



TRBL Holland Branch Newsletter

Volume 2, Number 1 March 2011

Chairman's Chat

Forthcoming Events

Dear Members,

This Chairman's Chat is adapted from my Chairman's Report made at the Branch AGM Friday 19th November 2010.

Since the inauguration of this branch on 16th April 2010, every member of the committee has been extremely busy and made great efforts to ensure that a very satisfactory start has been achieved towards the future successful continuation of The Royal British Legion presence here in The Netherlands. I thank all of my committee colleagues for their commitment.

However, although our membership is reasonably stable at around the 180 mark, there is no room for complacency. This is the reason for my plea to each of you now to make every effort to show your commitment, in practical ways, to our RBL Branch. These are a few suggestions:-

- *Attend, at least local, Remembrance Ceremonies;**
- *Support social events;**
- *Contribute to our Branch Newsletter;**
- *Communicate your ideas or suggestions to our branch committee;**
- *Volunteer to serve on the Branch Committee;**
- *Volunteer to assist with our annual 'Poppy Collec-**

- tion';**
- *Suggest possible social activities;**
- *Take an active role in recruiting new members;**

I do realise that we are an organisation with an ageing membership and that many of us have physical limitations. We do not all have personal computers or mobile telephones. But many of us are parents, or grandparents, dare I say great-grandparents? Could we not try to explain the aims and objectives of The Royal British Legion to these family members, with a view to encouraging them to join the branch? After all, there is much evidence, at many ceremonies in Nederland, of the participation of young Dutch people. They, the younger generations, have to be regarded as the only future for the existence of The Legion, whether here or in England.

The creation of one national Legion Branch has ensured the continued presence of The Royal British Legion in The Netherlands. But it also presents obstacles for members from all

corners of the country to attend ceremonies or social events at venues that are far from their homes, or not easily accessible by public transport. I was most disappointed by the very poor attendance of members at what was the very first AGM of our new branch. I do repeat my appreciation to the few of you who did attend this single most important event in any Branch's year. My Committee and I are nevertheless determined to make every effort to maintain personal contact with as many of you as possible in the future.

One thing is certain – without committed support from our members, and in the absence of recruitment of new members who are prepared to volunteer for posts of responsibility- this new Holland Branch has no more secure a future than the former Netherlands Branches. **It is the duty of us all to do everything possible to ensure that our Legion**

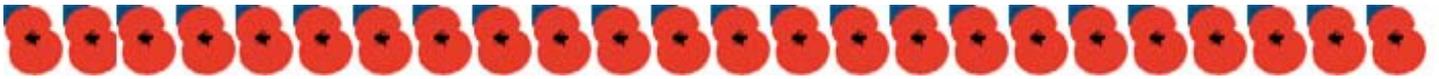
- **April**
25th ANZAC Day Remembrance Service, Westduin Cemetery, Den Haag
- **May**
4th Wreath laying service at the Waal Bridge Nijmegen, 20:00, 'Dodenherdenking' ceremonies at Eindhoven, Waalre, Oisterwijk, Tilburg, Epe, Gorsel, Amsterdam Nieuwe Oosterbegraafplaats and Dam Square, Beemster, National Monument for Seafarers and Crooswijk Cemetery, Rotterdam, Airmen's Monument, Den Helder, Monument 1940-45, Voorthuizen and the Airgunners Memorial, Dronten.
- 5th** Liberation Parade, Wageningen.

Branch not only survives, but flourishes. I intend to do everything I can to achieve this goal, and I know that this applies to my entire committee, so I now appeal to all members to work with us, in the ways I have suggested, in order to achieve this goal.

John Bright

Left: At the last AGM, Mr. de Bruijn (left) is thanked for his past service as Standard Bearer, after which these duties are handed over to Mr. Rotscheid (right).





Members' Lunch at the Van Ghentkazerne, Rotterdam (10-11-2010)

On November 10th, the Members' Lunch took place at the Van Ghent Kazerne, Rotterdam, organised by Mrs. Elsa E. van Gelderen. After a cup of coffee, we moved on to the Maasbruggen Restaurant, where we all enjoyed a lovely warm meal followed by a calorific ice-cream dessert. Mrs. Van Gelderen and John Bright held speeches and when all had finished, we moved on to the Algemeen Militair Tehuis (AMT) for drinks and socialising. We are very grateful once again to Mrs. Bep van Vliet for paying for the first round of drinks in memory of her husband, Mr. Arie van Vliet from Rotterdam, who died last

year. The Branch bought a second round, and a nice time was had by all! See elsewhere in this newsletter for news of the next Van Ghentkazerne lunch.



Silent Courage, by Tom Scott

At the remembrance ceremony at Venray on September 19th 2010, the chaplain recited the following poem.

Silent Courage

The mass of graves, the woods surround.
Mark the hallowed, holy ground.
The trees like brooding guards, protect the silent soldiers we respect.
We mourn the men, who lie below, who gave their lives in battle, to show the honour and courage, that in men lie when duty and their country cry.
Though high above their soul may be their memory will last an eternity.

Tom Scott wrote this poem after a visit to the First World War Military Cemetery at Ploegsteert Wood in Belgium. He was 17 years old at the time .

Thanks to Janet Bright

Wageningen, 5th May 2011

We have received word from the National Committee Capitulations 1945 Wageningen (<http://www.nchc.nl/home/?language=en>) that the Liberation parade will be held on May 5th in Wageningen. Those members who wish

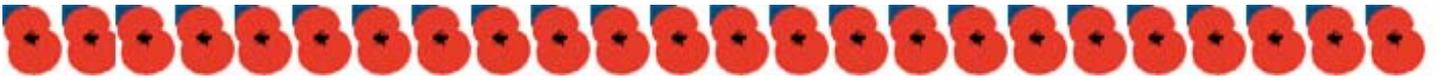
to take part are requested to contact Mr. H. de Jonge as soon as possible. A number of less mobile persons may be able to catch a ride with the old military vehicles. Please contact Mr. de Jonge for more information, preferably as

soon as possible. We would like as many of our members as possible to take part in this parade, in order to maintain the reputation of the Royal British Legion Holland Branch.

TRBL Holland Branch acquires ANBI status

The Royal British Legion Holland Branch recently acquired ANBI status thanks to successful petitioning by our former Vice-Chairman Mr. John Vuerhard. ANBI stands for Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling, basically a charitable organization. This has a number of interesting repercussions, particularly in terms of appealing for funding and of making tax-deductible donations. For more information on the latter, see: <http://www.belastingdienst.nl/giften/>





New Members' Lunch at the Van Ghent Kazerne, Rotterdam

Dear Members,

For Wednesday, April 13, 2011 we have organised our first lunch of this year at the Van Ghent Kazerne, Toepad 120, 3063 NJ Rotterdam. We will be welcomed with coffee/tea in a special room from 12.00-12.30 hrs and then move on to the Maasbruggen Restaurant for our lunch, 12.30-13.30hrs. Afterwards, at our usual venue Het Anker, we will not only have our 'chat and drink' session, but Mr. Eug. Kowalski, son of a renowned Polish officer who contributed to the liberation of the Netherlands, has

kindly agreed to give a short talk on the role the Polish troops played in WW II. Should you want to participate, please let Mrs. Elsa E. van Gelderen (tel.010 4827584 email:

eevangelderen@kpnplanet.nl, Karel Doormanstraat 297 B 3012GH) in Rotterdam know asap, before April 1, and transfer € 11.- p.p. to her giro account 31 20 249, stating: Lunch 13042011. For that amount you will get a 'meal of the day' (most probably it will be a 'blauwe hap'!!), an ice-cream dessert and a (soft)drink. The drinks at the AMT are at your own expense!

We hope to welcome a lot of our members there. Don't forget to bring along your ID (for security reasons at the gate) and a cheerful mood!

Kind regards,

Your committee

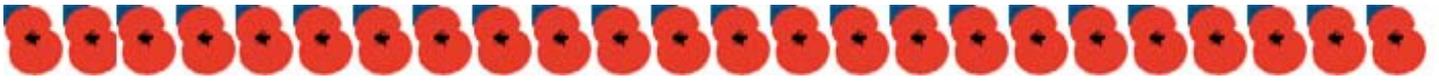
PS The Van Ghent Kazerne is next to the Van Brienoord Bridge. Tram 21 (De Esch) stops (relatively) close by. Please see the last newsletter for a map of the location.

TRBL Holland Branch Annual General Meeting



Some photographs taken at the Annual General Meeting last November. Top right: Committee and membership at the La Place venue in Houten. Above: Mrs. Emerson, the Poppy Appeal coordinator is presented with a certificate to thank her for years of dedication to the cause of the Royal British Legion. Right: Mr. de Jonge is presented with a certificate to thank him for years of dedication to the cause of the Royal British Legion. The certificates were presented by Chairman John Bright and Branch President Mr. Cameron-Webb.





An adventure in Friesland... By E.A. van Gelderen

Some weeks ago I went to Leeuwarden and decided to pay a visit to fourteen members of our Allied Forces whose graves are in the capital of Friesland. (Other members of your committee also visit graves wherever they happen to be in our country.) First I took a bus to the Noorderbegraafplaats where twelve of our lads are buried. The weather was misty with a slight drizzle, perfect for the occasion. I located the graves with the help of a young Friesian lad who commented on the fact that four members of the same airplane crew had been buried in one grave. He thought it very parsimonious of the authorities. I did not enlighten him.....

The graves are in a beautiful location and are well-kept. I left poppies at the

foot of the headstones so that other visitors might know our boys are not forgotten. Should you want to visit this cemetery: there is a "Theehuis" where you can have something to drink and eat. Afterwards I tried to visit the last two, Jewish, graves at a different location. Why, o why, were men given a better sense of direction, generally speaking, than women? I even managed to hold the map upside down. Finally I reached my destination: a ditch with a lot of overhanging shrubbery, a stone bridge and an iron door, locked. I wanted to leave my last two poppies there, so I even tried to climb over a stone sidewall, until I saw a lady in a house opposite grab her phone....I could already see the headline in the local paper: Dutch/British lady of the

Royal British Legion arrested for vandalism, so I nodded to the lady across the road, stuck the poppies in the door and walked off. I enjoyed the rest of my day, but pondered over not being able to reach our Jewish boys.

Later, with some difficulty, I got in touch with a very kind gentleman from the cemetery who told me that the "Israelitische Gemeente" used to have information on the iron door. However, after nasty phone-calls and even threats, they decided to keep the cemetery locked and not to give out any info. It seems we have not learned a lot since World War II.....

Legion 90

The Royal British Legion celebrates its 90th anniversary in 2011. Over this year, the Legion aims to raise £90 million, £1 million for every year of its existence.

The Royal British Legion Holland Branch also intends to organize a social activity later this year in recognition of the Legion's 90th birthday. Keep an eye on forthcoming newsletters and on the website! See also the Legion 90 website: <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/about-us/90th-anniversary>.



New Members

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members:

Mrs. J. Vervuurt van Vliet, Mr. H.A. Duinhoven MBE, Mr. S. Brown, Mrs. L.G. Van Vliet-Teters, Mr. D.P. Williams, Mr. R. Waller, Mr. K. Lightwood, Mrs. P.G.J. Alblas-Manders, Mr. G.H. Alblas, Mr. F. Janssen, Mr. P.E. van Draanen, Mr. R. van Beek, Ms. C. Wieman, Ms. J. Wieman, Mr. W.G. Moody, Mrs. M. Smith, Mrs. M. Driessen and Mr. N. Mons.

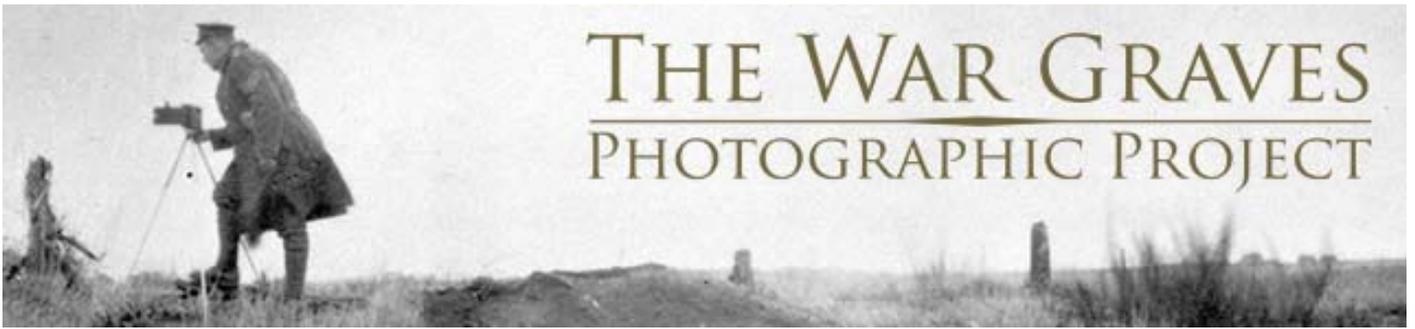
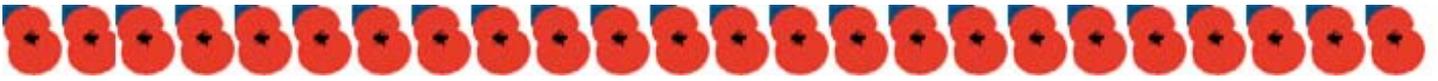


A Belated Happy Birthday to:

Mr. G. Alblas, Mrs. M.A. Alblas, Mr. J. Bright, Mr. H.J. Bruning, Mr. J.H. Cameron-Webb, Mr. M.D. Carn, Mr. M. De Bruijn, Mr. H. Disseldorp, Mr. M.A. Don, Mr. E.R.A. Geschiere, Mr. M.C. Grady, Mrs. R. Hadingue, Mrs. M.G. Honselaar, Mrs. L. Jobse, Mr. H. Kemper, Mr. P.E. Mertens, Mr. E. Mons, Mr. J.P.J. Movig, Mr. J. Peeters, Mr. M. Raaijmakers, Mr. A.

Rotscheid, Mr. R.W. Shargool, Dr. J.M.H.P. Timmermans, Mr. G.M. Trottier, Mrs. L.G. Van Vliet-Teters, Mr. R.E.A. Vaneker, Mr. M.J. Visch, Mr. J.A.H.M. Vuerhard, Mr. S.E. Wells, Ms. C. Wieman, Ms. J. Wieman, Mr. A.T. Winckle and Mr. P.J. Witteveen.





The aim of The War Graves Photographic Project is to photograph every war grave, individual memorial, MoD grave, and family memorial of serving military personnel from WWI to the present day and make these available within a searchable database.

Now working as a joint venture with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, this will enable families, scholars and researchers to obtain, via the

CWGC or TWGPP websites, a copy of the photograph of a grave or memorial which for many is impossible to visit due to the location. This service has only been made possible through the efforts of a dedicated group of volunteers, from all walks of life, who feel the need to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice and who realise the importance for families to see where their loved ones are laid to rest or commemorated. This emulates the CWGC

ethos to 'Remember in Perpetuity'. This project aims to photograph in excess of 1.75 million graves or memorials from Commonwealth Nations and many from other military forces around the world.

For more information about the project, or to volunteer to help out, please visit the following website: <http://twgpp.org/>

Urgent: looking for cheap venues for hire

To all members: your committee is currently searching hard all over the Netherlands for future venues where we could hold Branch Committee meetings (BCM), Annual General meetings (AGM) or even social events. While BCM and AGM venues would preferably be located centrally in the Netherlands in the interest of cutting down on transport time and costs, we would be interested in hearing about any potential venue you may know about for the hosting of social events. Professional

meeting venues are well advertised but prohibitively expensive, so we are thinking more in terms of venues like community centres, 'gildehuizen' and Church rooms/halls. Ideally these venues should be located not too far from a train station or bus-stop to facilitate accessibility, and would preferably be on the ground floor, so as not to exclude our less mobile members. If anyone happens to know of a suitable venue, please do not hesitate to inform a member of

your committee, either by phone, post or e-mail.

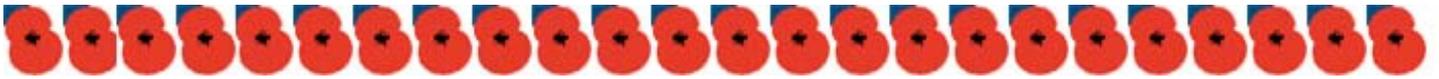


Thank you Rie!

Our Treasurer Rie Hadingue recently resigned. Fortunately a replacement has been found - Mr. Ray Waller. His full contact details have already been placed on our Website and are included in the Branch List of Officials, published in this Newsletter. Meanwhile I thank Rie for all her hard work on behalf of the Branch since April last year.

John Bright

Left: Rie at the BCM in January, where she kindly treated the committee to cake and drinks in celebration of her birthday.



ELECTED OFFICIALS 2011

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