

The Royal British
Legion
Harwell Branch
BR1805

Monthly Branch Meeting
Held on 28th August 2018
In the Branch Headquarters at Westfield
At 20.00 Hours.

ATTENDANCE:

R.C. East	- President
R.J. White	- Chairman
P. Davies	- Vice Chairman, Ceremonial Officer and Deputy Standard Bearer
P. A. Cox	- Secretary, Harwell Poppy Appeal Organiser and Welfare Representative
Mrs S. E. Pateman	- Membership Secretary
S. T. Haycox	- Treasurer
Mrs. H. Benton	- Chilton Poppy Appeal Organiser

COMMITTEE: G Street, J Belton.

MEMBERS: None.

1. EXHORTATION AND KOHIMA EPITAPH

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present; he asked those present to bear in mind former member George Gigg who passed away recently, and all who served and got injured or lost their lives.

This was followed by the exhortation and silent tribute; he ended with the Kohima Epitaph.

2. APOLOGIES: C. S. East, B. Mulford

3. MINUTES OF JULY 2018 MEETING

All present had seen the Minutes which had been distributed before the meeting. There were no corrections. On acceptance as a true record they were duly signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

The Chairman said that all Matters Arising would come up under the usual reports.

5. D DAY SERVICE

5.1 Letters of Thanks

The last letter to RAFA Wantage Branch was written by the Ceremonial Officer, approved by the Chairman and sent.

5.2 Service Sheets

About 60 are in stock for next year.

5.3 Reports and Photographs

The Ceremonial Officer has written a report and the Secretary has sent it to local newsletters. It was published in the September Chilton Chronicle and should be published in the next editions of Harwell News and Church Broadsheet. It has been posted on the Branch web page.

5.4 Timetable

The third and final version will be completed and distributed shortly.

This will complete the actions for this year.

6. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE

6.1 Approval to Start Preparations for 2018

The Ceremonial Officer asked for the Committee's approval for the Secretary and himself to start preparations for the Parade and Service including invitations and the road closure application.

Agreed by the Committee.

6.2 Publicity in Local Newsletters

The Secretary said that the deadlines to submit details for publication in the October – November Harwell News is 15th September. Deadlines for Church Broadsheet and Chilton Chronicle are likely to be early October. The Ceremonial Officer will prepare an article.

6.3 Timetable

The Secretary said that the first version is being drafted.

6.4 2017 Wreaths

The Secretary said that these will be disposed of shortly.

7. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

There were no new members this month on the MAP system and no applications.

8. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

8.1 Contact Details on Harwell Parish Council and Branch Web Site

The Branch listing on the Harwell Parish Council web page has been updated and the phone number is now blank. The County Membership Support Officer said that the phone number should be the Legion Contact Centre 0800 number and any publicised email addresses should be MAP addresses i.e. "Harwell.secretary@RBL.community". The Secretary will get this changed on the Parish and Branch web pages.

8.2 Archive Boxes in Club

The Secretary is arranging a date with the County Secretary to deliver the old membership lists and County Handbooks to County for disposal.

8.3 Lending Minutes to Harwell History Group and Moving to Oxfordshire History Centre

The County Membership Support Officer checked with Headquarters staff who said that the retention requirements are only guidelines, and they are happy for us to retain the minutes and pass them to the History Group.

8.4 Branch Web Page

The report on 2018 Parade and Service has been added to the D Day page, and last year's report and the address on the end of the GPRA from 2016 have been removed.

8.5 Awards

Ongoing.

8.6 Distribution of Branch Minutes.

The July 2018 minutes were distributed to Committee Members via email and printed copies, and copies have been put in the Club folder (The July and August County Circular was distributed last month). David Marsh will put the May Final and June Initial minutes on the Branch web page shortly.

8.7 Printing Costs:

July Minutes approximately 46 sheets: £ 1.83

Other printing approximately 29 sheets: £ 1.15

The Secretary is donating the cost of the black refill obtained last month. The Treasurer thanked him for this.

8.8 2017 AGM Follow Up

The minutes are nearly complete with a couple of queries to resolve. Back up of files to the Onedrive and MAP on-line storage is in hand.

8.9 Branch Community Support - Welfare

No cases or enquiries.

Anne Bethel, Advice and Information Officer for Berkshire contacted the Welfare Representative to offer any help or training required. He explained that due to lack of volunteers only some informal visits are carried out by Branch members. Anne Bethel highlighted these items which may be of help:

- Independent Living advice and Debt Management advice is available to beneficiaries.
- The Legion can provide advocacy for beneficiaries (e.g. to attend a council hearing alongside a beneficiary).
- Training is available for volunteers.

8.10 Poppy Poem "Wear Your Poppy with Pride"

The Club Chairman Angela Vaughan or Secretary Graham Davies will ask about displaying this in the Poppy Room at the Club Committee meeting next week.

9. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 94

9.1 Change in Membership

A member that has moved out of the area some time ago has now transferred their membership to another Branch.

9.2 On Line Membership Application

“Harwell RBL Club” is still suggested when you join Harwell Branch on line as of 27th August. The County Membership Support Officer is contacting headquarters again.

10. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 9th August 2018:

HARWELL BRANCH

Current Account:	£ 196.70
B.F.I. Account	<u>£ 795.82</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>£ 992.52</u>

10.1 Questions on Accounts

The Treasurer answered questions:

- The Secretary's expenses cheque was paid after the latest statement so is not included in the above total. The Treasurer always reports the totals from the statements at Branch meetings, so they are correct.
- Membership fees are received in the spring. They were received in March this year. We are doing alright but we must be careful. We are still in the black.

10.2 Question on Annual Accounts 2017-18

The Ceremonial Officer, who was away for the presentation of accounts at the last meeting, said that the balance is the same as last year less the cost of the Gold Badge. The Treasurer said that from now on we are on the level, though we have yet to make any donations for Remembrance Crosses or wreaths. Discussion ensued:

- The Harwell Poppy Appeal Organiser said that the Branch donated £60 for 60 crosses which he put on the War Graves last year on the Branch's behalf.
- The Treasurer said that he is not sure that we can donate again this year.
- The President and Chairman said that the Branch has done this for many years. The President added that we have not always done this.
- The Treasurer said that we could discuss this again nearer the time.

10.3 Audit of Accounts

The auditor has not yet replied to the Treasurer's request to audit the accounts.

11. CORRESPONDENCE:

Items indicated as “printed” or “by post” will be filed in the “County Circulars” folder in the Club. Other items can be printed on request.

Correspondence from Legion County Office and National Headquarters:

The July / August 2018 County Circular was received last month

11.1 Membership Newsletter August 2018 (Printed)

- Commemorating the last 100 days of WW1 – Art installation etc.
- Thank you to the WW1 generation – various commemorations and competitions.
- Upcoming events and survey results.

11.2 Membership Meet ups Bury 18th August, Crawley 8th September

To meet with the HQ team and other members for advice etc.

11.3 Festival of Remembrance Tickets

Tickets available (as of 1st August) for the afternoon and evening Performances.

11.4 Weekly Site Briefings – List of Sites for Legion Regular Giving Team

Also “Mystery Shoppers” required

11.5 Consultations on Changes to Royal Charter

The current version of the charter does not comply with latest guidance on best practice, it is not clear and there are some inconsistencies and duplication with the Management Handbook, so a new version will be composed with members opinions and advice considered. Dates and locations are:

- Online consultation on Yammer on 19 and 20 August.
- Online survey.
- Consultation at County HQ Arborfield September 8th 1pm. Please advise Secretary if you intend attending. Others at Swindon on 20th September, Bletchley on 25th September and Aylesbury on 29th September.

11.6 MAP Portal and Yammer Updates

In answer to a question the Secretary’s explained that Yammer is the Legion’s internal social media network (similar to facebook). It is accessed via the MAP portal. Headquarters staff regularly post information for Branches on it.

The updates posted since the last meeting include:

- Promotion of Yammer itself.
- New “Membership Documents” area on MAP.
- “Payments Outstanding” column missing from Membership Reports on MAP until after the October bulk renewals.
- Revised members’ contact preferences now on MAP.

Correspondence from Other Organisations:

11.7 WW1 Armistice Centenary Commemorative Sapling

Harwell Parish Council is participating in this initiative from Oxfordshire County Council and the Woodland Trust. They are providing a free sapling and plaque to local councils. Harwell Parish Council has ordered these, to be planted in Harwell Cemetery. They are aiming to have it planted before Remembrance Sunday. We are invited to see the sapling planted. They are asking if the Branch has any preference on where it is planted. Discussion ensued:

- The War Graves are almost all WW2 fallen.
- The Rector does not need to give permission as the Cemetery is owned by the Parish Council rather than the Church.
- There was no indication of the type of tree or how tall it would grow.
- We would need to look at the site.
- The Chairman suggested that it should be planted near the War Graves.

11.8 September 2018 Chilton Chronicle (from Chilton Parish Council)

Includes the Ceremonial Officer's report on D Day.

11.9 Team BRIT News - two updates

11.10 Didcot Town Mayor's Murder Mystery Event 10th November

Reminder - reply by 9th October.

11.11 Marketing Emails to the Branch Website Email Address

34 Items since the July 2018 meeting (4 weeks). Also:

- Two AOL account verification emails
- Harwell Parish Council WW1 Commemorative sapling email - see above

12. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:

12.1 BACS Wreath Donations November 2017

One more donation to sort out.

12.2 D Day Wreaths BACS Donations

The Harwell PAO's enquiry was delayed due to being given an incorrect email address of the new Poppy Appeal headquarters contact for our area (Lynn Thomas-King).

12.3 New Merchandise Items

The Harwell PAO had brought to the meeting some of the new merchandise the PAOs had received at the coffee morning last month, including Poppy Appeal trolley tokens, "Thank You to the WW1 Generation" badges and "Lest We Forget" badges.

The Chilton PAO said that the merchandise was not necessarily for the November Appeal but could be given for a donation at any time – the "Thank You" campaign was launched in August.

12.4 Correspondence

Including: WW1 Centenary badges are available from the County Fundraisers, Sponsored Sky Dives, "Thank you to the WW1 Generation" merchandise and Poppy Appeal Long Service awards.

12.5 November 2018 Collection Merchandise

The Chilton and Harwell PAOs have composed an order to be submitted in next few days.

Harwell Village and Campus

The Harwell PAO has ordered more merchandise, trays and collecting tins to allow ten more sets to be issued. These are for the new buildings being completed on the Campus and he hopes to recruit some more house to house collectors in the village.

Chilton Village and Chilton Fields Estate

The Chilton PAO said that she expects to have about the same number of house to house collectors, and Curie Avenue shops and business as last year.

12.6 Remembrance Sunday Wreaths

The Chilton and Harwell PAOs will order wreaths for the usual groups in the next few days including Chilton Church, the Scouts, Guides, ATC and Branch. We have still got an ACF wreath and five plain wreaths in stock. The Harwellian and Parish Council usually have one each leaving three spare plain wreaths.

12.7 Poppy Appeal Buckets

The Harwell PAO has cleaned these using a label and glue remover provided by the Treasurer which he thanked him for.

12.8 Total

No donations this month. This Poppy Appeal year will end on 30th September.

Total since 1st October 2017 is £4,812.49

Thanks to all who have helped.

13. CERMONIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

13.1 2019 D Day Parade

Duncan Rogers of Harwell Campus, Steve Wright of the GPRS and Cllr. Bob Girling of Chilton Parish Council are all keen to have a bigger parade in 2019, with numbers attending more in keeping with the 70th anniversary parade in 2014 than the smaller parades since then.

13.2 38 Group Plaque

Duncan Rogers has found photographs of a facsimile of pages from the Book of Remembrance of 38 Group for D Day. This was presented to the Atomic Energy Research Establishment (as the site was called then) by the 38 Group Association on 4th June 1994 in recognition of their care of the memorial and the support of the 50th Anniversary Commemoration. Duncan Rogers is suggesting that he provides a plaque with these names on a memorial near the stone. The Ceremonial Officer will cross-check the names with the War Graves in Harwell Cemetery.

14. STANDARD BEARER REPORT

14.1 Recent Parades

The Deputy Standard Bearer reported that the Standard had not been paraded.

15. Funeral of George Gigg

It was stated that there was no request for the Standard at George Gigg's funeral and that the Standard Bearer had not been available. A number of Committee Members attended.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

16.1 Annual Subscription Fees

John Belton asked if there would be any increase this year to the membership fees. It is due in by the end of September. Any members paying after this will be lapsed. Discussion ensued:

- The Chairman said that headquarters stated that the National Membership fee was not going up this year.
- The Treasurer suggested that we could consider an increase to the Branch fees at the AGM.
- The President said that people who pay late may think that they are getting away with something. Also headquarters staff forget we are volunteers and it takes time.

16.2 Grand Parade 90 Menin Gate

John Belton said that the County President had attended this as representative of Wantage Branch rather than representing the County. This was discussed briefly.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 25th September 2018

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:45 hours.