



**Monthly Branch Meeting**  
**Held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017**  
**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, Poppy Appeal Organiser and Welfare Representative
Mrs S. E. Pateman	- Membership Secretary
S. T. Haycox	- Treasurer

**COMMITTEE:** G Street, J Belton

**MEMBERS:** None

**VISITORS:** Robert Girling Chilton Family Fun Day (Until end of item 5.2).

**1. EXHORTATION AND KOHIMA EPITAPH**

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present to the first Branch meeting at the newly renamed Harwellian Club. This was followed by the exhortation and silent tribute; he ended with the Kohima Epitaph.

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

**3. MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 2016 MEETING**

All Committee Members present had seen the minutes before the meeting. There were no corrections. On acceptance as a true record they were duly signed by the Chairman.

Item 5 was taken at this point:

**5. D DAY SERVICE 2017, HARWELL FAMILY FUN DAY AND CHILTON FESTIVAL**

**5.1 Approval for Link with Legion and Support**

Robert Girling thanked the meeting for their time and distributed a location map and a general email about the event that the organisers intend sending to interested parties. He talked through the event and answered questions:

This is a new event combining the Chilton Festival with the Harwell Campus Fun Day (which is usually in September) into the Harwell Campus and Chilton Village Family Fun Day.

It will be held at the Harwell Campus Cricket Ground on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and will run from 12:00 to 17:00 so there will be enough time for people to attend the D Day Service which is on the same day at 17:30. The organisers are also aiming to keep the link with the Legion and the D Day Service and the Memorial to recognise the heritage of the site from the past to present to future.

The Festival is aimed at young people to give them an insight and experience of a career in science and technology and some fun activities. There will be an entrance fee of £5 per family and once inside all activities on the site will be free. They are looking to raise money for two charities: Helen and House Hospice and the Chilton Community Defibrillator Project. It has the support of Harwell Campus and Chilton Parish Council.

Mr. Girling was visiting tonight in order to inform the Branch about the event and gain the approval and support of the Branch for:

- a) The use of the Legion name in connection with the event.
- b) The link to the D Day Service at the RAF Harwell Memorial Stone.
- c) Any material support such as marquees or via other Legion Branches such as the Rider's Branch.

There were no objections in principle and discussion included:

- The Ceremonial Officer has briefed the County Committee and obtained their provisional support. The two County gazebos may be available and he would look for support from the Berkshire and Vale County Branches to staff them.
- John Belton said that the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry Association and a local Territorial Army band may be interested.
- The Branch does not have its' own marquees and usually uses the County's gazebos.

## **5.2 Vale of the White Horse District Council Grant**

Mr Girling is going to apply for a grant for the infrastructure for the event from the Vale of the District Council. He is yet to set up the required constitution and bank account for the event and would like to use the Branch account on the application, receive the grant and distribute the money, if this was an appropriate action for a Branch to do.

Discussion ensued and the Treasurer and others said that we would like to help but this arrangement involving another charity may not be allowed under Legion rules.

Mr Girling said that there is information on grants on the Vale Council web site and he would leave this matter with the Branch to enquire. He requested that the Branch inform him whether or not they could do this before the 1st March.

(There was further discussion after Mr. Girling had left the meeting and the Ceremonial Officer suggested that the Treasurer could contact the County Treasurer for advice).

**After note** – the above request is no longer required – Mr Girling thanked the committee for considering the request.

### **5.3 RAF Involvement and Possible Flypast**

Mr. Girling will enquire via his RAF connections to see what may be possible now the no-fly zone has been lifted. The Ceremonial Officer outlined his enquiries so far including the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and possibly 38 Group RAF.

### **5.4 Formal Permission to Start Preparations**

The Ceremonial Officer asked for formal permission to start plans, preparations and correspondence for this year's service.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

## **4. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Chairman said that all Matters Arising would come up under the usual reports.

5. (This item was taken earlier).

## **6. ARMISTICE AND REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICES**

The Secretary reported on the outstanding items:

### **6.1 Thank You Letters to Participants and Parading groups**

All of the letters listed in the November minutes have been written, approved and sent by the Ceremonial Officer and Secretary. There have been a few replies complementing the Branch on the event.

### **6.2 Publicity**

The Ceremonial Officer has put a selection of the Treasurer's and Dr. Beswick's photographs on the Harwell RBL Branch Parades facebook page.

The Secretary has written a report which has been approved and published on the Branch Remembrance Sunday page.

### **6.3 Service Sheets**

The Secretary will return spares to the Church Office for storage.

### **6.4 Bucket Collection**

This raised £156.23.

### **6.5 Timetable**

All actions are now complete and the final Version 3 is complete and will be distributed shortly.

### **6.6 Flag Pole Storage and Repair of Flag Rope**

In hand.

## **7. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS**

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

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

### **8.1 Archive Boxes in Club**

The Secretary has disposed of the items listed at the September meeting apart from the membership lists. He will compose a new contents list once disposal is complete.

The Secretary suggested that these items could also be disposed of:

- Old Membership changes forms.
- Complements slips e.g. from County and Poppy Appeal donations.
- Amendments to old versions of the Royal Charter.
- Another old Legion Management Handbook from 2010.
- Treasurer's Pack dated 2012
- 2016 County Conference Pack

**No Objections.**

### **8.2 Lending Minutes to Harwell History Group and Moving to Oxfordshire History Centre**

In hand.

### **8.3 Awards**

No news. The Vice Chairman said that there were no awards presented at the County Conference other than the usual County trophies and there was a comment that this was disappointing.

### **8.4 Branch Web Page**

The Secretary has composed updates for the Remembrance Sunday and Poppy Appeal pages.

The Secretary has replied to Club Secretary that Branch wishes to continue using David Marsh's web services and hosting, he will liaise with Mr Marsh directly over changes required following the disaffiliation.

Updates are now needed to the membership page making it clear that the Club and Branch are entirely separate and Club membership does not require Branch membership and Branch membership does not include use of the Club.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

### **8.5 Distribution of Branch Minutes and AGM Minutes.**

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

Minutes and County Circular approximately 88 sheets: £3.54

Other printing approximately 31 sheets: £1.23.

The Secretary has claimed for the previous ink cartridge refill now in use. The colour ink cartridge has now run out. The Secretary has got it and the empty black cartridge refilled at Cartridge UK yesterday for £14 and £12 respectively.

## **8.6 2016 AGM Follow Up**

### **Minutes**

These are in hand.

### **Thank You to David Marsh**

The Secretary has written to thank David Marsh for hosting and maintaining the web site.

### **Committee and MS1 and MS1 Addenda Committee Forms:**

The Secretary, President and Chairman have been in touch with last year's Committee members who have yet to rejoin; they reported on the conversations.

The Secretary said that Charles East has confirmed that he would be on the Committee but is unavailable to attend Branch meetings for a couple of months.

The County Membership Support Officer advises that as enough Committee Members have already signed the MS1 form she wants it sent in as soon as possible (it was due in at the end of December). This is so the correct details go in the County Handbook.

The Secretary asked what he should do. Discussion ensued:

- The Vice Chairman said that the Branch had reached the minimum requirement.
- The Chairman and Vice Chairman said that the form should be sent in as it is.
- The Chairman said that the Committee will be the same as last year except for John Fleming, and Charles East who can rejoin the Committee in due course.

### **No Objections.**

The Secretary will now send in the form, produce a new Committee list for notice board and update the Committee and Meetings web site pages.

## **8.7 County Conference**

The Secretary sent the lunch form and cheque to County.

## **8.8 Welfare**

No enquires this month. The Secretary submitted the quarterly Visitor Volunteer form to County at the beginning of January, slightly late, 0 volunteers and 0 visits.

## **8.9 Soldiers of Oxfordshire (SOFO) Oral History Project Enquiry to Member**

No news.

## **8.10 Conifers in Cemetery**

The Secretary has informed the Parish Council that the type of replacement trees is at their discretion.

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

**CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP:    stands at 120**

### **9.1 Renewals**

Five more people have renewed membership since the November 2016 meeting.

### **9.2 Membership Database**

The PC based database that the Membership Secretary uses (as supplied by the late Club Chairman Cyril Balderston) cannot be used after this year. She has changed the years 2003

and 2004 to 2016 and 2017 respectively but no further changes are possible. A replacement is needed.

The Treasurer asked the Membership Secretary to send him the database for review.

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

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017:

### **HARWELL BRANCH**

<b>Current Account:</b>	<b>£ 247.01</b>
<b>B.F.I. Account</b>	<b><u>£ 1217.46</u></b>
<b><u>Total:</u></b>	<b><u>£ 1464.47</u></b>

#### **10.1 BFI Balance**

The BFI balance includes interest of £12.09 from the last two quarters.

#### **10.2 Current Account Balance**

The balance today is £132 as the cheque to the Poppy Appeal for wreaths and crosses has now been paid. There has been no income from HQ for membership fees. The Treasurer has forms ready for a transfer of funds from the BFI should it be necessary.

The Chairman proposed that if a transfer is required the Treasurer should go ahead without further permission as the Committee is aware of the situation. The Treasurer may get the forms signed in case.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

#### **10.3 Poppy Room Hire**

The Treasurer has received an email on this subject from the Harwellian Club Secretary; he read the key points to the meeting:

“I did mention the item at the Club Committee meeting last Thursday and we have agreed that the RBL branch can have a room free of charge for their future monthly meetings and any outstanding payments that may have been due for room-hire in recent months can be ignored.

We remain supportive and sympathetic with the RBL good works and events.”

There were some very appreciative comments from the meeting. The Treasurer said that this has saved us. The payments were £25 per month. He has five cheques totaling £125 written to the Club for room hire which he will now destroy.

The Chairman said that the Secretary should retain a copy of the email as this is informing the Branch that we can use the room for the monthly meetings in perpetuity. The Secretary should write a letter of thanks to the Secretary of the Harwellian Club.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

#### **10.4 Room Bookings**

John Belton said that the bar staff were not aware of tonight's meeting because it was not in the bookings diary behind the bar.

The Chairman said that we should ask the bar staff to book the room for every last Tuesday in the month. The Secretary said that he always books the Poppy Room on the Club's online calendar as instructed by the Club so he can also do this.

### **10.5 Correspondence Address on Branch Letterhead**

There was some discussion of the change of Club name and disaffiliation. John Belton asked if the details should be changed in the County Handbook.

- The Chairman said that the Club would not be stated as the Branch Headquarters but as the Branch meeting place.
- The Secretary said that he quotes his home address as the Branch Correspondence address on the MS1 form rather than the Club address.
- The Treasurer said that all financial correspondence goes direct to his home address.

## **11. CORRESPONDENCE:**

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

### **11.1 December 2016 County Circular (printed and distributed)**

Attached documents:

- Board of Trustee Election Circular.
- National Parade Marshal application form.
- Christmas Day Football Match Poster.

The Vice Chairman confirmed that there had been no County Circular for January 2017.

### **11.2 Provisional Agenda for County Conference 21<sup>st</sup> January 2017**

### **11.3 Copy of Notice of Disaffiliation from Club Secretary to County MSO**

### **11.4 Final Agenda for County Conference 21<sup>st</sup> January 2017**

### **11.5 Legion Central Band Concert Reading 19<sup>th</sup> March and Subsequent Cancellation.**

### **11.6 Legion Knowledge Base Survey – Beneficiaries Q and A – Closed 25<sup>th</sup> January.**

### **11.7 Request for Numbers of Dunkirk Veterans in the Branch**

This is for possible interviews with Legion Regional Public Relations Officer Gina Edward. The Secretary asked if anyone present knew of any Dunkirk veterans in the Branch.

The President said that any Dunkirk Veterans would be getting on now and approaching 100 years old. The Chairman and President said that the Branch used to have some Dunkirk Veterans.

### **11.8 Update on Bulk Renewals**

Membership ended for non payers on 31<sup>st</sup> December. They will be sent letters and have until 1<sup>st</sup> March to renew. Copy to go to the Membership Secretary.

### **11.9 Letter from Director General On Executive Board Restructure (Printed)**

To Chairmen, also includes "Veterans Gateway" plans as in the Legion Magazine.

### **11.10 Team Brit (Motor Racing for injured ex service people) Update**

The Secretary will stop circulating these now the November 2016 minutes have gone out stating that these would no longer be circulated.

### **11.11 Marketing Emails to the Branch Email Address**

77 items since the November meeting.

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

### **12.1 Count**

The Secretary picked up the coin sorter from Clare Oldfield, the new Abingdon Branch PAO and got some useful advice from her.

Unfortunately the last collecting box was not available for a couple of weeks after the November meeting so the Treasurer, Hazel King and the Secretary counted the rest of the boxes and Remembrance Sunday bucket on 1<sup>st</sup> December in the Poppy Room at the Club.

The Poppy Appeal Organiser thanked the Treasurer who had an early start the next morning for his help and for composing a spreadsheet of the collection, Hazel King for her help and Patrick Muldoon who kept the Club open until they had loaded the cars at midnight. Also Graham Davies the Club Secretary who has said that there was no charge for use of the Poppy Room. The PAO suggested that he writes a letter of thanks to the Club.

### **No Objections.**

The PAO and Hazel King collected and counted the last box and paid all of the money into the Harwell Poppy Appeal account during the following week. There are a few Euros etc to go to County.

The totals were:

Chilton, Chilton Fields Estate and Curie Avenue: **£1274.12**

Harwell Village and Campus and Remembrance Sunday Bucket: **£2497.34**

Overall total: **£3771.46**

Discussion ensued:

- There were some complements about the amount raised.
- The Chairman said that there was a collecting box still at his grandson's workplace on Milton Park. It was said that this was likely to have been provided by Didcot Branch. The Secretary will give the Didcot Branch contact details to the Chairman.
- The President said that he took the thank you card back to Harwell School and thanked them for their magnificent effort. They were very happy with what they had raised.

The overall total last year was £4195.65 so this year's collection is about £400 down which may be down to the late organisation this year.

The PAO, Hazel King and the President have written and distributed the thank you cards to all of the business and house to house collectors.

The PAO has returned the coin sorter to Clare Oldfield. Unfortunately a catch that holds one container for sorted coins was broken during storage at the PAO's house. Mrs Oldfield and the PAO have checked the machine which works as before. The PAO informed Mrs. Oldfield that he will pay for any necessary repairs should any be required. He has emailed his thanks and suggested that he can follow up with a formal letter.

**Agreed by the Committee.**

### **12.2 Publicity**

The PAO informed the President and Chairman of the totals before Christmas as the Branch meeting was still 2 months away.

Hazel King arranged for the totals to go in the Harwell and Chilton Church service sheets and the Chilton total to go in the Chilton Chronicle. The PAO arranged for the Harwell total to go in the Harwell news.

The totals are on the Branch Poppy Appeal web page.

### **12.3 Other Donations**

Rutherford Appleton Laboratory donated their lost property change of £39.35 to the Poppy Appeal. The PAO counted this with their security guard and gave her a receipt.

The other donations paid in last month were £36.00

**The total from 1 Oct 2016 to date is £3846.81** (subject to confirmation).

### **12.4 Wreath Donation Cheques**

The PAO sent these cheques totalling £295 to County Fundraiser Sam Hickton at County HQ in December. Due to the Christmas post and County Office closure they were not received until earlier this month. The Treasurer confirmed that the Branch's cheque has been paid.

### **12.5 Unused Poppies, Collecting Boxes, Merchandise, Trays and Wreaths**

The PAO discussed availability of storage and future use of these items with Hazel King, the County Fundraiser, the County Membership Support Officer and Sue Brading at Aylesford and it was decided that:

- The poppies, collecting boxes and woven badges would be returned to Aylesford. This was arranged by Sue Brading and took place just before Christmas.
- All other merchandise and wreaths will be delivered to County HQ shortly.
- There is no room to store the trays locally and Aylesford cannot accept used trays unless in pristine condition so they will be destroyed and disposed of.

### **12.6 New PAO**

The PAO has informed the County Fundraiser that he is taking on this role.

The PAO thanked all who helped him in his first collection.

## **13. STANDARD BEARER REPORT**

### **13.1 Parade Marshal Refresher Course**

The Ceremonial Officer said that he had received an invitation from Laurence Butler Perks on behalf of the National Parade Marshal to Parade Marshal Refresher courses on two dates. Unfortunately he is not available for either date and he has replied to this effect. This was mentioned at County Conference – the location is Manchester which would mean a very early start from the Berkshire and Vale area and more regionalised locations would be better.

### **13.2 Letter of Thanks to Ian Clarke**

In hand.

### **13.3 Standard**

The Secretary said that the Standard Bearer had nothing to report.

## **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

### **14.1 Forces have first year since 1968 with no one killed on operations**

The Ceremonial Officer read out the first part of this Daily Telegraph article dated 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017:

“The Armed Forces have had their first year in nearly five decades without a soldier, sailor or airman being killed on operations. Ministry of Defence Figures show that 2016 was the first year without the death of a serviceman on operations since 1968. The end of Britain’s fighting in Afghanistan, a political unwillingness to put troops into combat missions and a current focus on instead training local forces away from the front line have contributed to a lower chance of casualties, military sources said.”

The full article is available on the Telegraph website.

It was stated that one service person was killed earlier this month and some service people have been sent on detachment earlier this month. Also there will be a memorial in London.

### **14.2 County Conference Report Saturday January 2017**

The Vice Chairman gave the following report:

The Conference was very straightforward this year with no laboured points

There will be a Branch Chairman’s Conference on 18<sup>th</sup> March at County HQ. It will include feedback from the County Chairman meeting with the National Chairman to be held on the previous weekend.

The County Strategic Plan includes the intention to get all Chairmen and Standard Bearers to attend the Commemorations at the Menin Gate Memorial for the end of World War 1 on 18<sup>th</sup> August next year. This would amount to 4,500 personnel.

The Address was given by Mrs Anny Read from the Legion Trustees Group. The Legion raised £46m last year and £35.5m from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 to date.

The Presentation was given by Dudley Wall who was a former soldier from Rodenisa, on his service life including in tenderfoot country and in South Africa. His connection to the UK was via his parents. It was very entertaining and interesting.

The Vice Chairman gave details of the Family Fun Day in the Open Forum.

The Vice Chairman passed the County reports, Agenda, and 2016 minutes issued at the meeting to the Secretary for storage.

**Secretary’s Note:** These will be retained until the next year’s documents are received.

### **14.3 County Committee Meeting January 2017 Report**

The Vice Chairman had attended this meeting as County Youth Officer. He reported:

He had encouraged support for the D Day events (as described in item 5 above). This was welcomed.

A Legion Branch officer had written to his MP in resistance to the current situation where Veterans are in court for what they did in wartime. The Vice Chairman had a copy of the

reply which appeared to be in a standard format. Some Veterans are concerned that former colleagues were being questioned about their actions whilst serving 20-30 years ago.

It was stated that the Legion is not political and we should not get involved in political issues. If Legion members choose to write to their MP or instructor then they must do so as individuals not on behalf of their Branch or Legion, though you can state you are a member of the Legion.

There was a discussion of the Small Branch Initiative. This is for Branches that can't fill the minimum number of Officers and Committee members can still operate (e.g. without a Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer). There was no certainty about what it will do or when it will start. One Branch is closing for this reason and can't wait for the initiative to start.

Garsington Opera Group would like members of the Armed Forces community to participate in a new production either on stage or backstage or front of house. This includes those currently serving, veterans, wounded and reservists. A poster was handed out which can be put on the Branch notice board.

#### **14.4 Jack Perry MBE**

The President reported that he had visited this member and congratulated him on this award which was well deserved.

#### **14.5 Harwell Village War Memorial**

John Belton reminded the meeting that his grandson had offered to the Parish Council last year to repair the Memorial with the suggestion of replacement of two of the three plaques so they match the newest plaque. He has not heard anything further. It is a non Legion matter and it is up to the Harwell resident Committee Members.

Discussion ensued including:

- The Chairman said that the Memorial is the responsibility of the Parish Council.
- The President said that some War Memorials are in a terrible state; people have short memories. No one wants to know the veterans including the government. Former Secretary Peter Cissel wrote at least three letters to the local MP with no response.
- The Secretary said that he had already been in contact with the Parish Council.

#### **14.6 January 2017 Legion Magazine Article**

The President mentioned the Standard Bearer's uniform and some discussion followed.

#### **14.7 Expenses**

The Treasurer said that members should keep track of expenses incurred when performing Legion duties such as travel, and keep any receipts so they can be approved and claimed back. There are funds available and no one should ever be out of pocket.

#### **15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.03 hours.