



# HAMPSHIRE LINK

DECEMBER 2015

CHARITY NO 219279

## Christmas Message

The branch activities chronicled within these pages over the last twelve months suggest that you've had a really busy year of meetings, fundraising, Remembrance and comradeship.

At the last County Committee meeting of 2015 our Community Fundraisers reported that the Poppy Appeal total had already topped £821,000 and, once again, that is a great credit to everyone who collected on behalf of our beneficiaries.

December has a very different feel this year; we are not looking ahead to a January County Conference and a new Legion campaign, in fact we are already well into our new year following the re-alignment of our Conference to October.

So, Remembrancetide is behind us, Conference is a fading memory and before you rush headlong into 2016 I hope you can find time to relax and celebrate Christmas.

On behalf of your Hampshire County Committee and the Area staff I would like to thank you for all you have done in the service of The Royal British Legion during 2015. I send you very best wishes for a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

John Smith - County Chairman



## BRANCH NEWS

### Netley marches on

The Netley Branch, standing alone after the disaffiliation of the Royal British Legion Club, had to rethink the organisation of their November Remembrance Parade.

They set off from the Royal Victoria Country Park, marched along Victoria Road, past the Parish Hall and on to Netley Church. The service was held close to the Cenotaph with hundreds of Cadets, Scouts, Guides, Brownies and Cubs, all looking very smart, following the Standards.

During the laying of the wreaths a very young man, wearing the famous red beret and cap badge, impressed as he stepped forward to represent the Parachute Regiment, laid the wreath perfectly, took one step back and saluted smartly. The Netley Branch, that has not experienced the easiest of times of late, is keen to thank all those that took part in the parade and those that lined the route.

## Havant pays its respect in Ypres



The Revd David Williams, Secretary and Chaplain of the Havant & District Branch, travelled to the Menin Gate in Ypres on October 30 to lay a wreath on behalf of the Hampshire Branch.

David is also a member of the Passchendaele and District Branch of The Royal British Legion Scotland and arranged through the Branch Secretary, John Sutherland, to be accompanied by the Havant Standard Bearer and the Branch Piper who played a Lament, *The Flowers of the Forest*.

## Memorial stands proud

The New Milton War Memorial was looking spick and span as people gathered for the annual Service of Remembrance on Sunday, November 8.

The memorial and surrounding area had been updated and revamped in readiness for the service in the town's Recreation Ground. The local Royal British Legion Branch is certainly grateful to the Town Council for carrying out the work and also appreciates the assistance provided by members of the general public who have added their support to the project.

The Memorial was erected following the cessation of the First War World and it was dedicated by the Rev A.C.G. Rendell on the last Sunday of September 1920. Public subscription enabled the village community to purchase the piece of land now known as the War Memorial Recreation Ground.

Since its inauguration the monument has seen several minor alterations, bronze plaques promulgating the names of the local service personnel who gave their lives during World War II added in 1995/96.

At the same time New Milton Sand and Ballast Company donated two granite stones, including the suitably inscribed plaques. 2009 saw the introduction of two flag poles (requested by a local resident) from where the union flag and town council flags are flown.

A suggestion from a local resident led to the further enhancement, the memorial heightened by the introduction of plaques recording the 18 international conflicts which have taken place since the end of the Second World War. It is thought New Milton's memorial is the only one in the country depicting such information.

The Rolls of Honour were brought up to date to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War on August 4, 2014 and on that day the memorial was re-dedicated by the Revd Canon Raymond Hubble and Revd Andrew Bailey. The ceremony was well supported by the public and uniformed organisations.

Another new addition is a plaque commemorating resident Col. George Wheeler who was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry during the First World War.

Visitors are now able to sit and relax on the re-located Rev John Kelsall's seat and view the memorial standing proudly within its new surrounding surface. The re-located granite stones, flag poles, small box hedges and flower beds complete New Milton's very special area of Remembrance.

## Services on parade at Sutton Scotney



An RAF contingent from the Adjutant General's Corps, Worthy Down, joined representatives of the British Army at this year's Remembrance Sunday Ceremony in Sutton Scotney.

This was the first time that regular soldiers and RAF personnel from the AGC had joined the parade and they were warmly welcomed by all those attending.

The visiting servicemen and women were joined by groups from the Riders' Branch and Honda Goldwings, who arrived on an impressive array of two and three-wheeled machines. They were joined by the 14<sup>th</sup> Winchester Scout Group, members from the local Branch and Women's Section and over one hundred villagers to remember the dead from the two World Wars and subsequent conflicts.

The names of the fallen from local villages were read by Major James McNally, AGC and the short Service of Remembrance was led by the Revd. Sue Foster, the Sutton Scotney Branch Chaplain.

## Netley 'bouled' over

A popular pastime on the far side of the English Channel, the game of Boules, has helped to swell the Poppy Appeal Fund at the Netley Abbey and Hamble Branch. The boules club in neighbouring Botley has for some years, staged a special match to raise money for the Appeal and boules enthusiast Alison Stubbs has recently informed Netley's Patrick Parsons that this year's match raised £500.

## Chaplain to chaplain

Our dynamic new County Chaplain, Mark Christian, is determined to do more than make the occasional appearance at our County Conference and the Festival of Remembrance.

He is particularly keen to make the acquaintance of each Branch Padre/Chaplain and, through the pages of the *Hampshire Link* newsletter is seeking the assistance of each Branch Chairman across the County.

It would be really appreciated if you could contact Mark to explain whether or not you have a Padre/Chaplain and, if so, provide him with a telephone number or e-mail address through which he can make contact with your cleric. Your help would be really appreciated.

Please send your response to [mark@padre.me.uk](mailto:mark@padre.me.uk)

## Top team take to the pitch



Professional, colourful and spectacular ... not a description of Portsmouth's performance against Division Two rivals AFC Wimbledon at Fratton Park on November 15 (that ended as a goal-less draw) but accolades earned by the Standard Bearers parading on the pitch before the televised game.



The south coast club invited the Royal British Legion, the Royal Navy and regimental associations to parade their standards on the pitch immediately before the Sunday kick-off. The French tricolour was also carried just hours after the terrorist atrocities in Paris.

Hampshire's Deputy Parade Marshal, Chris Purcell (left), led the parade and 95-year-old D-Day veteran, John Jenkins MBE (bottom left), read the Exhortation before the minute's silence.



"I am happy to play my part in today's commemoration," said Portsmouth FC chairman, Iain McInnes. "Pompey have always been a club with strong links to the services. The championship-winning side of the 1940s had former Service people at its core and Fratton Park was always a ground where the white caps of sailors could be seen on the terraces."

Mr McInnes also hosted representatives of Hampshire Royal British Legion in the Chairman's Lounge and the Director's Box during the afternoon.

Like many football clubs, Portsmouth invites Legion Standard Bearers to join them in remembering all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and they work closely with the Portsmouth South Branch to the benefit of the Legion and its beneficiaries.

Similar support is provided by Aldershot Football Club and Eastleigh FC for which we are extremely grateful.

In 2014, a memorial was unveiled to the 'Pompey Pals' - the Portsmouth battalions who served on the Western Front during the Great War. In January the project launches its 'One Portsmouth Summer' campaign and wants to hear from anyone whose descendants served with the 'Pals' in any capacity. They are looking to view photographs, service records or any original material. If you can help please contact [chrispennycook@pompeypals.org.uk](mailto:chrispennycook@pompeypals.org.uk)

## Let them eat cake

Your County Handbook will tell you that the Sutton Scotney Branch was formed on November 28, 1935. It was back in January when the enthusiastic branch committee decided to commemorate this year's significant anniversary in style, planning and organising a celebratory dinner which was staged 80-years to the day after the branch's formation.

After a drinks reception the Branch President, Brigadier Clinton Henshaw, welcomed the guests, spoke briefly about the significance of the evening and invited everyone to take their seats. Branch Chaplain Sue Foster said Grace and the guests tucked into a tasty three-course dinner.



In continuing recognition of events which occurred a century ago, a selection of songs from World War I served as background music during the meal.

As coffee was served, local vocalist Linda Tedder entertained the guests with songs from her extensive repertoire - from operatic to musical theatre, popular to comedy - the programme punctuated with poems of Pam Ayres and other humorous readings.

As the evening drew to a close a medley of marches representing the service, regiment or corps of members and guests present was played, many acknowledging 'their' march according to their service or regimental custom.

Branch treasurer, Philip Keating, with a little help and encouragement from his chairman Malcom Brown, was the driving force behind an excellent anniversary dinner which ended with Brigadier Henshaw cutting a suitably inscribed birthday cake (top right), the pieces boxed and presented to the departing guests.

One special guest was 88-year-old branch member, David Perry (middle left), son of one of Sutton Scotney's founder members. Frank Berry attended the inaugural branch meeting, served in both world wars and left his son the Legion badge he wore back in the 1930's - the badge (right) David proudly displayed at the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner.



## COUNTY NEWS

### Misdirected calls delay action

We are increasingly concerned that a number of branch officers have distributed the direct number of our Membership Support Officer (Steph Harris) to members and the general public. ALL queries, regardless of the nature of those queries, should be directed to the Legion's Contact Centre on **0808 8028080**. The MSO is receiving numerous calls regarding compensation claims, welfare queries etc. and a number of callers have confirmed that her number has been given by Branch Officers.

The MSO is not able to deal with these queries and is having to ask the caller to phone the contact centre. This is causing avoidable stress to the individual as they are being passed from one person to another and it is also delaying help for them. If the caller phones the contact centre in the first instance then the caller's details can be directed to the relevant member of staff much quicker.

Thank you.

## Checks and balances

Experienced event managers plan well in advance and the bigger event venues are usually booked years ahead. Cathedrals like those in Portsmouth and Winchester, major theatres like The Mayflower in Southampton and The Anvil in Basingstoke together with the Guildhalls in Portsmouth, Southampton and Winchester may well have plans established and bookings made for the use of their facilities.

We have, between 2014 and 2018 been commemorating a number of significant anniversaries, many linked with the First and Second World Wars. The Lord-Lieutenant's Office, local government staff representing town and city Mayors and personnel from various military establishments may already be laying plans for related events and we are concerned that we do not duplicate or disturb their arrangements.

We respectfully ask that any branch considering a significant event in one of the venues above, or at a similar location, contact the Area Office in order that a check can be made to ensure that there is no conflict of interest with the individuals and organisations mentioned above.

## POPPY APPEAL

### Mallory Challenge

In 2013, Winchester College CCF undertook an adventure training exercise called Mallory 1. It was named after George Mallory, an old boy of the College, who led the first 3 British expeditions to Everest in the 1920s. In 1924, Mallory and his climbing partner Andrew Irvine made an attempt on the summit but disappeared. Mallory's remains were discovered by an expedition in 1999 at 27,000 feet.

As part of Mallory 1 the boys raised £17,000 through sponsorship which they gave the Hampshire RBL. This year Mallory 2 took place over the first 5 days of the summer holiday in the Lake District. 40 plus members of the CCF took part and in 3 groups they all canoed the main lakes, cycled 360 kilometres and climbed all the highest peaks. Most of it was in atrocious weather but everyone completed the exercise.

RBL Hampshire was again their nominated charity and on the evening of November 23, Dame Mary Fagan, our retiring Patron, together with David Harrison, County President, and Clare Peppiatt, Community Fundraiser, together with boys and parents, attended a presentation in the College. Maj Sam Hart, the OC gave a presentation on the logistics and then 4 of the students, including Hugh Fagan, Dame Mary's grandson who has just been awarded an Army Scholarship to go to Sandhurst, described the various legs of the exercise.



Dame Mary and the County President receiving the cheque from Max Temple, Henry Warner, Mark Passmore and Hugh Fagan

At the end of the presentations the 4 students presented Dame Mary with a cheque for just over £27,000. Our County President congratulated them on what they had achieved and thanked them on behalf of the RBL for their incredible donation. He told them and their parents how vital the money is and the sorts of things that it will help towards.

# REMEMBRANCE

## Praise for Hampshire Festival

November's Festival of Remembrance has been acclaimed as a great success, around 800 people travelling to the prestigious Mayflower Theatre in Southampton for the third in the new series of concerts that was high on quality and strong on spectacle.

Under the Direction of Lt. Brenan Wheeler, musicians from the Adjutant General's Corps, the Queen's Division and the Corps of Drums and Band of the Rifles combined with the Southampton Philharmonic Choir (middle left) to present a varied programme of music which was introduced by Festival compere Sally Taylor and further enhanced by the Mayflower Theatre's youth group.



The start of the Festival was delayed very briefly, the guest of honour, Her Serene Highness, Princess Sophie von Hohenberg, delayed by heavy traffic and diversions created by a football match at St Mary's Stadium.

Princess Sophie was accompanied by her husband, Baron Jean-Louis de Potesta and joined by the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson Esq. and his wife Christine (top left).



BBC Television South presenter Sally Taylor seamlessly linked the musical items and welcomed Princess Sophie to the stage where she spoke briefly about the assassination of her great-grandfather, Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 and stressed the importance of peace and reconciliation.

One of a number of highlights during the evening was the arrival of the Mayflower Youth Group who led the audience in a medley of wartime musical favourites and lifted the mood with their energetic and enthusiastic gyrations across the stage and through the audience (Bottom left).



In his final appearance as Hampshire County Padre, the Reverend Canon Ray Hubble led the Act of Remembrance before the Festival closed with a rousing finale.

It was not long before the accolades started flowing in; "May I take this opportunity to thank you for a fantastic evening last night which my wife and I enjoyed very much", "Many thanks for everyone's efforts - and I hope the RBL managed to raise a substantial amount of funds as well as awareness for the Remembrance period."

To what extent the Poppy Appeal Fund has benefitted from the Hampshire Festival of Remembrance is still unknown but what is in no doubt is that, for Festival Producer Clare Peppiatt, Concert Director Paul Capper and their production team, the 2015 Festival was a resounding success.

# STANDARD BEARERS

## Guidelines on Medals

A number of complaints have been made recently about Standard Bearers wearing medals to which they are not entitled. As one correspondent wrote, "Those that are entitled to wear them have worked hard to get them not only under fire but in other areas."

Royal British Legion guidelines outline the differences between 'Official' and 'Commemorative' medals stating:

"The term 'Official' could be used for any medals for which Her Majesty, or her predecessors, have given approval. Only these medals are permissible on a Service uniform. 'Commemorative' medals are those which have been produced by organisations or private medal companies to commemorate particular branches of service or areas of operation.

Examples of popular 'commemorative' medals are the National Service Medal and the British Forces Germany Medal.

Commemorative medals are not issued by the Ministry of Defence Medal Office."

We are further informed that:

"Unofficial medals are those not awarded by, or approved for wear by, the Sovereign. Legion officials (particularly including Standard Bearers and Parade Marshals) should not wear them, and the Legion's position is to discourage the practice in general, as it detracts from the importance of official medals worn with the Queen's permission."

The guidelines are clear and, therefore our County Parade Marshal and his deputies have been asked to be vigilant during inspections and to ask those disregarding the Legion's directive to either remove the offending medals or leave the parade.

## EVENTS DIARY

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

The only remaining Hampshire event of which we have had notice is the Christmas Concert promoted below. Please do not hesitate to forward information about events your Branch or Club are organising in the New Year.



*Poppy Appeal  
Christmas Concert*

*With*

*The Farnborough Concert Band of the  
Royal British Legion*



*Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015*

*At The Royal British Legion Club*

*7.30pm*



*Raffle and Table Buffets*



*Tickets £10.00*

*Members and Non Members Welcome*

*Tickets available behind the Bar or  
please call 07767025074*



## LEST WE FORGET

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

Admiral Sir P C Abbott  
Mrs D Andrew  
Mr E Brittain  
Mr G MacFarlane  
Mr K Moore  
Mr N C Yates

Fleet Crookham & District  
Yateley & Hawley  
New Milton  
Romsey Branch Chairman  
Romsey  
Park Gate

## SEND US YOUR NEWS

We would like to thank all those that have sent news reports and photographs to the *Hampshire Link* newsletter over the last twelve months. It is very much appreciated. We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and look forward to receiving more news and information during 2016.

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

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

ALL OTHER ENQUIRIES TO THE CONTACT CENTRE ON  
**0808 802 8080**