



KENT COUNTY NEWS



TRBL South East Area Office (Kent)
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Registered Charity 219279

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

October 2017

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

I am pleased to say that for the 2016-2017 poppy collections we in Kent have collected £1,700,000 which, as we know, is around the sum spent on beneficiaries national each week. This is a tremendous effort by members, volunteers and the public of Kent. Therefore, please give yourselves a big pat on the back. Overall the National Appeal has raised a staggering £46,100,000.

Last month I attended the County Chairmen's Seminar in Birmingham to hear the future and current plans of the Executive Board and the Trustees for taking the charity and organisation onwards. Some of these will come into play during the next year and some are still in the planning stage. It is good to see that we have a dynamic executive team in place to ensure that we keep moving onwards, reviewing what we do and improving instead of resting on our laurels, thereby ensuring that the TRBL will be there to continue serving our beneficiaries for many years to come. Such things as new marketing and developing our brand which will include standardising the many differing Logos we produce, a more standardised approach to social media and the multi web sites that are currently in place so that they all give the corporate message and not some of our individual ideas.

Already, due to the help some members, staff and volunteers took part in we have now set a standard list of Values and Behaviours to work across the board as a corporate and membership organisation. I am sure you will agree that they were always there, but we now have them brought to the fore. They consist of five simple headings: **SERVICE** (it has always been at our core), **COLLABORATION** (working with other likeminded organisations and with each other at all levels), **PASSION** (members of the Legion, volunteers and staff have always been passionate in carrying out the aims of this organisation), **EXCELLENCE** (we strive to ensure that in all we do we strive to be the best). And finally **VALUEING OUR PEOPLE** (unless we ensure that we value all our members, supporters and staff we will never be able to uphold the other four Values and Behaviours).

If you don't treat your fellow members in your branch, the others within the Legion (staff and higher levels) and outside organisations in line with these values and behaviours, you are falling short of the high standard that the general public expect when they refer to the Royal British Legion and give to us in our appeals and Remembrance work.

Branch Community Support. Whilst we in Kent currently exceed our colleagues in Surrey and Sussex Counties with the number of branches signed up, they are quickly catching us up. BCS, which no matter what you say, has always been the core welfare work of the Legion Branches with the exception that now we are asking you to record on a quarterly basis what you do. This is because our world now wants proof of the work we do before they support our campaigns and other work. We

have 32 branches signed up out of 70 so we are actively seeking the other 38 to get signed up and commence completing the quarterly returns. Don't worry about the form filling on the computer, we can help support and train you. For more information contact Cherrie Harris, our County BCS Representative, on 01797 361807 or email at nr.drh1@yahoo.co.uk.

GP90 Just to let you know that the County Standard with a Wreath Bearer will be attending the event on 8th August 2018. It would be excellent if we could have as many of our branches present in support and to honour the memory of the many Men of Kent and Kentish Men who gave their lives in the First World War so that we can have the freedom that we still enjoy today. Please sign up today. They too were our beneficiaries so your charitable funds can be used to support their memory and by so doing will give comfort to their descendants who will know that the Legion still supports their memory. Hence our current strap line LIVE ON.

Richard Cast
County Chairman

BRANCH ACCOUNTS - END OF YEAR

Please ensure this information is passed to the Branch Treasurer

Treasurers are reminded that 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' for each account were to be submitted to the County Office by 30th September at the very latest.

I have to report that, to date, 56 sets of branch accounts have been received at County Office. The remaining 11 accounts listed below are now overdue.

Cranbrook	Hythe	Lamberhurst	Orpington
Eastry	Kemsing	Leigh	Westerham
Herne Bay	Knockholt	Minster	

If any branch is having problems with their accounts please contact the MSO soonest.

Branch Officers should be ensuring that as much help as possible is given to the Treasurer to ensure that they can successfully close down the books and produce the Branch Accounts.

BRANCH AGMs / COMPLIANCE

The Legion year ends on 30th September and your Branch AGM's are to be held between 1st October and 30th November. Branches are reminded that to be compliant there must be four separate members holding the main officer roles of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. There also needs to be a minimum of three additional committee members and there must be a named Branch Community Representative (formally Welfare Officer) who can be one of the committee members.

Branches should ideally have a succession plan so that each role is covered by a non-official deputy who can step in should the need arise. Now is the time to plan so that everything is in place for the AGM.

BRANCH MS1s

Please be aware that Form MS1 has changed this year. Due to Data Protection laws, all officers and committee members will be required to initial the signature page to indicate that they agree to allow their personal details (name, address and phone number) to appear in the County Handbook. Therefore previous versions, including the version in the Membership Handbook, are not to be used.

STANDARD BEARER COMPETITION

This year's County Standard Bearer competition will take place on Sunday 8th October at the Army Reserve Centre, London Road, Ditton, Aylesford ME20 6DB. Those taking part should arrive by midday for a 1.00 pm start. There will be refreshments available. Spectators are more than welcome.

If you would like to take part in the competition, please contact me on 01227 731385 or at annjaneausten@yahoo.co.uk by 24th September please.

Ann Austen
County Ceremonial Coordinator

COUNTY PARADE 2018

The County Committee has agreed that the proposed date for next year's parade will be 10th June 2018. Branches interested in hosting the parade should contact the MSO by 6th December.

GREAT PILGRIMAGE 90 (GP90)

The Pilgrimage takes place in August 2018 when it is hoped that most if not all Legion branches will be represented by a Standard Bearer and a Wreath Layer. To date just 13 Kent branches have registered an interest in taking part in this once-in-a-lifetime Legion event:

Ashford	Minster & Monkton	Swanley, Crockenhill & Hextable
Dover White Cliffs	Ramsgate	West Kingsdown & Dist.
Downs	Royal Tunbridge Wells	Westerham
Gillingham	Sidcup & Footscray	
Lenham, Harrietsham & Dist.	South Darenth & Dist.	

The Pilgrimage includes battlefield tours in addition to the parade in Ypres. The cost to the branch is just £1,000 to cover all transport, hotels, meals, insurance etc. for two people. Register your branch now at www.rbl.org.uk/gp90. For more information contact the South East Area GP90 representative Sue Coleman at scoleman@britishlegion.org.uk

ANNUAL COUNTY CONFERENCE 2018

Next year's County Conference will take place at Headcorn Village Hall on Saturday 20th January commencing at 1 pm. Branch Secretaries now have the papers branches will need. All paperwork concerning Conference is 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 Tuesday 5th December.**

The guest speaker will be Mr Terry Whittles, the Legion's National Chairman. 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 5th December please, to give him time to obtain answers – he doesn't know everything.

COUNTY AWARDS

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.

WELFARE MATTERS

We were approached by a lady whose ex-husband served in the army for 22 years retiring with the rank of Sergeant. They divorced in 2012. She is eligible as a beneficiary as is her 18 year old son, Anthony (just commencing college) by this marriage. Anthony has experienced anxiety, depression and a lack of confidence after his parents separated and subsequently divorced.

In October 2016 he took up Powerlifting as a hobby to boost his confidence and found he was quite successful in this sport, so much so that he achieved a British Record this year for Bench Presses in his category. He had the opportunity of attending the Commonwealth Powerlifting Championships in South Africa in September and he came away with 3 GOLDS and 1 SILVER - less than one year after taking up the sport.

His mother asked for assistance to get her son to the championships and as the Legion do not generally fund this sort of request, I raised an exceptional request to Central Grants Team and it was passed with the Legion funding the majority of this trip with additional funds coming from RBLI.

I was proud to be involved with this case - especially after seeing his delighted mother's face as she gave me the news of his medals.

Nikki Ward
Case Officer

YOUTH MATTERS

As autumn and the Poppy Appeal approaches, I am conscious that many branches will be working with young people more than at other times of the year. Please would you remember to encourage them to join the Legion as individual members in their own right. A parental signature is required and the only way for young people to join the Legion is via the paper membership form.

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that, in line with the Legion's Youth Policy, if youth members attend any branch meetings, they must be accompanied by a parent or by an adult with parental responsibility.

For any branches which are considering making a new affiliation, please use this season to make the necessary introductions. There is no better time!

And finally, I have devised a template for affiliation ceremonies which you are very welcome to use. Please email me at susanfoster61@btinternet.com if you would like a copy.

SWANLEY, CROCKENHILL & HEXTABLE BRANCH



Once again the branch welcomed the Pedal to Paris as the riders came through Swanley on 31st August. The photograph shows some the group welcoming them as this year we spread ourselves along the main road. We have waving to the riders as they cycled through the town for some 20 years.

The three local Cadet Units are already affiliated to the Branch and we support them when they have any special events taking place, for example we all worked together (with Geoff Lees acting as Parade Marshal) to ensure the Armed Forces Day event, arranged by the Swanley Town Council, was a success. Members from the units also help with the Poppy Appeal collection, as do Scouts and Guides. The uniform groups always do extremely well every year. In addition we use the Army Cadet Force hall as our Poppy Appeal office

To date we have five youth members from these units, plus the CO of the ATC has become a member and we are actively trying to attract more to join the Legion. Remembrance is a very important time for the Cadets and they turn out in force for our Parade and Service.

Chairman, Jackie Best, is pictured when she presented Legion Youth Badges to four cadets from the ATC this year.



NEW ROMNEY BRANCH

Once again we were invited to attend this special Service to commemorate Battle of Britain Day on Friday 15th September at the National Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne. It was a pleasant but brief service and we were informed that another two of the original pilots from the Battle of Britain had passed away since the service in 2016. Apparently those remaining now number less than ten.



Chairman George Harvey laying the wreath on behalf of the Branch



I-r: Peter Lee (New Romney), John Clayton (Gillingham), Bruce Barry (Brabourne & Smeeth), Paige Barry-Knowles (RAFA Hythe & Romney Marsh)

SIDCUP & FOOTSCRAY BRANCH

On Saturday 9th September the Branch had a stall at a family fun day and open day to celebrate the centenary of Queen Mary's Hospital. There were tours of the new Cancer & Kidney Unit, health and fitness activities with Charlton Athletic FC and lots of stalls from local organisations and services.

Those attending included the Mayor of Bexley Borough and the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP - Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, MP for Old Bexley & Sidcup and Vice President of the Sidcup & Footscray Branch.

The helpers included PAO Barbara Fielder, assistant PAO Helen Leader, Bob Chapman Deputy Standard Bearer plus members Barbara and Bert Nathan, Betty and Ray Barnes and Cyril Branch. Our stall raised £378.70.



James Brokenshire MP with branch members

ISLE OF THANET FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE

Tickets for the festival on 3rd November at the Winter Gardens, Margate are still available from the Winter Gardens Box Office. We only have 14 Legion Standards booked in so this is an urgent request for more to attend. Book your Standard in by contacting me on 01843 224805 or at austinwalker@live.co.uk. The reason the event is later than normal is that it was the only date that I could get a military band.

Aussie Walker
Festival Director

EURO MINIATURE EXPO

Over the weekend of 16th/17th September members from Cheriton & Morehall, Invicta and New Romney Branches attended the Euro Miniature Expo (formerly Euro Militaire) at the Leas Cliff Hall in Folkestone to

collect for the Poppy Appeal. The show attracts military modellers from all around the world, some of whom have never heard of the Poppy Appeal but who are interested to learn and always leave in awe of what the Legion does for this country's military personnel. This year the fantastic sum of £626.39 was collected for the Poppy Appeal. Thanks to an impressive display, we have been invited to return next year for the same exhibition and also to an additional event, "On Track" which features tanks and model tanks, in February at the same venue.

SHEPWAY GROUP – VETERANS COFFEE MORNING

Members from the Shepway Area Group hosted a Veterans Coffee morning on Saturday 23rd September at Age UK, Hythe. The aim of the morning was to provide comradeship and support to local Veterans and Legion members, with all present able to relax in the friendly welcoming environment of the Age UK centre.



As usual there was a good mix of Veterans and Branch members from the local communities in Shepway. We were particularly pleased to welcome a member of The Royal Canadian Legion, who was in Kent visiting friends and family and was brought along to the Coffee Morning by a member from Elham Valley Branch. It was interesting to hear of the activities carried out by the Canadian Legion which, he was very keen to impress upon us, belongs to the Queen. Everyone enjoyed themselves and we look forward to similar events in the future.

POPPY APPEAL 2016/17

As we have reached the close of the 2016 Poppy Appeal year, we are delighted to inform you that the grand total for Kent reached £1,734,826. We are over 11% up on last year which is a phenomenal achievement.

Our volunteers work tirelessly to manage this and the support that branch members give to the Poppy Appeal Organisers is crucial. Thank you to everyone who helps with the appeal, whether involved in delivering, collecting, counting or standing in supermarkets. It is very much appreciated by those beneficiaries whose lives are changed as a result.

New for 2017/18 - THE SILENT SOLDIER



The Silent Soldier is the black silhouette of a First World War "Tommy". It is anticipated that it will be displayed nationwide throughout 2018 as a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by service personnel of Britain and the Empire during World War One.

The figure is "silent" in remembrance of those who lost their lives, and "silent" as respect for those who returned to their home having suffered life-changing physical and emotional injury.

The scheme has been initiated in Surrey and is being offered nationwide. Kent is a unique location, soldiers exited through our ports but so many less returned. Silent soldiers placed strategically around port and station locations could be particularly poignant.

The Silent Soldier is made of weather proof dibond and may be fixed to flat surfaces like a wall, or attached to vertical angle irons as free standing figures. The figure is supplied with angle irons and nuts and bolts. It may be purchased as a simple figure with a base panel reading "1914 - 1918 Lest we Forget", or as figure with a company name included in the base panel.

Flyers with details of the scheme are being widely distributed. As the silhouettes appear in open spaces and on buildings, it is expected that further interest will be generated and requests for the Silent Soldier will increase. Social media will be used to report the progress of the scheme and to thank sponsors.

Any branch, person or company purchasing the Silent Soldier is responsible for observing appropriate health and safety practices when mounting the figure and for ensuring that it is displayed with the permission of the site owner.

Details on how to obtain a Silent Soldier may be obtained from the two Kent Community Fundraisers whose contact details are below. Any branch choosing to sponsor a Silent Soldier will be able to obtain one at the special price of £100 per soldier. The price to businesses, local authorities etc. will be £250

Julie Ness 07833 480272 jness@britishlegion.org.uk
Jane Ayers 07551 138413 jayers@britishlegion.org.uk

NEWCHURCH ADVANCED LANDING GROUND MEMORIAL

The New Romney Branch was invited to the Dedication and Unveiling Ceremony for the Newchurch Advanced Landing Ground Memorial, which took place at Newchurch on Saturday 23rd September.

Serving members of 3 (F) Sqn RAF, RAF Cadet Force members, members of New Romney TRBL and Standards, together with a junior RAF Cadet Force Band, marched from the village hall to the monument site on the outer edge of the village. Approximately 250 people assembled in the area of the monument to participate in the Dedication Service which was conducted by the Rev (Sqn Ldr) Matthew Buchan.

Mrs Jennifer Rose, wife of Flt Sgt Morris Rose (3 (F) Sqn RAF) who had served at this Station during WW2, smoothly unveiled the Monument without a hitch. A young lady RAF Cadet read the poem "A Pilots Poem" which was very touching. George Harvey, New Romney Branch Chair, recited The Act of Remembrance prior to the playing of the Last Post and the Kohima Epitaph after the playing of Reveille.

To end the day the RAF Falcons parachute display team dropped into the memorial site.



Regards to you all

Tony West

Membership Support Officer



LEST WE FORGET

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

Mrs Ellen Martin	Canterbury
Mr Victor Harnett	Cowden, Hartfield & District
Mr Russell Clarke	Dymchurch & District
Mrs Thelma Finch	Elham Valley
Mr Ronald Haden	Faversham
Mr David Barnes	Hawkhurst
Mr Peter Bonell	Hythe & Saltwood
Mr Kenneth Hodgman	"
Mr Edward Glover	Isle of Sheppey
Mr Harry Sellen	"
Mr John Lewis	Kemsing
Mr Brian Philpott	Maidstone
Mr Francis McAfee	Margate
Mr Edward Smith	Minster & Monkton - Vice Chairman
Mr Steven Wilson	"
Mr Lewis Kerton	Paddock Wood & District
Mr George Osborne	Royal British Legion Village
Mr Thomas Player	"
Mr Arthur Radcliffe	"
Mr Richard Broaders	Shepway & Parkwood
Mr Clifford Halliday	Woodchurch



Our deepest sympathies go to their families and friends



KENT COUNTY DIARY OF EVENTS - 2017

OCTOBER

Sun	8th	County Standard Bearer Competition - Ditton
Wed	25th	Civic Poppy Launch - County Hall, Maidstone
Fri	27th	Public Poppy Launch - Countywide
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

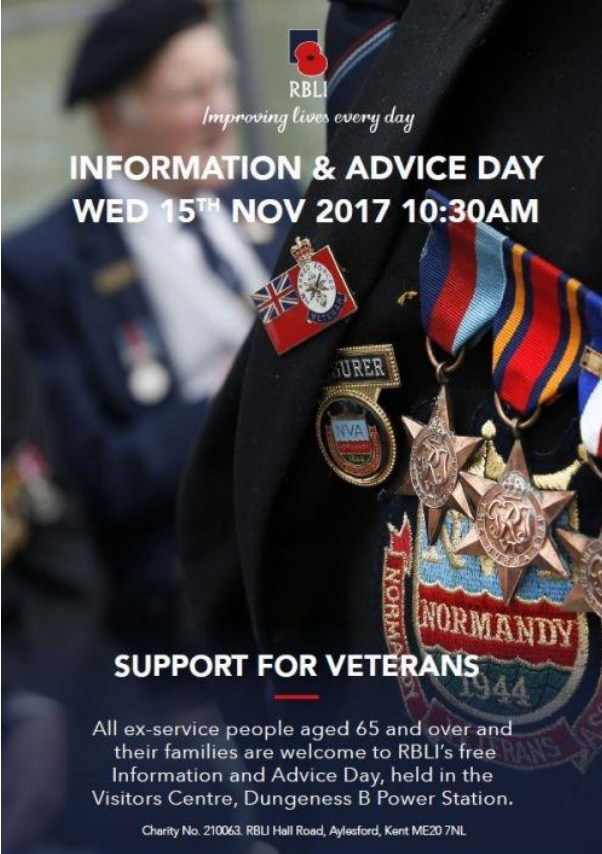
DECEMBER

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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Updated: 3rd October 2017



RBLI
Improving lives every day

INFORMATION & ADVICE DAY
WED 15TH NOV 2017 10:30AM

SUPPORT FOR VETERANS

All ex-service people aged 65 and over and their families are welcome to RBLI's free Information and Advice Day, held in the Visitors Centre, Dungeness B Power Station.

Charity No. 210063, RBLI Hall Road, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NL

BECAUSE OUR EX-FORCES DESERVE THE VERY BEST

RBLI would like to invite all those who have served in the Armed Forces and are 65 or over to this Kent-based event in Visitors Centre, Dungeness B Power Station. The event will provide an opportunity to meet some new people and talk to the many organisations providing health advice, social activities and more in your local area!

Wednesday 15th November 10:30am-2pm

**Visitors Centre, Dungeness B Power Station,
Romney Marsh, Kent, TN29 9PX**

This event is part of a project to find and support older military veterans.



**wellbeing
people**

Contact RBLI Event Co-ordinator Michael Bishop for more information



michael.bishop@rbli.co.uk



07827 943609