



## MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER FOR OVERSEAS

October 2016

### HELLO FROM MSO (OVERSEAS)

Best wishes to you all. I understand this is the busiest time of year for you all so I hope you can find a few minutes to have a cup of tea and read what's going on overseas.

This year Overseas did really well at submitting their accounts on time. You were also really helpful when I asked for more information and I really appreciated your assistance. Thank you! There are still a few accounts outstanding and if you are one of those branches I would ask that you contact me as soon as possible.

We are now in AGM time so I hope these go well. If you have any questions most answers can be found in the Membership Handbook or the Royal Charter but if not please get in touch. There is a new MS1 form that needs to be used along with a MS1B form which is your Standard Bearers declaration. Remember that the email address that is on the MS1 will be the one I, and others in HQ use – so it should be your branch email and not your personal one. The deadline for MS1 forms is **31<sup>st</sup> December**.

Renewals are also ongoing and I do feel that they have gotten off to a much better start this year. Bank transfers are a lot quicker than cheques and I would recommend you pay by this method if possible. Any questions about the process please let me know.

Remember that even though membership cards expire on 1<sup>st</sup> October, memberships are valid for 3 months after this so members have up until 31<sup>st</sup> December to renew.

I will be sending by separate email:

- Development of the Women's Section message from Terry Whittles and Marilyn Humphry
- Documents for Annual Conference 2017

Please note that I will be away from 19<sup>th</sup> November until 1<sup>st</sup> December. For any membership queries in my absence please forward to [membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk).

Good luck in the Poppy Appeal and thank you for your continued support in all aspects of the Legion.

Kayleigh

### LATEST NEWS

#### New Overseas Support Coordinator

As per Anthony Baines email sent in March we have now appointed an Overseas Support Coordinator who will lead on the development, delivery and promotion of all beneficiary services and support to Overseas branches. Further details will follow when the appointment commences.

#### New Assistant Director of Membership

As you know, Colin Gordon was seconded to the role of Assistant Director of Membership in July last year. Colin will be returning to his role as Assistant Director of Operations for the South Region in the new year. His permanent replacement will be Sandra Fruish. Sandra is currently the Area Manager for the South Region and has already got a good relationship with many of our members. She will take up her new position on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

#### New Director of Fundraising

Claire Rowcliffe has been appointed to the Leadership team as the permanent Director of Fundraising. Claire has been

with the Legion for 5 years and brings great leadership skills, a strong track record of collaboration and wide experience of developing and supporting teams from a broad range of roles; from her work in Regional Fundraising, from her role as Chair of a Staffordshire charity and her training and time serving in the Armed Forces. Claire took up her new role on 1 October.

## **Message from the Director General, Charles Byrne**

“On the 20<sup>th</sup> October the Board of Trustees met to discuss our proposed strategy and aims for the Legion for the next five years and our planned budget for next year.

Inspired by those we support, our aim is to offer the breadth, depth and quality of service they deserve. We cannot do this on our own. There is huge public support for our Armed Forces.

In response, our purpose is to be at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces through thick and thin – ensuring their unique contribution is never forgotten. Our strategy follows simply from this. Central to our strategy is collaboration between members, volunteers, staff and our many partners.

Today I am delighted to let you know that the Board gave its full support to this strategy and to the budget for next year .

After the remembrance period is complete we will share more detail on the strategy so that we can all gain a shared understanding of our purpose and plans and begin to understand what the strategy will mean for us as members, volunteers and staff.

I know that many of you have been working hard for weeks and months to get ready remembrance and the launch the Poppy Appeal on Thursday 27 October. Thank you to everyone for all your work. I hope your appeal and your commemorations go well and I look forward to sharing with you all our plans in the near future.”

## **Community Support Project**

The Community Support Project soft launched on 17<sup>th</sup> October. Those branches that have signed up should have now received a log in for your BCS contact, Chairmen and Secretaries of these branches also have access to BCS through O365.

To clarify some confusion, the BCS project was launched independently of current welfare support. The BCS came about because we are aware of branches delivering services like telephone support and hospital visits – but these services were not being delivered by caseworkers, just ordinary branch members, and therefore it was not being reported.

We do not want branches to change what they are doing but thought if the members were delivering these services they should be recognized and so the BCS is primarily about introducing a reporting tool.

Caseworkers and Branch Community Supporters are completely separate. Caseworkers do not have to be members, they have to have appropriate training and they deliver high level welfare – their work comes through the District Welfare Officer or Overseas Case Officer and is location, but not necessarily branch, based. Branch Community Supporters are members, they do not have to have any training and they deliver very low level support – their work comes through the branch.

If caseworkers wish to also be Branch Community supporters they can be but they will be double hatted, they do not need any further training but need to complete the agreement.

Please let me know if your branch wishes to sign up to the Branch Community Support Project.

## **NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE**

### **RBL Kyrenia Branch ‘Poppy Ride’ raises over £22,000**

By Brian Thomas, Branch Chairman.

It is always strange in life when a small idea germinates into a major event, which is exactly what happened when two committee members of the RBL Kyrenia Branch had a chat over a pint of beer in early January. Branch Communications Officer Martin Derbyshire asked the 59 year old Branch Chairman Major Brian Thomas if he fancied doing a cycle ride around Cyprus later that year. It was stated there and then that if the challenge was worth doing then it should be done for a good cause and both were agreed that the RBL Poppy Appeal fitted the bill perfectly. And so it was that the ‘Poppy Ride’ came into being, and it was hoped that several other cyclists would join them in the 650Km ride encompassing the complete island of Cyprus. Less than a month later 14 cyclists had enlisted for the cause with a squad average age of 60. A detailed training

programme was agreed and Martin Derbyshire became the team leader with Mark Ryan looking after the money side of things and Gary Abbott named as the technical specialist for any bicycle problems that may occur. All of the riders bought their own bike, cycling equipment and paid all running expenses throughout the 8 months of training. Everyone trained a minimum of 3- 4 days a week for 6 months, cranking it up to 5 days a week in the last month, even in the intense heat and the dreaded 'Gecitkoy dam hill', a 2-mile, 1,000' ascent, became a byword for pain, but it certainly paid off on the ride! The 2,000 miles of training was not without incident though with one of the female riders, 54 year old Sue Hopkins being savaged by an Alsatian dog which required 7 stitches and put her training routine out of kilter

Fast forward to Sunday 18 September and the Olive Press Bowling Club had been nominated as the start and finish point for the ride. A stirring speech by 55 year old cyclist Gary Abbott was read out at the breakfast, kindly provided free of charge by club owners Martin and Anne Monks-Appleton, as the riders nervously contemplated the challenge which awaited them: *"So the day has come as we ride east into the sun. It fills my heart with pride to be part of this amazing ride. Lest we forget why, it's for those who fought and died. Live On the Poppy Ride."*



**DAY 1** – Lapta to Balci Plaza 118km: With an 8.30am start the team headed eastwards through Girne and along the coast road past Esentepe, Tatlisu, up the Balalan valley to Yeni Erenkoy and finally after 6 hours in the saddle arrived as a group at the Balci Plaza hotel 5 miles short of Dipkarpaz. A swim in the sea and a hot meal made the day complete. Owner Hassan Balci kindly gave everyone a free packed lunch the next morning to see us off in style.

**DAY 2** – Balci Plaza to Boğaz 120km: An early start then 3 punctures in the first 3 hours were the least of our problems once we hit the ragged Karpaz Peninsular road, to say we had numb bums for hours on end is an understatement. Getting to the Apostolos Andreas Monastery was bad enough but knowing we had to retrace our steps to Boğaz was tough. After 8 hours in the saddle we finally arrived at the Boğaz hotel, probably the worst hotel that most had ever stayed in and not to be recommended under any condition. Definitely the hardest day of the overall ride!

**DAY 3** – Boğaz to Larnaca 92km: After a poor breakfast we were glad to be back in the saddle for an easy days cycling over the flattest part of the route crossing the border into the Republic of Cyprus at Famagusta after a tea stop at the glorious Petek restaurant inside the walled city. The day was not without incident with 2 of the team suffering bruises and lost pride as they crashed their bikes. As a side show one of the back-up crew had failed to get their MOT certificate for southern Cyprus, which entailed a hefty detour via Nicosia.

**DAY 4** – Larnaca to Pissouri 124km: After a great night in the Tsalis Apartments we rode through Larnaca and Dhekelia onto Limassol for a good lunch by the sea, then a very scenic ride through the Western Sovereign Base area and past Episkopi Garrison, finishing with long ascent and a final heart-breaking climb into Pissouri village with only 15 minutes of daytime remaining. Fortunately a great meal and some liquid refreshment in the picturesque village bolstered the spirits.

**DAY 5** – Pissouri to Pomos 98km: The day we had all been dreading! A photo stop at Aphrodite's Rock then an easy ride through Paphos stopping only for Brian Thomas to give a small briefing of his time as a UN soldier in the village of Timi. On to Coral Bay where an outrider on a Harley Davidson from the RBL Paphos Branch escorted us to Neo's Bowling Club where free drinks were laid on for us which was much appreciated. Fortunately, the 14km, 2,200' afternoon climb uphill was a lot easier than some expected, helped by some blessed cloud cover, and after a glorious descent with the northern coast in view everyone was in good spirits as we hit the coast road into Polis and then turned eastwards, finally heading for home.

**DAY 6** – Pomos to Soli 47km: Although on paper the shortest daily distance, the giant climb of almost 2,500' to bypass the restricted Turkish Cypriot enclave of Erenkoy had been the talk of the ride and we had allocated the whole morning to reach



the summit. In the event most got to the top in just over an hour, a testament to how strong we were all feeling due to the training regime we had stuck to religiously. We made the most of an 8km freewheel down to sea level again, with the Troodos mountain range magnificent to the southeast, before again heading eastwards with the sight of Karsiyaka mountain, (and home), in the distance spurring us on. Another couple of big climbs included the border crossing back into the TRNC at Yeşilirmak, grabbing a roadside lunch in the sunshine before putting the foot down to the Soli Hotel in Gemikonağı, our last overnight stop.

**DAY 7 – Gemikonağı to Lapta 70km:** With keen anticipation the last leg of the ride was upon us, and we set off in high spirits through the fertile orange groves of Guzelyurt (Morphou), before a final 1,000' ascent into a stiffening north-easterly wind, which took us to the ancient Maronite village of Koruçam. A snapped gear cable caused a temporary stop, but soon we were by the sea again, cycling along the beautiful but very hilly coastal road from Sadrazamkoy towards the finish line at The Olive Press, but not without one final puncture a mere 3km from the end! One final turn off the main road and into group formation for the ride across the finish line where a large, noisy crowd greeted us in. A very emotional finish for us all!



The oldest cyclist was Barry Beardsell aged 72, a part-time resident in the TRNC, from Stockport in the UK. He said: "I'm new to serious cycling so really buckled down when I was out here in May. But thanks to the many training sessions and the rigour of the chosen routes we coped and in truth did better than we expected. I'd chosen to use a very light racing bike which made it hard going on some of the rough roads but paid dividends when it came to hill climbing. Whilst we were cycling for a long time each day, we had lots of breaks, generally interesting surroundings and once we had done our stint that first beer didn't touch the sides!"

Branch Chairman Brian Thomas said: "What a magnificent effort by everyone involved, not just the 14 cyclists but the project could not have worked without the back-up crew of 7 ladies who were simply brilliant and hardworking which allowed us to concentrate purely on the riding. It was hoped to raise a few thousand pounds in sponsorship but it seems that due to everyone's kind generosity, both here in the TRNC, south Cyprus and the UK, we are now around £22,000 with local philanthropist John Graham from the 'The Little Society of Kyrenia' charity personally donating 40,000TL (£10,000)! Furthermore, it has been agreed in writing by RBL HQ in London that this money can be retained in the TRNC for any future welfare cases that the branch may encounter which is fantastic news. The owners at the Olive Press Bowling Club put on a magnificent party for us on our return that raised over £1,000 on the day. It just goes on and on so, on behalf of our branch members I would like to thank one and all. Crossing the finish line brought many a tear to the cyclist's eyes as the extent of what we had achieved started to set in."

Meanwhile team leader Martin Derbyshire, aged 53, who served for 26 years in the Intelligence Corps, and now permanently resides in the TRNC, had the final word: "I am delighted that The Poppy Riders have successfully completed the circumnavigation of Cyprus safely, and without getting lost once! I am amazed at the amount of interest that the project has aroused, and subsequently the money that has been raised for the RBL is nothing short of staggering. Moreover, the whole endeavour would have not been half as much fun, or as satisfying, without the camaraderie of the whole group, including the essential assistance from the team of support staff who were tireless in their help. We will be having a meeting later in the week to discuss our plans for next year, but a cycle tour in Turkey sounds a good option."

In total the team covered 669km and climbed approximately 13,000', half way up Everest!



The 14 cyclists who took part were: Martin Derbyshire, Brian Thomas, Gary 'Taff' Abbott, Neil Clayton, Mike Ennis, Barry Beardsell, Mark Ryan, Malcolm 'Cookie' Cooke, Jean Pierre Mainardi, Scott Kennedy, Ian Cowan, Angela Phillips, Sue & Steve Hopkins.

The 7 back up crew were: Joyce Derbyshire, Adele Thomas, Diana Beardsell, Edith Mainardi, Fiona Addington, Gina Ryan & Barbara Ennis.

## **Zurgena and District Branch awarded The McCrae Shield**

The Branch of Zurgena and District (from Almeria in Spain) was awarded the McCrae shield at the UK Annual Conference in May this year. The Shield is presented to the Overseas Branch which achieves the best percentage increase in new members during the previous year.

This is a great achievement for a small Branch and they were delighted to have joined other Branches from District North in being given this honour. Congratulations to all those concerned and we wish them well for the future.

Our photo shows the Chairman, Dennis Hibbert, and Secretary, Chrissy Maywood at a recent Branch meeting.



## **Rededication of Graves at Oosterbeek**

The Holland branch manned an information stall at the Rededication of the 6 graves from Market Garden, held on the 14<sup>th</sup> September at the Oosterbeek War Cemetery. Three Standard Bearers from District Germany were also present.





## Launch of the 2016 Poppy Appeal District Spain North

The Launch of The Royal British Legion District Spain North Poppy Appeal for 2016 took place in Benidorm on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October. Once again the sun shone and holiday makers enjoying time on the beach, came to see what was happening.

The Parade was led by the Torrevieja Pipes and Drums followed by Branch Standards and those of other military organisations. Also taking part were the Benidorm Alcalde, Snr Antonio Pérez Pérez, guests from the British Consulate as well as the Defence Attaché, members of The Royal British Legion followed by members of the public.

Lt Col David Whimpenny, from London, Chairman of the Legion Membership Council was delighted to have attended. Regular attendees from the Royal Hospital, Chelsea were Arthur "Skippy" Teasdale and Wayne Campbell looking marvelous in their scarlet coats.

The Parade finished at the Dias in the Rincon de Loix where various speeches took place. Mr Nigel Hails, Chairman of District North, welcomed everyone and thanked the Alcalde and the Benidorm Ayuntamiento for their support and tremendous assistance, without which it would not have been possible to arrange this event. Mr Hails presented Snr Pérez Pérez with a Certificate of Special Recognition.

Mr Hails remarked on the splendid total raised last year of over 171,000€ and thanked the public for their most generous support. He also spoke of the various ways the Legion helps beneficiaries here in Spain. The Alcalde welcomed everyone and said how delighted he was that Benidorm had again been chosen to host the Launch and talked of Benidorm being a multi national city.

As the Standard Bearers marched off at the end of the ceremony, appreciation was shown with rapturous applause.



Photo 1. Standard Bearers

Photo 2. Chelsea Pensioners "Skippy" and Wayne talking to Defence Attaché, Captain Paul Lemkes, RN, and Sgt Michelle Kadshaw RAF

Photo 3. The Torrevieja Pipes and Drums





## Malta Poppy Appeal Launch

On 24<sup>th</sup> October, President of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, presided over the launch of The British Legion's Poppy Appeal 2016 in Malta. In her speech, President Coleiro Preca, urged all members of the Maltese public to yet again show their strong belief in the value of solidarity and participate in the Poppy Appeal, which seeks to collect funds for ex-servicemen and their families, who might need help. She said that the poppy appeal is also an appeal for peace, adding that "by participating in the annual Poppy Appeal, all of us can make a statement that Malta will forever be a country committed to peace."

*Photo Credit – (DOI-Kevin Abela/OPR)*



## Santiago Branch Chairman Awarded BEM

*"Roger John Barlow, Royal British Legion Chairman in Chile. For services to the British community and veterans."*

Roger Barlow, Chairman of the Santiago branch in Chile was presented with a British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year Honours list. The medal was presented in September in Santiago as the Ambassador had waited for a special visitor to Chile! It was presented by HRH Prince Edward at a reception at the British Ambassador's Residence on Thursday evening 15th September.

This was a very special and unique occasion for the medal presentation attended by 150 guests, mainly from the Chilean Government, Military, Educational institutions, and other Ambassadors and dignitaries. There was a surprise performance by the Royal Marines Drum Corp. band from HMS Protector that was visiting Chile at the time.





## Oh What a Night!

Simon Weston CBE was in town once again last Friday evening when he presented his one man show 'An Evening with...' to a packed audience at the Olympia Restaurant, Mil Palmeras.

Simon, who is regarded as one of the very best speakers on the UK circuit, showed his worth as he captivated over 350 people who were there to pay homage to the Falklands Veteran.

The former Welsh Guardsman was supported on stage by one of the Costa Blanca's foremost young talents, Rebecca Holt, who, despite her tender years, has also been a longtime champion of the Royal British Legion, organisers of the evening's event.

And it was Rebecca who got the evening underway with one of her signature acts, a tribute to the war years for which she was dressed in the uniform of an ENSA (Entertainments National Service Association) L/Cpl. She gave a masterly performance featuring many of the period hits that were especially well received by the enthusiastic audience. As Becky brought part one of the evening to a close she was pleasantly surprised when Simon Weston then appeared on stage to present her with a jeweled poppy brooch, as a thankyou for the years of support that she has provided to The RBL in Spain.

After a short introduction by Branch President, Pastor Keith Brown, there followed a rapturous reception for Simon Weston which surprised even the man himself as he quickly realised the esteem in which he is quite clearly held on the Costa Blanca.

Simon then spent over an hour recounting his days, from the fateful invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982 that so dramatically changed his life, through the 90 or more operations and medical procedures he has undergone, his family life, experiences, and his relationship with the royals, throwing in many anecdotes and amusing stories along the way, all the while radiating optimism, courage and strength.

His irrepressible humour and infectious enthusiasm was clearly visible as he had his Mil Palmeras admirers enraptured for almost an hour before switching from direct delivery as he then provided the audience with an opportunity for questions and answers, his final message being one of sheer determination and acceptance of whatever difficulties you are likely to meet along the way. "The only obstacles to achieving one's targets and successes are those you create for yourself," he said, his words never failing to inspire.



As Simon concluded his presentation the audience rose to their feet in applause, clearly demonstrating the admiration in which the Falklands war hero is still held on the Costa Blanca.

Rebecca then returned to the stage for her second spell, this time following a more modern theme, Simon continued his evening's work where he was in great demand to sign almost 50 purchased copies of his autobiography. He then spent over an hour meeting many of the Mil Palmeras crowd before the evening was finally brought to a close.

The event was organised by the Orihuela Costa Branch of the Royal British Legion and supported by the generous sponsorship of Avalon, Currencies Direct and Sanchez Butron Solicitors with profits donated to the annual poppy appeal. More information on the work of the RBL locally can be found at <http://branches.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/orihuela-costa>. The Orihuela Costa Branch meets on the third Thursday of each month at the Olympia Restaurant, Mil Palmeras starting at 7.30pm



## All Change at the Top for Mollina Branch, Spain

At the A.G.M of Mollina branch of the RBL a reshuffle of officer posts has led to a completely different picture to that of other RBL branches in Spain.

Picture left to right: Steve Taylor after 8 years as treasurer was elected Chairman, Chris Roddis is Vice Chairman, Terry Ogiers remains secretary and Tony Burns who was social secretary was elected treasurer. Anne Roberts volunteered to be social secretary and there were sufficient volunteers to establish a social committee independent of the branch committee. This enthusiasm reflects the fact that though branch numbers are falling, new members are more active than in the past. Two of these new members Terri and Tony Singleton have only been members for a month and were presented with their membership badges by Chris Roddis. (pictured)

Members also received reports on the previous years activities which raised record sums for the Poppy Appeal



Steve thanked members for their support and said that there was no reason why the branch could not continue to grow and produce even more success.

At the first meeting back after their summer break members of the Mollina branch of The Royal British Legion raised over € 180 towards this years Poppy Appeal.

Tony Burns Social Secretary thanked members who attended the armed forces day picnic in June which raised a record breaking €700+ for the appeal. H then went on to list events for Autumn not including the fortnightly meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at Parque La Vina.

- 29<sup>th</sup> July Formal Dinner to celebrate the Battle of Jutland tickets €21
- 2<sup>nd</sup> October Car Treasure hunt Tickets €10 including food.
- 11<sup>th</sup> October Annual General Meeting
- 11<sup>th</sup> November Local Remembrance Service @ 11-30 am La Vina
- 13<sup>th</sup> November Remembrance Sunday excursion to Gibraltar for annual parade and shopping at Morrisons Tickets €13

Details for all these can be obtained by visiting the Legion Stall at Saydo market or any branch meeting/ committee member. The branch meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at Parque La Vina at 11am. Just come and join us!

## Torrevieja Solidarity Calendar raises funds for Orihuela Costa Poppy Appeal



Every year the Orihuela Costa's Poppy Appeal benefits by selling copies of the Torrevieja Solidarity calendar.

This is an A3 calendar which is produced annually by expatriate author Andy Ormiston, with a little help from members of the local Spanish media. The cost of production is met by sponsorship from the local business community and for the second consecutive year Aroca Sequier Abogados, Alamo Costa Blanca Real Estate, Brithol MAPFRE Seguros, Currencies Direct and Atlas Insurance Brokers have joined together to provide the funding.

This is the 11th calendar produced by Andy Ormiston all of which are distributed absolutely free to local charities and associations, which then go on to sell to their members in order to supplement their own funds.

The theme for the 2017 solidarity calendar is 'Women in the Community.'

The photograph shows the Chairman of the Orihuela Costa Branch of The Royal British Legion, Keith Carter, thanking Andy Ormiston for his generous endeavors.

## Malta Airshow

The Malta Airshow took place over the weekend of 24/25 September. The branch did well on the Saturday in spite of the flying display being over the sea 6 miles away. All they had at the airfield was the static display they shared a tent with the RAF Association and the RN Association. The RBL table was the largest there, standing out with the new Live On table cloth and display banner as well as Kath, Pete and Gill wearing Legion t-shirts. Sunday also went well until 13.00 when a massive storm blew through sending stands and tents everywhere and the day was abandoned.



## Something for Everyone at Mollina Branch

Over the space of a week members of the Royal British Legion Mollina branch raised over € 2,700 for this years Poppy Appeal and illustrated the diverse nature of its activities.

On Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September the monthly social meeting, comprising a quiz and Hoy raised €167.72.

At the same meeting it was announced that as a result of selling 50+ tickets for the October Cruise we were to receive over €2000 in a donation from Halcyon Travel.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September saw a mood change when the branch held a formal dinner at Bar Margaritas in Mollina. Before partaking of a magnificent 3 course meal members paid tribute to those who died in the Battle of Jutland and the Battle of the Somme. Marty Power (Branch Chairman) gave a short presentation on the involvement of the Royal Marines in both battles before the Rev Doreen led members in Prayers for the Fallen (see photos).

Proceeds from this event totalled €242.50

On Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October the English House Language School in Ecija organised and sponsored a Car Treasure Hunt terminating at Restaurant Cora in Herrera where a meal was served and the results were announced. Ironically the team arriving first was last (two wits to woo) and awarded the wooden spoon and the team winning the first prize was the last to arrive.



Austin Tansley the proprietor of the English House said "As a member of the Royal British Legion I cannot attend meetings due to work commitments so events such as this is my way of giving some thing back"

Thanking Austin for organising and members for attending the event which raised €373 Tony Burns Social Chairman stated "This fantastic week illustrates how local members can make a difference in their own way as there is something for everyone regardless of circumstance or taste."



## Malta Poppy Dinner

At the beginning of October the Not Forgotten Association with Joe Falzon from the Legion as their guide visited Malta with 9 Chelsea Pensioners. The photo below shows the 126 attendees.



## OPERATIONS UPDATE:

### Specialist Mental Health support for Beneficiaries in Germany

In 2005, 3 Evangelic hospitals in Bielefeld amalgamated and renamed as the Bielefeld Evangelic Hospital - Bethel Clinic for psychiatry and psychotherapy.

The hospital is divided into 7 departments each dealing with mental health issues and offering maximum care and support for patients. Gilead IV is a trauma unit with English speaking staff who understand the trauma military personnel can experience, both German and British. The unit provides diagnosis, treatment and care to those suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) along with other mental health issues.

District Welfare Coordinator, Mary Jansen, first found out about the hospital about two years ago when a volunteer case worker, who had been treated at the hospital, told her about the treatment and support they had received. After contacting the hospital and meeting with them to talk about the Legion's work and our beneficiaries needs, the hospital were happy for our beneficiaries to be made aware of the hospital and the care and support available to them.

Veterans residing in Germany can be referred to the hospital for assessment by their doctor/GP or by calling the unit directly and referring themselves. Veterans who were treated in UK have also been referred to the unit for after care at the day clinic as an outpatient. Each veteran attending the hospital has a personal care/support plan (involving their families as well) which will cover both the short and longer term care and support.

### My Thoughts on CMS...

From Frank Pope, Caseworker in Larnaca, Cyprus:

"I was first introduced to the Case Management System in March 2015. After so many years of using the Form A, I could not see the reason to change to this, as I saw it as a very complicated system with so many pages to complete.

I returned to Cyprus having been told that we would get several test exercises sent to us so that we could practice before going "live". The exercises failed to materialise and nothing more was said so I assumed that CMS was forgotten.

It came as a bit of a shock when a few months ago Meagan raised the idea of going live.

Not wanting to tell her that I had forgotten all about it said yes and found the instruction book and started to practice what we had been taught originally.

I have now used it several times and have definitely changed my mind on its value as a tool for the Caseworker. I still use the Form A because if you have completed it correctly you have all the information in front of you to take you through the 15 sheets of CMS.

Two of the very good points with this system are that if you think you have completed a page and you try to move on it will tell you if you have missed something out or if you have gone wrong.

There is also the facility to add notes after it has been submitted. Also knowing that the case manager can see what you are doing at all time is very beneficial. I also received a response in under 24hours from the first case that I sent.

To summarise this is a great system which will help improve the service we give to the client and is a great improvement on the old Form A."

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**THE NEXT OVERSEAS NEWSLETTER WILL BE SENT OUT AT THE END OF DECEMBER,  
PLEASE SEND ANY NEWS ITEMS TO [OVERSEASSUPPORT@BRITISHLEGION.ORG.UK](mailto:OVERSEASSUPPORT@BRITISHLEGION.ORG.UK)**