

Minutes from: Newent and District Branch of The Royal British Legion

Meeting held on 25 November 2021

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Post</u>
Richard Balding Keith Urch Pat Phillips Simon Mason Rick Axon Helen Axon David Sass Susan Urch Colin Calcutt Sue Colborne Mary Curtis John Celino John Price Pat Price Viv Miles Jonathan Miles Dave Pollock Tom Heseltine	Chairman BCS Representative, Deputy Chairman, Youth Liaison and Membership Secretary. Deputy Padre Padre Entertainments/Bar Member Secretary Treasurer Deputy Secretary
<u>Item</u>	<u>Action</u>
<u>1. Act of Remembrance</u> The Deputy Chairman Opened the Meeting at 19:00 hrs and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He asked if we could spare a moment of thought for those who could not be with us tonight, and who are struggling with illness and health difficulties, including several branch members, who's family members were going through a difficult time. He read the names of those from the Parish of Newent who had lost their lives during WWI and WWII during the month of December and concluded with the Act of Remembrance.	
<u>2. Apologies</u> Apologies had been received from Jim Cunliffe, Adrian Dover, Jim and Helen Powell and Graham Barton. Welcome to new members Viv and Jonathan Miles, Mary Curtis and Dave Pollock (formerly member of Ross on Wye branch)	
<u>3. Chairman's Report</u> <u>Introduction</u> Welcome everyone to this month's branch meeting, I hope it finds you all well enjoying the delights of Booster and Flu Jabs. Nothing from National and County this month so on to local news: <u>Local Poppy Appeal 2021</u>	

<p>After chatting with our local Poppy Appeal Organiser (PAO) Colin a few days ago, he mentioned that this year's appeal appears to be very near historical levels even though we are still in the grips of the pandemic. He stated that on the 2 weekend collections under the Market House the collection was just short of £400, which is a fantastic amount for a combined total of 4 hours. Congrats go to Colin and hoping the rest of the year continues in the same vein.</p>	<p>PAO</p>
<p><u>Newent School Remembrance Service – 11 November 2021</u></p> <p>What has now become a Newent Community Schools Annual Remembrance Service did go ahead this year, as with local advice the service was conducted outside on what turned out to be a lovely morning, as usual the reverence in which the Young People of Newent Community School (NCS) treated the occasion was fantastic for which the whole School under the excellent stewardship of Reece Phillips is to be applauded.</p>	<p>NCS</p>
<p><u>Newent Remembrance Parade and Service – 14 November 2021</u></p> <p>As with the School Service, St Mary's under advisement held the Remembrance Service Al Fresco, and once again we were blessed with superb weather conditions. The Morning started in the normal fashion with civic dignitaries, serving members of the Armed Forces, Ex-service Associations, members of the British Legion, youth organisations, cadet forces, uniformed public service and members of the public all turning out to parade from the lake carpark. This year the local 4 x 4 Response team was asked by Newent Town Council to Marshal Traffic for the duration of the parade, which they succeeded in doing without a hitch and in good humour. The local towns people turned up to cheer the parade on and through the town centre, which was brilliant and then our two parade marshals with the minimum of fuss got everyone organised within the Church grounds, which of course went smoothly. The Padre conducted the service with his Shouty voice as the 'New PA System' did not work as expected but I'm sure will be OK when next needed.</p>	<p>ATC Bugler Jim</p>
<p>The service went very well and with impeccable timing, the young Bugler from the Air Cadets gave an incredible performance of the Last Post and Reveille, which will live on in my memory, and of course our stand-in Standard Bearer (Jim) never put a foot wrong, my personal thanks to both.</p> <p>I have sent a report of both events for inclusion to the County News Letter and to National for the special piece they are doing for the year's Remembrance events, I will ask the Secretary to add the report as an attachment to these minutes.</p>	<p>Secretary</p>
<p><u>Branch Social Evening</u></p> <p>A big thank you to our Entertainment's member Rick for Organising the social evening, which happened in Cobblers on the 18 November 2021, thank you to all those who turned up for a couple of alcoholic beverages and a good old fashioned laugh, the music wasn't bad either.</p> <p>Even though there's no meeting next month, don't forget about the Christmas Meal on the 16 December, let our Entertainments member know who's coming so that he can book for the right number of people.</p>	<p>Ents Member</p>
<p><u>Finally</u></p> <p>Don't forget that as normal if anyone needs help in any way at all please do not hesitate to get in contact, and if we can help, we will.</p>	<p>All</p>

<p><u>Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Amendments to the minutes of the last meeting as follows:</p> <p>a. Observation from JC</p> <p>Having read his letter of resignation out JC handed the Chairman (KU) a copy at item 3 and not 5 as recorded. JC left the meeting early, and did not leave as President, but having resigned at that time it should be shown at the end of item 3. In other words, I JC arrived as President but left as an ordinary member of the Branch.</p> <p>b. Graham Barton and Reverend Simon Mason had given their apologies but these had not been included in the minutes.</p> <p>Matters Arising.</p> <p>Item 2. Love Newent Event: <i>'Discussions about a possible donation'</i> A Cheque was received for £100 from John Gayther for branch funds. A further donation to branch funds was received from the family of Victor Urch. The Chairman expressed his thanks on behalf of the branch for both donations.</p> <p>Minutes agreed as true and accurate. Proposed KU, seconded CC.</p> <p>Decision: Unanimous.</p>	All
<p><u>5. Reports by Officers</u></p> <p><u>Deputy Chairman/Membership/Youth Liaison/Branch Community Support (BCS)</u></p> <p>BCS REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2021</p> <p>This month's report is again brief as fortunately there is little more to report. Members are reminded that there is no formal meeting in December. We extend our thanks to Helen and Sue for their support to the Branch in their respective new roles.</p> <p>Membership, Branch Community Support Representative and Youth Liaison Officer</p> <p>While your Representative continues to attend RBL virtual meetings, life is slowly returning to normal, re-establishing links with representatives of the community.</p> <p>The RBL BCS Steering Group continues to develop services and a virtual presentation is planned for this coming Saturday (27th November).</p> <p>The County have now appointed a new MSO (Membership Support Officer) - more to come in the coming weeks as the new structure is developed.</p> <p>Welfare and Membership</p> <p>RBL HQ continues with its Strategic Review; updates are currently available via The Chairman's Report</p> <p>Welfare</p> <p>As in the past, we shall continue to aid and support our members and veterans, in the first instant, by signposting them to the National RBL Helpline but please be assured that our expertise and support is also based locally and county wide.</p> <p>The National RBL Helpline is: 0808 802 8080</p>	

The Veteran's Gateway:

https://support.veteransgateway.org.uk/app/answers/detail/a_id/127/~the-royal-british-legion

The Balding and Urch families are immensely grateful for the recent support received from Members.

Our thanks are also extended to Pat and John Price for representing The Branch at the recent funeral of Mrs Joan Buckland.

Branch Membership

The Branch Membership now stands at 44/45 members and this evening we have the opportunity to welcome our new members to this their first meeting.

Branch Statistics

The Branch has not been presented with any new cases this period, although members have kindly provided various levels of support to their colleagues and friends.

In the event that members identify a comrade in need, they are encouraged to contact their BCS Representatives at the earliest convenience.

Branch Statistics for this period are therefore as follows:

Total Number of Welfare visits	8
How many beneficiaries "visited"	3
How many visitors (Branch Community Supporters)	6
Total Welfare Expenditure	NIL

Telephone Buddies:

Total Number of Calls made by Branch Executive	10
Telephone – How many beneficiaries called	3
Telephone – How many telephone buddies:	5

No other telephone or email communications were made during this period.

Youth Liaison

All liaison activities are restricted and conducted in accordance with RBL Guidelines.

Community Liaison

In accordance with current RBL Guidelines your BCS Representative continues to conduct the majority of its general business via email and telephone.

Other Branch Information

BCS (Branch Community Support) Training

More information is continually becoming available via County Officers as programmes are being rolled-out.

Remembrance Events in Newent

Member's attention is drawn to the Chairman's Report for further information.

Remembrance Events in London

Sue Colborne attended the service in London and kindly reported upon her experience of the weekend's events.

Treasurer

The Treasurer stated that he had prepared the end of year accounts for sign off by the Chairman. A copy of the 11-page document is attached to these minutes. These will be marked as signed off on LOMAS and I will request MSO to sign off also. Chairman was asked to sign off the end of year accounts date 30 June 2021 and the Bank reconciliation report for same period.

The current balance at the bank up to today is £1073.03. This allows for the cheques written that did not appear on the last statement.

Now that I have seen the statement, I will update the online system.

This revision does not affect the accounts for the year ending 30 June 2021.

I have in my possession another Cheque for £10 which is a donation for J Collins - will be paid in via the post office and reported in an updated balance next meeting.

They will then be presented to MSO via Lomax.

The Treasurer confirmed that cheques had been received from the Urch and Gayther families. There has been little movement other than this. The year end for the account is June.

DS and HA visited the Gloucester branch of Barclays Bank to implement the change of Mandate. The completed forms are now with Barclay's head office and we await their further action.

Entertainments Member

The entertainments member stated that during the coming year he would propose the following:

Skittles every month and trips every other month. For example:

February – open to ideas

April – possibly Black Country Museum, again open to ideas

June – National Arboretum

September – Social afternoon or evening

October – AGM cheese and wine

November – Social evening

Any suggestions from members would be welcome.

RA also outlined "The Gloucestershire Minibus Scheme" where a minibus may be hired for a flat rate plus insurance and a mileage payment. The driver would need to undertake a Midas Course.

For example, a trip to the National Arboretum, a journey of 180 miles round trip would cost around £12pp if 17 people attended.

Padre's Report.

SM thanked everyone who took part in Remembrance Sunday and those who worked hard such as the Parade Marshalls. He also reiterated the good

Chairman

<p>behaviour and respect shown by the pupils of Newent Community School on November 11th.</p> <p><u>Secretary's Report.</u></p> <p>HA reported that a new Membership Support Officer (MSO) had been appointed at County level. His name is Seamus Brennan and had previously been MSO in Wales. RB said that in early contact with him, he had been very responsive.</p>	
<p><u>6. Any Other Business</u></p> <p><u>Memorial Hall</u></p> <p>6.a. Donation towards Newent Annual Christmas Party.</p> <p>Proposer: John Celino</p> <p>Seconder: Pat Philips</p> <p>I propose that the Branch donate £100 to the Memorial Hall Committee towards the annual community children's Christmas party which aim is to include local children from all backgrounds (including serving and ex-serving Armed Forces) who might not ordinarily receive a Christmas present or attend a Christmas party.</p> <p>For those members who have recently joined you may not be aware that the Branch used to meet in The Circle Club (formally The Old Comrades Club). We voiced our concerns over safety and access after two of our members fell down the stairs at the Club. We were offered the use of the downstairs bar area but this proved untenable as meetings were interrupted by other bar users! I approached the Memorial Hall Committee who were more than willing to help us out and donated the Private Bar area as a Royal British Legion room. Since that time, they have made a more obvious connection with the Hall's previous life as a Canadian Army establishment and the rescue of the Town's plaques given by The then War Department as a token for the contribution made during conflict.</p> <p>I believe that with the almost 2 years shut down we have all experienced that we should show our reciprocal support in kind by a donation of £100.</p> <p>Decision: After some discussion it was agreed unanimously by all those present that £100 should be given to the Memorial Hall for this purpose.</p> <p>KU formally thanked the Price's for representing the Branch at the funeral of Joan Buckland. PP stated that it was well attended.</p> <p>SC reported her attendance at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day and at the Festival of Remembrance. She had no problems obtaining tickets or with the seating arrangements.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>PP & JP</p>
<p>The Chairman closed the meeting at 8pm.</p> <p><u>7. Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The next Meeting will be held on 27 January 2022 at 19:00 hrs in the Memorial Hall.</p>	<p>All</p>

**Agenda for the Meeting of
Newent and District Royal British Legion Branch on
27 January 2021**

1. Act of Remembrance
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Chairman's Report.
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.
5. Report by Officers.
6. Any Other Business
7. Date for Next Meeting.