



# KENT COUNTY NEWS

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

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Registered Charity 219279

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

**May 2017**

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

**MSO ON LEAVE**

The MSO will be taking leave during the week 22nd - 26th May and because of the late May Bank Holiday will be back in the office on 30th May.

**COUNTY CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Taking a pun at my surname, and that of my wife's, I am reminded of the saying "Don't **CAST** clout until **MAY** is out". Those of you who already had put out your spring bedding and put away your overcoat will understand this after the drop-in temperature and the heavy ground frost we had last week.

Last month I said I would mentioned the fourth Kent and Medway Civilian Military Covenant Conference I attended in March which I missed out do to my remarks being longer than normal. It was held in the Leas Cliff Hall and was attended by members of the military, local authorities, schools, other military charities and the South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (SERFCA).

A very full programme of talks from interesting speakers was produced all of whom made you realise how many groups, organisations and authorities are actively working hard to support and make the covenant work within Kent and Medway.

We heard from groups who had received Covenant bids and how they have successfully enabled veterans to be involved. One in Maidstone was to support the Gurkha Community to open a community centre that can also be used by non-Gurkha groups. Kent Sheds was another. There are now 28 of these giving comradeship and support to many ex and service family members. They range from woodwork, gardening, boating, bee keeping, model making, knitting, chatting and socialising. Something there for all of us, so if the Legion is your only activity and you would like something else to do on the non-Legion days why not join a Shed. Full details of the conference and contact emails of the organisations can be obtained on line at [www.kentcouncilleaders.org.uk/military](http://www.kentcouncilleaders.org.uk/military). Log in and see for yourself.

On 22nd April I along with the County Standard and the County Parade Marshal attended the Laying up and Dedication of the Elham Valley Branch Standard. Although the day was a little damp there was a good representation from the Branch, and representatives of the local branches of Shepway Group. Also in attendance were the Deputy Chairman of Shepway Council, Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee, and representing the Lord Lieutenant of Kent was Air Marshal Christopher Nickols who read a

personal message from the Lord Lieutenant. The Standard was carried by an Army Cadet who in doing so was not only a credit to the Branch but also to his Cadet Unit.

With the Annual Conference looming this month, I would advise all delegates that I shall be at Conference Friday to Sunday and would ask them to please make contact. If I am in a good mood I might even buy them a drink. If they need support for anything during the Conference please ring on 07599 325326

Finally, I am very pleased to announce the reformation of the Invicta Branch which has been approved by the Membership Council. As mentioned in the February issue of County News, this County Holding Branch will operate primarily online and will be a place where we can encourage those younger people who are not ready to join branches at this stage in their working life, but want to keep in touch and also take part in local, countywide and national events. They will be kept informed by e-mail and other social media methods.

*Richard Cast*  
County Chairman

### **DONATIONS TO COUNTY FUNDS**

The following donations have been gratefully received:

£250.00 In memory of Mrs William Welch

### **MEMBERSHIP**

All members whose renewal fell due on 1st October 2016 and who did not renew were lapsed with effect from 29th March. This affected 796 members in Kent although some of these have already rejoined.

In Kent we currently have 7,538 members with 69 full branches, two sub-branches and 14 clubs. There are 13 Life members and 29 Youth members.

### **MEET THE TEAM DAY**

This event takes place on Tuesday 31st May in the Capel Morris Centre when Area Manager Craig Spence and members of his staff will be on hand to talk to people about their particular roles. In particular they will be explaining BCS and the reporting system (please see the BCS item below). At present there are 58 members attending from 28 branches. 11 branches have said they will not be attending leaving 31 branches that have not responded at all.

### **BRANCH COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

We currently have 18 branches registered for Branch Community Support, thank you to those branches that have already registered. I know that many other branches already do home visiting going for a cup of tea and a chat, giving some a call to check they are ok and for a chat, visiting someone in hospital, sending representation to a funeral and coffee mornings. Please see the message below, from Area Manager Craig Spence explaining the reason why it is important to register these branch activities:

**From Craig Spence:** 'Branch Community Support's (BCS) purpose is to capture all the details and statistics of the work our Branches are doing in their communities. As the Area Manager, I sit regularly on civil military partnership boards with local authorities and also community Armed Forces covenant groups. The information on the BCS forms gives me direct information on the welfare needs of our beneficiaries and also the work you are doing. This gives me direct evidence to argue for better support from statutory services for our beneficiaries. It gives hard proof of the work and needs out there. The information is used nationally in lobbying and advocacy work, in order to effect changes in law and policy of Government. Locally I use the information to see hot spots and areas in need of more support in which we can provide things like drop in centres and raise awareness with local agencies and third sector parties. When we are approached for external grants by parties

offering support for veterans and families, I have a better knowledge of the needs in areas from the information provided by BCS returns so can make a more balanced judgement to our grants section. This is also true when sitting on Armed Forces covenant boards deciding where funding from the Libor fund is spent to provide support. For you as a branch it gives a record of all of the hard work you are doing and the support you provide is recognised.

When registering your branch to participate in BCS, the development of the BCS framework within Office 365, and production of guidance/procedural documentation for you to follow when undertaking BCS activities, and recruiting Branch Community Supporters to undertake Home and Hospital Visitor or Telephone Buddy role is complete.

Should your branch have a Branch Welfare Representative, they will receive a log on/password direct from me. However, both Branch Chairman and Secretary are able to access the BCS area within Office 365 (MAP) immediately by either following the link <https://trbl.sharepoint.com/sites/BCS> and entering your Office 365 log in/password already provided. If already logged on to MAP, click on Useful Links and BCS will be listed as <https://trbl.sharepoint.com/sitePages/Home.aspx> in the available links.

By registering to participate it is hoped that you will use the BCS area as and when required, entering both beneficiary and supporter details and ensuring your activity reports are submitted in accordance with the dates provided in the guidance. By providing access to a number of branch officials it is hoped that BCS activity and data recording will remain consistent in the absence of key access users.

Reports will contain personal information which must be treated, used and shared in compliance with the Data Protection Act. A copy of the Legion's Data Protection Policy can be found at <https://trbl.sharepoint.com/sites/BCS/BCS%20Guidance/SOP95%20TRBL%20Data%20Protection%20Policy.pdf>

A copy of the BCS system user guide will be sent with your log in. As mentioned all other procedural documentation, including resources to aid the Branch are located within the relevant BCS folders. Before commencing any BCS activity/recording you are requested to ensure you are fully conversant with all documentation located within these folders.

**Should you have any questions in relation to BCS then please do contact your MSO. Also, if you have any difficulty with MAP/Office 365 he will be able to register your branch for you and can enter the Branch Community Support activities for you. These activities can be sent to the MSO on a monthly or quarterly basis whichever is easier for your branch.**

Your branch is an integral part for delivering BCS activities to assist our beneficiaries within your local community; your support is much appreciated.

## **BRANCH ACCOUNTS**

*Please ensure this information is passed to the Branch Treasurer*

This is a reminder that, as you know, the branch accounts need to be submitted soon after 30th June 2017 and no later than 30th September 2017. With the branch account form you will need to make sure that a copy of the bank statement/s for each branch bank account as at the 30th June 2017 with the Authority to Disclose Information form is sent with the accounts. The accounts forms and guidance will be sent to Treasurers in due course.

As in previous years, the County's Independent Examiners will be available to audit your accounts and the programme giving their availability at County Office will be published in due course. If you would like the IEs or the County Treasurer to audit your accounts, please be aware that the following must be presented:

- All statements for each branch bank account from 1st July 2016 to 30th June 2017
- Paying in books from 1st July 2016 to 30th June 2017
- Cheque books from 1st July 2016 to 30th June 2017
- All receipts from 1st July 2016 to 30th June 2017

- Branch Fund Initiative (BFI) Statements from 1st July 2016 to 30th June 2017 (If applicable)
- Branch Minute book
- Any other financial information for the branch that would be useful when auditing the accounts, i.e. further explanations on amounts spent.

If you have any difficulties please let the MSO know sooner rather than later; we are here to help.

### **CLUB NEWS**

Clubs are reminded that the RBL Licence Application (C4/C5) and Club Accounts must be submitted within one month of the Club AGM date as laid down in the Club rules and by 31st March. To date applications have not yet been received at Head Office from Edenbridge, Hawkhurst and Hythe Clubs.

### **COUNTY PARADE AND SERVICE**

This year the Dover White Cliffs Branch is hosting our County Parade on Sunday 11th June and I would like every Branch to make the effort to be represented on this Parade.

The marching party will form up in Pencester Gardens, Dover CT16 1NS at approximately 2:30pm. There follows a short march to St Mary's Church in Biggin Street and after the inspection of the Standards the Service will then commence at 3:00pm lasting for about 45 minutes. All bar the Standard Bearers are requested to be seated by 2:50pm.

After the service the parade will re-muster and march to Dover Town Hall passing the War Memorial where the salute will be taken.

The reception will be in Dover Town Hall. To assist the catering arrangements, branches are requested to submit the form on the attached information page.

As we, the Legion, are the guardians of Remembrance we need to remind ourselves and everyone else that this year is the 100th Anniversary of one of the most tragic of land battles - the Battle of Passchendaele, also called the 3rd Battle of Ypres. It cost the lives of about a quarter of a million men on each side over a period of three months. Let us remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we could live in freedom. We will be in the public eye so I would hope that the branches put on a good show for those that see us. The Chairman of the Dover White Cliffs Branch and I look forward to welcoming you.

*Richard Cast*  
County Chairman

### **STANDARD BEARER TRAINING**

The next standard bearer training session will be on Sunday 4th June at the Capel Morris Community Hall, Aylesford, 10 am to 1 pm.

Please wear casual clothing (uniform not required) but please wear shoes and not trainers. Don't forget your sling, gauntlets and standard.

This training session will concentrate on the County Parade. During the march on the parade the Standards will go from the Carry to the Slope, and back again later to the Carry so if any Standard Bearer who is attending needs instruction or practice for these movements, they are encouraged to attend this training session where these drills will be gone over.

Refreshments will be supplied. If you want to confirm attendance or have any questions, please contact me on [annjaneausten@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:annjaneausten@yahoo.co.uk) or 01227 731385. I look forward to seeing you there.

*Ann Austen*  
County Ceremonial Coordinator

## **STANDARD BEARERS UNIFORM**

With the County Parade on the horizon (11th June at Dover), perhaps it would be prudent to remind Branch Officers and Standard Bearers of the uniform requirements. It should be remembered that these criteria are laid down in the RBL Ceremonial Handbook and really are non-negotiable and not something the County are at liberty to vary.

Male Standard Bearers: Black or navy blue suit (not blazer and flannels), black or navy blue beret with RBL Beret Badge (not regimental badge and no flashes or hackles, etc.), black or navy blue socks, black shoes highly polished, Standard Sling with appropriate Sling Plate, brasses polished, white gauntlets.

Female Standard Bearers: The same as Male Standard Bearers except skirt or trousers may be worn and black tights if wearing skirts.

The only badges worn on the suit are the RBL Membership Badge and the Veterans Badge if entitled. Nothing on the left breast pocket.

Official Medals only may be worn on left breast. Relative's medals are NOT worn.

Standard Bearers who do not conform to these requirements will be required to remove any unauthorised adornment. Where this is not possible they will be prohibited from any Parade.

The relevant section of the Ceremonial Handbook is Section A, Chapter 6, which begins on page 24.

If anyone has any queries on uniform matters, feel free to contact me to discuss them.

*Geoff Lees*

County Parade Marshal

[geofflees@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:geofflees@yahoo.co.uk) / 01322 662693 / 07766 111607

## **NEW "DROP IN" DUE TO OPEN IN JULY IN CRAWLEY**

The Legion is starting a new "Drop-In" from July at The Civic Halls, The Boulevard, Crawley RH10 1UZ. It's a drop-in group for anyone from the Armed Forces community, whether still serving or who has served and their immediate families.

The Drop-In will be open on the 1st Friday of the month between 10am and 12.30pm and anyone can literally just "drop-in" to seek advice, information and guidance from external organisations and military charities regarding financial assistance, housing, care support, employment, health and wellbeing. There will also be a communal area where people can sit and chat about "the good old days" and enjoy a cuppa and biscuit.

Please help us promote this new venture by spreading the word. Launch date is Friday 7th July. Posters and leaflets to follow at later date.

If anyone is available to help out serving teas/coffees or just be there to have a chat with some of the veterans then please contact Zoe Kirby on 07920 378620.

## **NEW ROMNEY BRANCH**

The Branch Chairman was invited to the New Romney Annual Town Meeting that took place on the evening of 24th April 2017. As the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant was programmed to take place at this meeting he did not give the matter another thought. On arrival it was announced that the signing of the covenant was cancelled because of the pending General Election.

Towards the end of the meeting the Mayor presented four Pride of New Romney Awards. The first went to the retired lady who had lead the Scout Group for forty years. The second went to The Mayor's Sea Cadet for the service she provided in support of the Mayor and the Town. The third was presented to the New Romney Sea Cadets for the excellent training given to their young members and the obvious resulting high standards achieved by the Cadets. The fourth and final "Mayoral Star Award" went to our Branch for service to the Town.

The citation reads as follows:

*“The New Romney Branch of the Royal British Legion has a positive influence on both the local service community and the wider local community. Its members are proactive and caring Ambassadors at local, Branch and County level – not least in instigating the installation of a new war memorial in New Romney’s Garden of Remembrance.”*

This award, whilst most welcome, came as a total but very pleasant surprise.



Town Sergeant Mrs Tracy Morris, New Romney RBL Chair Lt Col (Retd) George Harvey OBE, The Right Worshipful the Mayor of New Romney Councillor Mrs Patricia Rolfe

### **DYMCHURCH BRANCH**

On Sunday 2nd April the Dymchurch Branch and the Step Short Society’s monthly parade at The Step Short Arch on The Leas at Folkestone we were joined by approximately 100 members of 103 Battalion REME plus three RBL Standards in stunning sunshine.

This Parade is normally held at 10:30 am on the first Sunday of every month irrespective of prevailing weather conditions.



This is advanced notice of our Parade in conjunction with The Step Short Society to be held on Sunday 6th August 2017 forming up at the Leas Cliff Hall, The Leas, Folkestone. As in previous years we hope to have the company of Civic dignitaries from the surrounding area together with military personnel. The Parade will assemble at 10:00hrs moving off at 10:50 for a Service to be held under the Memorial Arch. We extend a warm welcome to all Branches and their Standards together with Regimental Associations and other organisations.

There is plenty of parking available locally and, subject to numbers, a buffet lunch will be held at a local hotel for which a small payment will be asked for (details to follow).

Please advise David Tyler (07512 096845) if you wish to attend. For further details on the Arch please follow this link <http://www.stepshort.co.uk>

### **SUMMER CONCERT - ROYAL BRITISH LEGION VILLAGE**

All are welcome to RBL’s free Summer Concert with the Kent Police Band. The 25 piece band will play show tunes, popular marches and classical music. It will take place in the beautiful Garden of Honour in the Royal British Legion Village from 2.30pm to 4.30pm on Saturday 20th May.

Refreshments will be provided in the onsite café Base Camp and there are parking and toilet facilities within walking distance.

This event is part of a project to find and support older military veterans and is supported by Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and Aylesford Parish Council. Please contact Michael Bishop for more information on 07827 943609 or at [michael.bishop@rbli.co.uk](mailto:michael.bishop@rbli.co.uk).

## **SWANLEY, CROCKENHILL & HEXTABLE BRANCH**

On 30th March over a 100 of us gathered at the Swanley War Memorial Institute (known locally as Five Wents Hall) for our "Poppy Appeal Get Together". This is held annually to thank our volunteers, present Certificates of Appreciation and to celebrate that this year we have raised £35,673.28 for the appeal, another record for us.



Presenting the certificates to the 26 organisations and individuals was Lord Sackville, Deputy Lieutenant of Kent. The picture shows Lord Sackville, with our Branch Chairman Miss Jackie Best MBE, PAO Mrs Jacky Allen, Deputy Mayor of Swanley Cllr Lesley Dyball and Mrs Anne Hill, County Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator. Also in the picture are representatives of the 593 (Swanley) Squadron of the ATC, who are affiliated to the Branch and were the recipients of a Certificate.

During the evening a Branch Certificate was presented by our Chairman to Mr Terry Ayres, one of our regular collectors in the Swanley Branch of ASDA, who, over a 9 year period, has collected £18,000 for the appeal.

One Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to the Wilmington Day Nursery whose representatives brought with them a book showing how they had taught the children of their nursery what life had been like in Britain during World War 2, even having part of one of their classrooms turned in an Anderson Shelter, complete with a bunk bed!! This had won a national award for them.

## **SHEPWAY GROUP – VIMY 100 COMMEMORATIONS AT SHORNCLIFFE**

Thursday 6th April will be a lasting memory for all who attended the above commemoration hosted by Shorncliffe Trust. The sun shone, it was warm and there was a good crowd to welcome the 350 or so Canadian Military cadets who were here to remember their countrymen, who served in WW1 and passed through Shorncliffe Barracks and received much valuable training there before crossing the Channel to fight in France and Flanders.



The cadets represented all the provinces of Canada and were smart and proud in their various uniforms and were ably supported by their officers and helpers led by their senior officer, Captain Terry Plant CD, 287 Beaumont Spitfire RCACS, Canadian Armed Forces. Standard Bearers representing TRBL Branches of Hythe & Saltwood, New Romney, Cheriton & Morehall, Sandgate and Brabourne & Smeeth, supported by the Royal Naval Association, were allotted to groups of cadets so that there was a visual mark of welcome and friendship between the nation's representatives.

Regards to you all

*Tony West*

Membership Support Officer



## LEST WE FORGET

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

Mr Michael Marshall	Brabourne & Smeeth
Mr David Papa	Canterbury
Mr Arthur Maddock	Cheriton & Morehall
Mr Pat O'Reilly	Dover White Cliffs - President
Mr Reginald Lohan	"
Mr Michael Humber	Dymchurch & District
Mrs Mary Hurley	"
Mr Michael Lilley	"
Mr William Tanner	"
Mr Rex Nieto	Elham Valley
Mr Graham Holbrook	Faversham
Mrs Joyce Cutler	Hamstreet
Mrs Margarete Finch	Hythe & Saltwood - former Chairman
Mr Harry Sellen	Isle of Sheppey
Mr Allen Heasman	Leigh & District
Mr George Raymen	Maidstone
Mr John Moffatt	Margate
Mr Richard Piddock	New Romney
Mr William Jackson	Paddock Wood
Mr John Groombridge	Ramsgate
Mr Stanley Saunders	Royal British Legion Village
Mr John Power	Royal Tunbridge Wells
Mr John Pring	"
Mrs Carol Mason	Sittingbourne & Milton Regis
Mr Edward Foster	St Margarets at Cliffe
Mr Thomas Tomling	"
Mr John Purdy	Swanley, Crockenhill & Hextable
Mr Ian Gregory	West Kingsdown & District



*Our deepest sympathies go to their families and friends*



## KENT COUNTY DIARY OF EVENTS - 2017

### MAY

Sun	7th	Poppy Walk - Whitstable Castle (10 am)
Sat	20th - 21st	Annual Conference - Southport
Sat	20th - 28th	MSO on Leave
Wed	31st	Meet the Area Team - Capel Morris Centre

### JUNE

Sun	11th	County Parade - Dover (3 pm)
Sat	9th - 11th	Folkestone & Ashford Military Show - Sellindge Show Ground *
Fri	16th - 24th	MSO on Leave
Sat	24th	Armed Forces Day - Great Lines, Gillingham *

### JULY

Sun	2nd	Dover White Cliffs Branch Poppy Walk
Sat	8th - 9th	Battles for Victory - Ellington Park, Ramsgate *
Tue	25th-29th	War & Peace Revival - The Hop Farm, Beltring *

### AUGUST

Sat	19th-20th	Headcorn Combined Ops Military Vehicle & Air Show *
Sat	26th - 28th	Military Odyssey - County Showground, Detling *
Mon	21st - 3rd	MSO on Leave
Thu	31st	Pedal to Paris - Greenwich to Dover stage

### SEPTEMBER

Sat	16th - 17th	Salute to the '40s - Chatham Historic Dockyard *
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### OCTOBER

Sun	8th	County Standard Bearer Competition - Ditton
Wed	25th	Poppy Launch - County Hall, Maidstone
Sat	28th	County Poppy Lunch - Brompton Barracks

### NOVEMBER

Fri	3rd	Thanet Festival of Remembrance - Winter Gardens, Margate
Fri	10th	Dover Festival of Remembrance
Sat	11th	Armistice Day
Sat	11th	Festival of Remembrance - Royal Albert Hall
Sun	12th	Remembrance Sunday

### DECEMBER

Sat	16th	Carol Service - Capel Morris Centre (2.30 pm)
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### JANUARY 2018

Sat	20th	County Conference - Headcorn Village Hall (1 pm)
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ARMED FORCES DAY EVENTS

JUNE

Sat 24th The Great Lines, Gillingham  
Pencester Gardens, Dover

\* County Recruiting Stall

Updated: 28th April 2017

**Royal British Legion Village Branch**

**Fun Quiz Night**

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

Community Hall, Capel Morris Centre  
Royal British Legion Village  
Aylesford ME20 7NL

Start time 7pm

Bring your own food and drink (and a glass!)

Tables/Teams of 6

(Raffle prize donations very welcome)

Tickets £5 per person



Details from [robert.mccann@rbli.co.uk](mailto:robert.mccann@rbli.co.uk)

A fundraising event for Remembrance





# ROYAL BRITISH LEGION KENT COUNTY

## PARADE AND SERVICE OF RE-DEDICATION SUNDAY 11TH JUNE 2017 AT DOVER

The Parade will muster at 1430hrs at Pencester Gardens and march to St Mary's Church where the Standards will be inspected.

The congregation is requested to be seated by 1450hrs. The Service will commence at 1500 hrs.

After the Service the Parade will form up outside the church in Biggin Street under the command of the County Parade Marshal and will march to the War Memorial led by the Band.

The Salute will be taken by Colonel (Retd.) Jo Gunnell OBE DL at the War Memorial.

Refreshments will be available in the Town Hall after the event.

To help with the catering arrangements, please return the slip below to the Membership Support Officer ASAP but by no later than 31st May.

Richard Cast  
County Chairman

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### COUNTY PARADE ON SUNDAY 11TH JUNE 2017

(Every Branch is requested to submit this return to the MSO)

From: The Chairman ..... Branch

My Branch will / will not be supporting County Parade on 11th June 2017.

My Standard will / will not be on parade.

Attendance at the Service approx. .... Branch members

Signed ..... Branch Chairman

Please return slip ASAP to help with catering arrangements.

**Return to:** MSO, RBL South East Area Office (Kent), Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NL