***Manningtree and District Royal British Legion***

***Minutes of Branch No 3683 Meeting held on 10th February 2015***

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| ***Item*** | ***Opening Address*** | ***By Whom*** |
| ***1*** | Jamie welcomed everyone to the meeting. | ***Branch Chairman*** |

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| ***Item*** | ***Exhortation*** | ***By Whom*** |
| ***2*** | The meeting was opened with the exhortation, and a respectful silence was observed. | ***Branch Chairman*** |

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|  | ***Apologies and Attendance*** |  |
| ***3*** | 21 members of the Branch attended the meeting, with apologies being received from 7 others. | ***Branch Chairman*** |

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|  | ***Minutes*** |  |
| ***4*** | The Minutes of the last meeting were read out.  Proposed: Dave Brown  Seconded: Sharon Robinson  Agreed(one abstention (Andy Baker) as he was not present at the last meeting) the only changes were that the total for the Treasurer’s Report should have read £1,856.17 and under Events Committee Report the amount for each Cadet Unit should have read £50, which would be for the Plaques and personal award. | ***Branch Secretary*** |

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|  | ***Chairman’s Report*** |  |
| ***5*** | Change of Venue  Tonight is our last meeting at the Red Lion, as of March we are moving back to the Crown which is all on one level which will suit any of our members with a disability who have been unable to manage the stairs. It will also hopefully bring in new members. The Crown is also more accessible for parking, with plenty of spaces nearby and in the Pub itself. It also has a bar in the function room we will be using. This venue will also be used for Committee Meetings.  Jamie and Sharon had also had a meeting with the President and Vice President about Mistley Church Hall in New Road, and are waiting for Chris Hills to get in touch, the general consensus is it would be a great location, but is rumoured to cost £600 per month to run which is far too much for us.  Merchandise  We are now in possession of 100 Commemorative Pins (1915-2015) and new Table Cloths via the Poppy Appeal. It is suggested that we charge £3 per pin.  With regard to the £250 ring fenced for merchandise Jamie suggested that this amount be paid to one of the members for these purchases and be shown as Legion in the Community (LIC).  The Branch President offered to do this and it was formally proposed by Martin Rayner, seconded by Sharon Robinson and unanimously agreed.  County Conference  Jamie and Sharon attended on 10th January 2015, the Branch was awarded the Nigel Bird Shield, which is presented to the Branch without a Club who have the highest percentage increase in members, we had 41 members signed up which was an increase of 169%, there is no reason why we cannot be awarded this again next year.  County Committee (Saturday 24th January)  The Chairman had not attended this meeting but had received the minutes.  The finances of County are healthy with two accounts holding £71,335.07, the General Account holding £6,422.26 and the Welfare Account holding £39,866.98, the total being £117,624.31.  The title of County Secretary has now been changed to Membership Support Officer (MSO), and the County Office is now closed. All Branches have been sent information as to how to contact the MSOs. Application forms now go direct to CDI, transfers go to the Colchester address, anything else to go to MSO’s via email.  Various feedback that had been received about County Conference, such as the venue not being big enough and the low turnout of Branches.  It was confirmed that the keys to the new Area Office had been collected and that upstairs offices were finished, but the Pop In Centre still requires some work.  A question was asked what would happen if a Branch could not fulfil Officer positions. It was confirmed that should this happen then it puts Branches in a vulnerable position, and that they would be looked and closed, or amalgamated or considered for sub branch status.  (Jamie expanded on this and said that the four Officer positions had to be filled at all times in order for the Branch to be successful)  There are now 70 full Branches including Essex County Central. In January 2013 there was a Membership total of 12,573 which was a drop of 11.2%, by February 2014, this had increased to 12,687, an increase of 0.09%, with over the following year more increases in membership, with a couple of dips, but as of the end of December 2014 the total stands at 13,227.  A number of courses were listed, including Branch Management Course this coming weekend (14th & 15th January).  A list of County Committee Appointments was then read out.  Poppy Appeal Organiser Newsletter  The Essex total (2014-15) so far collected (as of January) stands at £1,161,214.83 against the total for 2013-2014 which was £1,133,890.82, a 2.98% increase. The National total (as of January) was £38,843,077 an increases of 17%, this is now over £40 million pounds.  PAO Photo ID Cards are now available and Jamie mentioned that it would be beneficial for the Branch to have these.  East Anglia & Essex Area Plan  Jamie would email this to all Members in due course.  Branch Gazebo  Steve Sadler had informed the Committee that after discussions with his father, they are prepared to make a donation to fund the purchase of a new Branch Gazebo. (Steve Sadler then presented the Treasurer with £200).  Parade Marshalls Course  A course is due to be held in March to which Jamie and Andy Robinson will attend, the venue is yet to be determined.  Branch Management Course  This is due to be held on 14th & 15th February at Chelmsford, the Branch Vice Chairman and Secretary will be attending.  Membership Committee Ballots  Jamie briefly explained about the Membership Committee and the two persons standing, but said the Branch Secretary would expand on this in his report.  Poppy Appeal  Two cheques of £100 had been received from Mistley Lodge and Dedham Vale Lodge, Jamie asked that suitable letters of thanks be sent to both (Branch Secretary to do this)  Cadets Certificate Presentation  These were presented to both Units and several members of the Branch attended.  The Commanding Officers of each Unit had been spoken to and were in agreement about the awarding of a Shield and a small personal award to the best Cadet. They would decide who would receive these Shields, and they would be presented by the Branch.  Pride of Tendring Awards  Jamie asked everyone to join him in congratulating the Branch President, Kerry King, on receiving a Pride of Tendring Award. | ***Branch***  ***Chairman*** |
| ***Item*** | ***Vice Chair’s Report*** |  |
| ***6*** | N/A | ***Branch***  ***Chairman*** |

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| ***Item*** | ***Secretary’s Report*** |  |
| ***7*** | Standard Newsletter  Training Dates for Standard Bearers are at the Army Reserve Centre, Springfield, Chelmsford between 10-12noon on Sundays 12th April,10th May, 14th June, 5th July, 9th August, 6th September (Full uniform- Passing Out Parade).  County Newsletter  Parade Marshalls Course will be on Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd March, location to be confirmed.  Two Events advertised – 1940’s Charity Dance at Finchingfield Village Hall. Saturday 28th February 7.30pm-11pm & Extravanganza of Song and Dance 70th Anniversary of VE Day. Sunday 22nd March 3pm at Chelmsford Civic Theatre. Tickets £14  Response by the Privy Council to Charter Motion.  The purpose of this communication is to inform all concerned of the response by the Privy Council to Charter Motion 2 which was carried at Annual Conference 2014 at Torquay.  Charter Motion 2 read as follows:  “Page 4, Article 3(e), before “to promote” add the words “as custodian of Remembrance, “”   Reason for Inclusion – As the custodian of Remembrance, the word “Remembrance” should be included in our Royal Charter.   Effect if Passed – It would clarify the Legion’s role in Remembrance activities and give added weight to one of our four pillars.   The Main Argument – A similar Motion was carried at the 2013 National Conference but not approved by the Board of Trustees for reasons given in the ‘Resolutions – Actions Taken Booklet.’  This Motion helps make the distinction between Remembrance and Commemoration more clear, and also enshrines our role as custodian of Remembrance within our governing document.”   The Charter Motion was carried at Annual Conference 2014 by 399 votes to 6 and, due largely to the wording of our Remembrance Strategy, it was also carried at the meeting of the Board of Trustees held on 19th June 2014.  The proposed amendment to the Royal Charter was duly referred to Privy Council Advisors for their comments.   Whilst Privy Council Advisors recognise the Legion’s historic and valued leading role in promoting Remembrance (including organising both national and local acts of Remembrance), they are unclear about the intended effect of the proposed amendment to the Royal Charter, and are concerned that, if adopted, it could give rise to misunderstandings.  The use of the word ‘custodian’ generally, and specifically in respect of Remembrance, could be seen to imply a sense of ‘exclusive rights’, or a sense of ‘ownership.’  Privy Council Advisors believe that it is not the aim of the Legion to suggest that we have a ‘monopoly’ on Remembrance, but are concerned that this could be the unintended consequence.  The result of its adoption, therefore, could be counter-productive to the Legion’s Remembrance Strategy which appears to stress accessibility and inclusivity.   At its meeting on 22nd January 2015, the Board of Trustees agreed with the response from the Privy Counsel, and that TRBL formations be informed accordingly.   Whilst the term ‘custodian of Remembrance’ will not be included in the Royal Charter, it will remain in our Remembrance Strategy and associated documentation.  Insult to Injury Campaign  The following was read out to all members present.   I am writing to you on behalf of the Legion’s Public Affairs and Public Policy (PAPP) team, who would greatly appreciate your support and help with a new high-profile campaign we are launching. This campaign is calling on the UK, Welsh and Scottish Government to change local authority guidelines around social care. Currently, veterans in receipt of a War Pension who require care via their local authority are having the majority of their payment taken away to pay for their care. The Legion believes this is a violation of the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant. We would be delighted if yourself and individual members of the branch would help support this campaign.   Veterans who were injured in Service on or before 5 April 2005 receive a War Disablement Pension and are known as War Pensioners. Should a War Pensioner have social care needs, they will routinely find that their local authority takes all but the first £10pw of their military compensation to cover the costs of their care. This is despite the fact that a veteran with a similar injury, but who was injured on or after 6 April 2005, is able to keep all of their compensation payments. This is because this injured veteran receives compensation through the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, which local authorities are instructed to fully exempt from means tests for social care. Local authorities must also exempt compensation that has been awarded to civilians who have been injured in the workplace, which is usually placed in a personal injury trust fund.  The Public Affairs and Public Policy team would really appreciate the support of your Branch, and all of your members. You can get involved by sending the attached template letter to your local MP.Please feel free to personalise your letter as we appreciate you may have strong links with MPs locally. We would also like as many branch members, family and friends as possible to do the same, either via the attached template letters or by using our website:[**www.britishlegion.org.uk/insulttoinjury**](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/insulttoinjury)   Finally, if you are aware of any War Pensioners who are receiving care from their local authority and who may be willing to support our campaign as potential case studies, please contact the team using the email address below or by calling one of our Public Affairs Managers:   Laura Pett – England Tel:02032072240  Peter Evans – Wales. Tel:03330114382   If you would like any further information, including help identifying your MP, please contact the team via[Insulttoinjury@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:Insulttoinjury@britishlegion.org.uk)  This email will be forwarded to all members so that they can, if they wish,  Masonic Hall  All welcome  17th February  Brian Watts has kindly sent an open invitation to members of the Branch to attend a Lecture followed by Dinner at the Masonic Hall on Tuesday 17th February, hosted by Dedham Vale Lodge  5.30 Bar  6.15  Lecture from the Curator of the Royal Artillery Museum, (Mark Smith) on 'The Victoria Cross'  with actual VC's on show including a unique VC with a Blue ribbon  All welcome with wives/partners  Cost is £18.50 4 courses plus Coffee  I have Brian’s contact details should anyone wish to take him up on this very kind offer.  Appeal for Veterans Accounts  A friend of the Branch Secretary, together with an acquaintance, have started a small Publishing company and intends to write small personal memoirs/short accounts of veterans service etc. At the moment they are interviewing as many of the small number of Arnhem veterans left and intend in 2016 (which is only 10 months away!) they are looking to expand this to Veterans of Suez, Korea, Malaya, Borneo, Falklands, Iraq and Afghanistan. If anyone is interested, or knows of anyone who served in those places, let the Branch Secretary know and you will be put in touch.  (A question was asked if Northern Ireland was also to be covered – this would be passed on).  Election to Membership Council 2015  On Thursday 27th March there will be an election of the Membership Council-East Region. There are two candidates: Helen Picken and David Swann.  Their Branch Secretary proposed that either  a) all members present read the election statements and make an individual choice and indicate that to him  b) all members present let the Committee make the decision as to whom to vote for, which will be then be decided tomorrow night (at the Committee Meeting).  It was agreed that a) was the best option and the Candidates Election Statements were then read out and the choice put to a vote. On a show of hands Helen Picken received 12 votes and David Swann 9 votes, the Ballot Form was then completed showing a Vote for Helen Picken, signed by the Branch Chairman and dated by the Branch Secretary. (To be posted on Wednesday 11th February). | ***Deputy Branch Secretary*** |

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|  | ***Treasurers Report*** |  |
| ***8*** | Monies Received:  Membership Fee: £30  Cheques: £150 (Mistley Lodge)  Tombola (Xmas Event): £80.42  Pascalls Solicitors: £236.00  Skinners Tin: £17.50  Red Lion Tin:£9.55  Pascalls Solicitors: £100  Donation (Sadlers):£200  Donation (Mistley Lodge): £150  Total: **£2,236.17**  (£274.39 ringfenced for WW1) | ***Branch Treasurer*** |

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| ***Item*** | ***Branch Welfare*** |  |
| ***9*** | Nothing to report – asked about the possibility of a Course. The Chairman advised to look on the RBL website. Wilf Sadler was now back at home, after a short spell in hospital, and we look forward to seeing him at our next meeting in the Crown all being well. | ***Branch Welfare Officer*** |

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|  | ***County Welfare Report*** |  |
| ***10*** | N/A | ***County Welfare Officer*** |

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|  | ***A Group*** |  |
| ***11*** | Ann Watson gave her apologies for the last meeting, and Jamie and Sharon were set to attend but it was cancelled. The rearranged date is Saturday 28th February in Harwich. | ***A Group Reps*** |
|  | ***Parade Marshals Report*** |  |
| ***12*** | The following parades & services will take place this year:  Sunday 26th April 11am Manningtree War Memorial (100th Anniversary of Gallipoli)  Sunday 10th May 11am Manningtree War Memorial (70th Anniversary of VE Day)  Sunday 16th August 11am Manningtree War Memorial (70th Anniversary of VJ Day)  Sunday 8th November 3pm Manningtree War Memorial (Remembrance Sunday)  Wednesday 11th November 11am Manningtree War Memorial (Armistice Day)  For all, apart from Remembrance Sunday, the Parades will form up in the High Street, junction with South Street, times to be confirmed but probably about 10.40-10.45.  Remembrance Sunday, same as 2014, the Parade will form up in High Street, junction with Brook Street, again times to be confirmed but probably about 2.30-2.40pm.  Alan Saddington has kindly agreed to print all our service sheets for this year and will make them available about a week beforehand.  Road Closures have already been submitted for each event.  Andy Robinson is suffering from back and hip problems, so Parade Marshall duties will be shared between this.  Also for the Parade Marshall’s course Andy Robinson will require a Drill Cane/Swagger Stick, the Branch Chairman asked for permission to purchase a Drill Cane which will become the property of the Branch and can be handed on to whoever performs these duties. | ***Branch Chairman*** |
|  | ***Membership Secretary Report*** |  |
| ***13*** | Dave Brown stated that at the moment the Branch had 41 signed up members, with a 4 new applications and one transfer submitted. He also had to redo 2 application forms, and had 1 further possible application to come.  Dave also stated that he had received a telephone call from a gentleman from Mistley Lodge regarding them making a donation to Branch Funds. This has resulted in him receiving a letter containing a cheque for £150 pounds (The Chairman asked the Secretary to send an appropriate letter of thanks). | ***Membership Secretary*** |
|  | ***Events Committee Report*** |  |
| ***14*** | Festival of Remembrance  The numbers interested in going have meant the coach is full (34 seater) so will possibly look at booking a bigger coach  NMA (National Memorial Arboretum)  Still waiting for a price for a coach to this location but could work out at £25, with free entry.  Coffee Morning  This will be on Saturday 27th June at Foundry Court, which although we have to pay for is only a minimal fee. Will run from 11am – 2pm and the Swing Band is already booked.  Poppy Picnic  This will be on Saturday 18th July at Acorn Village on the lawn between 12 noon and 4pm. | ***Events Secretary*** |

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|  | ***Press Relations Officer*** |  |
| ***15*** | Nothing to Report but looking to do a 2 page spread. The Chairman asked that in the next Press release mention be made of the move back to the Crown etc. | ***Press Relations Officer*** |

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|  | ***Poppy Appeal*** | ***By Whom*** |
| ***16*** | With four further donations, including three tonight, of £36.33 (Lawford Church) and £40 (Sadlers), and two £100 cheques from Mistley Lodge and Dedham Vale Lodge, the total to date stands at **£8,810.82.** | ***PAO*** |

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|  | ***AOB*** | ***By Whom*** |
| ***17*** | No longer an item on the agenda! |  |

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|  | ***Kohima Epitaph*** |  |
| ***18*** | The meeting closed at 21:05 with the Chairman reading the Kohima Epitaph | ***Branch***  ***Chairman*** |

***Jamie Robinson Branch Chairman*** ***Andy Baker*** ***Branch Secretary***

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