

The Royal British  
Legion  
Harwell Branch  
BR1805

**Monthly Branch Meeting**  
**Held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015**  
**In the Branch Headquarters at Westfield**  
**At 20.00 Hours.**

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**ATTENDANCE:**

R.C. East	- President
R.J. White	- Chairman
Mrs W. J. Clarke	- Vice Chairman, Welfare Representative and Poppy Appeal Organiser
P. A. Cox	- Secretary
Mrs S. E. Pateman	- Membership Secretary
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:

**Dick Bint**, whose family gave the land for the Kings Lane Club in 1948 and helped with the planning and other aspects.

**Peter McConville**, who served on Club and Branch Committees.

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

**2. APOLOGIES:** B. Mulford, S. T. Haycox, C. S. East, J Fleming

**3. MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2015 MEETING:**

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

8.5 "He distributed the December 2104 County Circular" changed to "2014".

8.6 "The Branch prints from 90 up to 250 sheets – more in November..." changed to "The Branch prints from 90 up to 250 sheets **per month** – more in November...."

15. "Date of Next meeting **AGM** 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015": "AGM" removed.

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 will come up under the various reports.

#### **5. D DAY AND CHILTON FESTIVAL 2015**

##### **5.1 Permission to Organise D Day Service**

The Ceremonial Officer said that he was approaching the Branch seeking permission to organise the D Day Service at the RAF Harwell Memorial Stone on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2015. He has done this successfully for the past two years with the support of the Secretary.

**Agreed Unanimously**

##### **5.2 Chilton Festival**

The Ceremonial Officer said that this will be going ahead but will be a much smaller event than last year due to financial restraints – last year's event was supported by grants and covenants that are not available this year. It will be held in the Chilton Village Hall which is behind the Church and next to the recreation ground. It will be a celebration of the refurbishment of the hall. The day will start there and the attendees then walk or possibly march to the stone.

Bob Girling is heading up the organising committee but is less involved than last year, and there is more input from the Chilton village community. If anyone knows of anyone who can help, let him know.

##### **5.3 Contact with Parading Groups**

The Ceremonial Officer said that as mentioned at the September meeting, 38 Group RAF has been reformed. He will contact their Commanding Officer to see if they can send a representation.

The Club Secretary said that he can mention the event at the Oxfordshire Rider's Branch meeting this week if the Branch wants them to come, the date is already provisionally in their calendar. The Ceremonial Officer and others agreed.

#### **6. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS**

There were 3 applications this month. None of the applicants were present:

- J. Vaughan – a lapsed member rejoining.
- J. Pratt - form not signed.
- J. Groves.

All of whose Club application form will be passed to Club Committee. These applicants join today and will be paid up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

**Agreed by Committee**

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

##### **7.1 Storage of Branch Documents**

The Secretary has moved the signed minutes from 2009 to 2011 from personal

storage to the archive boxes. He could also archive the 2012-2015 signed minutes then file each month's minutes once signed. The initial minutes for the past 12 months are in the Club folder.

**Agreed by the Committee**

The Secretary has not made any more progress on disposal, he will continue to dispose of County and National Correspondence over 12 months old and look for other documents to go e.g. a couple of 2013 County handbooks.

**Agreed by the Committee**

## **7.2 Archive Boxes in club**

The Secretary has sorted and filed the minutes loose in the archive boxes into card wallets. This covers from 2002 to 2011. There is a lever arch file covering 1992-7. 1997-2002 is missing. He has also rearranged the contents between the archive boxes. He thanked the Club Secretary for unlocking the cupboard and locking up.

Disposal of the old National and County documents such as National annual report 2003, and County Conference minutes in the boxes is in hand.

The Secretary asked if he could dispose of the following items also in the archive boxes: a blank Model Byelaws document, Royal Charters from 2003 and 2005, Annual Conference Packs 1992, 1993 and 2006, County Handbooks 2002 and 2012, and 2 pads of Membership Amendment advice forms.

**Agreed by the Committee**

The Secretary suggested he would have another sort out of the archive boxes and produce a new contents list.

## **7.3 Lending Minutes to Harwell History Group and Moving to Oxfordshire Records Office.**

The initial enquiry was by telephone to the County Membership Support Officer. She requested an email enquiry which the Secretary has sent. Reply is awaited.

## **7.4 Branch Web Page**

### **Email Address Comparison**

The Gmail address and AOL address continue to receive more or less the same emails so far. Gmail is a little better at picking up the spam. The email from Steven Freeman School was accepted by Gmail but rejected by AOL. He suggested he continue to monitor and log differences for another month or two.

**No Objections.**

### **D Day picture Acknowledgement**

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

### **Annual Membership Message**

David Marsh has removed "Annual Membership is now due" from the Membership page. He suggested some wording that describes the current renewal process and a message to encourage direct debit payment. The Secretary suggested that as HQ has stated that there will be changes to membership renewal this year, this is left in abeyance.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

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

The Secretary thanked those who checked sections of the minutes before distribution. He distributed the February 2015 County Circular and January 2015 Minutes to Committee Members and put copies in the Club folder. David Marsh has put the minutes on the web site. The Secretary did not print the posters for Bravo 22 Company or Glenn Miller Story performances as they were a whole page of colour and would have used a lot of ink.

Approximate Cost: £ 8.26 for 109 sheets

Other printing cost: about £ 2.40 for 32 sheets

The Branch is down to 1 black cartridge recently installed in the printer. A pack of 500 sheets of paper has been donated. A £6 loyalty voucher has been received from Staples.

### **7.6 HP Printing**

In hand.

### **7.7 Recruitment of New Members - Extract from Royal Charter**

The Secretary noticed at the last Branch meeting that the extracts from the Royal Charter signed by the new members were not presented with their applications. He investigated if this was still needed:

This procedure is not in the New Legion Handbook. Induction Ceremonies and new members required to attend Branch meetings are also not included.

The County Membership Support Officer states that Branches have various formats of induction for new members, ranging from a formal Induction Ceremony to a few words when the membership application form is handed in. This may change as new members will soon be able to join Branches on line.

The Secretary suggested that the Branch formally agrees to suspend this practice as members that join on line will see information on the web site and hopefully get information emailed. Possibly we can get some leaflets to be handed out to new cash paying members.

**Agreed by the Committee**

### **7.8 War Memorial**

The Secretary has sent the information from DECHO magazine as quoted by the President to the Parish Clerk. She replied asking if there are any repairs to be done. The Secretary will reply mentioning their previous correspondence.

### **7.9 2014 AGM Follow Up**

The AGM Minutes are in hand. The Secretary has added the following meetings to the Club Calendar as agreed at the AGM:

**Monthly RBL Branch Meetings:** 8pm - 10pm Tuesdays:

24 February, 31 March, 28 April, 26 May, 30 June, 28 July, 25 August, 29 September, 24 November

**AGM:** 8pm-9pm Tuesday 27 October

**Meeting after AGM:** 9pm-10pm Tuesday 27 October

### **7.10 Stephen Freeman School Fete 9<sup>th</sup> May 2015.**

The Branch has received an enquiry from the School PTA about this event which will have a VE day theme; they would like Harwell Branch to attend as their local Branch.

The Secretary replied stating that he would mention this matter at this meeting and asking if they had contacted Didcot Branch. They replied that they had not, they searched on line and Harwell was the only Branch that came up.

There is a list of web sites on the National Web but neither Harwell nor Didcot Branches are on the list of web sites. We could get Harwell Branch Web site added.

**Agreed by the Committee**

The PTA also requested contact details for Didcot Branch and are happy for both Branches to attend. Discussion ensued:

- The Ceremonial Officer said that this event is the day before the Poppy Walk.
- The Vice Chairman said that we may be able to do something. Also if we had a contact, she could put them in touch with County Poppy Appeal who could supply them with a lot of materials.
- The Club Chairman said that it would be good for Harwell Branch to participate. When he was head of Hagbourne School and Rush Common School, the President had visited with the Branch Standard. It made a big impact and it sowed a few seeds. For the children to see someone alive then would be a big thing. One of the Standard Bearers bringing the Standard would make a big impression on the children. Steven Freeman School could become part of Harwell Parish. For us as the Branch and the Club it would be good to do something. If the Club remains open a lot of support could come from that area.
- The Chairman said that the Branch needs to be careful not to do something in Didcot Branch's area without consulting them.
- John Belton said that Didcot Branch continues to meet at Vauxhall Barracks.
- The Vice Chairman suggested that the Secretary first contacts Didcot Branch to see if they want to attend. If not or they don't reply we can step in.
- Deputy Standard Bearer Ian Clarke said that the Rider's Branch may be interested as most are ex-service. He can mention this at their next meeting but Didcot Branch should be approached first.
- The Vice Chairman asked if the Secretary could have the phone number for Didcot Branch so that she could explain as necessary.

### **7.11 Names at War Memorial Service**

The Branch has received an enquiry from Jane Woolley, Secretary of Harwell Church Parochial Church Council. They have discussed the War memorial service and are considering reading out the first name and surname of the fallen instead of the initials and surname as currently occurs. They wondered if the Branch would support this

**Agreed by the Committee**

The PCC also asked if the Branch had the first names. Discussion ensued:

- The Chairman said that the Parish Council should have the names.
- The Vice Chairman said that the Army may have records.
- John Belton said that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission may have the names. He got the names for the Didcot memorial from them.
- The President said that he has a list of names and where they are buried.

### **7.12 Membership Council Elections**

The Branch has received the CVs of the two candidates and a Ballot paper. It is due back before 26 March 2015.

The Chairman read the details of the candidates. The meeting discussed the merits of candidates and decided to vote for Helen Picken.

#### **PROPOSAL: The Branch votes for Helen Picken**

**Proposed: Ceremonial Officer      Seconded: Vice Chairman      CARRIED**

### **7.13 Voice Recorder.**

The Secretary said that as he had family commitments for tonight (since postponed) he had asked the Membership Secretary to take notes and asked the Treasurer to borrow a voice recorder to record the meeting (as at the AGM). The Treasurer suggested that as this was becoming more frequent, the Branch could have its own recorder. He obtained a Sony voice recorder from Amazon for £35.31 so that it could be used at this meeting. If the Branch does not want to pay for this, the Secretary or Treasurer or both will pay.

Following discussion the Chairman suggested that the Branch pays for the recorder as it is to be used to help the Branch.

#### **PROPOSAL: The Branch reimburses the Treasurer for the cost of the Voice Recorder.**

**Proposed: Vice Chairman      Seconded: Club Chairman      CARRIED**

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

**CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP:      stands at 262**

### **8.1 Returned Membership Cards**

The Membership Secretary said that she has received an acknowledgement for the returned cards so the Branch will get a credit for those members that did not rejoin.

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

The Chairman read the following report on behalf of the Treasurer:

Accounts stood as follows as of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015

### **HARWELL BRANCH**

<b>Current Account:</b>	<b>£ 3510.25</b>
<b>B.F.I. Account</b>	<b><u>£ 1170.12</u></b>
<b><u>Total:</u></b>	<b><u>£ 4680.37</u></b>

### **9.1 Receipts and Payments**

All membership monies are now paid in and payments to the Club are up to date. There are no outstanding cheques to cash.

The Chairman and Ceremonial Officer said that there is good amount in the coffers, though a significant amount would be paid to HQ for memberships.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **10.1 County Circular February 2015**

**10.2 Membership Council Elections** - See item 7.12.

### **10.3 Privy Council Response to National Conference 2014 Charter Motion 2**

About the Legion's custodianship of National remembrance.

### **10.4 Insult to Injury Campaign**

As covered in Legion Magazine - Information sheet, a petition letter for Branches and a petition letter for individuals. The Secretary suggested that the Branch supports this campaign.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

**10.5 Steven Freeman School Fete Enquiry** – see item 7.10.

**10.6 Harwell Parochial Church Council Enquiry** – see item 7.11.

**10.7 Bravo 22 Company Play “Contact”** – Aylesbury, 26-28th March.

**10.8 Kartforce February Updates** – Motor racing for limbless Veterans

**10.9 Legassee February Update** – New veteran's interview added.

**10.10 Emails on Branch Web Site** – 63 items including travel and business offers.

## **11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT WITH COUNTING AND ACCOUNTING QUERY**

### **11.1 Remembrancetide Collection Counting and Accounting Query**

The Poppy Appeal Organiser said that last year, when she had dropped in the card with the amount collected in each tin a collector had queried the amount as she felt that there should be more - she was sure she had seen some notes put in the tin and the total was less than this.

The PAO has investigated the records of the count and could not find where the money had been swapped over. She spoke to the collector concerned and explained that nothing untoward had happened. The PAO, Secretary and Treasurer had all attended the count. The collector said that she was content with this. The PAO will look at how the counting is carried out for next year and put other controls in place – e.g. to double check the tins, and empty them straight into the machine.

The Club Secretary said that they had later got all the tins out of storage and checked for notes. They had also thoroughly checked the room where the count took place. The PAO said that she spoke to the collector again and said that we could only apologise. She apologised to the meeting for the report on this being delayed, the Secretary had been kept informed.

### **11.2 D Day Wreath Donation**

A donation remains outstanding. The Poppy Appeal Organiser has not chased this yet. She suggested that she write to the organisation on Branch headed notepaper to ask that if a donation had already been paid to give details. She could also ask this year for donations to be made up front.

**There were no objections.**

The Secretary said that he would send her the Branch letterhead.

### **11.3 Additional Amount in Branch Poppy Appeal Account**

The PAO has not heard from Aylesford (Poppy Appeal HQ) about the extra money paid in to the Harwell account – it now stands at over £7,000. She has been busy with family business recently and will wait for the next statement to see if the balance has gone back down to the £3,000 it should be. She has reported it to Aylesford; they have not replied yet. All of the paying in was done on paying in slips. Aylesford said that she was wrong about the balance. It is possible another branch is £4,000 down.

### **11.4 Poppy Walk**

The Poppy Appeal Organiser and Club Secretary will be away for the Poppy Walk. She asked if anyone else will be walking or if details could be put around the Club. The Club Chairman agreed to this. The Club Secretary said that a couple of other members do the walk.

### **11.5 World War 1 1914-1918 Centenary Enamel Pins.**

The Poppy Appeal Organiser has a number of these available.

**The Harwell Poppy Appeal Account stands at: £3416.77**

## **12. STANDARD BEARER REPORT**

### **12.1 Recent Parades**

The Ceremonial Officer reported that the Standard had not been paraded.

### **12.2 Funeral of Peter McConville**

A request has been received from Mr. McConville's family for the Standard to be paraded at his funeral. The Standard Bearer will parade the Standard, arrangements are in hand.

The Membership Secretary said that Mr. McConville had wanted to renew his membership but was too ill.

## **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **13.1 Ceremonial Officer Elected to County Committee**

The President and the Chairman congratulated the Ceremonial Officer on his appointment to the County Committee.

The Ceremonial Officer confirmed that he had been nominated and elected to the Committee as County Youth Officer. During the next month he and David Drew would be starting the Poppy Walk arrangements, he will contact the Scouts, cadets and other youth groups about taking part.

### **13.2 Dunkirk Veterans Event.**

John Belton said that there had been television coverage recently that Dunkirk Veterans were being sought as there will be a big event in May at the docks with the boats that are left. They will take them across the Channel to another event in France.

**14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015**

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:53 hours.