

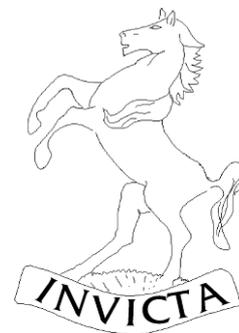


KENT COUNTY NEWS

TRBL South East Area Office (Kent)
Royal British Legion Village
Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NL

Membership Support Officer

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Registered Charity 219279

Welfare & Fundraising

via Contact Centre - 0808 802 8080

County website: www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/kent

November 2015

BRANCH SECRETARIES: PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ITEMS IN THIS MONTHLY CIRCULAR SHOULD FORM PART OF THE REPORT TO YOUR BRANCH COMMITTEE

COUNTY CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

As you read this edition you will be well into the Poppy collecting and the Remembrancetide events. Please remember to send in details of any special activities for next month's News. A short worded article and a photo will be helpful. our MSO (Tony West) has very little time to edit or rewrite articles.

For those that have't heard, last year throughout Kent we raised £1,532,752.97 for the Appeal which was 20% up on the previous year and almost 6% higher than the National increase of 14.1%. So a huge thank you to all who helped and we hope that we can at least match this total again this year which will end in September 2016.

My thanks go to Aussie Walker who during my absence (due to a holiday) took on my role and the organisation on the day, of the County Standard Bearers Competition. There were five entries and a good presentation of standard bearing was given by all. The full results are shown in this newsletter.

I must also thank all the standard bearers who turned out for the Thanet Festival of Remembrance. This is a really important annual remembrance event not only for Thanet but also for Kent. Thank you for your continued support.

Both the Poppy Launches went well this year. The Chairman of KCC was delighted with the Civic Launch and our two ambassadors were well received. The public event at Bluewater was well attended and the Poppy stall raised over £2,000 on the Sunday alone. The official Poppy Shop is also in Bluewater for the entire period and if you could get near it they were doing great sales in all the shiny Poppy items.

Most of you will either have held your AGM or be about to hold it. Please remember to send in your MS1s as soon as you can. Looking at some that have come in, it is noticeable that in at least a third of the branches there is only a small number (3-4) of people involved in the running of the branch. It is important that we attempt to get more names on the committees, otherwise it looks as if a number of branches are non-compliant and this is an area that the Membership Council are reviewing in the coming year. Branches should have four officers (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary) plus at least three other committee members.

Last week the MSO sent you all an email asking for Questions for our Guest Speaker, the National President, at the County Conference on 16th January. You can raise your question on any of the subjects that are concerning you and your branch over any of the HO Departments, because the Heads of those Departments will be writing the response. So please get your question in soonest. Even if you feel it's not that important it might be to another branch. Also we haven't seen any Motions. There must be something in the Royal Charter or the Membership Handbook that you feel needs changing updating or inserting. Or there may be something to do with Welfare that you feel is being overlooked. Don't forget at a County Conference not everything has to be something that needs to go to National Conference. By the way, don't forget to return your Delegates form and also nominations for County Committee.

Richard Cast
County Chairman

DONATIONS TO COUNTY FUNDS

The following donations have been gratefully received:

£25 Ash Heritage Group
£170.75 Borstal Branch

BRANCH AGMs

September sees the end of the Legion year and Branches are reminded that, in accordance with Governing Regulation 35 of the Royal Charter, all branches are to hold their AGMs between 1st October and 30th November. MS1s have been sent to all branch secretaries so please ensure yours is sent to the County Office as soon as possible after your AGM and certainly no later than the end of December.

END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS

Please ensure this information is passed to the Branch Treasurer

All branches are reminded that Branch Accounts were to be closed as at 30th June and that a copy of the audited accounts together with supporting Bank Statements and a letter of "Authority to Disclose Information" for each account were to be submitted to the County Office by 30th September at the very latest.

I regret that, despite all the publicity, there were a number of Branches that failed to correctly submit their Branch Accounts by the due date. Thank you to all those that got theirs in well in time and thank you to those that just squeezed in just in time. Unfortunately, there are still ten sets of accounts that have not been submitted or were submitted incorrectly:

Cranbrook	Sandwich
Kemsing	Sittingbourne & Milton Regis
Littlebourne & District	Southborough & High Brooms
Orpington	St Margaret at Cliffe
Rolvenden	Tonbridge

Please get them to the MSO without delay.

ANNUAL COUNTY CONFERENCE 2015

Next year's County Conference will take place at Headcorn Village Hall on Saturday 16th January commencing at 1 pm. Branch Secretaries will have received the papers branches will need. All paperwork concerning Conference has been printed on green paper to make it immediately identifiable. If you wish to send a delegate to County Conference or to Annual Conference in May **your audited Branch Accounts must have been received at County Office by 30th September and your MS1 must be received by 31st December**. Remember, if your Branch Delegate does not attend your voice cannot be heard. This is your chance to put your points of view over for

discussion. **Delegate applications must be received at County Office by no later than Friday 9th December.**

Only those Branch members in possession of delegate tickets will be entitled to act as Branch Delegates. No tickets will be issued on the day. Members and guests are more than welcome to attend as visitors.

The guest speaker will be the National President, Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson CB CVO. There will be time for a question and answer session and it is hoped that all branches will make an extra effort to attend so that they can put their questions to him. Any questions should be submitted to the MSO in advance, by no later than 9th December please, to give the President time to obtain answers – he doesn't know everything.

Standard Bearers: It would be nice to see as many Standards on parade as possible. Please let your Standard Bearer know about Conference and encourage him or her to attend.

Raffle Prizes: Would all those members attending Conference please consider donating a prize to the raffle held at Conference. Bring any donations with you on the day. Thank you.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

There have been a number of reported problems throughout the county concerning the renewal process. Many of your e-mails have been forwarded to Membership and they assure me that your problems are being addressed.

I believe there are some members that have not received their renewal letters. If they wish to remain members then I need their details (name and membership number) so that I can arrange for a new letter to be sent out.

Membership is aware of the high number of calls being made to the Contact Centre from members with membership enquiries or wishing to pay by credit/debit card. This is the first year of the new system and members are asked to please, be patient.

It is appreciated that many members have yet to receive their new cards but as each one is being produced once confirmation of payment has been received this is obviously taking longer than producing them all in bulk and sending them to branches. The time should improve once we have the first year out of the way.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Please ensure this information is brought to the attention of all members

There have been a number of recent stories in the press with comments from members and I would like to confirm the position regarding this.

The membership handbook states:

Chapter 1.2.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

2. Media

2.1. No Legion Member should speak in public on a matter outside his own area of responsibility unless he is in possession of a PR brief issued by the Marketing and Corporate Communications division. Anyone contacted by the television news, national or local media should notify a member of the PR team in order to get some key messages or a statement agreed in advance. Members should not approach the national media without first talking to the PR team. The team should also be contacted if a crisis occurs and a person is unsure how to handle the issue.

The contact details for the Legions Public Relations Team can be found here <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/>

If a member does speak to the press, then it needs to be clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the charity and that they can only offer their personal opinion as a branch member.

RBL STATEMENT ON POPPY APPEAL

Following a few complaints referring to people 'naming and shaming' other individuals, organisations and businesses who do not want to take part in the Poppy Appeal, please find below the Royal British Legion official statement on the matter.

"The Legion never insists that anyone wear the poppy or support the Poppy Appeal. We believe firmly that wearing the poppy must be a matter of free and individual choice. The charity also vigorously defends the poppy and the Poppy Appeal from political exploitation by any partisan organisation and we disown such 'naming and shaming' behaviour. The Legion is very grateful to the many shops and commercial enterprises which allow poppies to be distributed and collections to be taken on their private property or inside their trading premises. However, we never insist upon such permissions. Neither would we coerce businesses into allowing collections on their premises. And, under no circumstances, would the Legion support any boycott or public 'naming and shaming' of traders who choose not to or are unable to support the Appeal."

COUNTY STANDARD BEARER COMPETITION

The results of the competition, held at the Ditton TA Centre on Sunday 11th October, were as follows:

Royal British Legion

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 1 | Geoff Lees | Swanley, Crockenhill & Hextable Branch |
| 2 | Julian De-Zille | Downs Branch |
| 3 | Duane Ashworth | Isle of Sheppey Branch |
| 4 | Paul Austen | Chartham Branch |

Royal British Legion Woman's Section

- | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Linda Fletcher | Stoke & District Branch |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|



Many congratulations and well done to all who took part, especially the first timers. Thank you to all those who turned up on the day to support the event and make it run so well.

STANDARD BEARERS

With Remembrancetide almost upon us branches are reminded that, in accordance with the Ceremonial Handbook, it is essential that Standard Bearers should be physically strong and well able to handle the Standard under all conditions. Standards often get soaked and become very heavy - something that is felt when recovering the Standard.

Branches should be mindful of the insurance restrictions and whether age, infirmity or disability would have any implications. This is particularly important bearing in mind that the pole and finial can become a lethal weapon if a Standard Bearer should stumble. If the Branch is aware of any medical or other problems and someone gets hurt the Legion insurance company could refuse any payment.

When on parade, Standard Bearers must be properly dressed in accordance with the Ceremonial Handbook. The beret should be black or dark navy, matching the colour of the suit, with the Legion badge - not a service/regimental beret and badge. A neatly pressed plain black or dark navy suit should be worn with a clean white shirt and a Legion multi-motif tie. An Official Legion badge denoting the membership status should be worn and a Veterans Badge may be worn by those Standard Bearers who qualify. It should be worn just below and slightly left of the Membership Badge, as you look at it on the Jacket. No other badges should be worn.

NEW 'POP-IN' AT RBL VILLAGE

Thursday 15th October saw the launch of the new 'Pop-In' at The Royal British Village. The day was a great success with visits from the Deputy Mayor of Tonbridge & Malling and local parish councillors.

The 'Pop-In' is open every Monday and Thursday 10am-4pm and is here to help all members of the Armed Forces Community, including those who have served or are serving - regular or reserves - partners, carers and dependents, in times of need and when they need a bit of extra help to reach their goals in life. Anyone can turn up for information or to seek personal support or just for a chat. Our services cover the Four Pillars; Welfare, Comradeship, Representation and Remembrance.



The Deputy Mayor with the County Welfare Team - Nic Booth-Jones, Nikki Ward & Zoe Kirby - and Area Manager Sandra Fruish

We offer lots of services that people aren't aware of; including money and debt advice, seaside breaks and family holidays. We can also provide essential household appliances and furnishings. We can support homeless people into sustainable accommodation, fund mobility aids and equipment for people with disabilities, help people develop their career-options and contribute to family expenses such as funeral costs, school uniform and removal expenses.

If you feel you, or anyone you know, could benefit from The Royal British Legion's expertise and help then please pop down to the 'Pop-In'.

THE POWER OF THE GROUP



On a weekend late in September, members from Elham Valley, Cheriton & Morehall, Hythe & Saltwood and New Romney Branches attended the Euro Militaire Exhibition in the Leas Cliff Hall in Folkestone and manned a stand for the Poppy Appeal. The total figure collected was £867.34. This was a joint operation which shows that branches can work together very successfully, and everyone enjoyed working together towards a common cause.

SWANLEY, CROCKENHILL & HEXTABLE BRANCH - PEDAL TO PARIS

Once again members of the branch were out to welcome the riders on their way to Paris on Thursday 3rd September, as they came through Swanley.

Unfortunately, one of our members, Alan Brown, who normally takes part in this annual event, was unable to do so this year, but he did ride with them through Kent.



In France the riders stopped off at the cemetery at Longpre-les-Corps-Saints some 16 km SE of Abbeville where a wreath and crosses were laid on 5th September. This was organised by Alan with the assistance of our Poppy Appeal Organiser, Jacky Allen.

Our Branch turns out every year to give the riders support as they pass through the town, which we know is greatly appreciated by all the participants.

NEW ROMNEY BRANCH

The Branch has for some time felt the need for an outdoors Remembrance Memorial. The Memorials in St Nicholas Church dedicated to those who sadly gave their lives for their Country during both World Wars are quite magnificent and continue to be the focal point of remembrance for New Romney. The new outdoor Memorial "To The Fallen" complements the existing Burma Star Memorial and is dedicated to all service personnel who gave their lives in defence of our Country and her Colonies in the past and those who may sadly do so in the future.

The wars and conflicts our country has engaged in since the end of World War 2 number no fewer than 21 spread over a period of 70 years and collectively total some 150 years of active service. We hope therefore that this peaceful corner of New Romney will provide a small haven where we can remember those who paid the ultimate price to secure our peace. The post WW2 wars and conflicts are:

India 1945-48, Palestine 1945-48, Malaya 1948-1960, Korea 1950-57, Suez Canal Zone 1951-54, Kenya 1952-60, Cyprus 1955-59, Aden 1955-67, Radfan 1955-67, Suez 1956, Borneo 1962-66, Oman 1969-76, Dhofar 1969-76, Northern Ireland 1969-2007, Falklands War 1982, Gulf War 1 1991, Bosnia 1992, Kosovo 1999, Sierra Leone 2000, Gulf War 2 2003-11 and Afghanistan 2001-2014.

Mindful of the wonderful generosity shown by the people of New Romney, and the surrounding Districts, during the Poppy Appeal period and throughout the year; the New Romney Branch of the Royal British Legion raised the necessary funds from our Branch members, helped by a few small voluntary donations, and gifted the Memorial to the people of New Romney.



PILGRIMAGE TO NORMANDY

The Friends of the Legion are running a pilgrimage to Normandy from Monday 11th to Friday 15th July 2016. The first night we will be present at the Menin Gate where we will be taking part in the parade. We will also be going to Hill 112 where we hope to meet Albert Figg who installed a Churchill Tank (we were there). Then following onto the American Cemetery and onto Bayeux and Pegasus Bridge and museum via all the beaches. We will be having at least one parade each day.

If you are interested in joining us please email Peter Cooper at petercooper331@btinternet.com or contact him on 01622 890481.

ISLE OF THANET FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE

The Isle of Thanet Festival was, once again, a very successful evening with 52 Standards on parade. Principle guest Lieutenant Colonel David Whimpenny was very pleased with the night and gave a very good address that was well received. He commented that it was the largest number of Standards he'd seen on parade since Annual Conference. The Band of the Royal Engineers was, as usual, very good as were the Swingtime Sweethearts who had everyone singing along to the songs of yesteryear. I have only received good reports on the event.



I have a disc of photos taken during the evening that is available for a small donation. Just send a letter with your request and donation to me at 46 Hertford Road, Margate CT9 3SH.

Arrangements for the 2016 event will be announced after the next meeting of the Festival Committee. The Committee thank you all for your continued support.

Aussie Walker
Festival Director

GARDEN OF HONOUR



The memorial garden dedicated to all those who have served, do serve and will serve has opened at The Royal British Legion Village. More than 200 dignitaries, donors and former service personnel turned out, in brilliant sunshine, for the unveiling of the Garden of Honour on Friday 2nd October.

The Garden includes the Edwin Boorman Memorial Bandstand, parade ground, amphitheatre seating, a memorial square and an area for raised gardens and flowerbeds. It will be used for events throughout the year, particularly around the time of Remembrance Day, and everyone will be able to use the venue as a place for reflection and companionship.



Work started in June 2014, when Lieutenant General Andrew Gregory, the Chief of Defence Personnel, broke ground at the site, starting the project marking the centenary of the First World War. The General returned to open the Garden in a service conducted by RBLI chaplain the Rev. Chris Van Straaten.

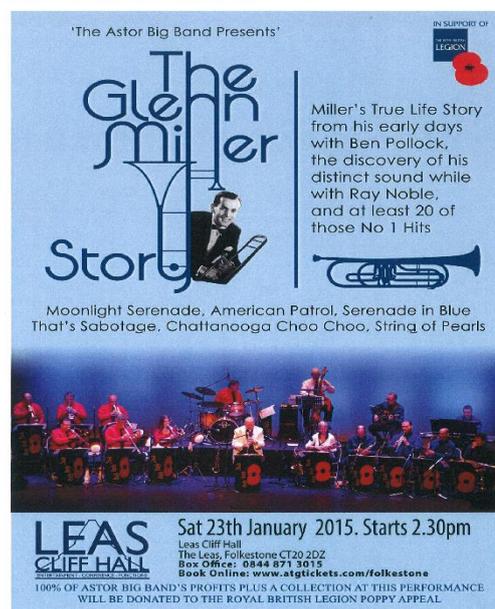
During the service, there was also a reading from John Riggs, a Burma Star holder and resident of Queen Elizabeth Court, and a performance of harvest festival songs from the Valley Invicta Primary School in Aylesford.

Members of the public can use the garden, which is open at all times. For further information and to donate with the upkeep of the garden please visit the web site at www.rbli.co.uk.

FUNDRAISING CONCERT

The Astor Big Band will be appearing at Folkestone's Leas Cliff Hall on Saturday 23rd January 2016 (not 23th January 2015 as it says on the poster) with "The Glenn Miller Story". This charts Miller's true life story from his early days and the discovery of his distinct sound. At least 20 of hits will be performed during the evening. 100% of the profits plus a bucket collection will be donated to the Poppy Appeal.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.atgtickets.com/folkestone or from the Box Office on 0844 871 3015.



WHEELCHAIR RUGBY AT DARTFORD

DARTFORD VALLEY RFC

OPEN DAY

WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

WHEN Sunday 15th Nov 2015 09:00 - 13:00	LOCATION Leigh Academy Sports Hall Green St Green Dartford DA1 1QE	WHO FOR? An all inclusive sport. Come along a try it! #dvrfcfamily
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WHEELCHAIR RUGBY IS AN ALL INCLUSIVE SPORT... COME AND TRY IT AT DARTFORD'S ONLY RUGBY CLUB. REGISTER YOUR INTEREST BELOW OR CONTACT JAMES.YATES@DVRFC.COM OR 07807 101829 FOR ALL THE INFO

WEBSITE: DVRFC.CO.UK

SIGN UP TODAY

FACEBOOK: [Dartford Valley RFC](https://www.facebook.com/DartfordValleyRFC)

FREE ENTRY

ACCREDITED RFLU CLUB

SPONSORS: Bluewater, ARC, emd, Bresser Fitness, Londis, Esquire, callisto, Bresser Fitness, Londis, Esquire.

Dartford Valley Rugby Club is supporting the Legion through its Youth Rugby section and they were proud to receive a Community Award from TRBL on 14th July. The Club is now launching its own Wheelchair Rugby Team and would like to encourage TRBL beneficiaries to join as players or supporters. To help promote the team they are holding a Wheelchair Rugby Open Day at the club on Sunday 15th November from 9am until 1pm and this open day is an opportunity for people to try the sport for free. Anyone interested should either turn up on the day at the Leigh Academy Sports Hall, Green Street Green, Dartford DA1 1QE or contact James Yates at james.yates@dvrfc.com or on 07807 101829 for further information.

FAR EAST PRISONERS OF WAR TALK

Major John Tulloch will be giving a talk on "A Brief History of Sandakan and Ranau Prisoner of War Camps in Malaysia and The Death Marches during WWII" at Sutton Valence School, North Street, Sutton Valence ME17 3HL on Friday 4th December at 5.30 pm.

Abstract: A historical talk by Major John Tulloch on the British North Borneo (Sabah) Japanese POW Camps located at Jesselton (Kota Kinabalu), Sandakan, Ranau and the three Death Marches.

2,432 Australian and British POWs were incarcerated either in Sandakan or Ranau. On 1st January 1945 the Japanese High Command in Tokyo issued a global order to all POW Camps, 'Kill all the Prisoners by whatever means at your discretion.' The impact of this order in British North Borneo was catastrophic. Only six Australians survived by escaping. There were no British survivors. This is their story.

John Tulloch, who has travelled and trekked extensively in Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak over the years, masterminded, initiated and organised SABAH SALUTE the Royal Artillery Act of Remembrance in August 2011. He has researched, studied and spoken on this subject in the UK and Brunei and most recently to the Kinabalu International School at Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

There is no cost for the event, however donations are accepted towards the Nepalese Earthquake Fund where SVS is raising £60,000 to rebuild a school.

If possible, could you please give this the widest distribution amongst your members. If you would like further information please contact Glen Millbery at enquiries@svs.org.uk or on 01622 845200.

WORLD WAR 1 SEMINARS

During this academic year the Gateways to the First World War public engagement centre at the University of Kent has organised a number of talks which may be of interest to your members based in the area.

We are co-organising a First World War Seminar Series with the In Flanders Fields Museum which will include talks in Canterbury and Ypres and further information can be found at: <http://www.gatewaysfww.org.uk/news/seminar-series-2015-16>

The seminars in Canterbury will take place at 6pm in Darwin Lecture Theatre 2, University of Kent and are:

Tuesday 24 November 2015

Dr. Birger Stichelbaut (University of Ghent and In Flanders Fields Museum - Centre for Historical and Archaeological Aerial Photography), 'World War One aerial photography in Belgium: a landscape archaeological perspective'

During the First World War, millions of aerial photographs were taken by all fighting countries, documenting a cultural landscape from which the relicts sometimes remain visible as scars on the landscape. Most often however this landscape is preserved beneath the surface as archaeological heritage. Since 2006 the Department of Archaeology (Ghent University) and the In Flanders Fields Museum explore the archaeological potential of these historical aerial photographs. This presentation explores how thousands of these images are now converted into a primary source on their own and complemented with other non-invasive techniques. This presentation also highlightshow these historical aerial photographs are used in modern museum contexts presenting a bird's eye view of the Western Front in Belgium and France.

Thursday 28 January 2016

Prof.dr. Luc Rasson (University of Antwerp –Department of Literature), "A Path of Glory leading toward the Stars": Film and the Great War in the Air'

In this lecture I would like to focus on what has been called the "bifurcated vision" of the Great War in film. A movie taking place in the trenches will mostly describe the war as an absurd waste of young lives and, at least implicitly, advocate a pacifist attitude. However, films showing the war in the air will very often carry values of romantic heroism and chivalry and will not question the legitimacy of the war. These films seem to be impervious to a pacifist stance, even in the Thirties. I will focus on the first feature film made about the young air forces, William Wellman's Wings (1925) and, if I have enough time, dwell on the trend of films about the air war in the Thirties.

Thursday 25 February 2016

Senior Captain Tom Simoens (Royal Military Academy, Brussels – Department of Conflict Studies),
'Discipline in the Belgian Army (1914-1918)'

Between 1914 and 1918, discipline in the Belgian army was deeply modified by the extreme living, working and fighting conditions of the trenches. Trench warfare not only modified the equipment, technics and tactics used by the military, but also the relationships between officers, NCO's, corporals and their men. I will claim that the Belgian Army - generally spoken - made a swift move from a rigid and formal discipline towards a more loose and informal discipline based on mutual respect. My presentation will be based on military archives, war diaries and archives from the courts-martial of the 1st Army Division.

Admission is free and there is no need to book a place - just turn up. The address is Darwin College, University of Kent, Canterbury CT2 7NY and parking is free on the campus after 5pm.

AND FINALLY

Despite the smile, Area Manager Sandra Fruish admits to having been just a little bit terrified during her abseil from the top of Guildford Cathedral on Friday 23rd October. She was happy to touch down safely and is delighted that £3450 has so far been raised for the Poppy Appeal.



Regards to you all

Tony West

Membership Support Officer

Email: twest@britishlegion.org.uk



LEST WE FORGET

Notification has been received that the following members have passed on:

Mr Michael Hall	Birchington
Mr Francis Dartnell	Canterbury
Mr John Laming	"
Mr Stan Jackson	Dymchurch
Mr Albert Moulder	Isle of Sheppey
Mr Laurie Hack	Leeds, Hollingbourne & District
Mr Aubrey Cheeseman	Maidstone
Mrs Stella Woodford	Sutton Valence
Mrs Marcelle Blount-Nissen	Tenterden



Our deepest sympathies go to their families and friends



KENT COUNTY DIARY OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

Sat	7th	Festival of Remembrance - Royal Albert Hall
Sat	8th	Remembrance Sunday
Tue	11th	Armistice Day - 11.11.11

DECEMBER

Sat	12th	Carol Service - Capel Morris Centre (3 pm)
Wed	31st	Last day for submission of MS1s to County Office

JANUARY 2016

Sun	16th	County Conference - Headcorn Village Hall (1 pm)
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The Royal British Legion

Swanley, Crockenhill and Hextable Branch

Christmas Carol Concert

**Orchards Academy
St Mary's Road, Swanley**

Thursday 3rd December

Commencing at 6 pm

FEATURING

The Hextable Wind Band

Students from the Orchards Academy

Students from the St Bart's Primary School

Entry is free to this event