



“THE JENDIT”

All the clips!

THE CREWKERNE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



AUTUMN 2018 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Jendit, and as we slow down after a long, hot and busy summer, we now have a chance to reflect on some of the events that have taken place since the summer Jendit.

Obituary of Stewart Kingdom

It is with great sadness that we must announce the untimely death of our friend Stewart Kingdom. Stewart has been a Branch member for a couple of years now and has been a regular attendee of many of our meetings, fetes, functions and school visits.



Stewart was formerly a member of the RAMC and did several tours of Northern Ireland, he served in the Falklands campaign of 1982 and the first Gulf war in 1991. After Stewart left the Army in 1997, his life seemed to be one tragedy after another. His father died in hospital during a routine operation, his mother so distraught by his father's death, took her own life the very same day. On the day of his mother and father's funeral his sister was killed in a road accident. As if all this wasn't enough for Stewart to cope with a few years later, Stewart was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease believed to be linked to Gulf war syndrome (though never admitted by the MOD) not surprisingly Stewart also suffered with PTSD which unfortunately was a major cause of the breakdown of his marriage.



Stewart's Parkinson's became increasingly more pronounced and eventually he had an electronic implant inserted into his brain to control his extreme condition.

In August, Stewart was diagnosed with terminal cancer of the oesophagus and given a maximum of 12 months to live. He helped us throughout the Poppy Appeal standing on the stalls even when he was not on the roster and he paraded with us on Remembrance Sunday, but sadly on Thursday 15th November, sometime in the afternoon, he decided that he could go on no longer and took his own life at his bungalow in Barn Crescent.

He had become a friend to many of us at the Branch and will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Unfortunately, due to the loss of so many family members, Stewart will have no one to attend his funeral except friends so it is our intention to get as many Legion members as possible to attend his funeral and as soon as we know the date we will be in touch with you all.

Severalls WW1 Thank You Event.

On Saturday the 1st September, the Branch held a WW1 Thank You event on the Green at Severalls. Committee members helped decorate the Green with bunting made by members of the Crewkerne Branch. The monument itself was decorated with poppies and pebbles with the names of all the Crewkerne men that gave their lives during WW1. The pebbles were kindly donated by Bradford's Building Supplies. The groundsmen from the CTC kindly fixed the wooden carving at the foot of the monument. The Town Council also very kindly lent us some gazebos for the tea stand and members of the local Severalls community supplied table cloths and flowers for the tables and the use of electricity to boil water, and of course not forgetting Nigel's store for generously providing milk and squash.



Severalls war memorial suitably decorated for the occasion with carving installed

Following a short service led by Rev. Stuart Huntley, a candle was lit by the Lady Mayor and a tea party commenced on the Green which was attended by a good number of residents and Branch members.

WW1 Display in St. Bartholomew's Church

On completion of the tea party the poppies and pebbles were taken to St. Bart's church and were placed on display along with some beautiful art work by the children from St Bart's School. Wadham School also contributed to the display using their creative skills writing WW1 poetry and artwork. It was a lovely display and thank you Revd. Huntley for allowing this to be held in the church, especially while the restoration work was taking place.



Legion Night Skittles

Our September Legion Night consisted of a skittles match and a small buffet laid on by members of the Branch. The whole evening was well attended and enjoyed by all. After the skittles there was plenty of "Dit Spinning" by some of our more senior members and we look forward to holding another Legion Night soon and we will let you know when the date will be confirmed in the New Year.

Wincanton Poppy of Honour

On Saturday 6th October, the Branch and many others were invited to Wincanton to parade for the unveiling of the Poppy of Honour, a giant Remembrance Poppy that was constructed of steel and glass. It stands; 2.600 mm high; 2.200 mm wide and 300 mm in depth. There are 1,115,471 individual Poppies with rank, name and date of KIA/MIA of every British and Commonwealth serviceman lost during WW1. Including the Names of 800 women killed in WW1 and the 306 soldiers who were shot at dawn, and have been granted a Royal pardon. Each individual poppy was hand written with the rank, name and date they were Killed in Action or Missing in Action. Each individual Remembrance Poppy was written by individuals, associations, companies, groups, schools and universities. Each individual hand written Poppy was permanently sealed inside the glass and steel Poppy and when the last hand written Poppy was placed inside, a box was enclosed with small vials containing earth and small artefacts from the Battlefields of World War 1. Before the unveiling we marched through the streets of Wincanton led by the standards of all the other Branches and associations in attendance. Finally we fell in at the recreation ground where a few wreaths were laid at the foot of the Poppy. Sadly, the weather was not on our side and all who attended got a right Royal soaking.



The Poppy of Honour.



*Crewkerne Standard Bearer Brian Forster,
Secretary and Chairman at Wincanton
Parade.*

The Lone Tommy Sculpture

On Saturday 29th September committee members were invited to attend the unveiling of a fantastic sculpture made by the learners at A2Achieve on the Coombe Farm site. The sculpture depicts a lone Tommy with reversed rifle and a garland of poppies. The detail in the sculpture was amazing but especially when you consider the whole thing was made of



*Members of the Branch attend the
unveiling of the lone Tommy.*



plastic bottles, so well done to all involved. The sculpture was put on display in St. Bartholomew's church over the Remembrance weekend.

Annual General Meeting 13th October

On Saturday 13th October, the Branch held their AGM which was an opportunity to appoint new committee members as well as a new President following Dave Lawrence's retirement earlier this year. This year the Branch purchased a chain of office for the President, so Dave was given the opportunity to wear it for the official handover to our new President Terry Austin. The Branch would like to congratulate Terry on his appointment as President.

Our other new committee members are Arthur Hamlin and John Smith. Arthur joined us earlier in the year and John has been a member a few years and they both expressed an interest in joining the committee so we would like to take this opportunity to officially welcome them.



Former President Dave Lawrence hands the chain of office to Terry Austin

Remembrance Sunday

On Remembrance Sunday, the Branch lead the community in the customary parade at Severalls which was extremely well attended by so many of the community's organisations and youth groups and it was estimated that over 300 people attended to either parade, or to spectate. The service was led by Revd. Stuart Huntley and Mark Barrett who played the Last Post and Reveille. Wreaths were laid by our new President Mr Terry Austin and a representative from the Town Council. Following Severalls, it was a quick dash down to Falkland Square to carry out the Armistice wreath laying at the town war memorial. A short service was led by Revd. Steve Gray and then it was off to the church for the main wreath laying ceremony and church service.

To begin the service in the church, the Standard and union flag were paraded to the altar by Arthur Watts and Brian Forster respectively, the standards were followed by a candle of Remembrance carried by LCpl Dennis Galvin of the Crewkerne Army Cadets and a wreath was laid by Lt.Cdr. Kevin Roffey RN, the procession was overseen by Mr Bob King.



The Decadettes entertained us through the afternoon.

The service included prayers read by the Scouts and pupils from St Bartholomew's First School and the choir from St Bart's School sang "Where have all the flowers gone?" led by Mrs Alice Samuel and accompanied by our Chairman Sam on guitar.



After church, the Branch held an afternoon of entertainment at the George Reynolds Centre including a lovely lunch laid on by the GRC and live music provided by the Decadettes. During the afternoon's proceedings, the Branch presented the newly created MacCready Shield to this year's best cadet and that went to the previously mentioned LCpl Dennis Galvin, who received a certificate and a copy of the SAS Survival Guide from the Branch President. The MacCready Shield was established in memory of Patrick MacCready, a long-time member of the Branch and a Burma Star Veteran who sadly passed away last year. At the end of the afternoon we held a



Thanks to Sue and Sarah at the GRC

draw organised by Sarah King. All in all a great day was had and a huge thank you must go to all who attended and those who organised and supported the event. A huge thank you must go to Sue and Sarah for catering for so many people on the day and the food was delicious.



L.Cpl. Galvin receives the very first MacCready Shield. From President Terry Austin.

Community and Remembrance

We would like to take this opportunity to comment on the wonderful displays that have sprung up around the town in shop windows and on pub walls, it is heart-warming to see, and it just goes to prove that the people of Crewkerne take Remembrance very seriously and that we will remember all who paid the ultimate price.

We would also like to mention all who assisted with our Poppy Appeal collecting. We are all very grateful here at the Legion because we know how difficult it can be with modern busy lifestyles to find the time to help and we know that our PAO Bob King worked tirelessly through the summer to recruit help with the Appeal, so a big thank you to everyone and especially Bob for making this year's Poppy Appeal one of the most successful ever.



Just one of the fantastic remembrance displays around the town

Crewkerne Poppy Appeal Update

At the time of going to press the Poppy Appeal total stood at an absolutely astounding £13,486.11. Obviously this year has been special due to the 1918 centenary, however that is more than double the total this time last year, so we must say a huge thank you to the community but also a massive well done to our new PAO Bob King for such a fantastic achievement, especially considering Bob only moved to Somerset last year and we know that when organising the Poppy Appeal, local knowledge is the key to success, so well done Bob and his wife Sarah.



Branch Membership

Finally, just a few words regarding the Branch membership. Over the last few years our Branch has been steadily growing in no small part due to the efforts of members going out and spreading the word about the work we do and the social events we hold. Today as we go to press, I am reliably informed that the Branch membership now stands at 88 members which is the most we have had since the early 1990s, so it is encouraging to see that we do still appear to be relevant in the modern world.

The Branch Committee is as follows

- PresidentTerry Austin
- ChairmanAntony Samuel
- Vice ChairmanDennis Holland
- Secretary.....Alice Samuel
- TreasurerVivien Green
- Committee.....Sue Phinn
- Committee.....Brian Forster
- Committee.....Peter Brown
- Committee.....Rita Brown
- Committee.....Denis Bowman
- Committee.....Tony Smith
- Committee.....Sandie Smith
- Committee.....Robert King
- Committee.....John Davies
- Committee.....John Smith
- Committee.....Arthur Hamlin
- Poppy Appeal Officer...Robert King
- Standard Bearer.....Andrew Watts
- Membership Sec.....Alice Samuel
- BCS RepSandie Smith
- BCS Sec.....Alice Samuel
- BCS Treasurer..... Vivien Green

