

The Royal British
Legion
Harwell Branch
BR1805

Monthly Branch Meeting
Held on 27th November 2018
In the Branch Headquarters at Westfield
At 20.00 Hours.

ATTENDANCE:

R.C. East - President
R.J. White - Chairman
P. A. Cox - Secretary, Harwell Poppy Appeal Organiser and Welfare Representative
Mrs S. E. Pateman - Membership Secretary
S. T. Haycox - Treasurer

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 those who gave their lives for our County.

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

2. APOLOGIES: H Benton, P. Davies, C. S. East, B. Mulford

3. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 2018 MEETING

All present had seen the Minutes which were distributed before the meeting. There were the following corrections:

Meeting Date corrected from 31st October to 30th October

Item 6.10 "The quarterly Visitor Volunteer report **will be** submitted which **is one visit (a funeral)** and no volunteers" changed to "The quarterly Visitor Volunteer report **was** submitted which is **no visits, one funeral** and no volunteers.

10.2 Third paragraph, first line "There was a very interesting talk and tour of **adjacent the** barracks by two Household " changed to "**..the adjacent** barracks..".

10.7 First line - the parade that Hazel Benton went to was called the **People's Parade**, not **Civilian Parade**.

On acceptance as a true record the minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

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

5. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE

The Chairman congratulated the Ceremonial Officer and Secretary on the way they organised the Remembrance Sunday parade. This was agreed by the President, Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

The Chairman reported that he had heard a complaint that the Parade had set off too late, at 10:50am rather than 10:40am. By the time it arrived at the War Memorial and the Rector had started the service, it was too late to have the Silence at 11am.

The Chairman added that it was an excellent the service at the Church.

5.1 Ceremonial Officer Report

The Secretary read the following report on behalf of the Ceremonial Officer:

Sunday's Remembrance Parade – 11th November

This year's run up to the Remembrance Parade and Service wasn't the usual slick operation between Peter Cox and myself.

With a "reminder memo" from Haig House regarding who is responsible for the event, specifically road closures and traffic marshals' being that of the local authority (council) this created an extra effort to coordinate more closely with the Parish council as it was agreed we should abide by these instructions.

However this didn't seem to detract from the build up and as far as I could tell no one outside of that circle saw any difference ahead of the event.

One advantage we did have was Parish council provided traffic marshals' saving Peter and I the effort to coordinate this. With the closure of Grove road for the building work there were questions on how best to divert the traffic. This was raised with the Parish, which then included the Vale and Oxfordshire County Council. Fortunately efforts were made to have Grove Road open on the Sunday to allow traffic affected by the service (and closed road) to easily divert around the village. Unfortunately it would seem this never occurred on the day.

This was the first of a handful of items which wasn't as slick as I had hoped. Due to the addition attendees this year (VOWH DC, Harwell History Group and the ACF) to see before the Parade I found myself with less time seeing everyone at the assembly point, resulting in the Parade setting off later than usual. Further to this, after receiving a request from the Beaver leaders to slow the pace down a bit so they could keep up our arrival at the War Memorial was noticeably delayed.

With the extra three wreaths laid this year from the VOWH DC, Harwell History Group and Didcot Army Cadets, and the silence occurring after this it thus has a knock on effect when the silence was held and was significantly later than 1100.

Finally, I completely forgot to bring with me the second yoke for the Standard Bearer. Although we had an Air Cadet ready and willing, at no point had it occurred to me to add it to my list and as a result the Union Flag was not carried this year.

However these are all relatively minor. Everyone was in the right place at the right time, we had additional wreaths laid this year which I hope starts an ongoing trend for future years, and although delayed the moment of remembrance was observed with a 2 minutes silence. We even had the weather very much on our side; a pleasant surprise given the wintery day on Saturday. It was clear the 100th anniversary year since the end of WWI had captured the public's attention with a bumper turn out from the Villagers.

We once again had musical accompaniment by the local musicians in the form of John MacFarlane-Horgan on the bagpipes and Tony Hughes playing the Last Post and Reveille on the bugle.

A collection for the Poppy Appeal went around the congregation at the Memorial ahead of the service and raised £200.06.

After the Church service members of the RBL attended the War Graves to lay a wreath and took note of the sampling which was planted earlier in the week in recognition of the 100th year.

A big thank you should go to Peter Cox in recognition for the all the work he completed in assisting me and for the liaising with the various authorities surrounding the road closure ahead of the day.

Having contacted the various participating groups the week after I have received some comments of feedback, mainly positive and will look to action these for next year, in addition to the areas of improvement I have already mentioned; key amongst these are the potential to include a marching band, rearranging the order of the wreath laying and silence to better match 1100 timings and to recruit a deputy standard bearer.

It was once again a pleasure to be part of the day and an honour to be part of such a significant year.

The Secretary reported:

5.2 Road Closure

The Road Closure orders and notices were received, and the Secretary forwarded copies to Thames Travel and the Parish Council. Thames Travel put "Service Disruption" notices on the bus stops and two bus services did not stop at the village.

The Secretary printed copies of the Road Closure notices and put them up in plastic covers at the start and end of each section to be closed. Several notices got soaked in the rain and became illegible and were replaced. They were taken down after the parade.

All the timings in the Orders were complied with, as far as the Secretary could observe.

5.3 Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment was duly signed by the Rector at the meeting (see item 5.7).

5.4 Publicity

The Ceremonial Officer sent the details to the Didcot Herald, but owing to workload this was sent in on the day of publication. The publishers also publish the Oxford Mail and Oxford Times, which are published later, but details were not in these newspapers either.

The Secretary composed and put up a poster in the Club, local shops and in the High Street in the days before the parade, these were replaced as required and were taken down after the parade.

The Ceremonial Officer composed a report after the parade which has been submitted to the Harwell News.

The Treasurer and Cllr. Bob Girling attended and took photographs which they made available via the Village and Harwell RBL Branch Parades Facebook pages.

5.5 Parading Groups and Representatives

Wreaths were provided to all parading organisations except the Vale District Council who provided their own. See item 11.5.

5.6 Participants

The Secretary wrote to the Rector to request use of the Farm car park, which was made available.

5.7 Meeting with the Rector

The Ceremonial Officer and Secretary met Rev. Mobey to do the usual walk through of the parades and services.

5.8 Service Sheets

The Rector, Ceremonial Officer and Secretary agreed that 700 service sheets were required. They were printed by the Church Administrator. The Secretary distributed 260 to the parading groups at Townsend on the day.

This left 440 service sheets for the congregation, which proved insufficient. This gave an estimate of the congregation as 500 people. The Church Administrator collected some service sheets for next year.

5.9 Harwell Gardening Club and Harwell School Armistice Project

The Gardening Club finished the replanting of the gardens by the Memorial in the days before the Service. They also laid new turf along the edge of the road and installed the Poppies that the school children had made.

5.10 WW1 Centenary Tree

The Parish Clerk informed the Secretary that the saplings were being collected and asked him to organise attendance at the planting with the grounds staff which he duly completed. So, on Thursday 8th November, Gerry Still planted a small group of the saplings and the plaque near the War Graves (by coincidence also near the graves of two former Branch Standard Bearers). The President, Chairman and Secretary attended. The rest were planted around the edge of the Cemetery.

5.11 Thank-you Letters

The Ceremonial Officer has drafted letters to the Bag Piper, Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps, Guides, Harwellian Club, Scouts and History Group.

The Secretary will write to the Bugler, Church, Harwell Parish Council, photographers and Gardening Club.

5.12 Timetable

The second version has been completed and distributed. A third version will be circulated once all actions have been completed.

6. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

There was one new member this month on the MAP system. There were no applications.

7. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

7.1 Archive Boxes in Club

Delivery of old membership lists and County Handbooks to County for disposal is in hand.

7.2 Lending Minutes to Harwell Parish History Group and Moving to Oxfordshire History Centre

The oldest minute book in the archive box is in fact the minutes of the Harwell Ex-servicemen's Club which ran for about a year to March 1928 when the members transferred to the Legion. The Secretary has passed it to Jane Card for examination.

7.3 Branch Web Page Updates

Following the AGM and Remembrance Sunday, the Meetings, Committee, Poppy Appeal and Remembrance November pages all need updates.

David Marsh has recently removed the "www" prefix from the start of the web page address. This is because it is less secure and Google searches will shortly stop showing pages with "www" addresses.

7.4 Awards

Ongoing.

7.5 Distribution of Branch Minutes.

The October 2018 minutes and October / November 2018 County Circular were distributed to Officers and Committee Members via email and printed copies. Printed copies will also be placed in the Club folder. David Marsh has put the Minutes on the Branch web page.

7.6 Printing Costs:

October Minutes and October / November County Circular approximately 65 sheets: £ 2.61
Other printing approximately 64 sheets: £ 2.55.

The Secretary is yet to get the black ink cartridge refilled.

He has obtained another pack of paper.

7.7 2018 AGM

Follow up actions are in hand including: The MS1 Committee form, minutes, thank you letter to David Marsh, back up of files to Onedrive and MAP and updates to the Committee lists and web site.

7.8 County Conference Delegate

The County Membership Support Officer says that visitors to the County Conference are

allowed as they would prefer that Branches are represented. The Secretary asked if he could attend.

No Objections

7.9 Branch Community Support - Welfare

No cases, one possible enquiry.

The Welfare Representative has obtained some suitable Legion greetings cards from the County Membership Support Officer. He wrote cards to two members that are understood to be in ill health, which were signed by all present.

7.10 “Wear Your Poppy with Pride” Poem

The framed poem was on display on a windowsill in the Poppy Room with a small Remembrance themed display.

8. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY’S REPORT

CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 94

8.1 Renewals

83 members have renewed, one member has left, and one new member has joined. 10 members are still to renew.

9. TREASURER’S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of 17th October 2018 (date of last recorded transaction):

HARWELL BRANCH

Current Account:	£ 174.70
B.F.I. Account	£ 799.80
Total:	£ 974.50

9.1 Income

£6 for membership has been received to the current account.

£3.98 interest has been received to the BFI account.

Funds are sufficient, and any expenses claims should be submitted.

10. 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:

10.1 October / November 2018 County Circular (printed)

Includes attachments:

- Amended Royal Charter.
- 2019 Election Pack for National Chairman, Vice Chairman and three trustees.
- Annual National Conference documents, Nominations forms and Motions forms.
- Photography and Video Policy GDPR Guidance for Branches.
- GDPR Audio Visual Policy request for feedback.

10.2 Mince Pies and Mulled Wine at County Office 6th December 2018

Representatives from Branches invited. The Secretary said that he and the Chilton Poppy Appeal Organiser would like to attend. **No Objections.**

10.3 Membership Newsletter October 2018

The theme is the Poppy Appeal which is linked to the WW1 centenary. Included are the two videos from the launch of the Appeal, stories of 4 members who are Poppy Collectors or PAOs, Poppy Shop products, a story from a veteran and other offers and news.

10.4 Membership Newsletter November 2018

This e-newsletter is focused on Remembrance. Included are a video about the story of the Poppy, a WW1 Remembrance project organised by one of our members, a Korean War veteran's story about himself and his wife who served as a Wren, the winner of the Christmas card design competition and other offers and events for members. This month's poll is about Remembrance and who you remembered on Sunday.

10.5 MS1 Branch Officers Form Electronic Version

10.6 MAP Portal or Yammer Updates

- Promotion of Yammer Social Network.
- Manchester Poppy Day 2nd November.
- Bristol and London Poppy Day 1st November.
- Photos of this year's Festival of Remembrance and Remembrance Sunday are on Yammer and the Official Poppy Legion Facebook page
- Christmas Card design competition winner announced - the cards are now available in Poppy Shop.

Correspondence from Other Organisations:

10.7 Didcot Mayor Events 2019

Masquerade Ball 23rd March and Civic Service 24th March.

10.8 Marketing Emails to the Branch Website Email Address and MAP Junk Email Folder

73 Items since the October 2018 meeting (4 weeks). Also:

- 5 emails from the Parish Council regarding the Sapling and Remembrance Sunday
- Didcot Mayor events - see above.

11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:

11.1 Crosses on Commonwealth War Graves at Harwell Cemetery

The Harwell PAO put the 6 crosses from the "Fields of Remembrance" packs and 61 additional crosses on the Graves (one already on one grave). He happened to meet the gardener Geoff Richardson at the graves a day or two later. He had weeded the surrounding flowerbeds before the crosses were placed, they will liaise to ensure this happens next year.

11.2 November 2018 Collection

Harwell Campus Businesses

A total of 28 boxes were distributed, there was another new location in the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory complex and a second box for Ricardo who had filled their box.

Additionally, the Harwell based S Division of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary put some of the new Emergency Services Poppy decals on their patrol car for the season.

Harwell Village Businesses

The President and Harwell PAO distributed a total of 9 boxes and trays. The Schools pack is yet to be returned. The President will make enquiries.

Harwell House to House Collectors

There were four collectors, all of whom did very well, given the spells of bad weather. There were no new collectors in Harwell or Chilton.

Chilton Village and Curie Avenue

The Harwell PAO reported the following on behalf of the Chilton PAO:

“I think the main thing to say is that many of the house to house collectors commented on how generous people were this year and thought it was probably because of the increased publicity of the centenary.

The only negative comment was from Chilton school who said that the items in the school box did not go down well with the children who said that they already had pencils, erasers and pencil sharpeners.”

A total of 41 boxes were distributed in Harwell and 16 in Chilton.

The Chilton PAO obtained some Khadi Poppies for a local person via the County Fundraiser and HQ – these Poppies are made of cloth to commemorate the 74,000 Indian soldiers that gave their lives in WW1.

The Harwell PAO had a useful conversation with the Didcot PAO in Tesco where he was running a Poppy stall. He also met up with Abingdon PAO Clare Oldfield – her Festival of Remembrance concert went very well, raising £1500 for the Poppy Appeal.

11.3 Remembrance Sunday Collection

The Harwell PAO did a collection and gave out Poppies at Townsend and the High Street both before and after the War Memorial service, collecting a total of £200.06. (Last year £134.83 was collected). This was counted separately last week by the Harwell and Chilton PAOs so the total could be included in the report for Harwell News.

11.4 Count of Collection

Clare Oldfield lent us her coin counter and the Treasurer, Chilton and Harwell PAOs had a marathon 7-hour count on Saturday. The money has been banked.

Totals (from Coin Counter):

Chilton: £1655.73 (2017: £1396.73)

Harwell: £2866.35 (2017: £2685.49 - both including collection bucket).

Overall: £4522.08 (2017: £4082.22)

Secretary's Note: The totals banked were different – reasons as shown below:

Chilton (including old £1 coins): £1671.73

Harwell (coin counter fault): £2863.94

Overall: £4535.67

The Harwell PAO thanked the President, Treasurer, Chilton PAO, those who distribute the boxes at RAL, MRC and Magnox, and all the collectors and contributors.

The Harwell and Chilton PAOs will be distributing thank you cards to all who had a collecting box over the coming days.

The Harwell PAO will update the web page with the totals, and they will be publicised in the local newsletters.

11.5 Remembrance Sunday Wreaths

The bulk order of wreaths arrived on 1st November.

The Harwell PAO copied the badge from the Army Cadet Force wreath to make a second wreath but did not have a suitable spare wreath to attach it to. He visited the County MSO who provided two ACF wreaths from County stock.

The Branch supplied one wreath each to the Scouts, Guides, Harwell History Group, Harwellian Club, Harwell Parish Council, Cothill School, Chilton Church and two each to the Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps and Branch. These were delivered before and on the day as requested.

Cash and cheque donations have been received from four organisations totalling **£132** and three organisations are donating via BACS. That leaves three more to come including the Branch.

11.6 Donations by BACS Transfer November 2017 June and November 2018

The Harwell PAO is yet to confirm these.

11.7 Correspondence

Various emails focussing on the November Appeal.

11.8 Annual Statement 2017-18

The Harwell PAO did not have time to enquire further. The totals for October and November must be reported by the 1st December.

11.9 Total

Committee members have donated £6 for pin badges and a further donation of £25 has been received. The Harwell PAO still has some pins.

Total since 1st October 2018: £4695.08

Secretary's Note Total £4708.67 banked - see note item 11.4.

11.10 Harwell Branch Donations

The Chairman said that we need to discuss what to donate to the Poppy Appeal for the Wreaths and Crosses. He read out the proposals agreed at the September 2018 Meeting (Item 9.3) and made the following proposals:

Proposal: That the Branch donates £37 to the Poppy Appeal for the two Wreaths and £25 for the 61 crosses

Proposed: Chairman

CARRIED

Secretary's Note: After the meeting the Treasurer wrote a cheque for £62 to the Poppy Appeal, and Committee members donated a further £10 in respect of more Poppy pin badges.

12. CERMONIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

See Item 5.1.

13. STANDARD BEARER REPORT

13.1 Recent Parades

The Secretary reported that the Standard Bearer had paraded the Standard at two Festivals of Remembrance at Abingdon and Faringdon as well as Remembrance Sunday.

13.2 New Standard Bearer

John Belton said that Wantage Branch has recruited an ATC cadet as Standard Bearer and suggested that we could do the same in due course.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

14.1 Royal Green Jackets Association D Day Parade

John Belton reported that he had been approached at the D Day parade by members of this association. They parade at the grave of Major Howard in Clifton Hampden annually on June 6th and they invited the Branch to join them. There are steps between the church and the grave but there is another way with no steps.

14.2 Read Their Stories Web Site - War Graves

The President said that an article in the October / November 2018 County Circular on the stories of the fallen buried in Kingston Bagpuize, Longworth and Hinton Waldrist cemeteries mentions that they include the graves of servicemen from Canada, United States and Australia. The Harwell War Graves include graves of servicemen from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 29th January 2019

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:00 hours. He wished all members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.