

The Royal British
Legion
Harwell Branch
BR1805

Monthly Branch Meeting
Held on 24th November 2015
In the Branch Headquarters at Westfield
At 20.00 Hours.

ATTENDANCE:

R.C. East	- President
R.J. White	- Chairman
P. Davies	- Vice Chairman, Ceremonial Officer and Deputy Standard Bearer
Mrs W. J. Clarke	- Poppy Appeal Organiser
P. A. Cox	- Secretary and Welfare Representative
Mrs S. E. Pateman	- Membership Secretary
S. T. Haycox	- Treasurer
I. Clarke	- Deputy Standard Bearer and Club Secretary

COMMITTEE: G Street, J Belton

MEMBERS: J Fisher Club Management Committee Chairman.

1. EXHORTATION AND KOHIMA EPITAPH

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present. This was followed by the exhortation and silent tribute; he ended with the Kohima Epitaph.

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

3. MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 2015 MEETING:

All present had seen the minutes before the meeting. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

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

5. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE DAY SERVICES

5.1 Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service Report

The Ceremonial Officer reported:

He sent a final instructions document to all participants and parading groups during the week before and provided updates on Facebook. There were no questions and all arrangements proceeded well.

Rev. Jean Barton was in touch with the Ceremonial Officer and Secretary to ensure she was familiar with all arrangements. The Rector asked her to cover for him as his wife was due to give birth. In the event, the Rector's wife gave birth to a daughter on the previous afternoon so the Rector led the War Memorial Service and met people at the Church and Rev. Barton led the Church Service.

The Ceremonial Officer read out the following report written by the Secretary:

The 2015 Parade and Service at the War Memorial were organised by the Royal British Legion Harwell Branch and St Matthew's Church Harwell on behalf of Harwell Parish Council. Parish Councillors closed the roads and marshalled the traffic. It was followed by a Service at St Matthew's Church.

The Parade marched from Townsend to the War Memorial in the High Street. The Parade included Harwell Parish Council, Royal British Legion Harwell Branch, Harwell Village RBL Club, 2410 (Didcot) Squadron Air Training Corps, 1st Harwell (St Matthew's) Scouts and Girl Guiding Harwell, about 200 people in total and 12 Standards. Two ATC cadets formed a Guard of Honour at the War Memorial, joined for the first time this year by a Harwell Scout and Guide. Their arrival was accompanied by Bag Piper John McFarlane-Horgan who played a selection of pieces through the service. It was good to see all of the youth groups in attendance; all gave an excellent account of their organisations. All of the Standard Bearers performed their duties well especially the younger ones.

The Service at the War Memorial was attended by about 400 villagers. It was conducted by the Rector of St Matthew's Church Harwell Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mobey. Mrs. Kate Evans led the singing.

The Last Post was sounded by Dr. Tony Hughes and the Two Minutes Silence observed. Wreaths were laid by Harwell Parish Council, Royal British Legion Harwell Branch, Harwell Village RBL Club, 2410 (Didcot) Squadron Air Training Corps, 1st Harwell (St Matthew's) Scouts and Girl Guiding Harwell.

The Parade marched to St Matthew's Church. Standard Bearers from the parade formed a Guard of Honour at the entrance to the Church. The Church Service was run by Rev. Jean Barton and Mrs. Kate Evans and was attended by 163 people, with primary school-aged children attending a special session at the Church Hall.

Legion Members attended the Ceremony at the War Graves in Harwell Cemetery after the Service and laid a wreath in honour of the fallen at the Memorial there.

Comments included:

- The Chairman asked if the parade's departure at 10:40 was late. The Ceremonial Officer said that he would check.
- The President passed on his wife's thanks, she enjoyed it.
- The Secretary said that a local fire crew were in attendance; they stopped by Gaveston Road. The Poppy Appeal Organiser distributed some service sheets to them.

5.2 Armistice Day Report

The Ceremonial Officer read the following report written by the Secretary:

About 40 people gathered for the Ceremony at the War Memorial on the following Tuesday including pupils from Harwell Primary School and a representative from Little Pippins Pre School. The Branch President led the Ceremony, the Last Post was sounded by Dr Tony

Hughes and the Two Minutes Silence observed. The Branch Standard was dipped in honour of the fallen. A wreath was laid by the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes Harwell.

Thanks are due to all who attended or participated in the Commemorations, also to Harwell Gardeners Club for maintaining the gardens around the War Memorial and Harwell Parish Council and Harwell Gardeners Club for maintaining the surrounding area.

Comments included:

- The President said that Parish Council Chairman David Marsh and another Councillor stopped the traffic.
- The Ceremonial Officer said that Councillor Kate Beswick provided photographs of the Armistice Day Ceremony and the Treasurer and the Didcot ATC provided photographs of the Remembrance Sunday parades. They are on facebook and links will be distributed to the participants and parading groups.
- The President said that he visited Harwell School on Monday 16th to explain about Poppies to the children. It was the same group that were at the War Memorial on Armistice Day. They think a lot about it and asked a lot of questions. It was an enjoyable morning.
- The Chairman said that it was nice to see the children at the Armistice Day Ceremony.
- The Club Secretary said that the Riders Branch visited Chilton School on Armistice Day. They took one of their motorbikes into the school hall and gave a very good explanation of what it was all about. The year 6 class had learned and recited the poem "In Flanders Fields". The Riders Branch members laid a wreath and the children laid poppies. They all enjoyed the event.

The Chairman congratulated all on their efforts.

The Secretary reported on other arrangements:

5.3 Road Closures

The Secretary put up copies of the road closure orders at the limits of each closure and took them down afterwards.

Thames Travel put notices on the village bus stops that their services would not be stopping during the Remembrance Service.

The Secretary monitored all of the timings for both events and all of the specified times were complied with and the roads reopened well before the closure orders finished.

5.4 Service Sheets

The Secretary agreed the number required (600) with the Church Administrator. Once printed he collected 200 for the parade, split them into sets for each group and distributed them on the day. He gave an extra 20 to the Scouts as there seemed more attending. They gave some to the War Memorial congregation.

He and 3 people from the Church distributed service sheets at the War Memorial. He also distributed Poppies and collected for the Poppy Appeal.

5.5 Requests to Participants

- Participants were made aware of car parking available at the Village Hall and Recreation Ground, however on the day this was limited due to a craft fayre and football tournament respectively – it should be noted however that no comments were made indicating any trouble in parking.

- The church farm car park was made available via the Rector
- Parish Council Traffic Marshals covered both Remembrance Sunday and Armistice.
- The Ceremonial Officer said that he had put updates and requests on Facebook.

The Secretary wrote to invite Little Pippins to the Armistice Day Ceremony, they replied that their lead practitioner would attend on their behalf and the children would have a talk and quiet time at the nursery.

The Secretary enquired with Harwell School after Armistice Day and they confirmed that all of Year 5 came down with their class teacher, Mrs. Katy Martin and Jane Morton to represent the school. The rest of the school held a 2 minute silence at 11 am and changed the timings of their morning break to ensure that the whole school were on the playground at that time

5.6 Publicity

The Secretary composed a poster and put it up in the Club, Harwell News and Headfirst and sent it to the Feast Committee who put it on their screen in Bobs Butchers.

He composed and submitted the reports included above to the Harwell News, having checked it with the Ceremonial Officer, Chairman, Rector, Harwell School and Little Pippins.

5.7 Thank You Letters

The Ceremonial Officer has written to the Scouts, Guides, Club, ATC Didcot and the bag piper. The Chairman said that he has read and approved these letters.

The Secretary is writing to the Little Pippins, Harwell Primary School, for Armistice, Bugler, Church, Parish Council and Gardening Club.

5.8 Timetable

A third and final version will be distributed once all actions are complete

The President said that the silence was well observed. All had been done excellently.

6. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

There were no applications this month.

7. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

7.1 Storage of Branch Documents

Disposal of items agreed and listed in May is in hand, i.e. blank floppy disks, County and National Conference minutes, old Royal Charters, agendas and Pathway to Growth updates.

7.2 Archive Boxes in club

Disposal of the old Branch Management Handbook and new contents list in hand.

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

Nothing to report

7.4 Branch Web Page

Updates in progress - see Remembrance Poppy Appeal Report and AGM items.

7.5 Distribution of Branch Minutes and County Circular.

The Secretary thanked those who checked sections of the minutes. He distributed the October 2015 Minutes, and November County Circular to Committee Members and put copies in the Club folder. David Marsh has put the minutes on the web site.

Approximate Cost £7.20

Other printing approximate cost: £4.95

7.6 HP Printing Instant Ink / Ink Cartridge Refill

The Secretary will get the second black XL cartridge refilled by Cartridge UK as a spare.

7.7 War Memorial Maintenance

The Secretary had nothing to report but John Belton said that his grandson is in contact with the Parish Council.

7.8 First Names of the Fallen Read at War Memorial Service

The Rector read these at the Service.

7.9 Awards

The Secretary has sent the payment to County.

7.10 2015 AGM FOLLOW UP

County Conference

The Secretary has sent in the delegate form, lunch form and lunch fee.

Committee Members Form MS1 and Addenda

The Membership Secretary has checked the MAP on line list and the Committee Member thought to have lapsed was in fact paid up for this year. All Committee Members have signed the MS1. The Secretary will complete the form and send it and the Addenda form to County. He had been informed of some changes to contact details and asked if there were any more. There were none.

The other outstanding items will be completed shortly including:

- Update to the Committee Members and Meetings web pages
- Updated list for Branch notice board
- Letter of thanks to David Marsh.
- AGM minutes

8. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 269. 157 have renewed.

8.1 Membership Renewals

The Membership Secretary said that she was pleased to say that the Treasurer and her lists agreed at 157 members renewed.

On the online list the "Status" column lists some of the members as "gone away" including her husband and another member - neither of whom has "gone away". She has contacted the County Membership Support Officer about this.

The Membership Secretary had checked with the Secretary that she should count all members with a renewal date in 2016 as renewed.

The Chairman said that it was all very confusing. All present agreed

The Ceremonial Officer, Secretary, Poppy Appeal Organiser and Treasurer all said that their new membership cards had arrived.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 28th October 2015:

HARWELL BRANCH

Current Account:	£ 393.34
B.F.I. Account	<u>£ 1187.58</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>£ 1580.92</u>

9.1 Notes on Current Account

The Treasurer has written cheques since the bank statements containing the above figures were issued, and the bank statements have not yet caught up. The current account now stands at £228. This is the lowest the Treasurer has seen and it is because the Branch membership fees have not been paid in yet. The County Membership Support Officer says that they should arrive by the end of November.

9.2 Donation for Remembrance Wreaths and Wooden Crosses

The Branch has donated £150 to the Poppy Appeal for the two wreaths laid on Remembrance Day at the War Memorial and War graves and the 70 wooden crosses placed by the President at each War Grave. This is the same amount as last year. The Treasurer asked for formal approval for this.

PROPOSAL: That the Branch donates £150 to the Poppy Appeal for 2 wreaths and 70 wooden crosses.

**PROPOSED: Ceremonial Officer SECONDED: Secretary CARRIED
UNANIMOUSLY**

9.3 Branch Current Account Trends

The Treasurer said that he had continued with analysis of the Branch's finances after the AGM and had produced a graph of the Branch's bank balance over the last 10 years – attached to these minutes. This will enable him to keep tabs on this ongoing. He answered questions including:

- The Chairman agreed that the balance is very low. The Treasurer said that there has been no income since May this year, the income being Branch membership fees.
- The Ceremonial Officer said that there was a peak in finances in 2005. The Treasurer said that this was before he took office and checked the Branch accounts book. It was possible that two payments of £1400 to the Branch were membership renewals which contributed to this. The Club Chairman suggested that it could be connected with the 50 Rugby Club members joining the Branch and Club en masse. They rolled into the membership renewal in subsequent years.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for his report.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

10.1 November County Circular (distributed)

Includes County Accounts and Minutes of 2015 conference.

10.2 BBC Berkshire Request for Information of Home Guard in the County

Received from County on 2nd November for reply early the following week.

10.3 Armed Forces Rugby Union Vs Bath United Remembrance Match 9th Nov 2015.

10.4 Salvation Army Remembrance Service Reading 8th November

Received last month.

10.5 Membership Council Elections

Received last month. Nomination for South East Midlands Area Electoral Region. Due back by 11th December.

10.6 Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum Oral History Project

Oral History Manager Mathew Smaldon is looking for members of any of the forces or children to record their WW2 memories. It has been in the Oxford Mail. He asked for advertising in our newsletter. This would be the Club newsletter or the Website. The Chairman agreed and the Secretary will look into it.

10.7 Team Brit / Karforce Update. Go Carting and Full Size Motor Racing for Injured Troops - Fundraising update

10.8 Request for Requirements for Pavilion from Harwell Parish Council

Part of Pavilion Future project, following recent requirements workshop.

10.9 Roy Bailey Big Band Concert Enquiry

A 19 piece band looking for concerts to perform at in February & April. Fee £200 to £600. Passed to the Club Committee.

It was stated that the Branch is not interested; it is a matter for the Club. The Club Chairman agreed.

10.10 Filton Brewery Products Offers Passed to the Club Committee.

10.11 Marketing Emails to Branch Web address. Usual offers etc. 71 items.

11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:

11.1 House to House and Business Collection

The Poppy Appeal Organiser thanked the Treasurer and Secretary for their help counting the money in the tins last Tuesday afternoon; she especially thanked the Treasurer for taking the afternoon off work. She also thanked the Standard Bearer and President for distributing the boxes and tins and collecting them in and the Abingdon Branch Poppy Appeal Organisers for the loan of their counting machine.

The associated paperwork is nearly complete. She distributed tables of donations and a copy is attached to these minutes.

The total collected in the tins is £4195.65

This includes donations and miscellaneous monies as listed. This is a 25% increase on last year's total of £3136.

The increase is in part due to increased donations from the local schools. The Legion has brought out "kids packs" which were given to Harwell and Chilton Schools. Harwell School raised £273.60 this year (£97 last year) and Chilton School which raised £296.74 (£68 last

year). These are both big increases in the money the Schools have raised and it is well worth giving them the new packs.

11.2 Total Raised to Date.

The Poppy Appeal Organiser thanked Peter Davies for arranging the ATC's donation for their wreath.

The Grand Total to Date stands at £4542.65.

11.3 Poppy Appeal Handover.

The Poppy Appeal Organiser will submit all of the outstanding paperwork tomorrow. The Legion will then remove her from the list of Poppy Appeal Organisers.

She has arranged for all of the Poppy Appeal stock she has from this and previous years to be returned to Aylesford. This includes wreaths, the collecting tins and all merchandise. The merchandise boxes used in November do not go back as Aylesford will not issue used boxes, so she will destroy them.

The Poppy Appeal Organiser brought some items to the meeting for the Branch to retain. This includes the two collecting buckets, paperwork files, Poppy table cloths and bunting. The Secretary has arranged storage in the Club cupboard for these items with Club Vice Chairman Yvonne Hinchliffe. When the remaining paperwork is finalised, the Poppy Appeal Organiser will pass it to the Secretary for storage.

Once a new Poppy Appeal Organiser has been found, she would be happy to talk through the requirements of the role.

The Chairman thanked the Poppy Appeal Organiser for all of her efforts over the years. This was agreed by all present.

The Club Chairman thanked the Poppy Appeal Organiser on behalf of the Club Management Committee for all of her work for the Club Committee as Poppy Appeal Organiser and Club Secretary, they are very grateful.

12. STANDARD BEARER REPORT

The Ceremonial Officer reported: The Standard had been paraded at the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Services and the Armistice Day Ceremony.

The Standard Bearer had also paraded the Standard at the Faringdon Festival of Remembrance on 7th November. His wife is a member of a choir that sang at the event and offered the Standard Bearer to attend. It was a very good event.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

13.1 Renovation of the RAF Harwell Memorial Stone Surround

The Ceremonial Officer has received a further update from Bob Girling with more photographs. The Treasurer has printed these and they were distributed to the meeting. The works have been completed, the old paving stones have been pulled up and fresh stones laid and the bench has been repositioned. The trees and branches have been cut back by 4 feet. He has not had a chance to visit but it looks to be a very neat and professional job in the photographs, much improved. Less foliage means the new slabs look neater.

He has not heard officially from Harwell Campus about completion, but the Branch should write a letter of thanks. The Treasurer has suggested a plaque be attached to the bench and the Secretary has suggested some suitable words indicating it is in recognition of the fallen with thanks to Angus Horner and Duncan Rogers for its restoration in 2015.

Writing a letter of thanks seems a good idea as hopefully Duncan Rogers will reply to this and we can then suggest a plaque.

Discussion ensued and the Ceremonial Officer answered questions:

- The Club Secretary said that the Harwell Campus would keep the area maintained going forward. The Ceremonial Officer said that they always have maintained the site but it was more difficult given the less satisfactory state the area had been in up to now. It is now is fantastic. It is maintained by the Harwell Campus gardeners in their own interest and he looks forward to the June parade and service.
- The Treasurer asked who the people were. The Ceremonial Officer said that Duncan Rogers is the contact for the Harwell Campus site facilities management team and Angus Horner is his manager.
- John Belton asked about a flypast for the Parade as RAF Benson performed a flypast at the Armistice Parade in Wallingford. The Ceremonial Officer said that due to the restrictions to air traffic locally due to Harwell Campus he has not pushed for a flypast for Remembrance Sunday but is happy to ask for one for the D Day service. He submitted a flypast application to the RAF in September; we usually hear back in April.

13.2 Vote Regarding Disaffiliation of Harwell RBL Club From the Legion

The Club Secretary said that further to the information presented at the last meeting, the disaffiliation vote schedule has been changed due to uncertainty over the current membership. A Special General Meeting will be held on 10th December to outline the schedule to the membership. The meeting will be advertised in the Didcot Herald.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 26th January 2015

There being no further business the Chairman wished all present a Happy and Holy Christmas and a Happy New Year and closed the meeting at 20:50 hours.

Harwell Branch Balance Over the last 10 years

