



# HAMPSHIRE LINK

AUGUST 2015

CHARITY NO 219279

## Bitter sweet memories of V.J. Day

AUG. 15, 1945  
VICTORY  
OVER  
JAPAN  
V-J DAY  
IN  
BURMA  
BY FRANK  
COLENSO



INDIA 1944



BURMA 1945



FRANK 2015

The commemoration of V. J. Day on August 15 will be very special to 1850215 L.A.C. Frank Colenso. During the Second World War Frank served with the Royal Air Force and when Victory over Japan was announced he was on the far side of the world.

To us serving in Burma, the announcement of a 'cease fire' to be effective on August 15, 1945 meant a miraculous finish to a struggle lasting over three years. Just two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had brought about Japan's surrender.

The Fourteenth Army's headlong advance to capture Rangoon in the south had beaten the monsoon rains but left the long road undefended. The retreating Japanese forces constantly crossed over it in their desperate attempt to retreat east, over the Sittang and Salween rivers, both in flood, into Siam.

On Toungoo airfield, 140 miles from Rangoon, 150 miles from Meiktila I was serving as airframe fitter on detachment from 3 Repair & Salvage Unit (Mobile) RAF in support of 155 Squadron RAF. That morning their Spitfire aircraft continued straffing and bombing the Japanese Army vainly attempting to escape annihilation, often returning from only twenty-minute flights to re-arm and refuel. Beside the airfield a battery of long range guns of the Royal Artillery kept up a deafening bombardment into the hills, only pausing to allow our Spitfires to land, then resuming firing salvo and salvo, right up to the eleven a.m. 'cease fire'.

Suddenly the incessant noise of the morning's action stopped. This silence was awesome - not a sound to be heard, leaving me with a dawning realisation that at last the war was over.

Close by the airfield, our small tented camp was approached by a track made from hundreds of steel boxes which had contained the 60-lb rocket bodies, making an all-weather surface in the monsoon rains. Our cook, L.A.C. Goosey, clattered over them in the 3-ton lorry bringing our rations. We soon unloaded everything. It was an excessive amount for sixteen of us, this time, the rum ration allowing one bottle between four. That was a memorable evening meal and the old diary said, "A big 'do' with bags of hootch and everyone merry and singing."

Aug.16, Day off. Everyone has hangover troubles. One or two merry all day, from last night!" That evening we went to the nearby village to enjoy a chicken meal with an old Gurkha ex-soldier called Lapalama, prepared by his Burmese wife in exchange for a spare bottle of rum.

Dairy reads, "With Sammy (Ward), Ginger (Hurlestone), Tojo (North), Johnny (Marshall) and 'Canada'. Had 2/3 of a bottle of 'zu' each. Happy as sand boys. Passed out later and did all sorts." It was a hilarious, wet walk back to camp in the dark, trying to stay on the narrow, slippery banks of the flooded paddy fields. Wearing my good left leather boot and a good right rubber boot was a useless attempt to keep feet dry as now and then we found a knee-deep 'chaung' (stream) to wade across! This was the Monsoon season ...

August 17, diary reads: "Day off. Went to Toungoo for a look around. Got parcel of soap, ink, pens etc. from home, a 21<sup>st</sup> golden key and papers and Lilliput from home. Still fighting in Burma here."

August 18. "Worked on Spit. MT429 today. Got issued one bottle of rum between two of us."

Now, seventy years on, I still enjoy a rum and lime – but only measured tots each time!



Frank Colenso is a volunteer Poppy collector and a member of the Farnborough Branch. Farnborough PAO Jacki Gatfield describes him as "a lovely guy. He has helped me on a few occasions," she says, "the most recent one was on the Army Hockey Day when he enjoyed time with the future generation of hockey players. It was Frank's wish that *Hampshire Link* readers share his memories and remember all those that served our country in the Far East during World War II.

## BRANCH NEWS

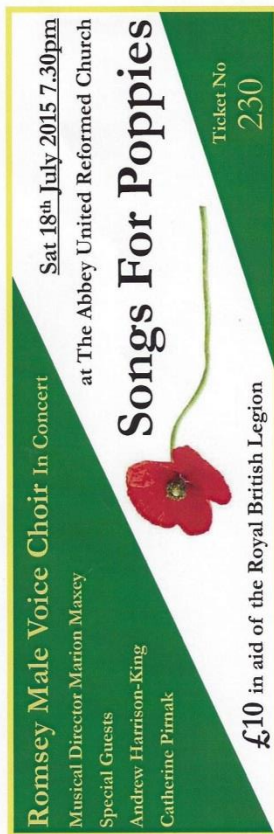
### Upper Froyle Poppy collector 'fêted'

A Hampshire Poppy Appeal collector arrived at the Upper Froyle Summer Fete in an open-top classic car, was introduced as the guest of honour at the annual village event and received a surprise award for her dedicated service on behalf of the Royal British Legion.

Maureen Fry has lived in Upper Froyle longer than any other village resident and has now collected for the Poppy Appeal for over fifty years. This was recognised when the County Chairman presented her with her long service certificate. The presentation had been a closely guarded secret and Maureen had no hesitation in paying tribute to the Royal British Legion before declaring the sun soaked Upper Froyle Fete 'open'.



## Men on song in Romsey



The Romsey Male Voice Choir, arguably one of the finest all-male choirs in the country, turned out in force last month to support the Royal British Legion at a concert organised by Romsey Poppy Appeal Organiser Kath Garland.

The 60-piece ensemble presented a stunning programme of harmony and high class music to a capacity audience in the local United Reformed Church and demonstrated why they now perform around Europe and entertain at prestigious venues like Southampton's Mayflower Theatre and with the Band of H.M. Royal Marines, Portsmouth.

Showcasing their considerable repertoire, they sang music ranging from Bach to Broadway and haunting Welsh melodies to patriotic songs of the First World War.

Soloists Ekaterina Pirnak and Andrew Harrison-King added further variety to the musical programme and the audience, including the local MP and the Mayor of Romsey, were generous in their applause throughout the evening.

The choir has already raised £17,000 this year for charity and Kath Garland, joined on the evening by husband Terry and stalwart Poppy collector Jenny Windibank, reported that the July concert had raised a further £1,000 for the Legion's Poppy Appeal.

## 'Token gesture' in Waterlooville

Shoppers passing through Waitrose are offered small green tokens which they are able to place in transparent plastic containers representing the charities the supermarket is currently supporting.



In November 2014 green tokens posted by customers at the Waterlooville store were translated into a proportionate donation and Fiona, the Community Matters Manager presented a cheque for £417 to the Waterlooville branch Poppy Appeal Organiser Richard Hill-Brown.

Richard thanked Fiona, particularly as the cheque came in addition to the collection made during the Poppy fortnight in the foyer of Waitrose. During Remembrancetide the deputy manager, Paul Alderslade, and the staff annually go out of their way to welcome members of the Waterlooville Branch and in 2014 the customers generously donated £5,746.



## Bordon 'proud' to seal ACF affiliation

On Tuesday, July 7 the Bordon Branch exchanged certificates of affiliation with 6 Platoon, Bordon Detachment, Hampshire & IoW Army Cadet Force. The branch are delighted that the Detachment accepted their offer of affiliation and the Branch President, Don Morrison, & Branch Chairman Steve Johnson presented the Cadets with their badges of affiliation.

The Cadets have raised several thousand pounds for the County Welfare Funds and the Poppy Appeal over a number of years as well as providing assistance at a great number of events supporting both the RBL & Poppy Appeal. The Cadets then handed over £400 that they raised at the County Poppy Walk on June 7.

Cadet Elizabeth Walsh was presented with a Branch Certificate of Thanks from the Branch President after she carried, at short notice, the Branch Standard at the Garrison Festival on June 27 and did the Branch and the ACF proud.

Cadet Walsh will soon be leaving the Cadets for the USA before returning in a year's time to join the Regular Forces in the Medical Corps. The members of the Bordon Branch send her their very best wishes.



(Far left)  
Bordon President, Don Morrison, speaks with a Cadet at the affiliation ceremony .

(Left)  
Branch Chairman, Steve Johnson, presents Cadet Walsh with her Certificate of Thanks.

## New home for Standards

In what was a busy few weeks in Bordon, the branch laid up its old Standard and the Women's Section Standard in St Matthews Church, Blackmoor on July 5. The Standards were paraded by Len Candon and Bob Mallison and handed over to the Vicar of St Matthews, the Reverend Dominic Clarke by the Branch President, Don Morrison and Chairman, Steve Johnson.

The Standards had, for many years, been laid up in St Georges (The Garrison) Church but, with the Army moving to Lyneham, the Branch wanted to keep the Standards locally and therefore on Sunday, June 28 they were received back from Reverend Wendy Mallas at the final service at the Garrison Church which was attended by many civic dignitaries and representatives of the Army and Clergy.

The Bordon Branch wish to thank the Hampshire Parade Marshal, Steve Forward, for his assistance in ensuring the ceremony went without a hitch and Standard Bearers Mike Cavaney (RBL), Les Bailey (RBL), Bob Dalton (RAFA), Andy Anderson (REME) and Phil Percival (Royal Corps of Signals) for escorting the Bordon Branch Standards. The ceremony could not have been the success it was without them. The two Bordon Standards will soon be mounted within the Church for all to see, as soon as permission is granted and the funds allow.

## Petersfield flies the flag



The Petersfield & District Branch marked 2015 Armed Forces Day with two special events.

The first flag raising ceremony was at Petersfield Festival Hall, attended by the Town Mayor, Cllr. Lesley Farrow, her Deputy James Deane, members of Petersfield Royal British Legion and members of the general public.

A second flag was then raised at the Parish Church of St Peter's (after which the town is named). There was no ceremony but a few hardy souls, including branch officials and Civic dignitaries, climbed the tower to watch the Armed Forces Day flag raised above the town.



(Top left)  
Petersfield & District Branch Chairman, Clive Lewis displaying the Armed Forces Day Flag outside the Festival Hall.

(Middle left)  
The Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Petersfield, the Branch Chairman, Standard Bearer John Salmon, and members of the branch outside the Festival Hall.



(Bottom left)  
Petersfield members Peter Fisher, Mike Jones and the Churchwarden of St Peter's attaching the Armed Forces Day Flag to the flagstaff.

## COUNTY NEWS

### Engagement ... pure and simple

At our Conference in January the Chairman expressed the hope that “the Hampshire Committee could better engage with the north and middle of the county.”

This has been achieved in part by the election of new County Committee members from Aldershot, Farnborough, Bordon and Old Basing. The committee also agreed to the cycle of Hampshire Committee meetings moving around the county and the July meeting was staged in the Council Chamber in Farnborough.

He also expressed the hope that the County Committee could engage with all branches on a more regular and positive basis. The Cluster Meetings were introduced with this in mind and during 2014, of the 64 branches and 20 clubs invited, 23 branches and six clubs attended. Having just introduced the initiative, a 34% response was not unexpected.

The launch of the second series in February was encouraging with a reasonable turn-out in Farnborough and Old Basing. Unfortunately, at Andover, only three of 10 branches (Houghton, Kingsclere and Sutton Scotney) participated and neither of the two clubs approached were represented. It was a similar story at Romsey where just three of 13 branches attended (Bordon, Copythorne and Fawley) and Romsey was the only one of three clubs to participate. The situation was not helped by a rumour circulated in Romsey that the meeting was designed to promote the new membership payment scheme.

In fact, the scheme barely got a mention at either meeting, those attending enjoying the opportunity to meet with other branches and clubs, share views, pass on valuable experience and good practice and discover, in these times of constant change, what valuable support they can obtain from the County Committee and Area Office.

The final Cluster meetings of 2015 will take place in Southampton and Portsmouth in September and if last year's experience is any guide they should be well attended. Any branch unable to attend previous meetings is welcome to attend and the general view is that participants consider the 'engagement' enjoyable, valuable and time well spent.

### Polish up your putter

Just a reminder ... that the popular Team Texas Scramble Golf Competition will be taking place at East Horton Golf Club (near Marwell) on Monday, October 19. The entry fee of £37 per head will include prizes. This is a branch team tournament and you are invited to enter a team of four.

Entry forms will soon be available but please put the date in your diary and support the event by entering your Branch or Club team this year.

For further information please contact our County Golf Secretary,  
Rick Bourne: ([rbourne@glenair.co.uk](mailto:rbourne@glenair.co.uk))



## The search is on

Your County Committee are still determined to locate the whereabouts of ten Hampshire Sports trophies. The three darts trophies have not been returned - Singles, Pairs and Team 4, the Billiards Singles and Snooker Singles and Pairs are still missing, as are the Cribbage Team 6, Dominoes Team 5 and Pool Singles trophies.

In the last decade Herriard & Lasham, Gosport and Park Gate have won one or more of the Darts trophies, Hayling Island are the only Club to lift the Billiards trophy and Gosport, Hayling Island, Old Basing and Park Gate claimed the Snooker trophies on one or more occasions. With the exception of one year when Park Gate won the Cribbage competition, Gosport have won the Cribbage, Dominoes and Pool.

Please would all members and officials wrack their brains, search branch cupboards and inspect Club trophy cabinets to track down these valuable items. If you can provide any information about these trophies please let your committee know on 01794 323487.

## Grasping nettles

Earlier this year two County Committee Working Groups met to discuss possible ways of improving the planning and presentation of events across the County and ways in which the bar could be raised in terms of ceremonial.

Both groups identified priorities and made three recommendations to the County Committee. Plans are being drawn up to act on these recommendations and address matters that are seen as areas of concern.

Last month a third working group considered the issues of dwindling membership and the apparent lack of recruitment strategies across the County. A fourth group then addressed communication problems - key messages from headquarters and the Area Office not reaching all members, how best to communicate with members not on the internet, whether the use of Social Media should be introduced and the future of the *Hampshire Link* newsletter that is reaching Branch and Club officials but very few members.

The recommendations of these two groups will be put to the County Committee on August 24.

## Remembering a WWII Commander

On August 21 two plaques are being unveiled on Hayland Island, one on the shorefront at The Langstone Hotel, the other at the cottage which for some time served as the home of Commander Harold Goulding RN, DSO.

They will commemorate the wartime contribution made by Commander Goulding who *"carried out more landings on enemy occupied coast, than any other Officer of any Service"* and the brave men and women he commanded in secret units during WWII.

On August 21 a flotilla of WWII vessels will deliver the plaques to The Langstone Hotel and any veterans wishing to attend the event will see a flypast including a Spitfire and Dakota, see Cockel canoes, Royal British Legion Standards and hear speeches. The event gets underway at 2.15pm.



## Goodbye to Bygone Days



25 years of graft  
and still smiling -  
Elaine Micklewright

Although it is strictly a Hampshire Women's Section event that also benefits the Salisbury Hospice and the Alzheimer Society, Hampshire Royal British Legion has always taken the *Bygone Days* phenomenon to its heart.

For those that haven't experienced a sunny (or stormy) Saturday or Sunday in South Gorley in early August, you haven't lived (and now the chance has gone forever).

*Bygone Days* was the brainchild of the Women's Section's dynamic and determined County Secretary, Elaine Micklewright, ably assisted by her cousin Cameron. They launched the venture in 1990 and declared this weekend's 25th anniversary event "positively the last".

So, to mark the occasion, did she produce something special? Well no. *Bygone Days* was just as it has always been. Utterly brilliant.

Field upon field packed with cars; volunteer attendants marshalling motors into serried ranks, cars down the lanes, cars on the village green while crowds queue to enter Elaine's 'wonderland'.

Brooklands is a working farm, but not in early August; barns are packed high with bric-a-brac along with row upon row of books that would put Waterstones to shame (these all available for a donation).

There are model aircraft displays, railway modellers, a dog show, the National Autocycle Association and Gypsy caravans.

Add to this the garden machinery; steam engines, stationery engines, classic and vintage motorcycles and cars and military vehicles and an RAF Ibsley exhibition and presentation that takes you back to WWII.

But then, the Master of Ceremonies announces the 'Grand Opening' and a parade of County and Branch Standards from the Royal British Legion carve a swathe through the crowd, preceding a vintage car carrying the former National Life Vice-President of the Women's Section, Mrs Wendy Bromwich.

The formalities over it's time to look at the craft displays, meet the metal detectors, the Air Ambulance volunteers, eat one of those unbelievable pork baps before visiting the hundred and one other stalls that scream for your attention.

And just as you take a break to chat with the Legion members from the Ringwood Branch that have a wonderful way of persuading visitors to make donations a Piper Cub swoops overhead and later it's a Pitts Special and then a Tiger moth and then a Spitfire.

And so it goes on. Mrs Micklewright would insist that her army of helpers deserve the credit but those that know her, know that Elaine is the driving force, the inspirational figure that has directed a quarter of a million pounds to her chosen charities in the last quarter of a century - Elaine Micklewright's remarkable *Bygone Days*.





# REMEMBRANCE

## 2015 Hampshire Festival of Remembrance

Talented military musicians from the bands of the Adjutant General's Corps, The Rifles and the Queen's Division will take to the stage at Southampton's Mayflower Theatre on November 1 for the third in the new series of Hampshire Festival of Remembrance concerts.

They will be joined by the Southampton Philharmonic Choir and among the special guests will be Her Serene Highness Princess Sophie Von Hohenberg, the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson Esq. and our County Patron, Dame Mary Fagan.

Tickets, which have been selling well for some weeks, are only available through the theatre box office and Legion members are advised to book tickets (from £16.50 to £21.50) as soon as possible.

### By telephone (02380 711811)

Monday-Thursday	9.30am-8.30pm
Friday	10.00am-8.30pm
Saturday	9.30am-8.30pm
Sunday**	4.30pm-8.30pm

### In Person

Monday-Thursday	9.30am-6.00pm
Friday	10.00am-6.00pm
Saturday	9.30am-6.00pm
Sunday**	4.30pm-8.00pm

## STANDARD BEARERS

### On Parade please

**Standard Bearers are required on the following dates:**

Friday, August 7	Funeral of the Hampshire County Vice President, John Bright County Standard, Farnborough and Branch Standard
Tuesday, August 11	Funeral of Mrs S Slatter (wife of Hampshire County Vice President) Branch Standards welcome
Friday, August 21	Plaque unveiling at Hayling Island Branch Standards requested
Sunday, September 6	The Earl Mountbatten Memorial Service in Romsey Abbey County and Branch Standards please
Sunday, September 13	Remembrance Service at Chilbolton Airfield. 12 noon. A Para. Event but Standards welcome.
Sunday, September 27	County Standard Bearer's competition in Bishops Waltham
Saturday, October 10	Annual County Conference in Bishops Waltham County and Branch Standards please
Sunday, October 25	County & Branch Standards for Festival of Remembrance in Eastleigh
Sunday, November 1	County & Branch Standards for Festival of Remembrance in Southampton

## School Days

County Parade Marshall Steve Forward is inviting Branch Standard Bearers to attend the Standard Bearer's Schools listed below:

Pavilion in the Park, Kingfisher Road Eastleigh SO50 9LH at 2.00pm

Sunday, August 9, September 13 and October 11

Lymington Schools meet at the TA Drill Hall in Bath Road at 7.30pm

Monday, August 10, September 14 and October 12

## Note to Bride: Aisle, Alter, Hymn

Our County Standard Bearers, Mr & Mrs David Graham, spliced their nuptials on July 12 - hardly surprising when County President, Brigadier David Harrison loaned the couple his sword to cut the wedding cake!! County Chaplain, the Revd. Canon Ray Hubble declared them man and wife.



## NATIONAL

Commemorative Events for your diary:

August 15, 2015	Victory over Japan Day (70 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary)
September 15, 2015	Battle of Britain Day (75 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary)
October 12, 2015	Anniversary of Edith Cavell's death in 1915
November 7, 2015	National Festival of Remembrance - Royal Albert Hall
November 8, 2015	Cenotaph Parade - Whitehall
November 11, 2015	Silence in the Square - Trafalgar Square
February 25, 2016	25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Gulf War
May 31- June 1,	Centenary of the Battle of Jutland
June 6, 2016	72 <sup>nd</sup> anniversary of D-Day
July 1, 2016	100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Battle of the Somme

# EVENTS

## EVENTS DIARY

### What's On.....

#### 15 August 2015

Victory over Japan Day

#### 15 August 2015

V.J.Day Dance

Hambledon Village Hall

(Hosted by the Hambledon & District Branch)

Tickets: Adults £10, 5-16-y-o £5

Further details: 02392 632703

#### 6 September 2015

Earl Mountbatten Memorial Service

Romsey Abbey

Further details: [bsoffe@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:bsoffe@britishlegion.org.uk)

#### 12 September 2015

Proms for Poppies

(Hosted by the Hampshire Riders Branch)

Copythorne Scout HQ, Romsey Road

From 5.00pm Admission £8

Further details: 02380 814732

#### 15 September 2015

Battle of Britain Day

#### 19 September 2015

Battle of Britain Bike Show and Fete

Old Basing RBL Club

From 12 noon to 4.00pm.

#### 27 September 2015

Hampshire Standard Bearer's Competition

Jubilee Hall, Bishops Waltham

Further details: 02380 693028

#### 10 October 2015

Hampshire County Conference

Jubilee Hall, Bishops Waltham

Further details: [s.harris@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:s.harris@britishlegion.org.uk)

#### 19 October 2015

Team Texas Scramble

East Horton Golf Course nr. Fair Oak

Further details: [rbourne@glenair.co.uk](mailto:rbourne@glenair.co.uk)

#### 24 October 2015

Hampshire Police Band in Concert

(Hosted by Ringwood & District Branch)

Ringwood Parish Church

7.30pm

Further details: 01425 478557

#### 25 October 2015

Great South Run (10-mile course)

Southsea, Portsmouth

£25 registration fee + £250 sponsorship

Further details: [c.peppiatt@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:c.peppiatt@britishlegion.org.uk)

02380 477274

#### 25 October 2015

Festival of Remembrance Concert & Service

(Hosted by Eastleigh & Chandlers Ford Branch)

The Point, Eastleigh

Further details: 02380 251156

#### 1 November 2015

Hampshire Festival of Remembrance

Mayflower Theatre, Southampton

Tickets: £16.50 - £21.50 (on 02380 711811)

Further details: [cpeppiatt@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:cpeppiatt@britishlegion.org.uk)

02380 477274

#### 1 November 2015

Hampshire RBL Women's Section

Remembrance Concert

Fordingbridge

Further details: 01425 652499

#### 8 November 2015

Remembrance Sunday



**BATTLE OF BRITAIN  
COMMEMORATIVE  
BIKE SHOW & FETE**

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

**All types of bikes scooters**

**Welcome to be shown**

**Bike, Club & Fete Stalls**

**Burger Van, Awards, Bar**

**All profits to The Poppy Appeal**

**Old Basing RBL**

**RG24 7DN**

***<https://www.facebook.com/groups/memorialbikeshow/>***

## LEST WE FORGET

Our sincere condolences go to the family and friends of these members:

Mr J Bright  
Lt Col Jim Cooke  
Mr M T Davis  
Mr B Evans  
Mr P Linscott  
Mr J Train  
Mr R Warrior  
Mr M C Witlea

Farnborough, EMMB & County Vice President  
Hartley Wintney  
Gosport  
Southampton  
Hartley Wintney  
Gosport  
Petersfield  
Gosport

## SEND US YOUR NEWS

We would like to thank all those that have sent news reports and photographs for inclusion in this month's newsletter. It is very much appreciated. We welcome all news and information from Hampshire branches and work to ensure that it is included in the *Hampshire Link* newsletter.

Please forward news (maximum of 250 words please) and pictures to:

[jshantsrbl@hotmail.com](mailto:jshantsrbl@hotmail.com)

ALL OTHER ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE CONTACT CENTRE ON

**0808 802 8080**