

The Royal British  
Legion  
Harwell Branch  
BR1805

**Monthly Branch Meeting**  
**Held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015**  
**In the Branch Headquarters at Westfield**  
**At 20.00 Hours.**

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**ATTENDANCE:**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| R.C. East    | - President                                     |
| R.J. White   | - Chairman                                      |
| P. A. Cox    | - Secretary                                     |
| S. T. Haycox | - Treasurer                                     |
| P. Davies    | - Ceremonial Officer and Deputy Standard Bearer |
| I. Clarke    | - Deputy Standard Bearer and Club Secretary     |

**COMMITTEE:** G Street, J Belton

**MEMBERS:** J Fisher Club Chairman.

**1. EXHORTATION AND KOHIMA EPITAPH**

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present; he asked those present to bear in mind the family of member Martin Sheridan who passed away on Sunday.

This was followed by the exhortation and silent tribute; he ended with the Kohima Epitaph.

**2. APOLOGIES:** Mrs W. J. Clarke, Mrs S. E. Pateman, J Fleming, C. S. East, B. Mulford.

**3. MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 2014 MEETING:**

The Chairman asked if all present had seen the Minutes. All had, so the minutes were not read out. There was the following correction:

Item 10.1: “..The Poppy Appeal Officer thanked the Treasurer and Secretary...” changed to “Poppy Appeal **Organiser..**”

The Chairman asked if they could be accepted as a true record. On acceptance they were duly signed by the Chairman.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman said that all matters arising would come up under the individual reports

## **5. REMEBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE DAY 2014**

### **5.1 Thank You Letters**

The letters written by the Ceremonial Officer as detailed at the last meeting were signed and sent. The Secretary has written and sent the letters as detailed at the last meeting. All were checked and approved by the Chairman. The Gardeners Club letter was noted at their meeting.

### **5.2 Timetable**

The Secretary has composed and distributed the third and final version of the timetable.

## **6. COUNTY CONFERENCE 2015 REPORT:**

The Ceremonial Officer reported on the Conference which was held at Arborfield RBL Club on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2015:

The Ceremonial Officer was the Branch delegate instead of the Vice Chairman who had been appointed to be delegate at the October meeting. In the weeks before the Conference, Andy Gale, the County Ceremonial Officer, approached the Ceremonial Officer to be Parade Marshal at conference as he would be busy with other duties.

The Ceremonial Officer accepted and contacted the Vice Chairman to discuss a lift share. She replied that a family member was unwell and asked if he could be Branch delegate instead, which he was happy to do. The Chairman gave his approval and arrangements were made with the County Membership Support Officer.

The Ceremonial Officer carried out the Parade Marshal duties at the start and close of the Conference and was Branch delegate for the business section of the Conference. He summarised the significant points:

**County President's address:** The Legion now has a challenge because Members of the Armed Forces are not on the public's mind following the pull out from Afghanistan and Iraq. It is a challenge to maintain interest in what the Legion does.

However there are now more Armed Forces personnel in the United Kingdom than for many years so there are more opportunities for the Legion to connect with local barracks and stations.

**Head Office Speech:** Anthony Barnes, Assistant Director Operations Midlands gave the standard speech for County Conferences, covering similar subjects. He also stated that 2014 had been a busy year due to the Centenary of the start of World War 1 and the Poppy Artwork in the Tower of London. It will only get busier this year with other anniversaries coming up. He explained the change in the Legion's tag line from "Shoulder to Shoulder with All Who Serve" to "Live On" which is more up to date and relevant to what the Legion does.

**County Chairman's report:** The County Secretary's job title has changed to Membership Support Officer. Also Community Fundraiser Annie Duffin is off work due to illness and her new assistant Samantha Hicton is covering for her.

The County Poppy Appeal is ahead of where it was this time last year.

In the latest National Public Opinion Index, the Royal British Legion / Poppy Appeal is second only to Cancer Research in first. Help for Heroes is ninth, having dropped five places. Despite being the Poppy Appeal's closest competitor and often regarded by RBL Members as more successful, it is not only placed lower but has lost places.

**County Youth Officer:** Angela Logue, the County Vice Chair, approached the Ceremonial Officer to volunteer to be County Youth Officer. He agreed and was duly accepted. He will encourage more affiliations between youth groups and Branches (like the affiliation between Harwell Branch and Didcot ATC squadron). He will encourage more youth groups such as Scout groups to take part in the Poppy Walk.

**Motions:** There was one motion proposing that the Youth Standard Bearer's competition is run alongside the National Standard Bearer's competition. Currently they are run separately, with the top two Youth Standard Bearers going forward to the National competition. This would bring cost savings and would give the Youth competition a bit more precedence and publicity. It was a good argument but the motion was not considered as it is an administrative matter. The County Parade Marshal Tony McClements, who is on the National Ceremonial committee, said that this is being discussed.

**Elections:** David Drew is standing down as County Chairman, and Angela Logue, current County Vice Chairman was elected to take his place. Andy Gale was elected County Vice Chairman.

**Ceremonial Report:** Andy Gale is standing down as County Ceremonial Officer following his election as County Vice Chairman. Andy Gale reported the various events the County Standard attended which included that the County Standard and 7 Branch Standards paraded at the D Day Service. Andy Gale offered thanks to the Ceremonial Officer and his team for organising this event.

Other reports were also presented. The Ceremonial Officer passed the Delegates Pack with copies of the reports to the Secretary.

The Chairman thanked the Ceremonial Officer for his report.

## **7. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS**

There were 6 applications this month; none of the applicants were present:

J. Chandler    S. Pickthall    R. Browning    J McPhail    G. Trinder    C. Jones

All of whose Club application form will be passed to Club Committee.

These applicants, whose applications will be put through on the Membership Secretary's return, join today and will be paid up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

**Agreed by Committee**

## **8. SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

### **8.1 Storage of Branch Meeting Minutes and Document Retention.**

No more progress on disposal or moving more to the archive boxes.

### **8.2 Archive Boxes in Club Cupboard**

Disposal of the old National and county documents such as National annual reports

and County Conference minutes in the boxes is in hand, as is filing the minutes loose in the boxes and listing the contents of the third box.

The Secretary has still not had a reply from County / National HQ about lending the minutes etc. out to Harwell History Group or moving the minutes to Oxfordshire County HQ for long term storage. He will chase this up.

### **8.3 Pictures in Loft / Club Cupboard / Club Room.**

Nothing to report. The Club Secretary said that all items had been listed.

### **8.4 Branch Web Page**

The Gmail address and AOL address receive more or less the same emails so far. Gmail is a little better at identifying spam emails. The Secretary suggested he continue to monitor and log differences for another month.

The Secretary has yet to get a name to use as acknowledgement from the Chilton Community Facebook page on their D Day photo.

The Secretary suggested that the message “Annual Membership is now due” on Membership page should be removed as the cash cards have been sent back to HQ.

The PAO’s Poppy Appeal update has been added with the 2013-14 table and January Poppy News.

### **8.5 Distribution of Branch Minutes and County Circular.**

The Secretary thanked those who checked sections of the minutes before distribution. He distributed the December 2014 County Circular, November 2014 Minutes and January 2015 Poppy news to Committee Members and put copies in the Club folder. David Marsh has put the minutes on the web site. There was no County Circular this month; the next one will be issued in February.

Approximate Cost: £ 10.60

Other printing cost: about £ 8.55. (Includes Remembrance Sunday Timetables)

The Secretary has obtained a black cartridge from Staples for £17 (£1 price increase) using the £9 loyalty voucher as mentioned in November. He will be submitting an expenses form. The Branch now has a spare of each cartridge (tri-colour and black) and the cartridges in the printer are half full, about £60 of ink which should last about 3 months.

### **8.6 Hewlett Packard “Instant Ink” deal**

The Club Secretary told the Secretary that Hewlett Packard have an offer where you buy a printer then pay a set amount per month for the ink depending on how much you print.

The printer is internet connected and orders the ink automatically. The Branch prints from 90 up to 250 sheets per month – more in November and less in August, average is about 170 sheets, at a rough cost of 7.5p per sheet (black ink only). The deal to cover this is £7.99 for 300 sheets per month, about 2.5p per sheet. An alternative is £3.49 for 100 sheets per month. Both have extra payments for printing above this. The cheapest printer on this deal is £59. The Secretary could investigate to see if the Branch can save some money. Discussion ensued:

- The Club Secretary said that payment can only be by Direct Debit or credit card. Hewlett Packard knows how much you are printing.
- The Treasurer asked if we could share a printer and ink deal with the Club. The Club Secretary replied that there is no Club printer; the Club Committee use another source for bulk printing. He uses his home printer for a small amount of ad hoc printing.

### **8.7 New Legion Membership Handbook and Royal Charter**

The Secretary continues to refer to these documents as necessary. He has not yet come across any major changes the Branch needs to make in the latest versions.

### **8.8 War Memorial**

The Secretary said that he had no news.

The President read out the article from the Winter 2014 issue of DECHO, the Journal of the Burma Star Association. It states that the War Memorial Trust has received one off additional funding of £3 million to conserve war memorials in connection with the Centenary of the start of WW1. It is a unique opportunity to look at the War Memorial heritage and ensure they are in the best possible condition. The Scottish government has already awarded £1 million and CADW in Wales £800,000.

The War Memorials Trust administers the funds. Anyone interested in a grant or conservation can submit a pre application form to identify if it is eligible for funding. If so, the relevant application forms and advice will be sent out. Depending on the particular grant scheme up to £30,000 or 70% of costs can be granted. Potentially larger grants can be made depending on available funds. Examples are a grant to Swinton of £2,500 and a grant to Dedham in Norfolk of £1,100. It could be worth the Parish Council investigating this further. The website is [www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk](http://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk).

Discussion ensued:

- Ian Clarke said that this information should be passed to the Parish Council.
- John Belton said that some War Memorials are private such as one his grandson had just worked on, but Harwell War Memorial is owned by the village. This scheme seems very good.

### **8.9 2014 AGM Elections**

The Secretary has put up the new committee list in the Club and submitted an update to the Committee and meetings page to David Marsh.

He completed the MS1 committee form, obtaining the remainder of the required signatures. The County Membership Support Officer advised that the President did need to sign but not the Vice President. He visited John Fleming who signed the MS1 form and Nominations List as a committee member and will renew membership. The Secretary has sent the MS1 and MS1 Addenda forms to County.

The Secretary has written a letter of thanks to David Marsh for his work on the Branch Web site.

The AGM Minutes are in hand. The Secretary thanked the Treasurer for the recording of the meeting which will be very useful.

Booking of this year's meetings is in hand.

### **8.10 County Conference**

The Secretary assisted with obtaining the required agreements from the Chairman and County to change delegate (See item 6).

The Secretary sent the lunch form and payment to County. The Ceremonial Officer paid for his own lunch following the change in delegate.

## **9. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The Secretary read out the following report on behalf of the Membership Secretary:

**CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 256**

### **9.1 Returned Membership Cards**

The Membership Secretary had to return 36 cards for people who did not renew and that includes the 4 members who unfortunately passed away. A note of those that did not renew excluding the deceased members will be put up on the board in the next few days. Thanks to the Club Secretary. The Club Secretary said that Martin Sheridan would be removed from the list following his passing.

### **9.2 New Membership Forms**

If the new members' forms, the Membership Secretary knows there are a few, can be put through her door she will deal with them when she gets home. Thanks to the Treasurer and Secretary.

## **10. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015:

### **HARWELL BRANCH**

|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Current Account:</b> | <b>£ 3155.22</b>        |
| <b>B.F.I. Account</b>   | <b><u>£ 1170.12</u></b> |
| <b><u>Total:</u></b>    | <b><u>£ 4325.34</u></b> |

### **10.1 Income**

The Branch has received £5.83 interest on the BFI.

### **10.2 Outgoings**

The Chairman said that the current account balance is high. The Treasurer replied that memberships have come in and there will be a big payment in March to HQ for the National membership subscription fees.

The Treasurer will be writing a cheque tonight to the Club for £355 for Club membership fees paid in over the last 2-3 months.

### **10.3 Membership Fee Double Payment**

There has been an error made by Lloyds bank during the transfer of the Branch membership fees paid by direct debit subscription payers to the Branch's Current account. This year the payment of £154 was made twice. The Treasurer was able to rectify this.

## **11. CORRESPONDENCE:**

### **11.1 County Circular December 2014**

### **11.2 Door to Door Fundraising in the Vale in January 2015.**

Fundraisers will be asking for direct debit monthly payments or Poppy Lottery entries.

### **11.3 Bravo 22 Company Buckingham Open Day and Performances**

Open day for ex service personnel 17 January at the Waterside Theatre, Aylesbury.  
Performances 26-28th March.

### **11.4 Membership Training Calendar 2015 and Application Form**

### **11.5 Season's Greetings Message from National President, Chairman and Vice Chairman**

### **11.6 Bank Processing Error. – See item 10.3**

### **11.7 Limited Car Parking for County Conference**

### **11.8 County Office Closed to 2<sup>nd</sup> February and Change of Membership Form**

### **11.9 County Handbook Entry for Correction – All correct.**

### **11.10 January 2015 Poppy News Via PAO**

### **11.11 Request for Information on WW2 War Graves**

Request from David Marsh to the Treasurer. For information on WW2 graves for Harwell Village History web site.

### **11.12 Kartforce Updates – Motor racing for limbless Veterans**

### **11.13 Legassee Updates Veterans interview website**

### **11.14 Woodland Trust Acquired sites for WW1 memorial woodland.**

### **11.15 Emails on Branch Web Site Scams, special events and business courses - 64 items.**

## **12. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT WITH COUNTING QUERY:**

No report. The Club Secretary said that this was a fairly quiet period for fundraising. The Poppy Appeal Organiser would make a report at the next meeting.

## **13. STANDARD BEARER REPORT**

The Ceremonial Officer reported that the Standard had not been paraded since the last meeting. He had represented the Branch at the County Conference as Parade Marshal (See item 6). The Chairman congratulated the Ceremonial Officer on this.

## **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

### **14.1 Bench at the RAF Harwell Memorial Stone.**

John Belton asked about the ownership of the area around the memorial and installation of the bench. The bench would need to be bolted down to a concrete base due to the vulnerable situation of the stone and to minimise damage to clothes.

Discussion ensued:

- The Ceremonial Officer said that the site management contact Duncan Rogers had suggested to the Branch that he arrange for the slabs surrounding the stone to be replaced with a bitumen based path. He also asked what else he could do. It was suggested that a bench could be placed next to the stone, which Mr Rogers agreed to do.

- The Chairman said that the site management organisation were to pay for the work
- The Club Secretary said that the Ceremonial Officer had agreed this with Duncan Rogers and will take it forward.
- The Chairman said that the Ceremonial Officer could make Mr. Rogers aware of Mr. Belton's points.

**Secretary's note:** Goodman has recently ceased management of the Harwell site and a joint venture of government organisations has taken over. It has been renamed Harwell Campus.

#### **14.2 Battle of Waterloo 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service**

John Belton said that this will be in June in London for relatives of those who took part. It was the first battle for which everyone who fought got a medal. The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire regiments fought in this battle so there could be relatives locally. People can check on the internet if they are relatives.

The President said that this was not on the Berkshire Regiment's battle honours.

#### **14.3 Ghurkhas Anniversary**

John Belton said that 2015 also marked 200 years since the Ghurkhas joined the British Army.

#### **15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:48 hours.