

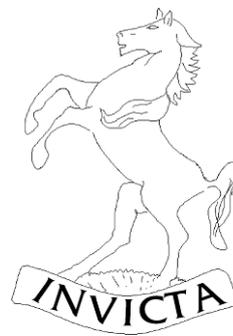


# KENT COUNTY NEWS

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](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/kent)

**November 2016**

***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**

The last month has been a strange month, starting off with me tendering my resignation and then, following the support of my Officers and Committee, withdrawing it. Now, knowing I have the full support of my team, I feel renewed and keen to get on and ensure Kent County remains in the top of the league, giving as much support to the branches as we can.

On the subject of branch support, we can only support you if you not only let us know your problems and plans but also by you giving us sufficient notice to arrange County Officers or members to come out and support you. Recently we have received requests at the last minute and sadly we do have to turn them down because other events are being held or we are not available. So please contact us as soon as the problems arise and that way we shall be able to arrange times to meet with you and discuss options before it gets too late.

I know you are all busy people at this moment, with poppy collections and organising your Remembrance Events. If you haven't heard last year we in Kent Raised £1,559,411.55. This was an increase of 0.59% - a small percentage increase but considering London and the Southeast was down by 2.88% it shows that your efforts in your locations worked well, so many thanks. I do wish you all a good appeal this year and although nationally they predict a small downturn this year I know that all will go from strength to strength to strive to increase or maintain your previous targets.

I hope you have all seen the new Remembrance Theme that has come out, "Rethink Remembrance", where an older Veteran is giving a story and it ends with it being the story of a recent Veteran. It is hoped that this will bring the continual need for remembrance, our appeal and welfare support into the constant memory and action of the general public and not just write it off as the remaining WW2 Veterans pass away.

*Richard Cast*  
County Chairman

**DONATIONS TO COUNTY FUNDS**

The following donations have been gratefully received:

£310      In Memory of Mrs Norma Baldwin of Halstead Branch

## **BRANCH ACCOUNTS - END OF YEAR**

Branch Accounts were to be closed at 30th June and that a copy of the accounts together with supporting Bank Statements plus a letter of 'Authority to Disclose Information' was to have been submitted to the County Office by 30th September at the very latest.

I have to report that, to date, 62 sets of branch accounts have been received at County Office. The remainder, as shown below, are now overdue and must be submitted immediately:

Hamstreet & District                  Headcorn                  Kemsing

## **BRANCH AGMs**

Branches must be aware that in accordance with the Membership Handbook 3.1.5 all four branch offices must be filled and no officer may fill more than one office; there must be no 'double hatting'. The four offices are Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. This means that when it comes to your AGMs four officers must be elected and their names and signatures must appear on the MS1.

AGMs are to be held during the period 1st October to 30th November 2016 and MS1s must be submitted to the MSO by no later than 31st December.

## **BRANCH SUCCESSIONS**

At this time of year a number of branches are experiencing problems persuading members to take office or join the committee leaving them short of the required number. Branches are therefore encouraged to plan ahead. They should identify and encourage potential 'top table' members early in the Legion year with them shadowing those in post so they can gain experience. Too many branches suffer when someone is unable to continue in post, often at very short notice, and there is no replacement available.

## **ANNUAL COUNTY CONFERENCE 2017**

Next year's County Conference will take place at Headcorn Village Hall on Saturday 21st January commencing at 1 pm. Branch Secretaries will now 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 Wednesday 7th December.**

The guest speaker will be Lieutenant Colonel David Whimpenny who is a trustee of the Legion and also, probably more importantly for the members and branches, Chairman of the Membership Council. 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 7th December please, to give him time to obtain answers – he doesn't know everything.

## **YOUTH - POPPY COLLECTORS**

I hope that all branches are seeking the support of their local cadet and youth units to assist with this year's Poppy Appeal collection. This is such a great opportunity to work together for mutual gain and also offers the best chance of gaining affiliations across the county. Please make the most of this time of year to publicise to your local units all the good work of the RBL and ways in which they can become involved – not least by affiliating with you. If you need affiliation forms please let me know as soon as possible so that we do not lose the enthusiasm of the young when it is at its greatest.

My telephone number is 01303 862779 (please leave a message) or my email address is [susanfoster61@btinternet.com](mailto:susanfoster61@btinternet.com).

*Susan Foster*  
County Youth Officer

## **NEW MEMBERS**

Potential Legion members often want to know more about the organisation they are joining. If anyone asks to come to a meeting or just turns up, please make them welcome, be informative and encourage them to become members of your branch. With a warm welcome they may even volunteer to get involved and perhaps even join the branch committee. Please do not turn people away - it gives a very bad impression of the Legion as a whole.

## **COUNTY AWARDS COMMITTEE**

We are fast approaching the time of the County Conference and I ask that if you were presented with a Trophy at this year's Conference in January could you please return it to County by the middle of November so we can get them checked out for any repairs and get them cleaned and engraved. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

*Aussie Walker*

Awards Committee Chairman

## **COUNTY CAROL SERVICE**

This year the Christmas Carol Service will be held on Saturday 10th December at 2.30pm in the Capel Morris Centre at Aylesford. We extend an invitation to all branch officers and members to come along and join us in celebrating Christmas together. Afterwards there will be refreshments and a raffle and all proceeds will go the County Welfare Fund.

It would be very helpful if you would please let us know numbers of people who intend to come by emailing Susan Foster at [susanfoster61@btinternet.com](mailto:susanfoster61@btinternet.com).

## **SHEPWAY GROUP - COFFEE MORNINGS**

Branches within the Group have continued to hold successful coffee mornings for veterans, serving personnel and their families. Following on from the success of the first coffee morning, another was held at Age UK Lyminge which, although not attended by many, had visitors of quality and certainly cheered up one elderly gentleman who has nearly become housebound.

By popular demand, the second coffee morning in Age UK Hythe was held on 24th September and received 63 visitors. We were so busy that unfortunately we did not have time to take any photograph to share with you!



We plan to continue to hold these coffee mornings which seem to be attracting a regular following and which also raise funds for the Poppy Appeal at the same time.

## **SHOREHAM BRANCH**

The Branch is hosting a 'Strictly' Tea Dance taking place at Shoreham Village Hall on Saturday 10th December from 3 pm to 5pm.

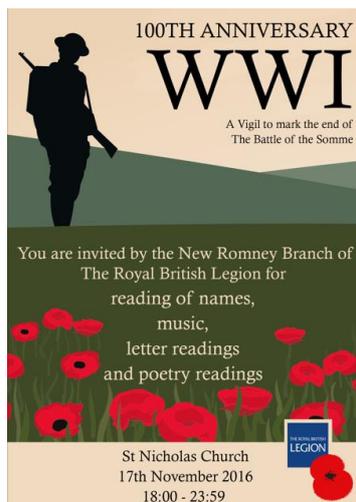
The afternoon includes:

- Fantastic guest dancers from 'Dance Expressions' in Sevenoaks
- Your opportunity to show off your dance moves
- A welcome drink on arrival as well as refreshments and mince pies
- A raffle for a Christmas Hamper

Tickets cost just £7 each and are available from the Shoreham Village Shop or from Lorna & Mike Robinson on 01959 525772. All are welcome.

## NEW ROMNEY BRANCH

To mark the end of the Battle of the Somme the New Romney Branch is holding a vigil at St Nicholas Church on 17th November from 6 pm until midnight. All are welcome.



## WEST KINGSDOWN BRANCH

Branch members together with the Parish Council Chairman and local residents assembled at the village War Memorial on 26th October. At exactly the same time a similar ceremony was held at the War Memorial in Kaikoura, New Zealand led by the Mayor and the President of the Royal New Zealand Returned & Services' Association [RSA]. These simultaneous events were held to remember 2nd Lt George Alexander Palfreyman and 2nd Lt Forrest Gale Parsons who were lost over the village of Courcelette, France on 26th October 1916.

George Palfreyman was the eldest son of the West Kingsdown village school head teacher. In November 1915 he resigned his post at the Bank of England and joined the Royal Field Artillery as a gunner. A former student of Sevenoaks School he was very soon commissioned into The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) and then joined the Royal Flying Corps in the Spring of 1916. Trained as an Observer he joined 7 Squadron RFC in France in June 1916.

In late September he was teamed up with RFC Pilot, 2nd Lt Forrest Parsons. Born in Kaikoura, New Zealand he had served briefly as a machine gunner in the Second Boer War. Arriving in England in early 1916 he trained as a pilot at his own expense obtaining his aviators licence in May. He was commissioned into the RFC in July and joined 7 Squadron on 28 September.

On 26th October 1916 they took off in a on a counter-battery reconnaissance mission. Whilst flying over German held ground in the vicinity of Courcelette the aircraft was lost. They were recorded as missing and later presumed dead as their bodies were never recovered. With no known graves their names are on the Flying Services Memorial at Arras.

People in Kaikoura were not aware of the fact that Forrest Parsons had come to England and joined the Royal Flying Corps until research by Martin Stoneham of West Kingsdown made the link. In an email to Martin, who is the West Kingsdown Branch Treasurer and PAO, from Yvonne Morrison President of Kaikoura RSA she commented that "It is a very big deal as we in NZ show great respect for our active service personnel. Thank you for the heads up on 2nd Lt. Forrest Gale Parsons".



## **FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE**

The Hellfire Corner Association, in association with the Dover White Cliffs Branch, is holding "A Night to Remember" at Dover Town Hall on Friday 11th November. Entertainment will include Mickie Driver and The Swingtime Sweethearts. An Act of Remembrance will close the programme. Doors open at 7 pm for a 7.30 start and tickets are available from Dover Town Council offices in Biggin Street at just £7.50 each.

## **AGED VETERANS ACTIVITIES**

RBLI is working in partnership with others to deliver monthly events across Kent aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of older military veterans.

If you are a veteran aged 65 or over come along and meet other veterans, share your stories and experiences and make new friends. Take the opportunity to have health MOTs and try out new sports. Get involved in a drama performance led by professionals from Maidstone's Hazlitt Theatre and talk to the many local community organisations present. Have a fun day and benefit from everything on offer.

Over the life time of the project it's hoped to make a significant difference to the lives of older military veterans living in Kent and to be able to make the case for more funding, support and programmes to help them in their older years.

You are invited to the Health and Wellbeing days as shown below. All events will run from 10:30 am - 3:00 pm.

Sat 19 Nov - Dreamland, Marine Terrace, Margate CT9 1XJ  
Fri 9 Dec - Tonbridge School Sports Centre, London Road, Tonbridge TN10 3AD  
Sat 28 Jan - Age UK Centre, 16 Reculver Road, Herne Bay CT6 6LE  
Fri 17 Feb - Folkestone Sports Centre, Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone CT19 5HX

For more information please contact Michael Bishop at [michael.bishop@rbli.co.uk](mailto:michael.bishop@rbli.co.uk) or on 07827 943609.

Regards to you all

*Tony West*

Membership Support Officer

Email: [twest@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:twest@britishlegion.org.uk)

## **KENT COUNTY DIARY OF EVENTS - 2016**

### **NOVEMBER**

<b>Fri</b>	<b>11th</b>	<b>Armistice Day</b>
<b>Fri</b>	<b>11th</b>	<b>Remembrance Concert - Dover Town Hall</b>
<b>Sat</b>	<b>12th</b>	<b>Festival of Remembrance - Royal Albert Hall</b>
<b>Sun</b>	<b>13th</b>	<b>Remembrance Sunday</b>

### **DECEMBER**

<b>Sat</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>Carol Service - Capel Morris Centre (2.30 pm)</b>
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### **JANUARY 2017**

<b>Sat</b>	<b>21st</b>	<b>County Conference - Headcorn Village Hall (1 pm)</b>
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## LEST WE FORGET

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

Mr David Petherbridge	Faversham
Mr William Dallas	Gillingham
Mr Harold Southgate	"
Mr Patrick McSweeney	Meopham, Cobham & Luddesdown
Mr Leonard Cooper	Minster & Monkton
Mr Michael Lepine	"
Mr Roy Beveridge	Orpington & District
Mr Alan Holden	Ramsgate
Mr Robert Godfrey	Royal British Legion Village
Mr Orlando Kinge	"
Mr Malcolm Clewer	"
Mr George Blackmore	Sidcup & Footscray
Mrs Barbara Lettice	Tonbridge



*Our deepest sympathies go to their families and friends*

