St. Joseph Island Plowing Match

Harold enjoys participating in the annual St Joseph Island Plowing Match. Harold first competed many years ago, then was busy with his business for years, however in his 80s started to compete again. On September 7, 2019, "long time participant Harold Kent participated just one day before his 94th birthday. His awards in 2019 were: Senior Tractor class, 1st by age - Harold Kent; 2nd best plowed land in the field - Harold Kent; best opening split – Harold Kent; and, oldest plowman on the field-Harold Kent" (Island Clippings, 2019; North Shore Sentinel, 2019).

Harold has won the Senior Ploughing Class (Oldest Plowman) Jack Underhill Memorial Trophy in the Following years: 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2015, 2019. The plowing match was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but Harold plans to participate in 2021.

United Church Member & Choir Member

As a member of the Harmony/St Marks United Church, Harold has attended the Sunday services faithfully all his life. Harold has been a member of the church choir for 48 years. In 2022, Harold will have sung in the choir for 50 years (1972-2022). He continues to enjoy this social activity and the church choir rehearsals every Thursday night. Due to COVID-19, in person choir practice and church services have not been possible since spring 2020, and Harold misses this social outing every Thursday and Sunday. However, he enjoys watching a streaming video recording of the service that his granddaughter Jennifer sets up for him every Monday, so that he can see and hear the church service and sing along to the hymns.

Winters in Florida

For about 37 years (1978-2015) Harold and Edith enjoyed going south for the winters to Florida. Harold and Edith were part owners in the park cooperative in Zephyrhills, Florida, 2002-2015; Harold often helped members (neighbours) in their community park with plumbing and electrical issues at no charge; of note, it is a well-known fact to his family and community that Harold can "fix anything"! Harold and Edith won many shuffleboard trophies in Florida. Bridge and card games of any kind were social activities they enjoyed at any time of the year.

Work and Businesses

With regards to work and business on the Island, Harold has worked in farming, part-time for the phone company, owned and operated a construction company, and sustained a family maple syrup business. A bit more about each of these work activities is as follows:

St. Joseph Island Municipal Telephone Company

In 1946, at age 21, Harold began to work part-time as a telephone installer, repairman, for both individual phones and the operator switchboard, and linesman making 35 cents an hour. For 21 years, Harold worked part time for the St. Joseph Island Municipal Telephone Company (1946-1967) until 1967 when Bell Canada took over on the Island, buying out the local company.

Construction Business

Farming and working in construction occupied the rest of his time. When there was work with his father, Greydon, Harold made 40 cents an hour, learning the construction business from his father. Harold got his ticket in wiring and operated a construction company for 44 years: Harold Kent Construction; in later years his younger son Lynn joined him: L & H Construction (1972-1991). Together they built and serviced many homes and cottages on the Island and North Shore, employing several local Islanders in the construction business.

Maple Syrup Producer

Every spring for 80 years, beginning at the age of 14, Harold has been making maple syrup on Maple Ridge Farm. Harold continues to be a maple syrup producer. In 2019, Kent Bros. Maple Syrup celebrated 100 years (1919-2019) (Island Clippings, 2019; North Channel Current, 2019; The North Shore Sentinel, 2019).

From 1970 to 1997, Harold submitted their Kent Bros. Maple Syrup for competition at the Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto. They consistently placed in the top ten every year in many categories, but years where they earned top awards included: World Champion in 1982, First in Maple Products in 1985, Reserve Champion in 1990, and First in Medium Syrup in 1992.

The Kent family maple syrup business started in 1919 with Frederick Kent and his sons: Greydon, Earle, and Cal, then with Greydon's son Harold; then Harold's son Lynn; and Lynn's daughter Hillary; together with the help of many family members over the years for tapping, gathering, boiling, canning, marketing and distributing the maple syrup (Kentvale Store, brother Fred, sisters Jean in the Soo and Jo in Allison, Ontario). In addition, a variety of maple syrup products, i.e., maple sugar candy making was added by Edith, and carried on by Jane Kent.

For 27 years Harold was a Director of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association (OMSPA) (1968-1994), making trips to Lindsay, Ontario for annual meetings. Harold served as President of OMSPA for two years from 1992–1994. In July 1994, Harold Kent received the Maple Syrup Award from the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association, Government of Ontario. Signed by the Honorable Bob Rae Premier.

Longevity

In addition to this 75yr milestone with the Legion, Harold Kent celebrated his 95th birthday with his family in September 2020 (d.o.b. September 8, 1925). Volunteerism, runs deep within Harold's siblings: Elsie (late), Leona, Jo, Jean, and Fred and their spouses; who also have devoted years of service to their church, and various community agencies and organizations. Harold at 95 years continues to drive his own car, blow the snow out of his lane by tractor in the winter, and mow his huge lawn on his riding lawnmower in the summer. Congratulations (dad) Harold!! Mom would be so proud, as we all are.

Compiled by Arlene Kent-Wilkinson & siblings: Glen, Brenda, Lynn & Cindy, & historian - Harold Kent, November, 2020

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Harold Kent, Legion 75 Year Club- Nov 11, 2020



Harold G. Kent was presented with the 75 Year Club (bar and lapel pin) at the Legion Hall. Left to Right: John Hooper, chair of Honours and Awards Committee; Steve Frech, District Commander; David Pearse, President of Branch 374; & Harold Kent, 95 (yrs), 75 year member. [Photo by Dallas Glawson, November 11, 2020]

Harold G. Kent (95yrs) – Legion 75 Year Club, 1945-2020

Presentation of 75 Year Club (bar and lapel pin) to Harold G. Kent, Legion Hall, Richards Landing, November 11, 2020. [Proud granddaughter, Hillary Glawson looks on, witnessing the event]

Remembrance Day, November 11, 2020



Harold G. Kent assists with draw, Legion Hall, November 11, 2020. Left to Right: David Pearse, President of Branch 374; Harold Kent, recipient of 75 Year Club; Hillary Glawson (granddaughter), and Jane Kent (daughter-in-law)

Harold Kent 95 years – Legion 75 Year Club, Remembrance Day, November 11, 2020

Remembrance Day Services, November 11, 2020



Harold Kent 95yrs, only living charter Legion member of Branch 374 was presented with a wreath to lay honoring his '75 Year Club' at the Remembrance Day Service at the Legion Hall, Richards Landing.

Photo by Dallas Glawson, November 11, 2020

Remembrance Day Services – November 11, 2020



Harold G. Kent (95yrs), Legion 75 Year Club member salutes.

Remembrance Day Services – November 11, 2020



Presentation of Four Wreaths –Far right: Harold G. Kent- 75 Year-Club Wreath, Legion Hall, Richards Landing

Remembrance Day Services – November 11, 2020



Harold Kent (95yrs) in background – far right

Harold Kent: RCAF (1943) and Legion 50 Year Club Pictures (1995)





1943 - Harold Kent at Niagara Falls

1943 – Harold Kent and other RCAF trainees in Southern Ontario



1995: 50 yr Club – "Chest tradition" Harold Kent on Rt.



1995: 50 year Club - Harold Kent on Right

Other Recent Pictures



2016 - Harold Kent and Grandson Jake Johnson



2019 Harold Kent in Plowing Match



2018- Harold Kent at the Legion Syrup Festival with their Kent Bros Maple Syrup



2018 – Harold Kent and granddaughter Ariel Pessione at Waldhaus Restaurant that Ariel managed at Banff Springs, Banff.



2018 – Harold Kent at Turtle Lake, SK for grandson Kent Wilkinson's wedding

TIMELINE

Harold Greydon Kent

75 years - Chartered member of Royal Canadian Legion, Oldest chartered member of Branch 374 (Same as Above In Brief Bullets)

Military Service RCAF (1943-1945) Timeline

1943	Harold enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)
1943-45	Two years RCAP military training at airbases in Toronto and Montreal
1944	Graduated from bombardier courses in Ottawa
1944	WW2 was ending so did not see action overseas
1945	Came home to St. Joseph Island
1945	Transferred to the Reserves, and discharged in 1946

Royal Canadian Legion (1945-2020) 75 years

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 325 in Hilton Beach (1944-1946)

1944	Branch 325 opened in Hilton Beach, the only Legion Branch on the Island.
1945	After Harold came home in spring of 1945, his Uncle (Mike) Earle Kent encouraged
	his nephew Harold to join the Legion.
1945	In June 1945, Harold joined Branch 325, of RCL in Hilton Beach
1946	In spring of 1946, Branch 374 started in Richards Landing.

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 374 in Richards Landing (1946-Current)

1946	Charter Member
	 Harold joined as a Charter member of Branch 374, RCL, in Richards Landing.
1950-80s	Executive Positions: During the timespan of 1950s-1980s, Harold served as:
	Treasurer of Branch 374 for 20 years;
	Secretary/Treasurer for two of those years; and
	President for two different one-year terms in the mid-1950s, and in the 1961-
	62 term of office.
For many	Electrical and Plumbing
years:	Harold did electrical and plumbing work, renovations, and repairs for the old
	and new Legion Hall in Richards Landing
Annually	Annual Community Night: Active member.
Every	Was often in charge of making the coffee and helped cooking the French-fries
summer	in the kitchen.
	Put up and wired the lights the day before community night.
1967	Annual Legion Syrup Festival:
Every	Active member since Syrup Festival began in 1967
spring	(Royal Canadian Legion, 2017).
	Kent Bros has supplied much of the syrup for this successful annual event.
1990-	Bingo Caller
2015/16	Harold called for Bingo for the Legion on Wednesday nights for about 25
	years (until age 90/91).

1990	Honorary Life Membership
	Harold was honoured in 1990 as a Life Member of Branch 374 for his over and
	above dedicated service to the Legion
1995	Certificate of Merit.
	Harold was granted a Certificate of Merit in 1995 for service rendered to or on
	behalf of the Legion.
1995	50 Year Club
	Harold became a Member of the 50-Year Club;
	Keeper of the "Chest" tradition.
2000	55 Year Club
2005	60 Year Club
2009	President's Recognition
2010	65 Year Club
2015	70 Year Club
2020,	75 Year Member
Spring	Member of the Legion for 75 years (1945-2020).
	Oldest & only living charter member of Branch 374 for some time (1946-
	current)
2020	Continues to attend <u>some</u> Legion events as an active and reliable member
	 Monday night Euchre;
	 Tuesday night Crib;
	 Wednesday night Bingo in the summer,
	 Thursday night General Legion Membership meetings until it started
	to conflict with Thursday night choir practice; and
	 Friday night Meat Draw at the Legion.
2020,	75 Year Club Recognition
Nov 11	Due to COVID the Annual Legion Honours and Awards Dinner was cancelled.
	Harold was presented his 75year club recognition (bar and label pin) at
	Remembrance Day Services, Nov 11, 2020 at the legion Hall, Richards
	Landing.

Family History

Birth

1925, Sept 8	Harold Greydon Kent was born to Elva and Greydon Kent in Richards
	Landing at the Red Cross Hospital in Richards Landing.
	Hospital was known then as the Barton House (Kent, E., 1949)
	• Cost for a two-week stay was \$20.00 in 1925 (Stevens, 1998).

Marriage

1947, Oct 8	Harold (1925-) married Edith Jane (Boyle) Kent (1928–2017).	
1947, Fall	 Harold bought Maple Ridge Farm where he has lived all his life. 	
1947-2017	 Married for almost 70 years. Together they had 5 children. 	

5 Children

• Glen Harold Kent, (& Shirley) previously Georgetown, ON, now live in Sault Ste. Marie, ON.
 Arlene Elva Kent-Wilkinson (& Dan) previously Calgary, AB, now live in Saskatoon, SK.
Brenda Jane Kent (& Steve Ritza) live in Sault Ste. Marie, ON.
• Lynn Ivan Kent (& Jane) live on Maple Ridge Farm, St Joseph Island, ON.
• Cynthia (Cindy) Anne (Kent) Pessione (& Sandy) live in Toronto, ON.

11 Grandchildren & 12 Great Grandchildren & Roles

Husband	Husband to the late Edith Jane (nee Boyle) who he misses every day.
Father	Father of 5 children: Glen, Arlene, Brenda, Lynn, & Cindy
Grandfather	Grandfather of 12: Tania, Sam (late), Amy (step), Kent, Grey, Tyler, Jeff,
	Jennifer, Hilary, Patricia (Trish), Lauren, & Ariel.
Great	• Great-grandfather of 12 to date: Cassandra, Beckie, Josie, Jake, Theodore
Grandfather	(Theo), Jack, Jake, Hudson, Keaton, Chase, Pierce, & Reid.

Community Member

community wember
l Dances/Family band
Played guitar with his brother Fred and sister Leona in 1940s-50s.
Fred went on to fame, with his own TV show; Freddie Kent's depute was in
he Orange Hall at Kentvale (Kent, A. H., 1993, p. 85).
seph island Plowing Match
atest competition August 2019 at age 94; still wins ribbons in various
categories every year.
Senior Ploughing Class (Oldest Plowman) Jack Underhill Memorial Trophy:
2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2015, 2019
nony/St Marks United Church
Member, attended all of his life
nony/St Marks United Church Choir
Member of Choir for 48 years (1972-2020).
h to Florida for Winters
Florida for over 37 years in retirement;
Harold and Edith were part owners in a park cooperative, in Zephyrhills,
Florida, 2002-2015;
Harold often helped members in the park (neighbours) with plumbing and
electrical issues at no charge;
Harold and Edith won many shuffleboard trophies;
Bridge and card games (of any kind, at any time of the year) are social
activities they both enjoyed.

Maple Syrup Producer

····apic of · ap · · · outside:	
1919	Kent Family Syrup business began (Greydon, FB Kent, Earl and Cal)
1940-current	Harold started making maple Syrup at age 14
1968-1994	Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association (OMSPA):
	Director for 26 years;
	President of OMSPA for two years from 1992-1994.
1982	World Champion in 1982, Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto, ON.
1985	First in Maple Products in 1985, Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto, ON.
1990	Reserve Champion in 1990, Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto, ON.
1992	First in Medium Syrup in 1992, Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto, ON.
1994, July	Maple Syrup Award. Received by Harold Kent in July 1994 from the Ontario
	Maple Syrup Producers Association, Government of Ontario. Signed by the
	Honorable Bob Rae Premier.
1919	Maple syrup producer for 80yrs starting at age 14 (1940-1919)
1919-2019	100 year old Maple Syrup Business (1919-2019)
	Major player (80 yrs) in sustaining the 100year-old family business
	Kent Bros Maple Syrup 1919-2019 (Island Clippings, 2019; North Channel
	Current, 2019; The North Shore Sentinel, 2019).

Construction Company

1947-1967	St. Joseph island Municipal Telephone Company)
	Part-time for 20 years.
1947-1991	Harold Kent Construction,
	Operated construction company for 44yrs.
1972-1991	L & H Construction
	Operated with his younger son Lynn for 19yrs (of the 44yrs)

Longevity

2020, Sept 8	95 th Birthday
	Harold celebrated 95 years in September of 2020 (dob: 1925/Sept/08)
2020	Currently Harold continues to:
	drive his own car,
	blow the snow out of his lane by tractor in winter,
	help with syrup making in the spring, and
	mow his huge lawn on his riding lawnmower in the summer.
	Congratulations

Compiled by Arlene Kent-Wilkinson & siblings: Glen, Brenda, Lynn & Cindy, & historian - Harold Kent, November, 2020