

The Royal British
Legion
Harwell Branch
BR1805

Monthly Branch Meeting
Held on 29th November 2016
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
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: C. S. East, B. Mulford, J Fleming.

3. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 2016 MEETING

All present had seen the Minutes which had been circulated to Committee Members 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 any matters arising would come up under the following reports.

5. ARMISTICE AND REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICES

5.1 Reports on Events

The Chairman said that the parades went very well and there was a good attendance. All agreed.

Armistice Day

The Ceremonial Officer had been at work on the day. He read the following report composed by the Secretary:

All went well, the weather was dry and bright and not all that cold. About 20 members of the public attended, together with a similar number of Harwell School pupils and two teachers and the School Business Manager. 23 pupils from Year 5, 2 teachers and School Business Manager Jane Moreton attended.

David Marsh and Kate Beswick were traffic marshals and closed the roads at 10:56 am.

Standard Bearer Charles East carried the Standard to the Memorial and attendees moved into the road at about 10:56.

The Branch President welcomed all present at 10:58 and said the Kohima Epitaph. Tony Hughes sounded the Last Post to start the 2 minutes silence which started on time at 11:00.

Tony Hughes sounded Revielle to end the Silence, the President said the Exhortation and John McFarlane- Horgan played a short melody in recognition of the Somme centenary (he attended unexpectedly).

Finally the President thanked all for attending. Attendees moved back to the pavement and the Secretary encouraged the last groups of people to clear the road which was reopened a minute late at 11:06.

Photographs were taken by Keith Beswick. See also AOB item 13.3.

Remembrance Sunday

The Ceremonial Officer reported that this went well and was very well attended by the parading groups and villagers. The Scouts offered 150 scouts as indicated in the Ceremonial Officer's Final Instructions document and at least that many attended and were joined by ATC cadets and Guides.

There was an issue with closing the roads (see item 5.3 below) but apart from that all went well. The weather was dry, bright and warm in contrast to the 2015 parade.

The Chairman and President thanked the Ceremonial Officer, Secretary and Rector for their work.

5.2 Timetables

The Secretary has prepared and distributed Version 2 of the timetables and is working on version 3.

The Secretary reported:

5.3 Road Closure Orders

The Secretary put up copies of the orders as described at the October meeting and took them down after each parade.

Even though the Secretary sent copies of the orders to Thames Travel with a covering note, a bus was held up on Remembrance Sunday and reported on their facebook page as 20 minutes late. Two busses passed on Armistice Day just before the Parade.

As far as he could ascertain the roads were closed, cleared and open on time on both days. He had arrived at Townsend at 10:35am and was unable to see what happened once he had left for the War Memorial. He encouraged the remaining people to clear the roads after the services.

The President, Chairman and the Ceremonial Officer arrived at Townsend at about 10:30am and people were already there, similar to past years.

There was an issue closing the roads for the Parade: the Ceremonial Officer gave an indication to the Traffic Marshal at the Hart of Harwell 10:40am to close the road but cars were still coming through from the High Street – possibly confirmation needs to be reaffirmed next year of the 10:40am timing to the other marshals.

The Chairman said that he shared the Ceremonial Officer's concerns; traffic could have come from either Grove Road or the High Street. The Ceremonial Officer said that traffic marshals were stationed at both of these locations.

5.4 Club Opening

Geoff Street reported that the Club had not opened after the service at about 12:20am. The Secretary said that it was open later.

5.5 Invitations to Participants and parading groups

Schools

Little Pippins replied that they were available for the Armistice Ceremony, but the pupils did not attend on the day and sent a representative.

Photographers

The Secretary invited Keith Beswick and the Treasurer to photograph both parades. The Treasurer photographed Remembrance Sunday and Keith Beswick photographed both events. Keith Beswick supplied the photos on a memory stick and the Secretary has uploaded them to flickr.

The Ceremonial Officer has added a link from the Branch Parades Facebook page to the Treasurer's photographs on flickr. The Treasurer said that they have been viewed over 870 times.

5.6 Thank You Notes

The Secretary is writing to the Gardening Club, Bag Piper, Church, Parish Council, Photographers, Little Pippins and Harwell School.

The Ceremonial Officer has prepared thank you letters to the Scouts, Guides, ATC, Club and Bag Piper for the Chairman's approval after the meeting.

5.7 Publicity

Details were published in the November Church broadsheet, the Ceremonial officer posted further updates on facebook on Remembrance Sunday and David Marsh posted details on the Harwell Parish Website.

The Ceremonial Officer responded to an enquiry from the Didcot Herald (via David Marsh). Details were published in the 9th November edition. The Treasurer submitted photographs afterwards but they were not published. Some of his photographs were in the Harwell News.

5.8 Meeting With Rector

The meeting took place on 1st November as scheduled.

5.9 Service Sheets

All of the parading groups gave an estimated number of attendees totalling 230. The Secretary and Rector agreed on 650 sheets total allowing 420 for the congregation. They were printed by the Church Administrator Vicky Johnston.

The Secretary distributed service sheets to the parading groups at Townsend. Mike Pepper and the Secretary distributed Service sheets to the congregation at the War Memorial. There were about 20 spares so 400 attended.

5.10 Wreaths and Crosses

The Secretary put wooden crosses on each War Grave in the week before Remembrance Sunday. There were already crosses on a couple of graves.

Wreaths were supplied to: the Branch (2), Harwell Parish Council, Harwell Village Club, the Scouts, Guides, Didcot ATC (2), Chilton Church and one to a local school. Some were distributed before the event, the rest were given out at Townsend.

Unfortunately the wrong shape of wreath was ordered for Chilton Church – a chaplet (closed horseshoe). However Sam Hickton County Fundraiser delivered the correct small circular wreath (class L) at short notice and Naomi Gibson from Chilton Church took the chaplet for a service at a local school.

The Secretary wired the wreaths to the War Memorial a few days after the service.

5.11 Bucket Collection Remembrance Sunday

The Secretary did the bucket collection, starting at Townsend and then walking down the High Street to collect from the congregation at the War Memorial. He also supplied about 20 poppies. The total will be advised once counted.

5.12 Flag Pole and Union Jack Outside Club

The President and Secretary put this up on Friday morning for the weekend. Unfortunately John Fisher found the flag and rope on the ground on Friday evening.

On Sunday morning the Secretary made a temporary repair and Richard Pateman took down the pole and put it back so the flag could be re hung. The Secretary thanked him for attending at short notice. The President and Secretary took it down again on Sunday afternoon.

This was discussed and the President said that the rope had been cut. He will repair it in due course.

5.13 Storage of Flagpole

The President said that the flagpole and flag are currently stored at his house. The route from there to the Club is through a neighbour's garden. It would be better for the flag pole to be stored somewhere else with better access e.g. the back of the Clubhouse or behind the Pavilion on the Recreation ground. The pole is a single length which may restrict the possible storage locations.

6. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

There were no new members this month on the MAP system and no applications.

7. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The Secretary apologised that he had not had time to look at some items since the last meeting due to work on the Poppy Appeal and Armistice and Remembrance Parades.

7.1 Archive Boxes in club

Disposal of items listed last month is in hand.

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

In hand.

7.3 Awards

No news.

7.4 Branch Web Page

The Secretary has updated the Poppy Appeal page. Other updates are in hand.

The Club Secretary has stated that the new Club will move to a new web site from late January and wants to know if we want to continue with the Branch site by David Marsh. Discussion ensued including:

- The Treasurer said that it is very useful. It costs £25 for 5 years. It is well worth doing.

**PROPOSAL: The Branch continues the current website hosted by David March.
PROPOSED: Secretary SECONDED: Treasurer CARRIED**

The Secretary will inform the Club Secretary.

7.5 Distribution of Branch Minutes and AGM Minutes.

The Secretary thanked the Ceremonial Officer and Treasurer for checking and correcting their reports. He distributed the October 2016 Minutes and November 2016 County Circular to Committee Members and put copies in the Club folder. David Marsh has put the minutes on the web site.

Approximate cost for approx. 145 sheets: £5.80.

Other printing approximate cost for approx. 87 sheets: £3.49

The Secretary will claim for the black cartridge refilled by Cartridge UK Didcot for £12 as stated last month. This is now in use. The colour ink cartridge may be running low which is quick as they usually last a year but there are far more pictures in the County Circular now.

7.6 2016 AGM FOLLOW UP

The minutes are in hand.

David Marsh apologised that he was busy with opening of new Orchard Hall so had no time to add minutes to web site or produce statistics before the AGM. The thank you letter to him is in hand.

Branch Committee Members 2016-17

Following lengthy discussion it was agreed that the Secretary will check if the Committee members who were not at the AGM (Standard Bearer, Vice President and John Fleming) wish to continue on the Committee.

The updated Committee list for notice board and web page, update for the meetings web page and MS1 and MS1 addenda committee forms will be completed once the Committee is finalised.

The County Membership Support Officer states that President and Vice President do not need to sign the MS1 form.

7.7 County Conference (See also AOB Item 13.1)

The County Secretary states that as the accounts were in late we cannot send a representative, but can send a (non voting) visitor. The Ceremonial Officer is due to attend as a County Committee member and Branch funds can be used to pay for his lunch.

7.8 Welfare

No enquires this month. The quarterly Visitor Volunteer form is due at County at the beginning of January, very likely to be 0 volunteers 0 visits.

7.9 Soldiers of Oxfordshire (SOFO) Oral History Project Enquiry to Member

No news.

7.10 Conifers in Harwell Cemetery (see October 2016 minutes item 9.7)

The Parish Council will shortly trim these trees back and cut a few down. The Chairman said that the Parish Council wanted to know if the Branch minded what type of tree was used to replace them. The Treasurer distributed pictures of the trees that he had taken on Remembrance Sunday.

There was agreement that this work was required. After discussion of tree types and their appearance it was decided that the type of replacement tree should be left to the discretion of the Parish Council. The Secretary will inform the Parish Council.

8. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 115

9. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 14th November 2016:

HARWELL BRANCH

Current Account:	£ 246.01
B.F.I. Account	<u>£ 1205.37</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>£ 1451.38</u>

9.1 BFI Account

The Treasurer cannot currently access LOMAS to check the balance or amount of interest credited recently. The problem is at Legion HQ and is being worked on.

9.2 Poppy Room Hire

The Treasurer has written another cheque to the Club. He will pass the outstanding cheques to the Club once he receives receipts for the payments he has given them already.

9.3 Donation for Remembrance Sunday Wreaths and War Grave Crosses

The Treasurer asked how much the Branch wanted to donate in respect of the 2 wreaths and 65 crosses. Discussion ensued and it was proposed that £115 is donated:

PROPOSAL: The Branch donates £115 to the Poppy Appeal in respect of the two wreaths and 65 crosses.

PROPOSED: President SECONDED: Ceremonial Officer

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.4 Balance of Current Account

The Treasurer said that when all of the cheques mentioned above are paid, the balance would be about £6. He asked if he could transfer funds from the BFI to the current account sufficient to cover any further payments that arise. It could be returned later if not required.

- The Chairman said that we must have enough money in the account to manage our affairs for the next couple of months, a couple of hundred pounds.
- The Treasurer said that the Branch membership fees had not been paid in yet.
- The Chairman said that this would only be £2 each for the 115 members. He said that the Treasurer has this responsibility and can take what actions are necessary.

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 November 2016 County Circular (printed and distributed)

Attached documents (not printed):

New Royal Charter 2013 version 11 dated 1st October 2016

Letter from National Chairman: Applications for National Parade Marshal

10.2 A Journey's End WW1 Show Cornerstone Didcot 4th November

Via Didcot Mayor's Secretary – details received on the day.

10.3 Notification of Funeral of Jag Cook, Former Vale Group Treasurer

10th November at Blewbury.

10.4 Invitation to Christmas Mince Pies and Mulled Wine 8th December At County Office

10:30am -12 noon please contact if interested.

10.5 New Harwell Village Club Draft Constitution and Disaffiliation Timetable

Also available in Club.

10.6 Team BRIT Update. Motor Racing for Injured troops

The Secretary asked if he should continue to list and circulate correspondence from non Legion organisations such as Team Brit and Legassee. People can register for newsletters and updates on their own behalf. The Secretary does not know how or why he was added to these email lists and suggested that he stopped distribution.

No Objections.

10.7 Salvation Army Reading Invitation to Festival of Remembrance

Received last month.

10.8 Marketing Emails to Branch Website email address.

55 Items since the October meeting.

11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:

The Secretary reported:

11.1 Donations

The Harwell Poppy Appeal account is still active and the donations for the auditor's fee, John Belton and from Georgina Greer have been paid in.

11.2 Poppy Appeal Organiser and Collectors Vacancy

There have been no applications since the last meeting. As it was so close to the collection the Secretary did not advertise on facebook. An advert is still up in the Club.

11.3 Distribution and Collection of Trays and Collecting Boxes

All of the wreaths, schools boxes, trays, collecting boxes and Poppy Appeal supplies and paperwork ordered by the County Fundraiser on our behalf arrived the day after the last meeting.

See Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day report items 5.10 and 5.11 for wreaths and crosses distribution and donations.

Chilton

Hazel King collected the supplies for Chilton Village and Chilton Fields Estate and Curie Avenue shops from the Secretary and made up and distributed the trays and boxes, about 18 in all with several house to house collectors including Hazel King.

Harwell Village

The Secretary thanked the President for distributing and collecting 8 trays and boxes to the village shops and businesses. There was also one at the Club.

There were four house to house collectors in Harwell including the Secretary. Most of the village was covered but it would be good to have a couple more collectors next year.

Harwell Campus

The Secretary could not access the buildings in the security compounds of the Medical Research Council, Magnox, Diamond or Rutherford as he does not work there. He arranged distribution and collection of 17 boxes and trays with the D Day service contacts of these organisations. He thanked them for their help.

He distributed six boxes and trays to other site organisations and one to Rowstock Garage, making a total of 37 in Harwell Village and Campus.

The boxes and trays have all been collected apart from one.

Didcot

One of the house to house collectors told the Secretary that the bar staff at the sports pavilion on Great Western Park would like a box. He passed this to the Didcot Branch who supplied one.

11.4 Count and Paying In of Donations

The Secretary asked Didcot Branch if they had a coin sorter but did not get a reply. There are two at County and one can be borrowed but this involves driving to Aylesford and back.

The Secretary made contact with Clare Oldfield, the new Abingdon PAO, who is happy to lend us their machine. He will collect it this week. Once the last box is collected Hazel King, the Treasurer and the Secretary will count the money and pay it in. Then the Secretary will make out and distribute thank you cards and add total to the website and facebook.

Donations have been received or are on the way for all wreaths and the wooden crosses. The donations will be sent to the County Fundraiser to pay into the County Poppy account.

This has all taken longer than in previous years partly due to everyone getting used to new procedures.

11.5 Remaining Poppy Merchandise and Wreaths

As all the items were ordered by the County Fundraiser the Secretary will ask her what should be done with these; likely to be return to County HQ or Aylesford.

11.6 Thanks

Everyone that the Secretary asked to help was very happy and keen to assist. He thanked all who helped in whatever way.

11.7 New Poppy Appeal Organiser

This has now been advertised for over a year with no responses. The Secretary has found it tricky to do the Poppy Appeal work whilst not being an official PAO - especially obtaining the merchandise and wreaths. He therefore offered to take on the role. Comments included:

- The Chairman asked if it would be too much work. The Secretary said that he didn't think so. He could do it for a year and then see.
- The Ceremonial Officer said that a volunteer is better than 10 pressed men and we should accept the offer. We could still advertise for an assistant PAO.
- The President said that you do not have to be a Legion member to do this; there are PAOs in areas where there are no Branches.

PROPOSAL: Peter Cox is Poppy Appeal Organiser

Proposed: Ceremonial Officer Seconded: Membership Secretary

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

12. STANDARD BEARER REPORT

The Ceremonial Officer reported:

12.1 Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Parades

The Standard had been paraded at both events which had both gone well.

12.2 Thanks to Deputy Standard Bearer Ian Clarke

Remembrance Sunday was the last parade where Mr. Clarke paraded the Standard. The Chairman and Ceremonial Officer both thanked him for his years of service at the parade. Mr. Clarke handed in his yoke, gloves and beret after the War Graves ceremony for the next Deputy Standard Bearer.

The Ceremonial Officer will write a formal letter of thanks to Ian Clarke.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

13.1 County Conference Lunch

The Ceremonial Officer confirmed that he was attending the County Conference and asked if the Branch would pay for lunch as mentioned earlier. The Treasurer said that this was £10 last year. The Chairman put this to the meeting.

No Objections.

13.2 Remembrance Sunday Pictures

The Treasurer said that he had his laptop with the pictures available for viewing.

13.3 Armistice Ceremony

The President thanked all for attending the Armistice Services, it had been a good turn out. A person whose father had served in Burma asked if she could wear his medals and which side they should be worn. His view is that it didn't matter as long as they are worn.

13.4 President's Visit to Harwell School

The President visited the school on the Tuesday after the Armistice Parade and talked to a class. They were well behaved and gave him their full attention and interest.

The Chairman said that as this was the last meeting before Christmas he wished all present a Happy Christmas and Happy New Year.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 31st January 2017

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:58 hours.