



We will remember them



Tower Poppy Moat

On the 11 November 2014, the last ceramic poppy was planted at the highly successful Tower of London WW1 Commemorative Art installation, 'Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red'.



British Legion Standard Bearer, were present, (including Michael Foster with the Greater London District (GLD) Standard) to take part in the closing of this particular Commemorative Event. The Remembrance Service was broadcast on various National TV stations. WW1 Commemorative Remembrance services increased demand for Standard Bearer over the past month and year, raising the profile of TRBL as the custodians of Remembrance. Mr Hubble the Standard Bearer for St George's Sub Branch is seen here at the Poppy Moat and was able to salute the much-loved Prince Henry (Harry) as he attended the Westminster Field of Remembrance on Thursday 6



November; Harry placed a poppy cross of Remembrance at the field of crosses placed at Westminster Abbey on behalf of bereaved military families. More Photos and videos of Westminster Field of Remembrance:-

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/96629202@N06/sets/72157648799310898/>

LIFE Member Award - Jeff Duley, Eastcote Branch



Often members ask "what would they need to do to be awarded the Meritorious RBL LIFE Award", and a model example to look at is Jeff Duley's service to the Legion, his inexorable commitment to the Poppy Appeal, HM Forces and the Branch. Jeff has raised the profile of the Legion, forging links with the RAF at

Northolt, Local Council and Community groups to promote projects and incentives which further TRBL aims and objectives. After the well attended (circa 1,000), Eastcote Parade and Service on Sunday 9 November, Jeff Duley was presented with his Award at Eastcote RBL premises by local MP, Nick Hurd, in the presence of Branch President, Cllr Catherine Dann, the current Mayor of The London Borough of Hillingdon, along with local dignitaries, RBL members, family members and friends. Jeff found it

very emotional and surprisingly for him, was nearly rendered speechless. Jeff felt that the time he has spent fundraising/recruiting etc. is nothing to what the HM Forces and families have given, so that we, in this country, can enjoy the freedoms and life styles we enjoy today.

Congratulations Jeff.

GLD London Remembers Parade - September 2014



A fantastic turnout was witnessed on Sunday 21 September 2014, as massed Standards of the Greater London District, WS, cadets, RBL Riders, Chelsea Pensioners and the Surbiton Youth Marching Band and members, paraded through Richmond High Street, for the third year since the GLD was formed. The GLD was honoured to have the National Chairman, John Chrisford in attendance, who gave a speech at the Richmond Club House. Thanks to GLD Parade Marshal, Reg Burton and GLD Ceremonial Officer Stan Heath's dedication, continuity for a major RBL presence in the London area was ensured once more.

Photos by kind permission of Joanne Stevens can be viewed online at <http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/greater-london/london-membership/annual-district-parade-2014>



NFL Wembley - Ra Ra Ra

Jacksonville Jaguars Cheerleaders dropped by the London Pop In Centre in support of the Poppy Appeal in the run up to the NFL at Wembley this November. The NFL matches were raising funds for the Royal British Legion and were a sell out. A big thank you to our allies.



L-R: April, Emily, Chole.

The 'Tigers' Came Home



Haig House staff and GLD members showed their support for soldiers and veterans of the local infantry regiment - The Princess of Wales's Regiment, nicknamed The 'Tigers' - as they returned from operation duty in Germany on 24 October 2014. A serving soldier had dropped by the London Pop In Centre a few days before the homecoming Parade asking for the Legion to show support for them and luckily for us, Mr Wildish The Bromley Branch Standard Bearer, at short notice, came to the rescue for a GLD Standard to be in attendance. All hands were on deck as suitable branded items were handed out to crowds and schoolchildren who had joined the Legion contingent and enthusiastically waved our Legion flags.

The 'Tigers' were in no doubt that the Royal British Legion was there for them.

London Poppy Day - 30 Oct 2014



On the Tuesday before Thursday's **London Poppy Day** kicked off, London Mayor, Boris Johnson launched the mega London Poppy Day, raising the roof of a poppy-adorned Liverpool Street station in an unlikely alliance with English actor Brian Blessed.

What began in 2006 as a group of 10 collectors has become the largest street collection event of its kind, raising over £2.6 million in eight years. With nearly 40 per cent of that sum from last year. Some 2,500 uniformed personnel, veterans and volunteers converged at tube and mainline stations to collect donations for poppies with entertainment from the likes of Joss Stone, who sang her Poppy Appeal single No Man's land (Green Fields of France) in Covent Garden.

Blessed is one of 14 familiar voices that featured in public announcements at stations across London. The message reminded commuters at Waterloo, Cannon Street, Fenchurch Street, St James's Park and Theydon Bois to wear their poppy.



Londoners could spot RBL branded train stations, buses, Underground and Overground trains, thanks to Network Rail and Transport for London (TfL), and the return of the celeb-laden London

Poppy Routemaster, going from Covent Garden to Leadenhall Market via the Tower of London. Marks & Spencer donated £12,500 worth of food vouchers to provide lunch for all volunteers. Britain's train companies provided free rail travel into London for all volunteer collectors including veterans and TfL offered free travel for all uniformed Service personnel and veterans collecting on London Poppy Day. Barclaycard, for the third year in a row, had collectors deployed with contactless payment terminals. With more consumers choosing to pay by credit and debit cards; Londoners could make quick and easy donations. Contactless payments are really taking off, especially here in the Capital where around half of all the UK's contactless spend is made. Last year, Londoners donated £28,000 through the Barclaycard terminals to the Poppy Appeal.

And a Bonanza year it has proved to be, with a record breaking total of **£1.25m. WOW.**



More photos of LPD

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/96629202@N06/sets/72157649126893511/>

Poppy Appeal 2014-15

This year, signs are that already the Poppy Appeal is going to be a bumper year. PAO and collectors were needing to restock and many items that hadn't been best sellers in the past, were sold out!

LIVE ON



TO THE MEMORY OF THE FALLEN AND THE FUTURE OF THE LIVING

This is the new strapline that has been launched with the new Advertising Campaign for the Royal British Legion. It replaces 'Shoulder to Shoulder with all who Serve'.

Key messages are:

- When you donate to the Poppy Appeal you help:
 - bereaved families to Live On
 - wounded Service men and women to Live On
 - younger veterans seeking employment and housing to Live On
 - older veterans needing age-related care to Live On

Branch Administration - Reminders

Card Returns

All unpaid /uncollected cash paying members cards need to be returned to the CDI unit with the returns form before 31 January 2015 at the very latest to receive a credit back to the Branch subscription Account. Any cards that are retained by the branch after this date will be charged for them. The CDI address is at the top of the returns form, they should NOT be sent to Haig House.

Application forms MS4

The MS4/12 form will be obsolete by 31 December 2014. Branches should order the new form so they have current stock as of 1 January 2015. Any applications completed on the MS4/12 need to be returned to Haig House well before the Christmas holiday period to ensure they get processed before January. Good practice would be to destroy the old forms to avoid an official inadvertently using it in 2015.



MS1

Branches should return their MS1 to Haig House by 31 December 2014.

Deceased Members

Sadly as the Membership grows older and Members pass to higher service, a recent trend has emerged, with wives of the deceased member wanting to take the place of their husband's on the Membership database record. As in the case with an NI No. or medical record, it is not possible to transfer the unique ID of the Membership Number to another person. A fresh application is required for a wife/husband/partner to become a member of the Legion once their RBL other half has passed away.

WW1 Commemorative Tree Planting

25 Elms and 5 Yew trees have been taken up as part of the GLD's collaboration with the Conservation Foundation's, super Elm and Yew Tree WW1 Commemorative project. The incentive is to see 100 trees planted across London by the end of 2018, so the GLD is on target. Branches need to keep up the momentum to promote this to local schools and community groups. Elms are supplied as saplings, planted properly with care and attention, they should put on 6ft of growth in the first season and hopefully be a fine specimen for a Remembrance service to mark the end of WW1 by 2018. More information on how to obtain free Elms. (Yews incur a low cost)

<http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/media/3855580/WWI-Tree-Planting-Commemoration-2014FINAL.pdf>

William Perkins School & Greenford RBL Tree Planting – Press release



On 11 November 2014, William Perkin CofE High School held two Remembrance Day Services commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the start of World War 1.

At 9.45am selected students, staff and visitors attended a tree planting ceremony. The local Greenford branch of The Royal British Legion donated a Hornbeam tree and two Elm saplings to the school. The significance of the Hornbeam tree goes back to the fierce battle on the Western Front in July 1916 in the area called Delville Wood (later referred to as Devils Wood) in the Somme. Following the battle, the landscape was littered with just the stumps of what had been trees except for a single Hornbeam tree. This same tree survives to this day although its trunk is studded with shards of metal artillery.

The trees planted at William Perkin will remind the community of the soldiers in the Great War and serve as a sign of hope, reminding students to work together - across their diverse backgrounds - for understanding and peace.

LIVE ON TO THE MEMORY OF THE FALLEN AND THE FUTURE OF THE LIVING

Ms Alice Hudson, Executive Head teacher, said *"We have been delighted to work with The Royal British Legion to make this lasting memorial to the sacrifice of young men in World War 1"*

Steve Pound MP commented: *"Generations past fought for the freedoms that today's generation enjoy and the simple but moving ceremony today paid tribute to the sacrifices made and tribute to those who fell and to the families that mourn...The pupils who took part with such dignity in the service of commemoration and the tree planting showed that at William Perkin respect is still paid and gratitude expressed so well... I hope that the hornbeam tree planted today will grow and flourish as strongly as this great school and give shelter and inspiration to the pupils of tomorrow."*

Following this, all students and staff gathered in the playground at 11.00am in order to participate in an Act of Remembrance. Mr Bedford, Assistant Headteacher led a short Remembrance Service which included readings and prayers to remember those who had lost their lives and those who had been affected by war. The Last Post was sounded by a student from Twyford CofE High School followed by a two minute silence.



Youth Affiliation

Every Man Remembered - Statue Unveiling

Over 1 million Commonwealth Service men and women were killed during the First World War. The losses were felt in almost every town and village in the UK and throughout what was then the British Empire. The Royal British Legion, working in partnership with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, with the support of Ancestry.co.uk, would like to see each and every one of these men and women individually commemorated throughout the WW1 centenary years. 'Every Man Remembered' is an opportunity for you to be part of a great collective act of Remembrance. More details

LIVE ON TO THE MEMORY OF THE FALLEN AND THE FUTURE OF THE LIVING

online at

<http://www.everymanremembered.org/>



L-R: Lisa MacGregor, Sean Hazon, [Pixie Lott](#), James Andrews, Sanjog Gharti.

Strictly Come Dancing Stars teamed up with newly Affiliated Cadets from Clapton and Hackney Sea Cadets and the 56 (Woolwich) Squadron ATC on the 7 November 2014 for a Strictly Come Dancing Remembrance feature, that was screened on Remembrance Sunday 9 November at 19:45hrs.

More photos at this link:-

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/96629202@N06/sets/72157648780012498/>

Barkingside Branch - joined up working with Air Cadets



Air cadets from the 4F (Ilford) Squadron selling poppies at Newbury Park tube station

When their commanding officer called for volunteers to collect for the Poppy Appeal at their final parade, amazingly every cadet present volunteered without prompting, which meant Barkingside had at least 12 cadets each evening, to be deployed at Newbury Park tube

station. John Coombes, Chairman at Barkingside Branch, was over the moon and was quoted in the Ilford Recorder as saying, "I think it is great they are getting involved and they are brilliant cadets"

"It is extremely important young people are involved, because they are the future of the Legion"

Merton Volunteer Police Cadets proud to march with the Royal British Legion in Mitcham's Remembrance Sunday Parade

On Sunday 9 November 2014, Merton's Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC) were proud to join the Remembrance Sunday parade in Mitcham. For the first time, the Merton Police contingent included 15 new Junior Volunteer Police Cadets, young people from St Marks Academy and other local schools aged 10 - 12.

As the first VPC unit in London to be granted formal youth group affiliation to the Royal British Legion, the Merton police cadets were proud to live up to the Royal British Legion motto, "Shoulder to Shoulder with All Who Serve".



This year's Mitcham Parade marched from the British Legion Hall in St Marks Road through Mitcham Town Centre to the Mitcham War Memorial in Cricket Green.

The Remembrance Service was conducted by the Reverend Nigel Stone, Vicar of St Mark's Mitcham. Wreaths were laid by Siobhan McDonagh, MP, local councillors and Merton Council representatives.

Other wreaths were laid: Chairman of the Mitcham RBL, Mr Allan Barley (who also represented the RAF); Merton Borough Commander; Detective Chief Superintendent Stuart Macleod, and other Cadet organisations.

The two Merton Volunteer Police Cadet wreaths were laid by Senior Cadet Sam Watson and Junior Cadet Aaron Gascoyne.

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The Salute was taken by Deputy Lieutenant The Right Honourable Sir John Wheeler and the Mayor of Merton Councillor Agatha Akyigyina, with Mr Allan Barley, Chairman of the Mitcham Branch, Royal British Legion.

Cadet Sam Watson said "I am really proud to take part in the Centenary Parade today, and lay our wreath to remember all who have Served."

PC Marco Cetara, Schools PC at St Marks Academy and co-leader of the Junior VPC, said "Our Juniors have only just been issued with their new uniforms, and practised for today's Parade. Thanks to all our excellent Cadets for representing the police service so well, and doing such a great job today at such a significant major local event on Remembrance Sunday."

City of London Poppy Appeal Opening of the Garden of Remembrance Service at St Pauls



L-R: Rita Orange, Norman Espie , Rachel Perkins
Standard Bearers in the crypt, getting ready for forming up and marching out to the Garden.

On Tuesday 3 November 2014 the annual Remembrance Service was well attended with 14 RBL Standards. Terry Whittles the National Vice Chairman planted the GLD Cross on behalf of the GLD Chairman.

More photos

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/96629202@N06/sets/72157649202573382/>



Standard Bearers Training - 2015

With more activity and demand for RBL Standard Bearers due to the WW1 Commemorative Period and other Military anniversaries, our Standard Bearers have never been busier.

The GLD is privileged to use the Territorial Army Centre in Balham, 213 Balham High Road, London, SW17 7BQ, for Standard Bearer Training Sessions.

All on a Wednesday evening 6.30pm - 8.00pm:-

- January 21st
- February 18th
- March 18th
- April 22nd
- May 13th
- June 17th
- July 15th
- September 30th

Just turn up with Standard, sling and gloves, no need to book. Anyone wishing to attend may enquire with Parade Marshal, Reg Burton on 020 8894 9420 for more details.

The story of the Christmas truce



Christmas 1914 and the war wasn't over. No-one knew better than the men stuck in freezing cold trenches. In many places along the front line, the German and British front trenches were within earshot of each other and opposing soldiers exchanged seasonal greetings and sang songs. Some had even decorated their trenches.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, many soldiers ventured out into no-man's-land, where they shook hands, exchanged food and souvenirs, and sang carols together. Some famously played games of football. Burial parties gathered up the dead in safety and took them away.

This poignant episode shows how little enmity there actually was between the ordinary British and German soldiers at this point in the war. The truce was not universal and in some areas fighting continued during the day, but it was widely and positively reported in the British press at the time and has become one of the most legendary episodes of WW1.



Even when the fighting continued, soldiers tried to make Christmas special. Some men enjoyed food hampers or other treats received from family or well-wishers, while others used whatever they could find to cook their own Christmas meal.

RBL Corporate Partnership chocolate

Sainsbury's has unveiled a poignant new advertising campaign this Christmas called 'Christmas is for sharing'. The advert features an interpretation of the 1914 WW1 Christmas truce and was made in partnership with The Royal British Legion to mark Sainsbury's 20 years of support for the Legion. In the advert, a young British soldier ventures from his trench into No-Man's-Land to greet his rivals and initiate a football game. He shares a moment of connection and friendship with a young German soldier and as the truce ends and they return to their trenches, the German soldier is moved to discover that his British friend has hidden the gift of a chocolate bar in his pocket.

The chocolate bar, featured in the advert is now on sale for £1.00 at Sainsbury's with **100% of profit** from each bar being donated to the Legion. In the first week the advert was broadcast, they were selling at 5,000 bars per hour.

Arrival of the Unknown Warrior, Service - 10 November 2014

The British tomb of The Unknown Warrior holds an unidentified British soldier killed on a European battlefield during the First World War. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, on 11 November 1920, simultaneously with a similar interment of a French unknown soldier at the Arc de Triomphe in France, making both tombs the first to honour the unknown dead of the First World War.

Every year on 10 November around 8.15 pm there is a wreath laying Remembrance Service held at Victoria Station on platform 8 to mark



the arrival of the coffin when it arrived at the platform at 8.32pm that evening and remained overnight under escort of the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards. (A plaque at Victoria Station marks the site). In this poignant WW1

Commemorative year, a remarkable 34 Standards from The Royal British Legion and Regimental Associations attended, the majority of which were RBL Standards. A carriage similar to the one that the coffin arrived in, was on display for the Service.

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District Secretary - Job title change

Over the past year Head Office set up a working group to look at the role and remit of the County/District Secretary. The purpose of which was to align the role to the New Ways of Working - following the Pathways to Growth Strategy implementation.

The report from the CS Working Group was presented to the Board of Trustees, who came to a decision to accept the recommendations, for the job title to change to 'Membership Support Officer - (Region /area)'.

The District Secretary for the GLD as of 1st of November 2014 is now referred to as the 'Membership Support Officer -Greater London District'.



Above: Sarah Stephenson MSO - GLD, at London Poppy Day, October this year.

Mayor of London's Veterans' Reception - 24 Sept 2014



Boris and Rob

In appreciation of our UK Armed Forces Veterans, Boris Johnson - Mayor Of London hosted an evening reception at City Hall. The GLD Chairman, Rob Richier was invited along with his nominated guests. Rob along with RBL Members: Staff Sgt Ithia of 144 Para Field Ambulance; Dave Booth, ex Royal Signaler; Tom Emerson, who has recently finished a tour of Afghanistan with the Infantry and Penny Bell-Wright, GLD Officer, were in attendance representing the GLD.

At the reception, our Chairman and members experienced a wonderful opportunity to meet up with many other serving and ex-service

personnel, as well as the high profile character Boris Johnson, Mayor of London.

In his address to his guests, he thanked the service community for all they had done for the country and how proud he was of them all. Rob found it particularly interesting to talk with some of our WW2 fighter pilots from the Polish Fighter Pilot Squadron, who boasted of being 95 and 102 years old. It was a pleasure for Rob to listen to their stories of how they settled in England after the war. True to military form, following the event Rob went for a few beers with a current fighter pilot, Squadron Leader, Jamie Norris, who shared his thoughts on how well the Legion were doing and the valuable work they carried out.

The night also served as a Military Charities networking experience, where Rob caught up with Sue Faridi from the Stoll Foundation and Sean Bonnington from the Army Benevolent Fund, on their Service Charity work.

From the 9th floor Living Room at City Hall, Rob and his guests enjoyed the magnificent view, over looking the Tower of London, Tower Bridge, HMS Belfast and this great city of ours, spreading out from the banks of the River Thames. While they sampled yummy petit fours and wine, they listened to the Military Wives' Choir from Colchester.

All in all it was a fantastic evening and great to see the Mayor's appreciation for serving and ex-serving members for the UK Armed Forces.

Chairman's message

Just a few words prior to Christmas. Throughout the year we had undertaken quite a lot of work in establishing how the Greater London District is progressing and how we should move forward for 2015. It was good to have such a positive response from branches on the 'Branch Visit' initiative that was put in place after the AGM. The GLD Committee officials have visited around 25% of our Branches, with feedback such as:-

- thank you for visiting
- it's about time someone made the effort
- this hasn't happened before.

I personally have visited GLD Branches: Earl Haig, Chelsea & Kensington; Greater London City Hall; Petts Wood; Safeways, as well as The London Riders Branch Meetings. I've been out and about popping in at the Harrow, Richmond, Chingford, Romford Clubs; tree planting in Stepney, attending a Summer Fair in Southgate, visiting The Rifles Assoc., manning stands at Open day events at The Honourable Artillery Company and RAF Northolt and appearing in EastEnders, the opening of the 'Pop

In' Centre at Haig House and heading up one of our own GLD led WW1 Remembrance Services at the Machine Gun Corps Memorial. On my radar are visits to GLD Branches: Hackney, Eastcote, Hillingdon & Distr., Charlton & Blackheath, East & Central Lewisham, Bexleyheath & Welling, all of which, have indicated they would like a visit. Hopefully, I will be able to prior to Christmas.

Thank you for all your efforts during the hectic Remembrance Tide period and for the Poppy Appeal throughout the coming year.

Wishing you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year. Hope to see you at the GLD AGM at Harrow

Rob Richier

*'When you go home, tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow, we gave our today.'*



Greater London District Committee

Alan Ronaldson in October resigned from the GLD Committee.

Name	Position	Local Branch Member
Rob Richier	Chairman	Walthamstow
Reg Pinney	Vice Chairman	Southgate
Joanne Stevens	Treasurer	Elm Park
Phil Beckinsale		Harrow
Penny Bell-Wright	DPRO	Richmond
Bryan Binning		Greenford
Stan Bonner		Chingford
Irene Brockey		Sunbury
Robert Cantwell		Chingford
Chad Carress		Croydon
Griff Griffin		Romford
Ray Harris		Southgate
Jim Lowther		Chiswick
Syed Mahmood		Ilford
Peter Twidle		Hillingdon & District
Jack Weedon		Ilford

By Appointment

Welfare Rep	Ken Sprowles
Standard Bearer	Michael Foster
Ceremonial Officer	Stan Heath
Parade Marshal	Reg Burton
WS, Met. Central Rep.	Janet Salter
Membership Support Officer	-London, Sarah Stephenson.

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sstephenson@britishlegion.org.uk

Website:

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/greater-london>

Conference Committee

Penny Bell-Wright
Phil Beckinsale
Ken Sprowles
David Justice
Finola Turner

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