

The Royal British
Legion
Harwell Branch
BR1805

Monthly Branch Meeting
Held on 28th June 2016
In the Branch Headquarters at Westfield
At 20.00 Hours.

ATTENDANCE:

R.C. East - President
R.J. White - Chairman
P. A. Cox - Secretary and Welfare Representative
Mrs S. E. Pateman - Membership Secretary
S. T. Haycox - Treasurer

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: P Davies, B. Mulford, C. S. East, I. Clarke, J Fleming.

3. MINUTES OF THE MAY 2016 MEETING (Held 30th May 2016)

All present had seen the Minutes before the meeting. There were no corrections. They 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 following reports.

5. D DAY SERVICE 2016:

5.1 Comments on the Service

This item started with comments including:

- The Chairman and Treasurer said that it all went very well.
- There was a brief discussion about why the Kohima Epitaph was not used alongside the Exhortation.
- The President and Chairman expressed their thanks to the Ceremonial Officer and Secretary for all their work in arranging the event and the Treasurer for photography.
- John Belton said that Hazel King should also be thanked for collecting for the Poppy Appeal and distributing Service Sheets.

5.2 Ceremonial Officer's Report

The Secretary read the following report on behalf of the Ceremonial Officer:

Now in the fourth year the Branch has coordinated this Parade and Service many aspects are becoming familiar and well-rehearsed.

With no Chilton Festival this year the focus was solely on the event with no outside distraction or influence. Although this may have had a small effect on the numbers within the congregation, the atmosphere and attitude around the Stone was unchanged.

Unfortunately I was behind the curve of progress this year, down to an illness in April knocking me out for nearly two weeks which is the usual window invitations are normally sent out.

However I can report this has little effect on the day as turnout of VIPs and expected guests was as high as ever.

One welcome addition was a representative of 38 Group, namely Group Captain Andrew Timperley who quickly made himself known upon my arrival. He was very keen to be involved and thoroughly enjoyed attending and reconnecting the link between 38 Group and the operations of D-Day. He hopes if AOC 33 Group AVM Tim Bishop cannot make it next year that he will again be asked to attend.

Although we were able to make connections with 38 Group, there was as ever still a missing aspect that being in the shape of a flypast. With no luck with the BBMF I turned to the former Army Historic Aircraft Flight OC Maj George Bacon, now heading up the civilian Historic Army Flight Trust gifted the aircraft of the AHAF.

Unfortunately due to their Trust status, flights are now at direct cost without Army funding and as a result on this occasion were unable to provide a flypast.

The Parade and Service however was a success. With a fine Guard of Honour from 1861 and 2410 Squadrons of the Air Cadets, the Bagpipes played by the now familiar shape of John MacFarlane-Horgan accompanied the marching of the Standards and the laying of the wreaths, and a fine selection of RBL Branch, County and veteran group Standards on Parade.

The service conducted by Reverend Mobey was done so in his usual respectful and dignified manner with the Reading offered by one of the Didcot Squadron Cadets and exhortation delivery by the Branch Chairman. A 2 minute silence was observed, the last post played by Tony Hughes.

In total 19 wreaths were laid showing that despite the lack of Chilton Festival, there is still a strong community approach to the event.

Unfortunately there is one aspect which was a disappointment and that was the return of the congregation and parade participants back to the RBL Club. Having laid on food for 20 persons, it was a great shame to see only half a dozen back at the Club when all were counted in.

I am unsure why numbers were so low this year, but with our purse strings getting tighter, this may give reason to limit the invitation to just drinks in future?

Of course there are some thanks to mention.

Firstly to **Peter Cox**, an unsung hero who although completes a background role is vital in its success, he continues to keep progress going and is ever diligent on every aspect, and particularly those that pass me by!

Both he and **Hazel King** were busy ahead of the parade handing out service sheets carrying collecting buckets as they did so. The collection totalling **£102.77** a fantastic effort and thank both Peter and Hazel for their work.

Thanks to **Rev Jonathan Mobey**, for conducting the service and to **Brian Morris** for allow the PA system for a second year

A big thank you **MUST** go to **Bridie Spinks** who was kind enough to step into the PAO role, wearing the hat already at Hanney Branch. With Wendy's departure and the role still to be filled we would have been stuck without Bridie, who incidentally has offered her services to us for Remembrance, and really must highlight my personal thanks to her for this.

Finally a mention to **Duncan Rogers** for all the work he does with his team supporting this event both to us the RBL and assisting the coordination of the onsite businesses at the Campus.

All in all the day was a success, and although there was a grey tinge to the clouds, the enthusiasm to make it a good Parade bore through thanks to the hard work put in ahead of time and the fantastic attitude of all who took part.

Peter Davies
Ceremonial Officer and Parade Marshall for the Parade

The Secretary reported:

5.3 Publicity

The Ceremonial Office composed an excellent briefing document and distributed it to all participants in the week before the service.

A general report will be composed and sent to the County Circular, Chilton Chronicle, Harwell News (if publication continues), and published on the Branch web page.

Photographs were taken by the Treasurer and Frank Dumbleton of Chilton Parish Council. They are on the Chilton Village and Harwell Branch Parades facebook pages.

5.4 Thanks to Contributors and Participants

The Ceremonial Officer has written and sent letters to the Harwell Campus Management, Harwell Church (Rev. Mobey), Didcot ATC, Wantage ATC (including provision of First Aid Cover), Parachute Regiment Association, Glider Pilot Regiment Association and Chilton School.

The Secretary is writing to the Bugler, Bag Piper, Photographers and Harwell Club. He will also write to Hazel King as suggested earlier. He suggested that he additionally writes to thank Bridie Spinks.

Agreed by the Committee.

5.5 Service Sheets

There were 50 sheets from previous years. 100 more were provided by Duncan Rogers and 20 more from other sources. 103 sheets were either not used or collected after the service by Hazel King and the Secretary. They will be stored for next year.

5.6 Bucket Collection

The Secretary took the buckets to Bridie Spinks to count the money: The Secretary's bucket had £49.34 and Hazel King's £53.43 giving the total of £102.77 stated earlier.

The Secretary, Treasurer and Mrs. Spinks had agreed just after the service that this would be split 50-50 between the Harwell and Hanney Poppy accounts. However:

- Ms Spinks had agreed that a wreath donation paid by BACS transfer went to our account rather than hers (this saved changing bank details with the donor).
- The Secretary has not yet accessed the Harwell account.

The Secretary therefore suggested that all the money should go to the Hanney Account. The Chairman and President agreed.

No Objections.

5.7 Wreaths

Two further wreaths were provided to Magnox and the 38 group RAF representative.

The Secretary delivered 6 wreaths to Harwell Campus and village organisations a couple of days before the service.

Bridie Spinks distributed the rest of the wreaths and collected donations on the day. She reports that donations are awaited from:

- Didcot Squadron Air Training Corps - Ceremonial Officer is chasing.
- Harwell Parish Council - Bridie Spinks is in touch.
- Vale of the White horse District Council Vale Council – Secretary to chase.
- Harwell Branch. (**Secretary's Note:** Cheque written after this meeting).

The Ceremonial Officer briefed the wreath layers before the service and composed a list of organisations which was read out by the Rector as each was laid. Discussion ensued:

- The Chairman confirmed that the names of the organisations were audible.
- The President said that the bag piper's tune had ended before the last wreath was laid, it would be better if he had carried on with another tune, a possibility for next year.
- The Chairman said that there were so many laying wreaths. It used to be just the Branch and Women's section and the Glider Pilots and Parachute Regiment Association.
- It was suggested that County may take this over if we don't run it but they may not realise the amount of organisation and invitations involved.
- The President said that there was no report or photographs in the Didcot Herald or Oxford Mail. They only reported on the ceremony at Berinsfield, which only commemorated one man, we remembered a large number of fallen.

5.8 Timetable

The Secretary will compose and distribute a third version when all actions are complete.

6. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

Due to loss of broadband the Membership Secretary was unable to check if any new members had joined on line this month. There were no paper applications.

7. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The Secretary apologised that, as last month, due to high volume of work and keeping track of tasks for the D Day ceremony, he has only worked on a few other items.

7.1 Archive Boxes in club

In hand.

7.2 Lending Minutes to Harwell History Group and Moving to Oxfordshire History Centre

In hand.

7.3 Awards

In progress. Please inform the Secretary of any supporting information for applications.

7.4 Branch Web Page

The D Day page will be updated with a report on the Service.

7.5 Distribution of Branch Minutes and County Circular.

The Secretary thanked those who checked sections of the minutes. He distributed the May 2016 Minutes, June/July County Circular and an email about the laying up of the White Horse Group Standard to Committee Members and put copies in the Club folder. David Marsh will put the minutes on the web site shortly.

Approximate Cost £ 4.00 for approx. 80 sheets (same total for the 3rd month)

Other printing approximate cost: £ 3.26 for approx 65 sheets.

The Secretary has brought another pack of 50 A5 envelopes (approx £2). He has now paid for a large ink cartridge to be refilled (£10) and some more paper (£4 for 500 sheets) in lieu of the non RBL printing he does. He will continue to track this.

7.6 2015 AGM Minutes

In hand.

7.7 Welfare

No enquires this month.

The Branch has been asked to register on the Branch Community Support on line system (via the MAP system). It encompasses Branch activities such as Legion awareness events, telephone buddies, home and hospital visiting, bereavement support, local touch points and any other similar. This is so that County knows what we do and can refer people wanting help.

A further information sheet was received later in the month with more information and examples of support activities.

7.8 Beret for President.

In hand.

8. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 196*

The Membership Secretary was unable to confirm the figure due to her broadband being disconnected and therefore she was unable to access the membership database.

* **Secretary's Note:** The broadband fault was repaired and the Membership Secretary was able to confirm the day after the meeting that the membership stood at 196.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 9th June 2016

HARWELL BRANCH

Current Account:	£ 352.02
B.F.I. Account	£ 1199.43
<u>Total:</u>	<u>£ 1551.45</u>

9.1 BFI Interest

Interest of £5.91 has been credited.

9.2 Year End Comparison

As the accounting year end has passed (30th June), a comparison with last year can be made: The Branch funds are £361 down on the same time last year, mainly due to the lower number of members. The amount in the accounts is still satisfactory.

9.3 Annual Accounts Form

The Treasurer has received the annual Receipts and Payments accounts forms and will complete them shortly.

9.4 Renaming of Branch Current Account

An instruction has been passed to us by County from the Membership Council that the account name for all Branch current accounts has to be in a specific format. This name is printed on all cheques and paying in slips. The Harwell Branch current account name needs to be changed to this format. The Treasurer has got the required form from the bank which needs to be signed by all of the signatories of the account.

The form was duly signed by the Chairman, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Secretary.

The form will be sent to the bank and they will send new cheque and paying in books. To prove that this has been done the Treasurer has to send a copy of a cheque with the new name on it to County.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

Items indicated as "printed" will be filed in the "County Circulars" folder in the Club. Other items can be printed on request.

10.1 June/July 2016 County Circular (distributed and printed).

The covering note mentions a pop in session on 7th July at Aylesbury for Independent Living Service to support ex service people to continue living at home.

Attached documents are:

- Membership Newsletter - includes Annual Conference Report, Membership Renewal Changes, Membership Council news, and commemoration events (3 pages - printed).
- Albert Hall Festival of Remembrance Special Circular for members and for Secretaries and Chairmen (both 1 page printed) and ticket application form.
- Director General Address to National Conference (6 pages). It was agreed that this document is not printed as it is available online.

10.2 Branch Community Support (Was Branch Welfare Project) See item 7.7

Information letter (1 page, printed) and brochure (5 colour pages), further information and questions and answers from National Conference (2 pages printed).

The following three items were passed to the Treasurer:

10.3 Request to Change name of Branch Bank Account to Specific Format

10.4 Branch Membership Rates Letter - repeat and this has been accepted.

10.5 BFI Statement is Late

10.6 Club Members Newsletter June 2016

This includes Club events for June and transition information and approximate timetable for disassociation, hopefully to be completed by end September 2016. (2 pages printed)

10.7 Laying up of the Vale of the White Horse Group Standard 26th June (Distributed)

Request for numbers attending - Secretary replied 1 attending

10.8 Poppy Appeal Seminars Newbury 2nd July or Arborfield 16th July

For Poppy Appeal Organisers - update on County and National Poppy Appeal. The guest speaker is a beneficiary of the Poppy Appeal fundraising. Reply by 26th June.

10.9 Chilton Chronicle June 2016

Includes Poppy Appeal Organiser advert

10.10 Team Brit Update- motor racing for injured troops

New divers, request for sponsors and talks to schools

10.11 Emails on Branch Web Site

A couple of D Day emails, a query on Poppy Walk sponsor money (referred to County fundraiser) and 52 marketing emails.

10.12 Reply from County Committee Member Del Milam

The Secretary checked with Mr. Milam the wording of address in the minutes before sending the minutes out. He replied thanking the Branch for an interesting evening.

11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:

The Secretary gave the following report:

11.1 Poppy Appeal Organiser Vacancy

The advert was published in the Harwell News, April Church Broadsheet and June Chilton Chronicle.

A person may be able to organise in Chilton only. The Secretary suggested that he asks County if our area could be split. The Treasurer, Chairman and President agreed. The President added that it would spread the workload and another person may then be more willing to organise in Harwell.

Agreed by the Committee

There was discussion concerning which Branch would cover the new houses in Great Western Park and the new UTC college including:

- The houses are partly in Didcot parish so Didcot Branch may cover this area.
- John Belton said that Didcot Branch have recently stopped doing house to house collections, they just do the business and shops.

11.2 Remembrancetide Collection

The Hanney Branch Poppy Appeal Organiser Bridie Spinks has offered to supply a few boxes for some of the static collections.

12. STANDARD BEARER REPORT

12.1 D Day Parade

The Secretary reported on behalf of the Standard Bearer that he had paraded the Standard at the D Day parade. The Chairman said that the Union Flag was carried by a member of another Branch.

12.2 Laying Up of Vale Group Standard

The Secretary read the following report on behalf of the Ceremonial Officer:

On Sunday 26th June Wantage hosted the Armed forces Parade which included the laying up of the Vale of the White Horse Group Standard. With both the Standard Bearer and Deputy Standard Bearer unavailable, the Deputy's deputy, namely your Ceremonial Officer, stepped forward and carried the Standard at the Parade.

The parade itself followed the usual route for a Wantage Parade, with a march past and Salute taken by Sir Roger Austin. The RBL Standards were joined by 1861 (Wantage) Squadron and a bass drum to hold us in step however this was a small parade in comparison to others I have attended. After a short and sweet ceremony at St Peter and Paul's Church the Standard was laid up and is now on show at the back of the church.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

13.1 Increase to National Membership Subscription

John Belton said that a motion to keep this subscription at £16 was not carried so the annual increase of £1 will go ahead from 1st October.

13.2 Changes to Collection of Subscriptions

John Belton said that there will be changes for this year's renewal due to the problems last year and the costs involved. The President said that he was not surprised as the original change to computerised renewals had taken years to sort out.

13.3 Mons and Somme Anniversaries

It was stated that these anniversaries are coming up soon.

13.4 Branch Awards

The President said that the Legion does not give much away. These two people are not ex Service; they do their jobs because they want to and receive no reward. He was pleased to award Branch Awards to the Branch Treasurer Simon Haycox and Branch Secretary Peter Cox.

Both the Treasurer and Secretary said that they were very touched and thanked the Branch for the awards.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 26th July 2016

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