

The Royal British
Legion
Harwell Branch
BR1805

Monthly Branch Meeting
Held on 25th September 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
S. T. Haycox - Treasurer

COMMITTEE: 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 all who have suffered in the service of our Country.

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

2. APOLOGIES: H Benton, C. S. East, B. Mulford, S. E. Pateman and G. Street.

3. MINUTES OF AUGUST 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:

4.1 D Day Service

The Secretary asked if he should dispose of the remaining approx. 60 copies of the old version of the Service Sheet. The Ceremonial Officer and Treasurer said that as the new version was different they should be disposed of. The Treasurer said that further copies of the new version can be obtained easily.

The Secretary said that the third and final version of the timetable is complete and has been distributed.

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

5. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE

The Ceremonial Officer said that the preparations are now underway.

5.1 Road Closure Order and Risk Assessment

The Secretary said that we will apply for one road closure for Remembrance Sunday which will be the same timings and locations as last year.

The Ceremonial Officer said that he will review the risk assessment which has to be submitted with the road closure application. If there are no changes, he will sign it on behalf of the branch, otherwise he will consult the other signatories: Branch Chairman, Parish Council, and Rector.

5.2 Publicity

The Ceremonial Officer's article has been sent to the editors of Harwell News and Church Broadsheet, and David Marsh has put it on the Branch web page. It will be sent to the Didcot Herald. The County MSO has said that she is unlikely to send a County press release with all parades on to local papers this year.

The Ceremonial Officer has posted details on facebook.

The Secretary will compose and put up a poster in the Club and local shops towards the end of next month.

5.3 Invitations to Parading Groups and Representatives

The Ceremonial Officer has composed invites to Scouts (Including a request for a first aider), Guides, Didcot Air Training Corps (including a request for a Standard Bearer), Didcot Army Cadet Force and the Harwellian Club.

The Secretary said that we are not inviting Harwell School or Little Pippins to the Armistice service as there is no separate Armistice service and the Little Pippins are too young at 4 years old and under.

The Branch has received a request from Vale of the White Horse District Council Secretary to invite Councillor Reg Waite to attend. The Secretary asked if the meeting agreed he could be invited.

Agreed by the Committee.

The Ceremonial Officer confirmed that he would be the senior wreath layer, before the Parish Council Chair and the President.

5.4 Requests to Participants

The Secretary will write to the bag piper, bugler, Harwell Parish Council (including road signs and traffic marshals) and the Church (for the farm car park).

The Secretary said that the Village Hall car park has not been available last couple of years. It was stated that he should leave this in abeyance. The Ceremonial Officer said that the recreation ground car park would be available.

The Secretary asked if he should formally invite photographers this year as there were reports of congestion and a number attend uninvited. It was confirmed that there was congestion at the memorial and the Secretary should leave this in abeyance.

5.5 Service Sheets

The Secretary reported that the Church Administrator is happy to print service sheets. Estimates of numbers attending will be requested from attendees and will be passed to the Church Administrator early in November.

5.6 Meeting with Rector

The Ceremonial Officer will arrange a meeting with the Rector, President and Secretary.

5.7 Timetable

The first version is in hand.

6. ENROLLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

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

7. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

7.1 Branch Contact Details on Harwell Parish Council and Branch Web Sites

The change of contacts on Harwell Parish Council and Branch Web Page are in hand.

7.2 Archive Boxes in Club

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

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

In hand.

7.4 Branch Web Page Updates

- The Remembrance Sunday page has been updated with details of the 2018 Service.
- The Membership page may need a note that there is no increase in the national membership fee this year.
- The AGM notice, minutes and Annual accounts will go on the meetings page.

7.5 Awards

Ongoing.

7.6 Distribution of Branch Minutes.

The August 2018 minutes and September County Circular were distributed to Committee Members via email and printed copies and printed copies have been put in the Club folder. David Marsh has put the May Final and June Initial minutes on the Branch web page, and the June Final and August Initial minutes.

7.7 Printing Costs:

July Minutes approximately 68 sheets: £ 2.70

Other printing approximately 56 sheets: £ 2.25

The black ink cartridge has just run out – it has lasted since end July. The Secretary will get it refilled.

7.8 2017 AGM Follow Up

The minutes are nearly complete - queries resolved.

Back up of files to the Onedrive and MAP on-line storage is in hand.

7.9 AGM 2018 Procedures.

The AGM procedures from the Membership Handbook are:

Officers and Committee Elected at the AGM

The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary are elected for 1, 2, or 3 - year terms; they can stand again.

A minimum of 3 and up to 7 further Committee Members are elected, making a total of seven to eleven Committee Members (the upper limit has been reintroduced this year).

The Secretary proposed that the Branch Officers and Committee continue to be elected for 1-year terms of office.

Agreed by the Committee

Summary of some rules from the Membership Handbook

- Officers and Committee Members must be paid up members.
- All Branch Officer roles must be occupied.
- No member can be elected to be more than one of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. However, each of these officers could also be appointed to one of the other offices for example Standard Bearer or Welfare Representative.
- “Attending Branch meetings” is a key requirement for Committee Members, you can’t miss more than 2 in succession without good reason.
- Officers must be aware of the financial rules and regulations.
- Addresses are gathered from Branch Chairman, Branch Vice Chairman and Branch Secretary on the MS1 form to give more correspondence options.
- Other rules are in the Membership Handbook.

Officers Appointed at the First Meeting after the AGM

The Standard Bearers, Membership Secretary and Welfare Representative are all appointed by the Committee at this meeting. The Poppy Appeal now appoints Poppy Appeal Organisers, but Branches can nominate candidates. The AGM Notice and nominations list will state that anyone interested in these offices should attend this meeting.

President and Vice President

Both were reappointed at the 2016 AGM for a 3-year term.

AGM Notice and Nominations List

The Secretary will arrange for display of an AGM notice with agenda items on the web site, in the Club and Harwell Newsagents.

The Secretary has prepared a Nominations List which he will put on a notice board in the Club for two weeks prior to the AGM if the Club Secretary approves. He will then check eligibility of all candidates with the Membership Secretary.

7.10 Branch Community Support - Welfare

No cases or enquiries. The quarterly Visitor Volunteer report is due by 6th October which will be 1 visit (a funeral) and 0 volunteers.

7.11 “Wear Your Poppy with Pride” Poem

The Club Committee has agreed to this being put up and the Club Secretary will put it up shortly.

7.12 WW1 Centenary Tree

The Secretary had not replied yet as he was not clear what reply was needed following the last meeting.

The Treasurer said that there was a question about how tall the tree would grow. The Ceremonial Officer said that we are happy with the Cemetery as the location, but we would need confirmation of the species of the tree before we could advise any further.

8. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

CURRENT PAID UP MEMBERSHIP: stands at 94 (unconfirmed)

8.1 Membership

The Secretary reported on behalf of the Membership Secretary that she had been unable to access the MAP portal and could not report the membership. The Chairman said that this was likely to still be 94 as no deaths etc. had been reported.

8.2 On-Line Membership Application

The Secretary reported that "Harwell RBL Club" is no longer suggested when you join Harwell Branch on line as of 24th September, he will thank the County Membership Support Officer for arranging this.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that accounts stood as follows as of: 20th September 2018

HARWELL BRANCH

Current Account:	£ 168.70
B.F.I. Account	<u>£ 795.82</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>£ 964.52</u>

9.1 Balances of Accounts

The Treasurer said that the current account balance has dropped since the last meeting, but we are still doing satisfactorily.

The President said that funds are still good compared to past years.

9.2 Audit of Accounts

The accounts have still not been audited. The County Membership Support Officer has enquired with Newbury, Wantage, Didcot and other local Branches for a recommendation of an auditor but there has been no response. The Treasurer is therefore holding onto the accounts for now but has sent the numbers to County on a spreadsheet.

9.3 Donations for Remembrance Wreaths and Crosses

John Belton suggested that as our funds have dropped significantly since last month, the renewal payments will not be received in the Branch account for some months, and we have lost 2 more members recently, we should no longer donate £25 per wreath to the Poppy Appeal but donate only the Legion's suggested donation or obtain a plain wreath and add a Legion badge. Discussion ensued:

- The Harwell PAO said that the Legion suggests minimum donations of £18.50 for a wreath with a badge and £17.00 for a plain wreath.
- The Treasurer said that last year we donated £110 for two wreaths and 60 crosses for the War Graves.

- Several Committee Members said that we can no longer afford to donate this amount and it would be better to donate a smaller amount that we can sustain for the years to come.
- There were various suggestions of what amount should be donated.

The following proposals were agreed:

PROPOSAL: The Branch donates the Legion’s suggested minimum donation of £18.50 to the Poppy Appeal for each wreath.

PROPOSED: John Belton SECONDED: Treasurer CARRIED

PROPOSAL: The Branch donates £25 to the Poppy Appeal for the Crosses for the War Graves in Harwell Cemetery

PROPOSED: Chairman SECONDED: John Belton CARRIED

9.4 Ink Usage

John Belton said that we should watch ink usage too.

It was stated that we do watch ink usage, the Secretary uses free ink offers when available and reduces printing where he can.

The Chairman and Secretary made suggestions for reducing printing of the Remembrance Sunday Timetable and Membership Newsletter.

9.5 BFI Account

The Ceremonial Officer asked where the money in the BFI account came from.

The Treasurer said that previous Treasurers had paid the money in. The Chairman said that the money had come from when the Branch had a lot of members and accounts were healthier.

9.6 Welfare Account

The Treasurer had noticed this account while looking through the accounts book. It had a balance of a few hundred pounds, but it had not continued beyond 2006.

- It was stated that Welfare Account funds are restricted for helping beneficiaries rather than passed to County or National Accounts.
- The Chairman said that the account may have been closed, any names of beneficiaries would be kept private.

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 September 2018 County Circular (Printed)

Includes that the National membership fee is to stay at £17.

Attachments include:

- Commemorative Festival of Remembrance Application forms
- Centenary Field Dedication Service Didcot details (**Printed – on notice board**)
- Membership Newsletter

- Armed Forces Race day Newbury Racecourse leaflet - The Secretary said that the Club are running a coach trip.

10.2 Membership Newsletter September 2018 (Printed)

- Reports on GP90. Merchandise available.
- Upcoming events and survey results.

10.3 Thank You Activity Tracker (MAP)

Send in details of “Thank You to the WW1 Generation” events and you can look up what other “Thank You” events are on.

10.4 Information Required on Cheques for Membership Fees (printed – on notice board)

Novacroft require members to write their first initial, surname, post code, and Membership number on the back of cheques sent to them so they have more options to match them with the correct renewal form. Cheques that have insufficient or illegible information are shredded.

10.5 Date Error on Bulk New Membership Cards

The renewal date on some cards is in the format Month / Day /Year e.g.10 / 01 /19 instead of Date / Month /Year i.e. 1/10/19. They will be replaced.

10.6 Berkshire County Festival of Remembrance 3rd November Reading Minster

Open to members and guests. Tickets are free. Chapel Choir of St. George’s School Ascot and Woodley Concert Band present. Apply by 19th October to County MSO. The Ceremonial Officer added that there is a low take up so far.

10.7 Branch WW1 Centenary Events

- Lambourn Branch talk “How WW1 shaped the Modern World” 15th October at Lambourn Club.
- Arborfield and Barkham Branch Poppy Dance and Supper 24th November at Arborfield Club.

10.8 MAP Portal or Yammer Updates

- Promotion of Yammer conversations.
- There is a video of GP90 on YouTube titled “Great Pilgrimage 90 Highlights of the Battlefields Tour and Parade to the Menin Gate”.
- Second “on line consultation day” on changes to the Royal Charter on 19th September 2018.
- Update to appearance of MAP Homepage coming soon.

Correspondence from Other Organisations

10.9 Didcot Mayor’s Murder Mystery Event

Reminder to reply by 9th October 2018

10.10 Marketing Emails to the Branch Website Email Address

65 items since the August 2018 meeting (4 weeks).

11. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER REPORT:

11.1 BACS Wreath Donations November 2017

One more donation to sort out.

11.2 D Day Wreaths BACS Donations

Lynn Thomas King HQ searched and found no BACS donations, but due to a misunderstanding she searched from the day of the service 9th June onwards and some donations were made before the day of the Service. Unfortunately, she has now moved to HQ. The Harwell PAO will check correspondence and organisations as required.

11.3 New All-Year-Round Merchandise Items.

There had been some confusion over when the key rings, “Thank you” and “Lest We Forget” Badges could be sold but the County Fundraiser Sarah Brown has confirmed that they can be sold during Remembrance. The Harwell PAO will try to get some more.

11.4 Annual Poppy Seminar Berkshire and the Vale

All Berkshire and Vale Poppy Appeal Organisers have been invited by the County Fundraisers to this event at the Museum of Royal Household Calvary Windsor next Friday. Both the Chilton and Harwell and PAOs will attend.

11.5 Correspondence

Newsletters including the following:

- Totals requested for “All Year Round” merchandise.
- GDPR forms due in - ours has already been sent.
- Donations are to be banked promptly and classified.
- “Thank You” Banners, Flags and Badges are available for events.
- WW1 Pub Quiz packs are available. The Harwell PAO said that the Club has got an event on 10th November and already gives considerable support to the Branch and Poppy Appeal.
- New handbooks are being issued soon

11.6 Fields of Remembrance Campaign Packs

These packs were unaddressed and appeared to be delivered to all local homes. They contain a wooden cross which people can write a message on, return it to HQ and it will be put in a Field of Remembrance. The Harwell PAO had not received any advance information about this. The Treasurer and other members have also received these.

11.7 November 2018 Collection Merchandise

The “Kids packs” for schools arrived last week. (These were ordered separately couple months ago). The Chilton PAO has the Chilton school pack.

The merchandise order has been submitted and is due for delivery in the 2nd week of October. Neither the Snap Rulers or kid’s wristbands were not on the system to order, and were not in the Kids Packs this year. The Harwell PAO has enquired if any are available with Poppy Appeal HQ – no reply so far.

11.8 November Collection House to House Collectors

The Harwell PAO will contact last years’ collectors shortly.

Adverts for more collectors are going in the Harwell News, Chilton Chronicle and Church Broadsheet. The Harwell PAO may also advertise on facebook. He has some pre-printed posters which he may put up locally.

11.9 Remembrance Sunday Wreaths

The wreaths as described last month have been ordered. We now additionally need a Vale of the White Horse District Council wreath. The Harwell PAO has tried to add one to the wreaths order and got an error.

11.10 Street Collection Permit See July 2018 item 6.2

The Branch has now received a permit covering the Remembrance Sunday Service for up to 15 collectors.

11.11 Annual Statement

The total given is £4935.24 – £122.75 more than the total money paid into the account by the Harwell and Chilton PAOs as given below. This may be due to missing BACS payments. The Harwell PAO will check this.

11.12 Total

No donations this month:

Total since 1st October 2017 is £4,812.49

Thanks to all who have helped.

12. CEREMONIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The Ceremonial Officer proposed that to mark the 100th anniversary of the formation of the RAF, he wears his RAF blue uniform as parade marshal on Remembrance Sunday instead of black suit he normally wears.

Agreed by the Committee

John Belton said that the 75th anniversary of D Day is next year too. Representatives from RAF Welford attended the parade in the past.

13. STANDARD BEARER REPORT

The Deputy Standard Bearer reported that Clare Oldfield, Poppy Appeal Organiser Abingdon, had invited the Standard Bearers to parade at her Remembrance Concert on 3rd November. The Standard Bearer has said that he should be able to attend.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

14.1 Representatives from Germany at Cenotaph Service

John Belton said that it was stated in the national media that the government had invited the President of Germany to this year's commemoration. John Belton and the President said that the Legion is non-political. This was discussed briefly.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: AGM 30th October 2018

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:11 hours.