HAMPSHIRE LINK

JUNE 2015

CHARITY NO 219279

Southport 2015 15% Eastbourne 2016 ?

Whilst decisions on motions and charter motions, reports and minutes from the 2015 National Conference in Southport have already been published, there is much information that was only gleaned by branches represented at the annual event.

This year there was a definite change of mood from the platform and National Chairman John Crisford hit out at branches that fail to send delegates to Conference. Announcing that only 15% of the Legion's branches were represented at Southport he described the non-appearance of the others as "a dereliction of duty."

"Conference only works if it is truly representative of the membership," he added. "We achieve more when we all work together. That is the way to revitalise the Legion."

Director General Chris Simpkin also took a strong line, his address containing a passionate defence of the Haig House staff and a justification of the changes currently being introduced including the new membership process.

He explained the need to change processes and stressed the need to do things better which involved dropping some existing practices. He described the Royal British Legion as "a great organisation working towards an even greater tomorrow … changing more lives for the better than ever before."

Some, he suggested, hold the view that the charity could operate without the support of the professional and senior membership, countering this by stating that the headquarters' fundraising staff alone raise, on average, £631,000 per person per year in support of the Legion's welfare work.

Chris Simpkin stressed the successes of 2014, describing the last twelve months as "a monumental year for the Legion" and stated that we "should take a pride in that."

The Membership Forum, included in the main Conference agenda this year at the request of the membership, was dominated with questions about the new payment scheme and door to door collecting, the members of the Membership Council and staff showing some frustration at a number of misguided and inept questions from the floor.

It is argued that the membership has little opportunity to direct the future course of the Legion at Conference and that, should a greater number of branches attend the annual gathering, the Conference facilities would not be able to cope with the increased numbers - views worth testing.

Two of the three Charter Motions were carried and six of the eight Motions were similarly successful (full details on the Legion website) suggesting that democracy and branch power is alive and well in the Royal British Legion.

BRANCH NEWS

I'll continue as long as I can"

Octogenarian Dionis Macnair MBE was guest of honour at a special thank you event to mark her 70-years of service as a Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal collector.

Right: Dionis Macnair receives her badge and certificate from Brigadier David Harrison.

She joined other Burley Branch collectors who received accolades and certificates from Hampshire County President David Harrison JP DL. The President was accompanied by his wife Christine and joined by New Forest West MP Desmond Swayne and the Branch President Major (retd.) Philip Daubeney.

Miss Macnair, who received her MBE for services to the New Forest in 2010, pledged to continue as a Poppy Appeal collector as long as she is able. She started collecting as a child with her mother and continued to help when her father, who was ADC to Admiral Sir Dudley North during the Second World War, served in Malta and Gibralta.

After the family's return to Burley and following her mother's death she took over her collection and has continued to collect it ever since. She admitted to being "slightly embarrassed about receiving the award but was really flattered."

Awards were also presented to Karen Barnes, Karen Byatt, Roger Hutchings, Lydia Lee, Enid Norcott and Titia O'Riordan.

Northward bound on C90's

Riders' Branch members Mark and Alison Hunt and Ritchie and Mark Cunningham are riding from Land's End to John O'Groats next month.

They will be riding their iconic Honda C90's in an event has been organised in support of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal .

Anyone wishing to support the riders can sponsor through the Justgiving website.

www.justgiving.com/Graeme-CunninghamD208087T/

Liss honours two remarkable ladies

Members of the Liss Branch gathered at their Rake Road club last month to honour 21 Poppy Appeal collectors.

County Chairman John Smith presented long service certificates to Alison Boyle, Amanda Fletcher, Justine Jenner, Nicola Kohn, Terry Morgan, Cathy O'Connor, Anne Pannell, Nicola Seaman, David Snuggs (5 Years), Susan Hughes and Sally Jinks (10 Years).

Cmdr Brian Cane, Joan Clark and Linda Hodges received 15-year brooches or tie tacks, Maureen McNaughton was awarded a 20-year badge and 30 Year Long Service Medals were presented to Mary Hall, Rosaland Hamilton, Aliaga Kelly and Daphne Martin.

Mrs Nancy Woodman MBE (pictured below left) was presented a 35-Year Bar and a magnificent bouquet of flowers before Mrs Desiree Roderick MBE (above left) received a Bar and Service Badge and a bouquet for her 50-years of service as a Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal collector.

Before inviting those attending the presentation to gather around the buffet, the Branch Poppy Appeal Organiser Nicola Kohn praised all those honoured at the special presentation and thanked the numerous other individuals who collect so conscientiously each year on behalf of the Liss Royal British Legion Branch.

Milford shakes its Poppy Appeal Can-Can

The Milford-on-Sea Branch celebrated V.E.Day last month and raised over £1,000 for the Poppy Appeal to further the Royal British Legion's welfare work.

As part of its continued commemoration of World War I and to celebrate Victory in Europe the branch hosted a French-themed lunch attended by some 90 members and their friends.

A four-course lunch was preceded by a glass of fizz and wine flowed freely during the afternoon. A show of singing, dancing and sketches by Legionnaires and their friends were well received by the audience and when Mary Wheatley, Jill Reid, Suzie Watson and Val Brace (above) danced the Can Can there was generous applause.

There was also a comedy routine concerning communication with French allies put on by Peter Gibbs and Carole Tearle before Branch Chairman, Peter Gibbs, thanked all the performers, the backstage team, serving and kitchen staff and those that had helped with the raffle and sponsorship before the meeting concluded with everyone singing "We'll Meet Again" and the National Anthem.

Securing the future in Totton

V.E. Day saw a celebration of a different kind in Totton when four members of the Totton and Eling Branch visited Lydlynch Infants School.

They attended the Friday "Well Done" school assembly where Branch Chairman Chris Compton presented an affiliation certificate to the school head teacher Kate Lane.

Branch President Rodney Hawkins related his experiences of V.E. Day and Chris Compton told the children why the Totton Branch of the Royal British Legion wished to affiliate to their school and explained what it means to the Branch members.

The Branch is currently affiliated to four of the schools in Totton and Eling as well as No. 2498 Squadron Air Training Corps. They are looking to extend their affiliations to other youth organisations in the area.

The pictures show Chris Compton addressing the children and exchanging the Certificates with the Headteacher, Kate Lane.

Liss men remembered

Fifty eight men of Liss died in the First World War and of these, 5 died in the Gallipoli campaign.

For the 100th anniversary of this campaign Liss RBL Chairman, Lt Col Terry O'Connor, joined a Saga cruise "Gallipoli Remembered" which visited the Gallipoli peninsula, the island of Lemnos which was used in support of the landings and Thessaloniki (the Salonika front).

On the Sunday before the main commemorations a service was held at the Helles Memorial which serves the dual function of being a Commonwealth battle memorial for the whole Gallipoli Campaign and place of commemoration for 20,885 Commonwealth servicemen who died there and were lost at sea or have no known grave.

All five Liss men are commemorated at Helles and a wreath was placed in their memory. Four were from the 2nd Battalion The Hampshire Regiment (Ptes Frank Baker aged 16, Albert Collins aged 21, William Coombs aged 25 and John Dennis aged 38 the Grandfather of a Branch Committee member). The one officer was 2Lt Herbert Wace aged 31 of the Royal Munster Fusiliers previously of the Ceylon Planters Rifle Corps.

At 0400 on the April 25, 100 years after the Landings and ANZAC Day, the ship anchored off the peninsula. The dawn service was watched by those on board who included 70 Australians and a few New Zealanders including Dame Kiri Te Kanawa who was on the ship for 4 days.

For all involved it was a memorable and moving few days and interviews from those on board can be found on the Cruise International site at http://cruise-international.com/ where enquirers should search for "Remembering the Heroes of Gallipoli"

St George on a Poppy Appeal crusade

The Totton and Eling Branch raised £209 for the Poppy Appeal at their recent St George's day celebration evening.

Julie Taylor cooked a Traditional English Supper which consisted of a superb Pie & Peas meal which was both admired and devoured by everyone. The evening entertainment consisted of a good 'old fashioned' Beetle Drive which was a huge success.

This was a new experience for many and much hilarity resulted when some people's confusion about the rules resulted in impossible scores.

Later a quiz based on St George and the era during which he lived was followed by a raffle for some excellent donated prizes which included Champagne, a large jar of sweets, wine and many other prizes.

Thanks were extended to all the volunteers who worked so hard to decorate the tables and the hall with red and white bunting and flags.

Photograph: Totton Vice Chairman, Ian Middleton with branch member Mrs Maureen Cromar.

COUNTY NEWS

Step out on the 2015 Poppy Walk

One of the highlights of the Hampshire RBL year is just a few days away and we are anticipating glorious weather and an excellent turn-out of branch members at the 2015 County Poppy Walk.

Darron Back, secretary of the Bordon and District Branch, has spearheaded the planning of this year's event and, with the kind permission of the Forestry Commission, secured permission to stage the sponsored walk through the Alice Holt Forest near Farnham. With a good turnout the walk will help to boost the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Alice Holt has a number of walks to cater for all abilities: the 1km Habitat Trail, 1km Willows Green Trail and a 2km Easy Access trail which is suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs. The forest also offers a 4km Lodge Pond, "off-road" trail to the pond and a 5km cycle trail around the perimeter of the forest.

There is a café and cycle hire shop for those that wish to hire a bicycle to do the routes and also a large adventure playground for the children to explore.

We invite Legion members, family and friends from across Hampshire to make a day of it and bring a picnic. There is also GoApe, a tree top adventure park and Bird World is just down the road.

The event has been moved from the New Forest for the convenience of branches in the north and middle of the County and we hope you will all support Darron and his team in their bid to boost the Poppy Appeal Fund. To that purpose we have attached a sponsor form to this newsletter for those planning to take part in the 2015 Hampshire County Poppy Walk.

V.E. Day song and dance in Southampton

Veterans, guests and friends deemed Southampton's celebration of the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe a resounding success.

Hampshire Royal British Legion joined forces with Southampton City Council to produce a magical event that attracted widespread coverage on radio, television and in local and national newspapers.

The Sunday Telegraph wrote: "More than 400 people gathered in Southampton's Guildhall Square to celebrate, dancing to Forties music from the Victory Swing Band and joining a giant conga organised by the Royal British Legion."

Over the next seven paragraphs the paper quoted a number of Second World War veterans attending the 'Street Party' including men involved with the assaults on the Gold and Sword beaches and a member of the Southampton Home Guard who witnessed the bombing of his city.

The Mayor of Southampton opened the party, the City Chaplain conducted a short Act of Remembrance, remembering those that perished, were wounded and bereaved during World War II and reflected on the sufferings of those caught up in the Southampton Blitz of 1940.

The lighting of the V.E. Day Beacon by a WWII veteran and an ATC Cadet the previous evening was equally successful, although dampened by heavy rain.

A small but hard working committee should take considerable credit for the success of the two events and the Southampton Branch and the Hampshire Women's Section also played a major part in ensuring that the veterans had a very memorable day.

Their efforts were certainly appreciated and a number of veterans at the 'Street Party' suggested the Legion organise similar events every year.

Branches across Hampshire have marked the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day in a number of ways and will now be looking ahead to Saturday, August 15 when the Royal British Legion will lead the national and local commemorative events to mark V.J. Day.

Farewell to the Garrison

The British Army is leaving Whitehill & Bordon after more than 100 years, the town staging a spectacular “Farewell to the Garrison” on Saturday, June 27.

In 1863, the War Department required additional training grounds for British Army troops and purchased 781 acres from Her Majesty's Woods, Forests and Lands in the north of Hampshire.

The facilities have served various regiments and units carrying out different functions. The current combined camp and training area covers 4,410 acres and is home to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, providing trade training to its soldiers. REME are now being re-located to Lyneham in Wiltshire.

At 10.30am on Saturday 27 troops representing the Garrison will parade from Prince Philip Barracks in Bordon to the War Memorial on the A 325. The Armed Forces Flag Raising Ceremony will take place at 11.00am before the Freedom of the Town is bestowed on REME. After the Parade, the Farewell Festival will open on the Budds Lane sports fields at 2.00pm.

This Festival will include non-stop arena events, military displays (including the REME Enduro Motorcycle Team and the REME Parachute Display Team), side shows, entertainment activities, a community marquee, historical information and a funfair. It will be brought to a close at approximately 5.00pm by a ‘beating the retreat’ ceremony performed by the REME Band.

The Royal British Legion will have a presence at the Festival and this event is recommended to all members who are able to attend.

Hampshire RBL honours RFC

Fawley’s Dave Gammon dips in tribute

The Royal British Legion played a prominent part in celebrations to mark the arrival of the Royal Flying Corps in East Boldre (near Beaulieu) in 1915.

The week-long centenary events were launched with a dramatisation entitled ‘From Forest Field to Western Front’, written and directed by County Chairman John Smith. It played to packed houses over three evenings and proceeds of bucket collections were donated to the Royal British Legion.

After a talk on ‘The Politics of World War I’ by the New Forest MP Dr Julian Lewis an exhibition of unique and previously unseen photographs taken at the East Boldre airfield during the First World War was opened to the public.

Legion members also participated in a special memorial service conducted by the County chaplain, Canon Ray Hubble, the laying of Poppy Crosses on RFC graves in the village churchyard and a parade led superbly by the Fawley & District Standard Bearer Dave Gammon.

On the final day of the festivities members of the Great War Display Team staged an aerial dogfight in replica World War I aircraft above the site of the former Royal Flying Corps airfield.

EVENTS

EVENTS DIARY

What's On……..

7 June 2015
Hampshire County Poppy Walk
Alice Holt Forest Centre, Bordon
(Hosted by Bordon & District Branch)
09.30 start
Further details: 07758 881961

14 June 2015
Waterloo Commemorative Service
Winchester Cathedral
3.30pm

22 June 2015
Armed Forces Day

27 June 2015
Farewell to the Garrison
The British Army leaves Bordon
Parade, Memorial Service and Fun Day
Further details: 07758 881961

10 July 2015
Musical Summer Soirée
(Hosted by Copythorne & District Branch)
Scammels Farm, Copythorne
7.30pm
Admission £8.00
Further details: 02380 812504

1 / 2 August 2015
By-Gone Days
Brooklands Farm, Sth Gorley, Fordingbridge
From 10.30am each day
Admission £4
Further details: 01425 652499

15 August 2015
Victory in Japan Day

6 September 2015
Earl Mountbatten Memorial Service
Romsey Abbey
Further details: bsoffe@britishlegion.org.uk

12 September 2015
Proms for Poppies
(Hosted by the Hampshire Riders Branch)
Copythorne Scout HQ, Romsey Road
From 5.00pm Admission £8
Further details: 02380 814732

27 September 2015
Hampshire Standard Bearer's Competition
Jubilee Hall, Bishops Waltham
Further details: 02380 693028

10 October 2015
Hampshire County Conference
Jubilee Hall, Bishops Waltham
Further details: s.harris@britishlegion.org.uk

25 October 2015
Festival of Remembrance Concert & Service
(Hosted by Eastleigh & Chandlers Ford Branch)
The Point, Eastleigh
Further details: 01962 275980

25 October 2015
Great South Run (10-mile course)
Southsea, Portsmouth
£25 registration fee + £250 sponsorship
Further details: c.peppiatt @britishlegion.org.uk
02380 477274

1 November 2015
Hampshire Festival of Remembrance
Mayflower Theatre, Southampton
Tickets: £16.50 - (£21.50 on 02380 711811)
Further details: cpeppiatt @britishlegion.org.uk
02380 477274

1 November 2015
Hampshire RBL Women's Section
Remembrance Concert
Fordingbridge
Further details: 01425 652499

8 November 2015
Remembrance Sunday

FAREWELL To The GARRISON FESTIVAL

BORDON GARRISON

SATURDAY 27th JUNE 2015

D-Day
Photo
Exhibition
30th May
until
30th June
The Dancing Man
(Formerly the Wool House)
Town Quay
Southampton

The Great South Run

25th October 2015

10 Mile Run, Southsea, Hampshire

Compete in the Great South Run in aid of the Poppy Appeal and help support all our service personnel and veterans.

For More information contact:

Clare Peppiatt

cpeppiatt@britishlegion.org.uk

Tel: 02380 477274

Guaranteed Royal British Legion Places with
A free t-shirt and running vest, hospitality in the Charity tent.
All for £25 registration fee and £200 sponsorship.
Come join the Team!

POPPY APPEAL

There's no harm in asking

"Time?, I haven't the time," is the answer Nicky Seaman often gets when she asks potential Poppy Appeal collectors to join the Liss collection team. Nicky, it seem, is very successful at recruiting so how could she persuade us to join the ranks?

"But, it only takes a couple of hours and it is the same time every year so you can plan ahead. I always go out on the first Saturday, if at all possible at the start of the year's appeal before the poppies are issued in the shops to avoid any negative feedback.

You can ask your Poppy Appeal co-ordinator for a round that is not too large, that is either local to your home or not, whichever is your preference. That is the advice I would give to anyone first starting out. It is most rewarding and gives you the opportunity to meet the local residents who then will anticipate your visit from year to year, especially the elderly, who often wait for the knock on the door. Only very occasionally do you receive a negative response then it's best to smile and apologise for the interruption and continue on to the next house.

Anyone can collect for the Poppy Appeal; it does not take a certain type of person and in the past I have taken my two children with me, educating the younger generation who are the Poppy Appeal collectors of the future.

A new generation is needed to continue this legacy. I have two children, work at two jobs but still find time for a few hours at certain times of year where I gain a lot of satisfaction in doing my house to house collection. I have successfully recruited work colleagues, friends and family and other mums at the school gate. Many of them have very busy lives but they have become Poppy Appeal collectors. It is just a matter of asking the question and providing one or two answers."

Victory for budding talent

The furore surrounding Sepp Blatter's re-election as FIFA President pales into insignificance compared to the shock and disbelief surrounding County President, Brigadier David Harrison's, victory in this year's County Golf Pairs competition.

The tournament, staged once again by County Golf Secretary Rick Bourne, took place at The Army Club in Aldershot on May 11. The Brigadier's success in the four-ball competition left participants dumbfounded, totally unaware that Brigadier Harrison is long standing member and former chairman of the Club.

Little surprise therefore that he mastered one of the finest courses in north Hampshire, a 6,300 yard par 71 challenge. Brigadier Harrison's reward, apart from a coffee and bacon sandwich breakfast on arrival and ham, egg and chips at the 19th was a fine silver cup which his playing partner (who incidentally carded the higher score) carried home to grace the mantelpiece - apparently our President's trophy cabinet is already too crowded!

REMEMBERANCE

Time to telephone for tickets

The 2015 Hampshire Festival of Remembrance will take place at the Mayflower Theatre in Southampton on Sunday, November 1 and the committee laying the foundations for this prestigious event will meet for their second planning meeting in a few days' time.

"Two years ago I hoped and prayed the support of the people of Hampshire for our Armed Forces, past, present and future would make the Hampshire Festival of Remembrance a success," says Community Fund Raiser (South) Clare Peppiatt.

"It worked, the overwhelming success of the event at the Southampton Guildhall for the last two years is not only due to the people that helped make it happen but also the masses of people buying tickets which resulted in us raising over £10,000 for the Poppy Appeal.

"This success has also found us in the privileged position of holding this year's performance at the Mayflower Theatre. I cannot describe how wonderful everyone involved in the event has been in making it the best it can be and we are really excited about this year's performance and guests that will attend."

The support received over the last two years is manifesting itself once again, the Mayflower Theatre reporting that tickets for this year's Festival are already selling well. Tickets can only be obtained through the Mayflower Box Office and branches are advised to consider booking a coach, minibus, local community bus or a fleet of cars to transport members to what is certain to be a spectacular and memorable evening.

By telephone (02380 711811)		**In Person**	
Monday-Thursday	9.30am-8.30pm	Monday-Thursday	9.30am-6.00pm
Friday	10.00am-8.30pm	Friday	10.00am-6.00pm
Saturday	9.30am-8.30pm	Saturday	9.30am-6.00pm
Sunday**	4.30pm-8.30pm	Sunday**	4.30pm-8.00pm

(** Only if there is a performance)

STANDARD BEARERS

School Days

County Parade Marshall Steve Forward is inviting Branch Standard Bearers to attend the Standard Bearer's Schools listed below:

Pavilion in the Park, Kingfisher Road Eastleigh SO50 9LH at 2.00pm

Sunday, June 14, July 12, August 9, September 13 and October 11

Lymington Schools meet at the TA Drill Hall in Bath Road at 7.30pm

Monday, June 15, July 13, August 10, September 14 and October 12

On Parade please

Standard Bearers are required on the following dates:

Sunday, June 22	County Standards for the Armed Forces Day Flag Raising in Winchester
Sunday, June 28	Six standards required for transfer of Branch Standard at Bordon
Sunday, September 6	County Standards for the EMMB Parade in Romsey

Special announcement:

Please remember that Karen and David, our County Standard Bearers, are getting married on Sunday, July 12. Our County Parade Marshal requires 8 standards to form a Guard of Honour.

NATIONAL

Nepal Earthquake Appeal

TRBL Head of Grants has asked us to circulate the information below to all Hampshire branches.

The Royal British Legion recently awarded a grant of £50,000 to the Gurkha Welfare Trust's (GWT) *Earthquake Response Fund*. GWT's new fund was created to provide emergency aid to the Gurkha and ex-Gurkha community affected by the earthquakes in April and May.

GWT is the only emergency aid charity to receive TRBL funding as they have a strong track-record of working in the affected area, and we are confident that the funds we award will be spent in the manner intended.

We are sad to confirm that thirteen of GWT's clients in Nepal – who are also TRBL beneficiaries – have died as a result of the two major earthquakes. Many more are injured.

More than 350 veterans' homes have been completely destroyed, with hundreds more being damaged to some degree. The *Earthquake Response Fund* is already being used to provide medical aid and shelter to Gurkha veterans (many of whom are in their 80s and 90s) as well as providing emergency financial grants and repairing water supply systems. Longer term, funds will be used to rebuild veterans' homes and contribute to the repair of GWT's welfare centre.

Headquarters is asking Branches to contribute to the £50,000 awarded by TRBL. In the likely event that GWT requests additional funding from the Legion, we will contact those Branches who have expressed an interest in supporting the Gurkha community.

To pledge funding to GWT, Branch details and pledge amount should be e-mailed to externalgrants@britishlegion.org.uk.

(Donations may not be made from restricted or BPT funds, eg proceeds from a BPT property).

LEST WE FORGET

Our sincere condolences go to the family and friends of these members:

Major General John Stephenson CB OBE	President Houghton & District
George Thompson	Totton & Eling

SEND US YOUR NEWS

We would like to thank the Burley, Copythorne, Liss, Milford-on-Sea, Riders and Totton branches for sending their news reports and photographs for inclusion in this month's newsletter. It is very much appreciated. We welcome all information from Hampshire branches and work to ensure that it is included in the *Hampshire Link* newsletter.

Please forward news and pictures to:

jshantsrbl@hotmail.com

ALL OTHER ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE CONTACT CENTRE ON

0808 802 8080