



We Will Remember Them

Mr M Longy – *Sutton Scotney*
Mr C Jennings, Mr G Gillauseyn – *Old Basing*
Our sincere condolences to family and friends

VE75 Commemorations

As people are no longer able to attend national and regional VE Day 75 commemorations or events due to the Covid-19 pandemic, The Royal British Legion is playing a central role in the delivery of a range of remote activity for people to participate in from home. This includes a VE Day 75 livestream, national moments of Remembrance and thanksgiving and a learning pack for young people.

The Legion is inviting all its members to join together in encouraging people of all generations and communities to take part in the activities on 8th May and pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of the entire Second World War generation. As society faces some of the most challenging times since of the Second World War, it is now more important than ever to unite in recognition of service to the nation, just as communities did 75 years ago.

Royal British Legion Schedule

1100-1102 – Two Minute Silence

1115-1200 – The Royal British Legion VE75 Livestream

2000-2110 – VE Day 75: The People's Celebration, BBC One

2100 – 'We'll Meet Again' Singalong

Two Minute Silence

The Legion is calling on people to join in a national moment of reflection and Remembrance at 11am on Friday 8th May and pause for a Two Minute Silence, not only in recognition of the service and sacrifice of the Second World War generation, but also to reflect on the devastating impact Covid-19 has had on so many lives across the world.

People are invited to take part in the Silence in whatever way they feel appropriate be that standing at their window, stepping outside their home, whilst remaining distanced from others, or taking the opportunity for a quiet moment of reflection. To build momentum towards this important moment, please share this with your communities and encourage everyone to come together in Remembrance at 11am.

The Royal British Legion Livestream

Following the Silence, the Legion is hosting a VE Day livestream, sharing stories and memories from those who served and sacrificed during the Second World War. The Legion is inviting people to grab a cup of tea and join us for the livestream as we bring the World War Two generation together with today's generation to chat about their experiences.

Hosted by TV presenter Sonali Shah, the programme will feature contributions from social historian Julie Summers and cook and influencer Melissa Helmsley. The stream will be live from 11.15am on the Legion's website rbl.org.uk/veday75.

VE Day 75: The People's Celebration BBC ONE: 20:00 – 21:10

To mark the 75th anniversary of VE day, in these unprecedented times, the BBC in partnership with The Royal British Legion will honour and celebrate the World War Two Generation with an evening of memories and music. Featuring some of those who remember this historic day, together with Britain's favourite performers who will entertain us with popular songs of the era. In a fitting finale at 9.00 pm we will see the nation unite for a very special rendition of "We'll Meet Again" as we all give thanks to our veterans and remember our loved ones.

'We'll Meet Again' Singalong

Lyrics available on [The Royal British Legion website](https://www.rbl.org.uk/stories/ve-day-singalong) <https://www.rbl.org.uk/stories/ve-day-singalong>

VE Day 75 Learning Pack

Designed for 7-14 year olds the [learning pack](#) includes first-hand accounts from the Second World War generation, veteran interviews and a range of activities to allow families to explore and commemorate VE Day 75 together. People can follow the activity on social media using #VEDay75 and #VEDay75Live during the livestream.

Branch led activities

Many Branches are organising online/virtual VE Day 75 activities so don't forget to check what your Branch might have planned and join in.

Sandra Fruish MBA MSc

Assistant Director Membership

Covid-19

Over these last weeks I have spoken to many people who are doing all they can to keep our country and communities working, from those in the big supermarkets to friends trying to run their own small businesses, from those who are Serving to politicians and to delivery drivers, from other charities to staff working across the Legion and with members who are supporting our beneficiaries in communities across the UK and Europe. We are all facing real and fundamental issues with huge unknowns and many common challenges and shared concerns. All are doing their very best to understand and navigate this new world. None have all the answers. None expect to get everything right but all I have spoken to are determined to play their part as best they can and build stronger communities and nations as we emerge from this.

The Legion was created as a response to massive challenge and change. The red poppy took root and grew as a national (indeed international) symbol of remembrance and hope. This short message reflects those challenges and that shared determination. Please forgive the rather home-made recording. <https://youtu.be/oGxADTAE5iE>

Charles Byrne

Director General

Club News

As part of its response to the Covid 19 pandemic the Legion is looking at its financial position and how it can alleviate the impact of the crisis on all aspects of its business. The organisation is very aware of the financial challenge this is placing on clubs at this time and is looking at what action can be taken within legal and charitable constraints. This will be discussed and a decision made at the Board of Trustees' meeting next week.

In the meantime, the Executive Board have confirmed that there will be a postponement in collection of licence fees until the end of April for those clubs which pay by BACS and clubs will not be charged for late submissions of their licence application due to an inability to hold an AGM during this period. The plan is to conduct a review of the licence fee payment before the end of April after which clubs will be informed of the outcome of the review.

Kind regards, and I hope you are all keeping safe and well.

Sandra Fruish MBA MSc

Assistant Director Membership'

Branch News

Bramley & District

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak and unavoidable uncertainty about the months ahead, the Branch's Annual Dinner scheduled for 2nd October 2020 deferred one year to Friday 1st October 2021.

Bordon & District

The Branch Secretary will be laying a Wreath on the Local Town's War Memorial for VE75, on the 8th May, which has been purchased by the Town Council.

A 2nd Wreath, donated by members of the Community will be laid at the same time, to commemorate all the NHS front line staff, and care workers that have lost their lives during the current pandemic.

Standard Bearers

Training

ALL Standard Bearer Training is cancelled with immediate effect.

All Standard Bearers are reminded that it is current RBL policy that **NO** Standard is present at funerals.

Poppy Appeal

Poppy Seminar

The PAO Seminar has been provisionally rearranged for Saturday 15th August 2020, as it is also the date of VJ75, the date is subject to change.

Please be aware that it is very difficult to go firm on an actual date until such time as the Government lifts its current lockdown, and details for group gatherings are updated.

Notices

Legion Care Homes

As we have all seen over the past few weeks, the outbreak of COVID-19 has had a huge impact on all businesses and services globally. The support and services provided by the care sector have never been more important and we are taking action to make sure that we can continue to provide critical support to those who are most at risk in our communities.

The safety and well-being of the elderly and most vulnerable of our beneficiaries, including our veteran population, is our highest priority. So, to ensure that we can continue to provide high quality residential, nursing and specialist dementia care to our residents, we're seeking to increase the number of staff that we have working at each of our care homes in order to be able to withstand the challenges resulting from Coronavirus, including the large-scale staff absences due to self-isolation or sickness.

We're looking for new staff to help support our six UK care homes in Taunton, Cromer, Broadstairs, Bexhill-on-sea, Southam and Ripon.

We need people who are available for work, to apply now for the full and part time positions below:

- Nurses
- Care assistants
- General assistants
- Catering staff
- Administrators
- Maintenance staff

In addition, we're also looking to recruit a bank of casual staff members to provide temporary support to the homes when required.

If you are interested in applying for any of the roles, please visit the RBL website

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/quick-links/careers>

Also please share this with your community.

Dimitra Nikolakopoulou

Membership Communications Officer

HMS Leigh – Onwards & Upwards

The upcoming HMS Leigh event due to take place on Southend Pier from 5 - 10 May 2020 has been postponed due to the recent Covid-19 outbreak. However, with our crack team, we've leapt into action and have found a way to make a different method to celebrate VE Day – all from the comfort of your own home!

The new event will be called 'HMS Leigh – Make Do And Mend', and like the original event it will be designed to engage school children and the wider community with the world class heritage that is right in front of Southend-on-Sea. 'HMS Leigh – Make Do And Mend' will tell the forgotten history of Southend Pier during World War Two; from her commandeering by the Royal Navy in 1939, being renamed HMS Leigh and used as secret Naval Command for the River Thames and London, to her being 'paid off' in October 1945 once the job was truly done.

Please see the attached document for the full details.

Resilience Rules?

This message was passed to the Link from a Hampshire Member, who wishes to remain Anon, but shows the strength of character of some of the Country's Veterans.

Had message on my answerphone on Saturday asking for me or so I thought, although it was no one I recognised, so I initially shrugged and got on with my day.

I kept thinking about the caller as it sounded an elderly lady, so I traced the number on my calls list and called to tell her she'd got the wrong number.

She told me she'd been calling a friend, same Christian name as me, to tell her that she (the caller) had had a fall on Friday, spent the day at Poole A&E but was now home and ok though resting in bed.

She had dressings on her head and cheek, and had misdialled the phone as already partially sighted,

she couldn't get her glasses on to see the numbers with her good eye. She assured me she was alright.

I called her again the next day just to check on her, and that in these difficult times she had someone to call on, as yesterday she'd only mentioned a neighbour getting milk.

She assured me she was much better thanks, was up, washed and dressed, the sun was shining and she had her beef casserole lunch on to cook, which she was looking forward to, as she didn't have a proper meal yesterday!

Her neighbour is keeping an eye on her and son and daughter are in telephone contact.

She apologised again for dialling my number but thanked me for calling.

Nothing too out of the ordinary maybe, until I tell you she is **97** !!

Probably the most positive and cheerful elderly person I've ever come across, it was a pleasure to talk to her.

MOD War Detectives

The War Detectives are looking for any surviving family of Company Quartermaster Serjeant Charles John Niven of the 6th Battalion Gordon Highlanders. Charles was killed in action on 13 March 1915.

He was from Strathdon, Aberdeenshire. Although we know his father's name was also Charles, we don't have his mother's name. Both his parents were already dead before he was killed and as far as we can tell, he didn't have any siblings.

Could you be related or do you know anyone who is? Please get in touch if you can help. As we're still working at home, we don't have access to our emails, so we won't be able to respond, but we will be able to pick up all the messages when we're allowed back into the office. Our thanks, as always, for your help.

Branch Meetings

The Royal British Legion Headquarters, and County Offices have been receiving enquiries from Branches and Branch Officials, about the possibility of holding Branch meetings and attending War Memorials of the 8th May, to lay Wreaths and hold small Services.

The RBL continues to have the Health of our beneficiaries, volunteers, members and employees as our top priority. We are taking our lead from Government advice, which

STAY HOME

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- **Do not meet others, even friends or family.**

In accordance with this instruction, and as previously advised, we strongly recommend that all non-essential meetings are cancelled or postponed. These include branch and county/district meetings and remembrance events at war memorials.

We also urge that members follow the government advice, particularly guidance on social distancing for the over 70's and vulnerable people, which includes avoiding large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces.

The Membership Council will be considering how the lockdown may affect branch compliance this year and providing guidance if it becomes necessary.

Keep safe,

Jason Coward

Trustee and Chairman of the Membership Council

Word Searches/Cross Links

Please find attached two Word Searches/Cross Links produced by Chris White of the Lee on the Solent Branch for members to have a go at.

The solutions will be published in the next edition, or email the link for the solution earlier if you cannot wait.

Many thanks to Chris for his contribution, and we hope members enjoy doing them.

Link Requests

We are looking for stories from Branches, to be published in the Link, about how Branches or individuals are supporting their members and the local communities during these difficult times.

Please if you are involved in helping in the community, or feel someone in your Branch deserves a special mention can you put a small piece together and send it to the editor at hampshirelink@outlook.com for inclusion in future editions.

**-- REMEMBER --
-- STAY HOME --
-- STAY SAFE --**

Events Diary

2020

ALL EVENTS ARE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED

Once the pandemic is over, dates for rearranged events will be published here.

Please keep the link informed when your events will be taking place.

Please if you have any events in the pipeline then contact the Hampshire Link Newsletter and we can advertise the event for you.

County Websites

RBL Website:

www.BritishLegion.org.uk

County Website:

<http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/hampshire>

Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/groups/hantscountyrbl/

Facebook - Email

Hampshire.web@rbl.community

Poppy Appeal

www.facebook.com/poppy.HampshireRBL

Contact us

It's your newsletter!!!

If anyone has any articles that they would like published in the Newsletter then please contact the editor at:

HampshireLink@outlook.com

Or

Editor – Hampshire Link
15 Champney Close
Whitehill, Bordon
Hampshire
GU35 9DX

(Please ensure correct postage is paid)

ALL LEGION INQUIRIES
(including Welfare requests)

Should be directed to the national call centre

0808 802 8080

County Personnel

Patron	<i>Lt Gen Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL</i>
President	<i>Col Andrew King</i>
Chairman	<i>Tim Russell</i>
Vice-Chairman	<i>Robert Bartlett</i>
Treasurer	<i>Ges Brown</i>
MSO	<i>Christopher Bolton</i>
Membership Council Rep	<i>Gerry Nunn</i>
Area Manager SW	<i>Craig Spence</i>
Training Officer	<i>Mike Davis</i>
Recruitment Officer	<i>Pat Prior BEM, QVRM</i>
Branch Support – North	<i>Jacki Gatfield</i>
Branch Support - South	<i>Andy Knight</i>
Youth Officer	<i>Vacant</i>
Committee Members	<i>Brian Mansi & Brian Soffe</i>
CFR – Manager SW	<i>Claire Peppiatt</i>
CFR – Hampshire North	<i>Sarah Farris</i>
CFR – Hampshire South	<i>Claire Smith</i>
PAO Coordinator – North	<i>Jacki Gatfield</i>
PAO Coordinator – South	<i>Pat Prior BEM QVRM</i>
Communications Support	<i>Avril Mitchell</i>
Hampshire Link	<i>Darron Back</i>