

## We will remember them

To all whom we have lost this month. Our sincere condolences to family and friends.



*Our mission is to safeguard the welfare, interests, and memory of those who are serving or who have served in the Armed Forces*



## The Strategy going forwards

The RBL has a strategy that focuses on the changing needs of the Armed Forces community that includes all serving personnel, veterans, families, and the bereaved. The RBL has been in existence for a long time and current times are changing, placing uncertainty at the forefront. The threat of conflict, the posturing of nations and the unexpected all create an uncertainty as to when and where our armed forces will be deployed in the near future. What is certain, is that the RBL must be ready to play its important role whenever and wherever it is needed. Therefore there has been a need to change the RBL strategy to keep it current with today's affairs. The Strategy is intended to last up to 2035 and is based on three pillars – Connect, Remember, and Support.

### Our Strategy 2025-2035

OUR VISION AND MISSION		<b>OUR VISION</b> Bringing society together to recognise, remember, and support the Armed Forces community.	<b>OUR MISSION</b> The Royal British Legion will support our Armed Forces community and ensure that their unique contribution is not forgotten.	 <p>ROYAL BRITISH LEGION</p>
	OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES	<b>CONNECT</b> The Armed Forces community have more and better opportunities to connect and come together. Connections are created and sustained across communities to understand and support the Armed Forces community.	<b>REMEMBER</b> The Armed Forces community feel that their service and sacrifice is valued and recognised. People acknowledge the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces community and participate in Remembrance.	
OUR ENABLERS			<b>OUR PEOPLE, ASSETS, AND CAPABILITIES</b> Through effective ways of working, our people, assets, and capabilities ensure the delivery of our strategic outcomes.	
	OUR VALUES	<b>STAND TOGETHER</b> We stand with an ever-evolving Armed Forces community, sharing a life-long commitment to support and comradeship. We share knowledge and build connections. Together with a national network of charities and partners, we ensure life during and after service is filled with purpose and community.	<b>BE RESPECTFUL</b> We stand with the Armed Forces community, valuing and respecting all experiences with empathy. We put people first, treating everyone with fairness and kindness, acting with integrity.	<b>TAKE PRIDE</b> We exist to make a positive difference to the Armed Forces community, remembering and honouring service and offering support. We are thoughtful and focus our passion in the right way, taking ownership to ensure every action counts.



4-11 February 1945. The leaders of the 'Big Three' powers (Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin) convened at Yalta in Crimea.

8 February – 11 March 1945. Operation Veritable launched in conjunction with US Operation Grenade to clear German forces west of the Rhine. During February, British and Canadian forces advanced through the Reichswald in Germany, close to the border with the Netherlands.



To understand County Lieutenancies, one needs to delve back in history because the office of Lord-Lieutenant is inextricably linked to the office of Sheriff, which preceded it by five hundred years. The word sheriff is a contraction of the term shire-reeve. It is an old English word designating an official, a reeve, who was responsible on behalf of the Sovereign for all matters judicial, military and financial throughout a shire or county, hence “Shire-Reeve”. The office of Sheriff had its origins in the 10th century and reached the height of its power under the Norman kings. However, the post was open to abuse with the Sheriff being able to make profits from the collection of taxes, once he had fulfilled his obligations to the exchequer. Some Sheriffs indulged in extortion, corruption and aggression, especially towards the church and monasteries. Discontent about such abuses was a chronic source of complaint in medieval councils and parliament. Tales of Robin Hood spring to mind.

By the 15th Century, Sheriffs' powers had severely declined in the face of these injustices. Nevertheless, they continued to play an essential part in local administration by enforcing the law, collecting various royal revenues and to entertain important visitors to the county. Later, the appointments and duties of the Sheriffs in England and Wales were redefined and much reduced by the Sheriffs Act 1887. Today, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, the office was retitled High Sheriff and the appointment is for a one year term. It is now mostly a ceremonial role, but High Sheriffs actively lend support and encouragement to crime prevention agencies, the emergency services and to the voluntary sector.

Now onto Lord-Lieutenants. One of the Sheriffs' duties that suffered as a result of their lessening authority in the 15th Century was their military function in organising the raising of men at arms. From the earliest times in England, it was accepted that all able bodied freemen should rally to the defence of their homeland when called upon to do so. This was termed the levy. The Statute of Westminster in 1285 reinforced this obligation, but the Statute also placed a restraint on the Sovereign by confirming that the county levies could not serve abroad. To overcome this restriction, Edward I and subsequent Kings and Queens ordered certain trusted nobles to raise troops in specific counties by means of commissions of array, a term used to muster and prepare citizens to fight. The nobles thus appointed were originally called captains, but in 1296 a certain William Latimer was called 'Our Lieutenant'. This was a grander title because it meant acting in place of the Sovereign.

Moving forward to Tudor times, several commissions of array were raised to deal with various periods of unrest and local nobles were appointed as county Lieutenants for the period of the crisis. A few were single county Lieutenants but most were appointed to cover several counties. In 1545 the

Duke of Suffolk was appointed as King's Lieutenant for several southern counties including Hampshire. Then in 1550, Lieutenants for individual counties were approved by Parliament for the first time and in effect became permanent. The first Lieutenant that we know of who served in Hampshire was William Paulet, First Marquess of Winchester, who took office in 1551. Under Elizabeth I, many of the appointments were held for life and it was during this period that Lieutenants became known as Lord Lieutenants because almost all office holders were peers of the realm. Deputies were also allowed to be officially commissioned.

The organisation of the county levies continued to be vitally important and from around 1590 they were known as the Militia and became the direct responsibility of the county Lord-Lieutenants. This was later enshrined in The Militia Act 1802 that gave Lord-Lieutenants formal command of the Militia. In the early 20th Century, the link to the military was further reinforced by the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907, which established county territorial force



associations with the Lord-Lieutenant as the head. In the aftermath of the First World War, Lord-Lieutenants were very active in the new charities and organisations that sprang up to support the returning injured and wounded. With the onset of the Second World War the military came to the fore and Lord-Lieutenants took a back seat, but they still took a keen interest in the Home Guard. The biggest

change in more recent times has been the long overdue appointment of women. The first woman Lord-Lieutenant in England was Lavinia Fitzalan-Howard, Duchess of Norfolk, who was appointed to West Sussex in 1975 and in 1994 the first woman Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire was appointed, Dame Mary Fagan. Today Lord-Lieutenants are appointed under the Lieutenancy Act 1997 and there are 47 Lieutenancies in England, 35 in Scotland, 8 in Wales and 8 in Northern Ireland.

Turning now to the County of Hampshire. In present times, the Lord-Lieutenant is an honorary titular position and continues to be appointed personally by the Sovereign. Since William Paulet in 1551, Hampshire has had a total of 51 Lord-Lieutenants and the current Lord-Lieutenant, Nigel Atkinson Esq, has held the appointment since 2014. In this role the Lord-Lieutenant personally represents His Majesty The King by upholding the dignity of the Crown and by promoting a sense of stability and continuity, officially recognising success and excellence, strengthening links between communities and supporting the ideal of voluntary service. In essence, the Lieutenancy acts as the glue that helps bind society together without which it could become disjointed and fractured. As such, the main duties of the Lord-Lieutenant are:

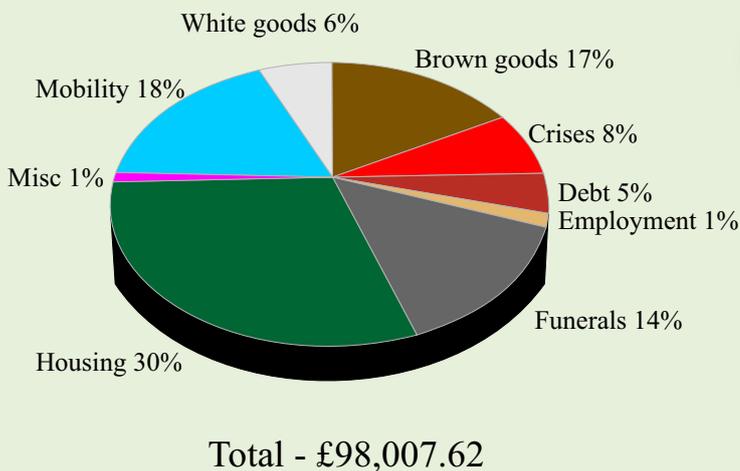
- Accompanying royal visitors and carrying out representational duties on behalf of His Majesty The King;
- Greeting Heads of State visiting the country on arrival in Hampshire;
- Participation in civic events and a wide range of community engagements especially those involving charities, education, youth organisations and voluntary service;
- Promoting the King's Award for Enterprise and the King's Award for Voluntary Service;
- Supporting local military units of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army and Royal Air Force, especially the Reserves and Cadet forces;
- Promoting honours and awards and carrying out presentations on behalf of His Majesty The King;
- The Lord-Lieutenant is also either president or patron of over 60 voluntary and charitable organisations in Hampshire.

With so many duties to perform, the Lord-Lieutenant is supported by a Vice-Lord Lieutenant who acts as a second-in-command. Lord-Lieutenants also appoint people they consider fit to be Deputy Lieutenants. Within Hampshire there are currently 42 deputies on the active list; the number of Deputy Lieutenants in a county varies according to the size of the population. Lastly, Lord-Lieutenants and Deputy Lieutenants do not get paid and do not claim expenses.

Lt Gen Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL



## What do Hampshire RBL finances get spent on?



Housing £29,565.06  
 Mobility £17,633.22  
 Brown goods £16,600.72  
 Funerals £13,978.74  
 Crises £7,377.70  
 White goods £6,359.81  
 Debt £4,421.57  
 Employment £1,369.80  
 Miscellaneous £701.00



## Southampton Branch and Club Valentines Evening on 14th February

The Southampton Branch and Club held a very successful Valentines Evening on 14th February. This is an annual event and during the evening all the ladies receive a glass of wine, roses and chocolates. A large raffle was held with many wonderful prizes donated by members to help raise funds.

One of our veterans, Tony Fullick arranged and paid for a huge Valentine cake to be made which he donated as the main raffle prize. The winner Mrs Sue Parsons kindly donated it to the Mountbatten Hospice at West End who do such a wonderful job looking after so many people. The cake was presented to the nursing staff who were very pleased and grateful for the donation. Photo attached of the nurses receiving the cake. A special thanks to Tony for his generosity. Archie Parsons





## South West Standard Bearer Competition

**G**ood news! Hampshire won the Southwest Regional Standard Bearer Competition in the adult and the Youth sections. The Competition was hosted by Wiltshire RBL at Corsham on the 7th February. The following people achieved success.

Pete Pullin, Fawley & District Branch, won the Adult Competition.

Amelie Neal, Winchester Branch, won the Youth Competition.

Amanda Bearryman of Wiltshire WS County won the Women's section Competition.

We now have much hard work to do to get ready for the Nationals. The National Youth Competition is on 12th April at Stockport. Good luck, Amelie! The National Adult Competition is on the 8th May in Brighton. A big thank you to Andy Wells, Sandra Fishlock, Karen Ralph, Lucy Pullin and Karen Graham, who came up and supported Hampshire.

Dave Graham, our County Parade Marshal, assisted with the running of the Competition and, as always, did an excellent job. Big thank you to Wiltshire County RBL and the Judges for a well-organised and well-run competition.

Pete Pullin. Membership Engagement Officer



## Remembering a Petersfield Man

**H**OWGILL THOMAS CH.2217(S), Private, 2nd Royal Marine Battalion, Royal Naval Division, Royal Marines Light Infantry. Killed in action 6/11/17. A butcher by trade. Mother, Jane, 49 Keogh Road, Stratford, London E15. Enlisted 29/3/17 aged 37, embarked with the Royal Marine Brigade on 18/5/17, draft for BEF 7/8/17. He joined the 10th Entrenching Battalion from Base Depot Calais 28/8/17 and then joined the 2nd Royal Marine Battalion on 4/10/17. He was single and was born in West Ham, Essex; living with his widowed mother at 7 North Road, Petersfield, Hampshire. No known grave. Commemorated at the TYNE COT MEMORIAL, Zonnebeke, West Vlaanderen, Belgium. Panel 1 and 162A.



If you have a military family member and want to remember them in the Hants Link, please send details and a photo if you have one and they will be remembered here.



## Need Help?

Statistics indicate that approximately twenty two Veterans succumb to their struggles daily. Please spread the word that there is help at hand. Someone's life may depend on it. The following phone numbers are relevant. Call one of them if you need help or just want to talk -

- Veterans In Action - 01264 771658
- Veteran's Hotline - 0800 1381619
- Samaritans - 116123
- Breathing Space - 0800 838587.

After the completion of Operation Market Garden, the Allies conducted a series of operations as they advanced to the Rhine River. Operation Varsity was conducted from the 8th February 1945 by British 21st Army Group to clear the territory between the River Meuse and the River Rhine. British 2nd Army and Canadian 1st Army were allocated for this task and encountered fierce resistance from the German 1st paratroop Army in the Reichswald Forests. At the same time the US 9th Army conducted

Operation Grenade to push the Germans eastwards in the vicinity of Dusseldorf which was delayed until the 23rd February 1945 due to the fact that there was major flooding in their area of operations.

The US 12th Army Group under command of General Bradley conducted Operation Lumberjack in the vicinity of the West Wall German border fortifications and reached the River Rhine on the 7th March 1945. The US 6th Army Group under command of Lt Gen Devers advanced into the German Saarland and reached the town of Mannheim on the southern Rhine. During Operation Lumberjack the US 9th Armoured Division got to the bridge at Remagen and found that it had not been destroyed by the retreating Germans so they crossed and established a small bridgehead. The Germans counter attacked and damaged the bridge. Some days later the bridge collapsed. The Rhine remained a significant natural obstacle to be crossed for entrance into central Germany from the west.

Allied forces were deployed along the German border as follows

**North.** 21st Army Group under command of General Montgomery. Under command were the Canadian 1st Army (General Crerar), the British 2nd Army (General Dempsey) and the US 9th Army (General Simpson).

Opposing the Allied force were the 1st Para Army consisting of five divisions, The German Mobile Reserve being the XLVII Panzer Corps consisting of one Panzer Division and one Panzer Grenadier Division.

**South.** In the south the US 1st and 9th Armies advanced to Remagen. US elements of the 1st Army captured the railway bridge at Remagen. The plan for the Rhine crossing was to deploy artillery and air support for the establishment of a large bridgehead on the east bank of the River Rhine and then advance onto the northern German plains to push the German forces back into central Germany. This operation was to be conducted in two separate operations – Operation Plunder and Operation Varsity.

Operation Plunder was the amphibious assault conducted by the British 2nd Army and the 9th US Army.

## OP VARSITY

Operation Varsity was the air assault by the XVIII Airborne Corps that consisted of the British 6th Airborne Division and the US 17th Airborne Division. The aim of Op Varsity was to deploy by air to capture the high ground inside Germany along the River Rhine in the area where the British 2nd Army was to cross. The secondary task was for the airborne formations to then deny the use of the high ground by German artillery and also to stop any possible attacks launched by the Germans for a south easterly direction.

**Stage 1.** Commenced with air interdiction operations to gain air superiority by the US 8th and 9th Air Forces. The purpose was to isolate the industrial area of the Ruhr and then provide combat air support for ground forces. This force had approximately 1000 fighter aircraft under command belonging to the 2nd Tactical Air Force.

**Stage 2.** The US 17th Airborne Division enplaned at Paris and the



6th Abn Div (UK)



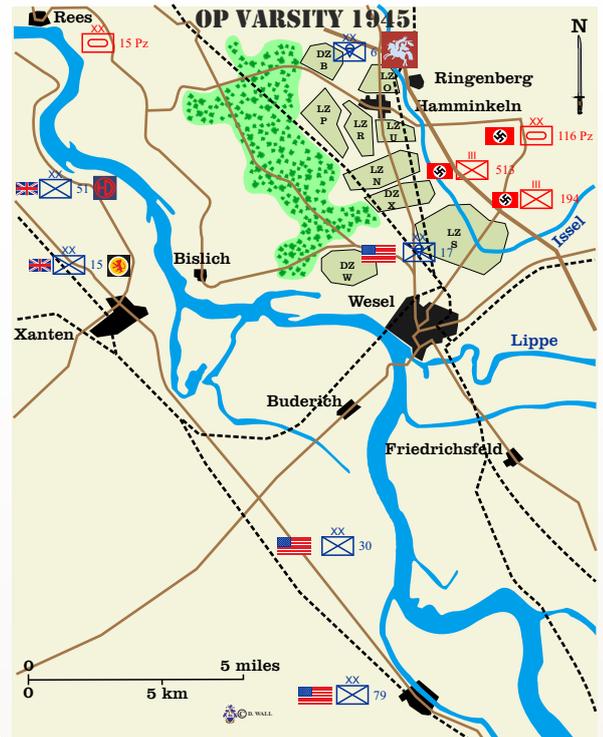
51st Inf Div (UK)



15th Inf Div (UK)



17th Abn Div (USA)



British Airborne troops left from airfields in southern England. The various aircraft linked up near Brussels and then flew in three air corridors for their objectives. There were a total of 1696 transport aircraft and 1348 gliders for the operation. There were also 800 vehicles and artillery guns as well as 600 tons of ammunition for this operation.

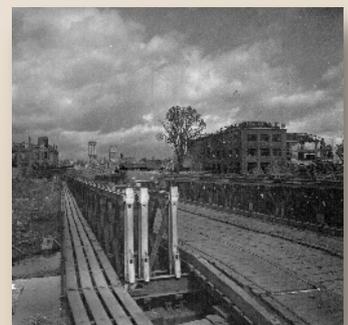
The airborne landings went well. Paratroopers landed on DZs between H Hour and H + 65 hours and the US gliders landed on their respective LZs between H +20 and H + 108 hours. The US 507 Para Regt landed two of its battalions directly on their DZs between Diersfordterweld and the River Rhine. The 3rd Bn and the Regt HQ landed north of Diersfordterweld and immediately engaged in a fire fight with German forces. Fighting continued until 15h00 when the remaining Germans surrendered.

The US 513rd Para Regt landed north of their DZ which was situated north east of Fluren village. The British 6th Airborne Division with the 13th Devons under command, had been allocated this LZ. The 13th Devons linked up with the 513rd to attack targets at Hamminkeld. The US 513rd Para Regt then redeployed after the immediate objectives were taken.

The US 194th Glider Infantry Regt landed north of Wesel village and captured their objectives on the west bank of the River Rhine. To their left the British 3rd Para Bde landed on DZs to the north of Diersfordterweld that were situated east of the town of Bergen. They were immediately engaged by German forces using AA guns on the ground role. 3rd Para Bde successfully dealt with this opposition and then went on to capture their objective, the village of Schnappenberg.

British 5 Para Bde landed near some woods west of Hamminkeln on either side of the road to Rees and captured their allocated objective. British 6 Airlanding Bde landed south of Hamminkeln in some open fields. They had suffered some casualties while still airborne but, on landing, captured their objective, the town of Hamminkeln.

On the 24th March 1945 British 2nd Army crossed the River Rhine and advanced to link up with the paras so that the amphibious bridgehead over the Rhine could be secured against any counter attack. Two second line German divisions were quickly defeated during this deployment. The Allies suffered many casualties in the operation but were successful. Thus, the advance into central Germany was possible. DW



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RBL Website: [www.BritishLegion.org.uk](http://www.BritishLegion.org.uk), County Website: <http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/hampshire>

Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/groups/hantscountyrb/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/hantscountyrb/) Facebook Email - [Hampshire.web@rbl.community](mailto:Hampshire.web@rbl.community)

Poppy Appeal - [www.facebook.com.poppy.HampshireRBL](http://www.facebook.com.poppy.HampshireRBL)

Contact us

It`s your newsletter!!!

If anyone has any articles that they would like published in the Newsletter then please contact the editor  
Colonel (Retd) Dudley Wall MSM (Rhodesia), MMM (SA) with any information or articles by the 20th of the month at:  
[HampshireLinkDW@yahoo.com](mailto:HampshireLinkDW@yahoo.com)

ALL LEGION ENQUIRIES  
(including Welfare requests) should be directed to the national call centre  
**0808 802 8080**

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County Youth Standard Bearer: Amelie Neal

Ceremonial Support: David Graham, Karen Graham

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Golf Officer: Rick Bourne

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Membership Council Representative: Gerry Nunn

Public Relations Officer: VACANT

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**Errors and Omissions Excepted**

