

The Royal British
Legion
Harwell Branch
BR1805

Monthly Branch Meeting
Held on 28th November 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, Harwell Poppy Appeal Organiser and Welfare Representative
Mrs S. E. Pateman - Membership Secretary
S. T. Haycox - Treasurer
*from item 5

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: H Benton, C. S. East, B. Mulford

3. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 2017 MEETING

All 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.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

The Chairman said that all Matters Arising would come within the remit of the different reports.

Secretary's Note: Item 5 was taken after item 7.

5. ARMISTICE AND REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICES

5.1 Report on the Parades and Services

The Ceremonial Officer reported:

Armistice Day Ceremony

The Ceremonial Officer was able to attend this year's ceremony. It was well attended. The President welcomed all present and gave the Exhortation and Kohima Epitaph. The Standard Bearer dipped the Branch Standard and Tony Hughes sounded the Last Post and Reveille. Kate Beswick and David Marsh were traffic marshals. He thanked all for their participation.

Remembrance Sunday Parades and Services

The Parade went well.

Traffic Marshals

The Parish Council could only provide Kate Beswick to marshal and she was also available to coordinate. The Ceremonial Officer put an appeal on the village facebook page a few days before the parade and 5 people volunteered. He liaised with Kate Beswick and the volunteers were briefed by Kate Beswick and the Ceremonial Officer on the day. The Parish Council were able to provide "High-Viz" jackets and the usual "Road Closed" signs.

There were comments on facebook that during last year's parade the traffic marshals were questioned by a motorist if they had authority to close the roads. This year the Ceremonial Officer printed copies of the Orders for the marshals.

Road Closure

The roads were closed at 10:40am when historically the Parade has left. We need to emphasise when the roads are closed, as one car came down the High Street after the closure.

Parade and War Memorial Service

The parade marched up the High Street and John McFarlane-Horgan played the bagpipes when the Parade reached the Gaveston Road junction. He played well despite the cold weather. The Ceremonial Officer thanked him on the day.

The War Memorial Service went well. The parade marched to the Church afterwards except the younger members of the parading groups who went to an activity in the Village Hall put on by the Church.

The Church Service was attended by most of the Standards and was followed by a short ceremony at the War Graves in the Cemetery.

Photographs

Photographs were taken by the Treasurer and Robert Girling on Sunday and on both days by Keith Beswick. These have been posted on the Harwell Branch Parades facebook page and many positive comments have been received.

Thank you letters will be written to the participants and parading groups.

Comments included:

- John Belton said that the young ATC cadet who carried the Branch Standard looked very smart. The President suggested that the Branch writes a letter of thanks. The Ceremonial Officer said that the Standard Bearer had briefed the cadet and he did very well. He offered to write the letter.
- The Chairman thanked the Ceremonial Officer for his organisation on the day – it was really brilliant.
- The President reported that he visited Harwell School on Friday 10th November. The pupils had compiled a set of questions for him, which he did his best to answer. Year 5 pupils attended the Armistice Day ceremony.

The Secretary reported on other preparations and actions:

5.2 Road Closure Orders

The Secretary forwarded these to the Parish Council and Thames Travel. He didn't see any notices on the bus stops this year. He put copies of the orders on lampposts at the start and end of each closure on 9th November and took them down after the parades.

The timings for opening and closing the roads were all complied on both days as far as the Secretary could observe, except on Remembrance Sunday the youth groups had already started arriving and spilling onto Barrow Road at 10.15am.

The Ceremonial Officer and Secretary said that there is not a lot we can do about this.

5.3 Invitations to Parading Groups

Remembrance Sunday:

Acceptances, numbers attending and requests for wreaths were received from Didcot ATC, Harwell Scouts and Guides, the Harwellian Club and Parish Council. No reply was received from Didcot Army Cadet Force.

Armistice Day:

Harwell School accepted but Little Pippins were unable to attend as it was a Saturday.

The Ceremonial Officer will write thank you letters to Didcot ATC, Scouts (including first aid), Guides, and Harwellian Club. The Secretary will write to Harwell School.

5.4 Requests for Help

The Rector confirmed that the Farm car park was available and car park signs would be put out by the churchwardens.

The Treasurer and Keith Beswick were formally requested to take photographs.

The Ceremonial Officer wrote a Final Instructions brief which he distributed to all participants and parading groups.

The Secretary will write thank you letters to the Church, Bugler, Bag Piper, Photographers, Parish Council and Gardening Club.

5.5 Publicity

Details were published in the Church broadsheet and put on the Branch website and a poster put up in Harwell News.

The Ceremonial Officer has composed a report for the Harwell news which has been approved by the Chairman and Rector. The Secretary has submitted it and he will also post it on the Branch Website with the bucket total which is £134.83.

5.6 Wreaths – See also PAO report

The Secretary wired the wreaths together around the War Memorial after the Service. A RAOB wreath and a posy were laid in the days after the service.

5.7 Service Sheets

A total of 700 sheets with 285 for the parade were agreed. The Church Administrator printed 650, as the Secretary had 50 left from last year. The Secretary collected and divided up the sheets for the parade and distributed them at Townsend on the day.

The remaining 415 service sheets were distributed to the War Memorial Congregation by Mike Pepper and Christina Wood of Harwell Church. There were between 50 and 75 left over, giving an estimated 350 people in the congregation.

5.8 Timetable

Version 2 was completed and distributed before the services by email. The Secretary apologized that the paper copies were only delivered this Sunday – due to a fault with his printer.

The Secretary will compose a third and final version once all actions have been completed.

5.9 Rutherford Appleton Laboratory Ceremony

The Ceremonial Officer reported that a representative from RAL had contacted the Branch to request a wreath and advice about dipping the Union Flag at this ceremony which was held on Friday 10th at RAL.

The Poppy Appeal Organiser supplied a wreath, the Ceremonial Officer provided advice and the Standard Bearer offered to attend.

The RAL representative reported that about 80-90 people attended, and this was the second year that the ceremony was run.

6. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

There were no new members this month on the MAP system and no applications. Hazel Benton, Chilton Poppy Appeal Organiser is completing an application which she will pass to the Membership Secretary in due course.

7. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

7.1 Archive Boxes in club

Disposal in hand.

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

In hand.

7.3 Branch Web Page

Updates to the Committee and Meeting pages are complete, updates to the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance pages are in hand – details are listed under the relevant items.

7.4 Awards

Consideration for more awards is ongoing.

7.5 Distribution of Branch Minutes and AGM Minutes.

The Secretary wrote the October 2017 minutes and distributed them and the November Circular via email.

Due to a printer fault the paper copies were only printed and delivered over the weekend and yesterday. The Secretary has not yet sent them to David Marsh to put on the web page.

7.6 Printing Costs:

October Minutes and November County Circular approximately 77 sheets: £ 3.08

Other printing approximately 64 sheets: £ 2.25.

The Secretary has had the colour and black ink cartridges refilled at £10 and £7.50 respectively (25% off from loyalty card).

7.7 2017 AGM Actions

The minutes are in hand.

The Committee web page has been updated to the current Officers and Committee and the Meetings web page has been updated that the AGM has taken place.

An updated Officers and Committee list has been put on the Branch notice board.

The MS1 Branch information, Officers and Committee form is in hand, the MS1B form is also required from the Standard Bearer.

7.8 Welfare

Still no reply from Welfare about help for victims of the door step "Council Worker" con. (ref September 2017 AOB).

7.9 Branch Memorabilia

Club Committee Chair Kevin Lewis has contacted the Branch: There is a requirement from the Legion that the Club does not have any pretence to be a Legion Club now it is disaffiliated.

The Club Committee has removed the external Legion items and badges, and they are now looking at the internal items including Branch memorabilia such as notice boards, Legion posters, regimental plaques and the Officers Board. They need us to write back soon to confirm ownership of the memorabilia inside the Club. They also would like in future to move the items to a "Branch area" within the Club with our permission and help.

Discussion ensued including:

- The President and Chairman said that the regimental plaques were brought by different people, many of whom have since passed away.
- John Belton said that the Guinea Pigs brought their plaque.
- It was stated that it was important that these items were not just thrown away.
- The Chairman suggested that the plaques could be moved to the Poppy Room.
- The Treasurer suggested that a representative from the Club Committee could be invited to attend a Branch meeting to discuss this matter.
- Geoff Street said that we don't want to cut off ties to the Club.

It was agreed that the Secretary writes a reply to the Club Committee confirming that the memorabilia belongs to the Branch, thanking them for the opportunity to consider future location of the items and stating that we are willing to discuss any option.

8. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 116

One member, George Noble, has passed away.

8.1 Membership Renewal

95 members have renewed so far. Members still have a chance to renew. John Belton said that in the latest County Circular it was stated that a lot of people have had problems renewing.

8.2 Spreadsheet

The Membership Secretary has completed the new membership spreadsheet which replaces the old one composed by the late Club Chairman Cyril Balderston.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 3rd October 2017:

HARWELL BRANCH

Current Account:	£ 213.86
B.F.I. Account	<u>£ 1007.62</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>£ 1221.48</u>

The Treasurer said that we are doing sufficiently well.

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 2017 County Circular (Printed)

Attachments:

- Cayley Cup and Piroet Shield Application Forms
- Minutes of County Conference 2017
- Berkshire County Accounts 2016-17

Correction received separately: Vice Chairman's name is Jim Sibbald.

10.2 Harwell RBL Branch Memorabilia in Harwellian Club

10.3 MAP Updates

- Discussion groups on Training and GP90

10.4 County Poppy Appeal Updates

- Thanks for your work
- Appeal for help moving a giant Union Jack table donated by a PR company.

10.5 Spam emails

One this month – a fake UPS invoice to the Secretary's MAP email.

10.6 Marketing Emails to the Branch Website Email Address

91 Items since the October 2017 meeting (4 weeks). Also 3 emails forwarded to the Club Secretary and the Branch Memorabilia query.

11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:

11.1 D Day Service Wreaths

Chasing of organisations for missing BACS donations is in hand.

11.2 Remembrance Sunday Wreaths

Wreaths were distributed to RAL, Chilton Church, Cothill House School, two to Didcot ATC, Harwell Scouts, Harwell Guides, Harwellian Club, Harwell Parish Council and two to the Branch. Five were distributed beforehand and rest on the day.

Donations have been received from all the above organisations except the Club and Branch (and RAL via BACS to be confirmed). Total £152 so far including £25 in October.

Discussion ensued regarding the Branch's donation for the wreaths, concluding with this proposal:

PROPOSAL: That the Branch donates £50 to the Poppy Appeal in respect of the two Legion Wreaths laid on Remembrance Sunday.

PROPOSED: Ceremonial Officer SECONDED: Geoff Street CARRIED

11.3 Bucket Collection at Remembrance Sunday

The Chilton and Harwell Poppy Appeal Organisers collected at Townsend and the High Street Service, collecting £134.83. The Chilton PAO left the Chilton service early to get there. The Harwell PAO was very grateful for her help.

11.4 Wooden Crosses on Harwell War Graves

The Harwell PAO put out approximately 58 crosses - two graves had crosses on already and he missed the WW1 grave (which a Branch member placed a cross on).

Discussion ensued regarding a donation in respect of the crosses:

- The Poppy Appeal Organiser said that he obtained the crosses from the Poppy Appeal free of charge, but they have said that he could not give the crosses away.
- The Membership Secretary said that she has an expense claim to submit.
- The Ceremonial Officer said that the County Conference meal will cost £10.
- The Treasurer said that a donation of £60 will leave £100 in the Current Account until the Membership Fees arrive in March, less the expenses described above. We can draw money from the BFI account, but we are doing this more regularly. There are not many more expenses expected between now and March.
- The Ceremonial Officer suggested that £100 is moved from the BFI account to the current account.

PROPOSAL: That the Branch donates £60 to the Poppy Appeal in respect of the approx. 58 wooden crosses put on the War Graves.

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

11.5 Remembrancetide Collection 28 Oct – 12 Nov 2017

Harwell

Two further boxes were delivered – one more to the campus and one to the School for old £1 coins (following the Ceremonial Officer's facebook post) making a total of 39 boxes.

Gaynor Dingley, County Fundraiser, asked the Harwell PAO to collect a box from Resmed on the Campus. The company said that they brought the box with them when they moved from Abingdon to the Campus. He agreed with Clare Oldfield, Abingdon PAO, that it will go to the Abingdon collection.

The Harwell PAO did not advertise for house to house collectors on facebook as time too short and other enquiries were unsuccessful so there were four in all. They covered a large portion of the village and the Harwell PAO is grateful for their efforts.

The house to house merchandise was topped up as required. One collector said that he and the School had run out of the Children's wristbands and could he have more to take in which were provided. He sold at least 25 and his son took 35 into the school and sold them all raising £35 which went to the school collecting box. The Harwell PAO suggested that he writes to thank him for his effort.

Agreed by the Committee.

The Harwell PAO and President have collected all the boxes and trays except one which will be picked up shortly.

Chilton

The Chilton PAO has collected her 20 boxes.

11.6 Count and Totals

The Treasurer, Harwell and Chilton PAOs counted the Chilton boxes and half of the Harwell boxes on Thursday at the Poppy Room which was provided free by the Club. They used the Abingdon Branch's coin sorter loaned by Abingdon PAO Clare Oldfield. A non-UK coin got jammed in the coin sorter, which took some time to get at and remove, and despite best efforts they finished at nearly midnight.

They counted the rest of the Harwell boxes on Friday afternoon at another location. There was another small problem with the coin sorter that was quickly remedied. The money has been paid into the bank.

Total for Chilton (all boxes collected and counted):	£1396.73
Total for Harwell (one box yet to be collected and counted):	£2631.73
Overall	£4028.46

For comparison, the 2016 total was: £3,771.46.

Old £1 coins: Harwell £185, including £40 from the School, and Chilton: £57.

The Chilton PAO will publicise the totals in the local newsletters once the final box is counted and banked.

The Harwell PAO thanked the Treasurer, Chilton PAO, Abingdon PAO and Patrick Muldoon for their great help with the count and banking the money.

11.7 Return of Remaining Stock

As we have minimal storage, all the collecting boxes, Paper Poppies, crosses and merchandise will go back to Aylesford.

The Kids Packs and coin sorter will go back to Abingdon Branch who provided them.

The Poppy Appeal won't pay for return of wreaths so the Harwell PAO will store the unused RBL, ACF and three plain wreaths.

Last year the Poppy Appeal warehouse only accepted the trays back if in perfect condition for reissue. If this is still the case the Harwell PAO will try to arrange storage otherwise they will be disposed of.

11.8 Poppy Appeal Volunteer Survey

In hand.

11.9 Report to Poppy Appeal HQ

The Harwell PAO will submit the report.

11.10 Total

With the further donation at AOB in the October 2017 meeting and not recounting the £25 wreath donation received in October 2017:

Total so far is £4340.46

The Poppy Appeal Web page will be updated appropriately.

Thanks to all who have helped.

12. STANDARD BEARER REPORT

The Ceremonial Officer reported that the Branch Standard had been paraded at the Armistice Day Ceremony and the Remembrance Sunday Service.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

13.1 Remembrance Sunday Photographs

John Belton proposed a vote of thanks to the Treasurer for his photographs of the Remembrance Sunday Parade which are very good.

Agreed by All Present.

13.2 Air Training Corps Award Ceremonial Officer

John Belton congratulated the Ceremonial Officer on his recent ATC Long Service and Good Conduct award.

Agreed by all present.

13.3 Vale of the White Horse District Council Community "Unsung Hero" Award

The Ceremonial Officer had mentioned his nomination for this award at the last meeting. He attended the presentation lunch with the Secretary as guest. It became apparent that all who received invitations had won. The Ceremonial Officer received a certificate and small glass award. It was good to have his work recognised as an Unsung Hero.

The Chairman congratulated the Ceremonial Officer on this, agreed by all present.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 30th January 2018

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