

Minutes from: Newent & District Branch of The Royal British Legion.

Held 27th April 2023 Newent Memorial Hall.

<u>Attendees.</u>	<u>Post.</u>
Richard Balding	Chairman
Keith Urch	Vice Chairman, BCS Rep, Youth Liaison and Membership Secretary
Mary Curtis	Secretary
Helen Axon	Treasurer
Pat Phillips	Deputy Padre
Graham Barton	Parade Marshal
David Pollock	Raffle Coordinator
Rick Axon	Bar & Entertainments Member
Elaine Balding	
Susan Urch	

1. Act of Remembrance.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1900 hours and asked us to think of the people who couldn't be with us due to ill health. He then went on to read the names of those from the Parish of Newent who lost their lives during WW1 and WW2 during the month of May and concluded with the Act of Remembrance.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Simon Mason, Colin Britt, Susanne Britt, Tom Heseltine, Jon Miles, Viv Miles, Adrian Dover, Sue Colbourne, Colin Calcutt, John & Pat Price.

3. Chairman's Report.

Introduction.

My report this month could be very long, however you will be pleased to hear that I will be reporting the bare minimum to make sure our guest speaker does not feel rushed, so starting this month with County and Head Office briefings and Conferences:

County Briefing Day - 1 April 2023

As reported in last month's meeting I attended the County Briefing Day which took place at the royal British Legion Club in Frampton Cotterall on 1 April 2023. The County Chairman John Maloney was supposed to give a presentation to an audience of 15 that the County Chairman had received from the Board of Trustees and National Chairman. Unfortunately, the County Chair did not agree with most of the points presented therefore the Briefing Day turned into more of a discussion group, items that should have been discussed were: Case for Change, Impact of our Services, Membership, Audit findings and sharing effective practice.

Governance Q&A session over Teams – 19 April 2023

I then attended a Governance Q&A session via Teams on 19 April 2023, this was led by the National Chairman Jason Coward who gave a presentation outlining the proposals and reasoning behind a motion

for an organisational change to make the RBL more visible and accountable for the future. The National Chair was very eloquent in putting across the motion and gave through answers to all the diverse questions received from 78 (reducing to 66) delegates attending.

National Conference – 19-21 May 2023

The Deputy Chairman and myself are set for the National Conference which takes place over the weekend 19-21 May at the Riviera International Centre in Torquay. I've now received the agenda for all 3 days along with the 11 Motions and 15 Omitted motions so voting wise it will be busy. Because of the number of Motions to vote I intend to send these Motions to the Branch Committee and ask for their Yes or No response, I will then collate the responses and vote accordingly at the conference, but if anyone else would like to participate in this process you will be more than welcome.

King Charles III – Coronation

Coronation celebrations will be in full swing over the coronation weekend 6-8 May, you will hear more about the activities going on around the town center from Keith and there will be a Service to mark the occasion which Graham has more details about. Whatever your plans over the weekend I hope you all have a joyous time.

New Member

The branch has a new member; Andrew Woodruff, I have been in touch with Andrew to welcome him to the branch and he hopes to attend a meeting at a later date.

2 Guest Speakers

Samantha Brittain

As I mentioned earlier, Samantha will be giving us a few insights into the Buchannan Trust this evening, so please make her feel welcome. **After meeting note:** Unfortunately Samantha was unable to make the evening.

Rachel Smith

Some of you will have met Rachel on her last visit, which unfortunately saw the smallest number of members attending since I've been Chairman. Rachel will be here at the next meeting on 25 May to talk about Newent Fire Service and all that it offers to Newent and the district. She will talk about any subject connected to the fire service but primarily to give tips and hints around fire safety. If you have a particular question, you want answering, let me know prior to the meeting and will pass them on so he is forewarned.

Innsworth Military Wives Concert – 25 June 2023

Preparations for the Innsworth Military Wives Concert in aid of this year's Poppy Appeal are well underway. Graham and Rick will be able to update us all on the progress so far during their reports.

Branch Membership 2023

Branch membership has stabilised this month, which is a blessing, Keith will give you this month's numbers during his reports, but if anyone has ideas on how to recruit new members, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss it.

Finally

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.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.

There were several spelling mistakes in last month's minutes which the Secretary apologies for, also one omitted word. HA has volunteered to proofread the minutes before they are sent out. Thanks very much. The misspellings were: Item 4 title word Trophy was missing an r, item 7.a. Wives should be Wives, item 7.b. line one delete extra word 'the', and line 2 conformation should read 'confirmation'.

Apart from that they were to be taken as a true and accurate record.

5. Reports by Officers.

5.a. Vice Chair/ BCSO/ Youth Liaison.

For those veterans, friends and Branch colleagues suffering ill health, or experiencing difficulties, please remember that we are here to assist you; you only need to contact one of your Committee Members.

Membership, Branch Community Support Representative and Youth Liaison Officer

Members are reminded that those considering becoming BCS Representatives, on-lone courses remain available, assistance remains available from your Branch Chairman and BCS representative.

The Branch is now fully compliant and registered with TRBL HQ and County for all BCS matters.

Welfare and Membership

Welfare

The Branch continues to aid and support its members and veterans, initially by signposting them to the National RBL Helpline and then by interaction with the local community and national organisations.

Members are reminded that The National RBL Helpline telephone number is: 0808 802 8080

The Veteran's Gateway:

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

Please be assured that we will always continue to utilise our local knowledge and contacts to support our members and veterans.

Branch Membership

In accordance with TRBL records, Branch Membership currently stands at 36 members, an increase of one member: we have the pleasure of welcoming Andrew Woodruff from Redmarley to our Branch.

Branch Statistics

The Branch has continued to provide support Member and veterans this period.

In the event that members identify a comrade in need, they are encouraged to contact a Committee Member or BCS Representative at the earliest convenience. All communications are confidential.

Branch Statistics for this period are therefore as follows:

Total Number of Welfare visits	3
How many beneficiaries visited	3
How many visitors (Branch Community Supporters)	4
Total Welfare Expenditure	NIL (See Note 1)
Telephone Buddies:	
Total Number of Calls made by Branch Executive	10
Telephone – How many beneficiaries called	3
Telephone – How many telephone buddies	4

Notes:

1. We still await the outcome of the RBLHQ review of our recent “Crisis Grant” to one of our Veterans. TRBL MEO “Membership Engagement Officer” is fully aware of this issue, as approved by TRBL Board.
2. A small number of emails and telephone communications were made to TRBL HQ during this period on behalf of veterans and their families.

Community, Youth and Veteran Liaison Activities

1. The Buchanan Trust

Further to our previous meeting, we have contacted The Charity’s Veterans Support Manager, Samantha Brittain and have great pleasure in informing you that is providing us with an overview to The Trust’s activities immediately following our normal business this evening.

<https://www.buchanan-trust.org.uk>

2. Other Matters

Activities continue on works to upgrade Newent’s War Memorial and incorporate those names originally omitted.

Members are reminded the HMG and Service grants remain available for those suffering hardship.

Liaison continues with Newent’s youth and community organisations, the aim of which is to promote TRBL and its specific activities in and around Newent.

Events in Newent to commemorate the impending Coronation of King Charles III continue at a pace. Further information can be found on local media sites or by contacting your BCS representative direct.

3. TRBL HQ, County Liaison and Branch Communication (O365)

For further matters relating to other HQ/County/Branch communications and other local activities, please see your Chairman's and other Representative Reports.

5.b. Treasurers Report.

Transactions since the last meeting:

Outgoings £15 for engraving shield and paperweights.

Income £14 for Head Office for membership fees.

Balance £1025.84

5.c. Parade Marshal.

The plans for Church Service on 7th May at St Mary's to commemorate the King's Coronation will be a Civic Service. Uniformed groups have been invited to attend and should arrive by 10am. There will not be a parade through the town. Standards will form a Guard of Honour outside Church (or in the porch if the weather is wet). Standards will then process into Church as per Remembrance Sunday at 10:30am.

5.d. Bar and Entertainments Member.

Innsworth Military Wives Concert.

25 tickets have been put aside for Members.

Posters have been put in shop windows. Tickets have been distributed to the following places for sale.

Manna House – 20 Tickets

Wye Inn – 10 Tickets

Cobblers – 25 Tickets

We have access to the Hall from 1pm on the day. Doors open at 2pm.

GB will be meeting the Choir Mistress and Mary from the Memorial Hall on 30th May.

We have to be out of the hall by 5pm as there is a prior booking after.

RA has done advertising on Facebook and will investigate the deadline to put a bit in Newent Focus.

Email about the Concert to be sent to the principal of Newent Community School so she can inform parents at the school if they are interested about attending.

A request for cakes would be welcome as it is calculated that a minimum of 18 cakes will be needed.

Many thanks go to RA for doing a fantastic job and all this all his hard work.

The Ents. member then stated that he would like to have July's meeting in the back room of Cobblers, all those attending agreed this would be an excellent idea. **After meeting note:** Cobblers back room has now been booked for 27 July 2023, from 7pm.

6. Any Other business.

6.a. New Paper Poppy.

The Chairman went over the relevant points from the new Royal British Legion paper poppy, they included:

- A 40% reduction in carbon emissions in production.
- 50% recycled waste from production of coffee cups and 50% responsibly sourced wood fibre.

He went on to state if anyone wanted to see the new design or has any questions about the new poppy, he would be able to send out photographs and Q&A sheet from Membership communications or of course all the details will be on the RBL website.

6.b. Newent Town Council (NTC) Annual Assembly.

KU gave a brief overview of the evening.

6.c. Nepalese Lunch at White Hart

GB opened the invitation to members if they wish to attend the White Hart on 2 May at 12pm. RB & EB accepted the offer.

Date of Next Meeting.

The meeting closed at 20:15 with the next meeting taking place on 25 May at 7pm in Newent Memorial Hall.

Agenda for Meeting of Newent and District Royal British Legion Branch on 25 May 2023.

1. Welcome and Act of Remembrance.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Chairman's Report.
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.
5. Guest Speaker – Rachel Smith – Newent Fire Service
6. Reports by Officers.
7. Any other Business.
 - a. Innsworth Military Wives Concert - Update
8. Date of Next Meeting.