

The Royal British  
Legion  
Harwell Branch  
BR1805

**Monthly Branch Meeting**  
**Held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016**  
**In the Branch Headquarters at Westfield**  
**At 20.00 Hours.**

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**ATTENDANCE:**

R.C. East	- President
R.J. White	- Chairman
P. Davies	- Vice Chairman, Ceremonial Officer and Deputy Standard Bearer
P. A. Cox	- Secretary and Welfare Representative
Mrs S. E. Pateman	- Membership Secretary

**COMMITTEE:** G Street, J Belton

**MEMBERS:** None

**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:** I. Clarke, C. S. East, J Fleming, S. T. Haycox, B. Mulford

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

All present had seen the minutes prior to the meeting. There was one correction:

Item 2: **C. S. East** removed from Attendance and added to Apologies.

The minutes were corrected and duly signed as a true record by the Chairman.

**4. MATTERS ARISING:**

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

**5. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE DAY SERVICES**

**5.1 Publicity**

The Secretary reported that a report has been published in the Harwell News and is on the Branch's Remembrance Sunday web page.

**5.2 Letters of Thanks**

The Secretary reported that letters have been sent to the organisations listed at the last meeting. The Secretary has also written to Kate Beswick and the Treasurer for photographs.

The bugler Tony Hughes replied dates for 2016 should be alright. The Church and Gardening Club replied thanking us for our letters of thanks.

The Ceremonial Officer reported that he had sent a general thanks for assistance and participation as a follow up to his final instructions document. It requested any feedback from the participants. There was a reply from 1<sup>st</sup> Harwell guides which he read out: They thanked the Branch for a well organised event; it was just the right length. They also thanked us for having a Guide as a sentry at the War Memorial and for providing the service sheets before the parade.

### **5.3 Timetable**

The final version 3 has been completed and distributed now all actions are complete

The Chairman thanked the Ceremonial Officer and Secretary for their contributions, the Ceremonial Officer especially for his leadership on the day and the Secretary for arranging the road closures etc. They have done a marvellous job.

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

There were no applications this month.

The Membership Secretary said that she does not receive applications for new members that join via the Legion website. She checks the membership list on the Membership Application Portal (MAP) for any new members. There are two new members on the list since the last meeting:

K McGann     S Baird

One new member joined Harwell Branch so a relative could use a Club in Scotland.

The Membership Secretary said that a member who belongs to another Branch but wishes to pay his Club fees to Harwell RBL Club had asked how he should pay his Club fee. The Chairman said that the Club deal with their own applications and fees so it is a matter for them. The Membership Secretary said that she would ask the Club for advice on joining the Club only.

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

### **7.1 Storage and Disposal of Branch Documents**

Disposed of since November Meeting:

- Old Royal Charters, blank floppy discs, spare copies of County Conference minutes

Suggested for disposal:

- Branch Agendas
- Spare copies of Branch meeting and AGM reports and MS1 and addenda forms.
- County and National Conference agendas, reports and minutes from 2008-2014. That will leave one year retained (in line with other Legion documents).

The Chairman said that there would be information about who to contact for copies of these documents if needed in future.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

The Secretary has also found some superseded Branch model bye laws and documents about the Recreation Ground Sports Development Project which he also suggested for disposal.  
**No objections.**

## **7.2 Archive Boxes in Club**

Disposal of the old Branch Management Handbook and new contents list is 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 and Legion Awards**

Listed separately.

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

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

Approximate Cost £4.52.

Other printing approximate cost: £3.05.

(Other printing includes two month's correspondence and letters of thanks for Remembrance.)

The estimated ink cost used in these calculations has been revised from 7p to 4.5p per sheet in line with recent cartridge and refill costs.

There were problems getting the empty cartridge refilled. The current cartridge ran out recently so the Secretary got it refilled by Cartridge UK for £12. The Secretary will ask them to look at the other cartridge again or else get a new one (likely to be £17-£18).

The black correspondence folder from the Club has gone missing with the November 2015 correspondence.

## **7.6 War Memorial Maintenance**

No news.

## **7.7 2015 AGM FOLLOW UP**

- MS1 and addenda forms completed and sent to County.
- "Committee Members" and "Meetings" web pages have been updated.
- An updated Officers and Committee list is on the Branch Notice Board.
- A letter of thanks has been sent to David Marsh for the web site.
- The AGM minutes are in hand.

## **7.8 County Conference**

The County Secretary and Ceremonial Officer informed the Secretary in the week prior to Conference that as the Ceremonial Officer was on the County Committee he could not be Branch delegate and asked for a substitute. The Secretary discussed this with the Chairman and contacted all of the Branch Committee but there were no volunteers.

## **7.9 Visitor Volunteer Report**

The report for October to December 2015 has been submitted (0 visits and 0 volunteers).

## **7.10 Branch Notice Board**

In addition to the usual addition and removal of notices, the Secretary has also removed some notices dating from early 2015 and previous years. This included some Welfare notices as the Legion Advice Line can help on Welfare issues. Contact details for this are on the notice board.

## **7.11 Thanks for Stone Improvements To Harwell Campus**

In hand.

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

**CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 269 members. 185 renewals.**

### **8.1 Renewal**

The deadline for renewal has been extended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 so members who do not renew will lapse after this date. This is due to the problems seen nationally this year.

The Chairman said that the number of renewals is down from last year when we had about 300 members. The President agreed; he suggested that this was connected to the announcement of the Club vote to disaffiliate from the Legion.

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

The Ceremonial Officer reported on behalf of the Treasurer:

Accounts stand as follows:

### **HARWELL BRANCH**

<b>Current Account:</b>	<b>£ 214.84</b>
<b>B.F.I. Account</b>	<b><u>£ 1193.52</u></b>
<b><u>Total:</u></b>	<b><u>£ 1408.36</u></b>

**Secretary's note:** The Treasurer stated by email after the meeting that these figures are as of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The Chairman asked if the Branch membership fees had been paid in yet. The Membership Secretary said that they had not, she was aware of three members whose cheques had yet to be cashed. The Chairman said that the Branch was in credit for more money than stated above.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE:**

### **10.1 December / January County Circular (distributed).**

### **10.2 Membership Policy and Admin Newsletter November 2015**

Includes membership renewal update, online giving, Annual Conference Delegates, training and National elections.

### **10.3 War Graves Tree Pruning and Replacement Request from Parish Council.**

The Parish Council has written to state that: Three at least of these conifers are encroaching on graves next to the old farm wall, and all need pruning. The Council would like to carry out pruning as necessary and possible removal of the encroaching trees, with the idea of replanting in the future. They ask if the Branch has any objections.

The President said that they were last pruned years ago when Steve Prior was Branch Chairman.

**No Objections.**

#### **10.4 Revised Membership Renewal Arrangements and Comradeship Project**

From National Chairman with revised renewal deadline, Question and Answer sheet and Bulk Payments letter.

#### **10.5 Provisional Agenda for County Conference**

**10.6 WW1 Centenary Events** - Please inform County and HQ.

#### **10.7 Team Brit / Karforce Update.**

Report on 2015 fundraising and racing and plans for 2016.

#### **10.8 Marketing Emails to Email Address on Branch Web Site**

150 items received since November meeting.

#### **10.9 RAF Benson / Oxfordshire County RBL Poppy Appeal Dance 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

The RAF is organising this on behalf of Oxfordshire County in their Officer's mess. Tickets are £40, apply by 31<sup>st</sup> March.

### **11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:**

The Secretary reported:

#### **11.1 Poppy Appeal Handover**

Wendy Clarke states that Parcel Force has collected all of the Poppy Appeal stock and collecting tins and delivered them to Aylesford.

Mrs. Clarke has emailed copies of the Poppy Appeal Statement of Accounts documents to Aylesford. She has passed the remaining Poppy Appeal documents to the Secretary including the paying in book for any donations. She has also given him the email address of a contact for any queries including ordering wreaths. He has updated the Poppy Appeal web page accordingly (update approved by Wendy Clarke).

#### **11.2 Harwell Feast Legion Stand**

The Secretary has had an informal chat with Ian Clarke who could suggest to the Oxfordshire Rider's Branch that they have a joint stand with us. They have their own gazebo so we would not need the County gazebo.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

#### **11.3 Poppy Appeal Organiser and Collectors Vacancy**

As there has been no response to the previous adverts the Secretary suggested that he advertises this in the Harwell News, Church Broadsheet and Chilton Chronicle.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

### **12. STANDARD BEARER REPORT**

The Ceremonial Officer and President said that there was nothing to report and the Standard had not been paraded.

### **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

#### **13.1 Life Membership Award to the Branch President**

The Chairman reported that he and the County President visited the Branch President and presented him with the Legion's Life Membership award. This is the second highest award the Legion gives.

The President said that he was very surprised and did not know anything about it beforehand. This was the furthest thing from his mind when he joined the Legion.

All present congratulated the President on his award.

#### **13.2 County Conference Tilehurst January 2016**

The minutes of the Conference will be published in the coming weeks. The Ceremonial Officer gave a report of the main points covered:

##### **County President's Address**

The County President said that this is his final conference as he is standing down from the position. There have been lot of improvements during his term some of which necessary to do. He thanked all for their work. The new County President will be David Drew.

##### **County Chairman's Report**

The County Chairman thanked the Poppy Walk team for their work. She also thanked the County Membership Support Officer Jennifer Strange for her work concerning the new membership renewal process. The County Chairman also sent her best wishes to Anne-Marie Duffin who has stepped down due to ill health.

##### **County Treasurer's Report**

The County Treasurer encouraged all members to attend the annual County Festival of Remembrance which provides a big income to the County. Andrew Bowes, the Oxfordshire County Membership Support Officer, did the audit free of charge. He can help with Branch audits.

##### **Other Reports**

The Strategic Plan and Armed Forces Covenant were all signed.

##### **Ceremonial Report**

All Standard Bearers have been busy including attending local events. Pangbourne Branch has reopened and it is encouraging that it is going well.

##### **County Poppy Appeal**

The target for County was £900,000 this year and £937,000 was collected. This is on a par with last year even though last year was a big year for the Legion with the Centenary of World War 1 and other events.

##### **Welfare Visit Reporting**

Many types of visits count including phone calls. Please report all visits.

##### **Recruitment**

The County aim is for each Branch to recruit 1 member per year for the next 5 years to 2020. If a Branch loses 10 members they will need to recruit 11 more new members.

### **Address by Martin Tye, RBL Trustee from HQ.**

The Legion is 3<sup>rd</sup> in the charities index rated by the general public. Two cancer charities are rated 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is encouraging despite what people may think about Help for Heroes and other military charities having profile, this result shows it is not the case. There has been a documentary on the Legion dementia care home. He talked about this being a positive for public relations as the care home was highly rated.

### **Awards**

Caley Cup – Tilehurst Branch

Humpries Cup – Pangbourne Branch

Around the Edge Award – Holyport

County Standard Bearer's Competition – A. Gale Winner, J, North runner up. R Grace (attendance) and E Landor (Youth).

Comments included:

- The Ceremonial Officer suggested that Andrew Bowes could audit the Branch accounts.
- The recruitment target will be more difficult to achieve at this Branch due to the current circumstances.
- A couple of regular volunteer visits made by Branch members were mentioned. The Branch Welfare Representative will check if these visits should be included on the Visitor Volunteer form.

### **13.3 Club AGM Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 8pm**

The Secretary passed on a reminder of this meeting from the Club Secretary. It will include the result of the Club disaffiliation vote.

Discussion ensued of the reasons for the vote and the future of the Club.

Comments included:

- The Chairman said that the Vice President had prophesied that the Club would last about 30 years when this building opened in 1986. It would be better for the Club to be kept open as a facility for the village rather than close.
- The Officer's Board should be retained and completed. It is a historic artefact. The Club section of the board should have the date of disaffiliation recorded on it.
- The Branch will continue if the Club disaffiliates. It will be a Branch with no Club, similar to Didcot Branch.
- The President said that there was hardly any members left that belonged when the Branch and Club used the Kings Lane building. Most current members had joined after the move to Westfield.

The Chairman said that we will find out more at the meeting.

### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016**

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:57 hours.