

Annual Conference

Over the weekend of 21-22 May, more than 400 delegates arrived at the Devonshire Park Centre in Eastbourne for the Legion's Annual Conference 2016.

During his opening address, the outgoing National Chairman, John Crisford, announced the exciting news that Charles Byrne, current Director of Fundraising will be the next Director General.

Colin Gordon, Assistant Director of Membership, presented to The Membership Forum and spoke about the membership renewal process and the need for change in time for renewals in October. He then answered questions from the floor. Colin highlighted that the renewal process last year went smoothly for the majority of our membership but at the same time recognised the issues experienced by some members. He assured everyone that we are working hard to address them in order to improve our customer service and make the renewal journey pleasant for everyone.

The Pop Up Pub organised by the Sussex County was a successful and well attended event – the raffle proved very popular amongst the attendees and the Victory Sisters gave a splendid performance setting a positive mood for the rest of the weekend.

Our Membership Services team at the Digital Hub managed to sort out a lot of membership issues and members visiting the hub were really happy that they could talk to someone face-to-face and explain their problems in detail.

For more information, including the results of charter and general motions and photos from the day, go to our [Annual Conference web page](#).

Latest updates

Membership fees

At this year's Annual Conference it was decided that **youth membership will be free**, in the hope that we recruit a greater volume of youth members throughout the country who may currently be deterred by the cost. In time this should feed through to an increase in adult members.

The membership fee for adults will go up to £17 this year as planned at the 2011 Annual Conference.

Admin/joining fees

All branch treasurers should now have received their rates letters. We asked what (if any) admin/joining fees the branches would like to charge their members in the next financial year 2016/17. Your response needs to reach Membership Services by 30 June. If we have not received a reply by this date, TRBL will not collect any extra fees for the branch and its members will only be asked to pay the £17 membership fee.

Renewals

We have now successfully rolled out the anniversary renewals with members who joined the Legion last summer, a year after they joined (as opposed to 1 October).

Membership council news

Change to Festival of Remembrance ticketing criteria

It was agreed in the Membership Council meeting on Wednesday 1 June that the criteria of eligibility to apply for Festival of Remembrance tickets be changed. The Council have agreed that branch members should not be penalised where their branch officials have failed to meet compliance regulations, and as such should be able to apply for tickets for the Festival with immediate effect.

Commemoration events

The Battle of Jutland centenary

On 31 May and 1 June 1916, over 100,000 sailors were on 250 ships in this 36-hour battle in the North Sea and more than 6,000 Royal Navy and 2,500 German sailors lost their lives.

The Orkney Islands hosted the national commemorative events on 31 May with a morning service at St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall. Prime Minister David Cameron, Princess Anne and German President Joachim Gauck attended the service and afterwards the ceremony at the Royal Naval Cemetery ceremony in Hoy where they were among six dignitaries who laid wreaths at the Cross of Sacrifice to represent the British and German lives lost.

Battle of the Somme Centenary

This year we also remember the Battle of the Somme, which took place in France from 1 July until 18 November 1916. Friends, family and neighbours signed up on the promise that they would serve together and as a result, people at home suffered terrible losses.

The National Commemoration of the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme will take place in Manchester on **Friday 1 July** to commemorate the bravery and sacrifices of our ancestors 100 years ago. There will be a National Parade led by representatives from the three Services, followed by Legion Branch Standard Bearers.

If you are unable to attend the event in Manchester, we encourage you to hold a local event to remember those who lost their lives in the Battle. If you would like ideas of how to conduct commemorations, go our website for more details www.britishlegion.org.uk/remembrance/ww1-centenary/somme-100/somme-100-toolkit?gclid=CMjsganf5cwCFEuy0wodtHAJw

MC Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	7-June	8	9	10	11	12
					The Royal British Lunch	The Patron's Lunch
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		Jutland Centenary Concert				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
					Armed Forces Day	

27	28	29	30	1-July	2	3
			Somme Centenary Vigils	Somme Centenary UK		
				Somme Centenary Thiepval		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please send any of your team's news and achievements to pbadger@britishlegion.org.uk if you would like them published in the main Membership e-Newsletter.

Greater London District News



Annual Branch Account Returns

The RBL Head Office Finance Department will be sending out the branch accounts forms the last week of June 2016. The branch transactions should be reconciled to the 30 June 2016 and returned to the MSO Sarah Stephenson before the 30 September 2016 with bank statements and the Authority to Disclose Form.

GLD Taylor Walker Youth Sport Quiz



May 2016 saw the launch of the first GLD Sport Youth Quiz. Teaming up worked for 56 Woolwich Sqn ATC, with the old adage, more heads are better than one. They decided to put their £100 winnings back into their local ATC quiz activities, so everyone had a chance to share in their efforts.

The Quiz is open to Youth Members and GLD Youth Affiliated group Members. With Youth joining and membership fees now deemed free by the Membership Council, branches should promote these Youth incentives for the longevity of the Legion Membership element.

For the July Quiz, download the entry form online

<http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/greater-london/london-youth-affiliation>

Collection Of Club Fees 2016

Sample of the letter intended for Clubs sent from Head Office 2016.

*At their last meeting on 1st June, the Membership Council voted overwhelmingly to **not** collect Club fees centrally in the forthcoming renewals round.*

You will be aware that last year all RBL affiliated Clubs were given the option of having their Club Membership Fees collected centrally along with Branch and RBL Membership Fees. About 40% of Clubs took up this option, with the remainder continuing to collect their own fees direct from members. You may also be aware that the introduction of the Comradeship Services Programme which involved the outsourcing of fees collection has had a number of implementation issues which although are thankfully mostly resolved have delivered some valuable lessons.

One area that has proved overly complex has been the very broad variation in the amount of cumulative fees that members have been asked to pay. Variations in Branch and Club fees on top of a standard Membership fee have provided a huge range of non-standard charges that have significantly impacted on our ability to accurately define exactly what a member owes. As we go forward into the next financial year it is clear that we need to simplify the collection system as much as possible in order to deliver the service to our members that they expect and deserve.

Clubs should therefore collect the relevant fees from their members directly. This decision has been taken in order to drive down the possibility of error in processing renewals and therefore reduce renewal failure. We will continue to collect Branch and Membership Fees through the established CSP system.

I hope this clarifies the situation, and trust that you will understand our desire to provide a seamless service to the membership in the coming months.

Remembrance

This year the application process has changed slightly and all those attending on the day need to have photographic ID on them. The Festival of Remembrance ticket application process and the Cenotaph March Past ticket request process and forms have both been communicated to branches via email.

The deadline for Branch applications is:-

- for the Festival is **12 August 2016** and
- for the Cenotaph **30 June 2016**.

The application processes are outlined in full here:-

- <http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/greater-london/remembrance/festival-of-remembrance>
- <http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/greater-london/remembrance/cenotaph-november-march-past>

National Conference Awards

The GLD Chairman Reg Pinney was delighted to pick up two awards at the National Conference in Eastbourne this year.

The GLD received a runners-up certificate to the Hughes Trophy for 'County/District with best percentage increase per capita for Poppy Appeal collection'.

And for two years running a GLD branch has picked up the Jellicoe Shield; Croydon in 2015 and this year Dagenham. The GLD Chairman on behalf of Dagenham RBL picked up the Jellicoe Shield awarded for 'Large branch with most improved membership over the previous 3 years'. Unfortunately, while we were able to notify the branch of the award, with deep sadness, we regret, the Branch Chairman, Colin Hollely passed away before Reg could present the award in person to the Branch.

Full list of awards can be found online here:- <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/members/annual-conference/awards/>

GLD AGM of Conference 2017

The GLD Conference Committee have agreed the Annual GLD Meet up, be set for Saturday 4th February 2017; 9.30am registration for a 10.30am start. Venue Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, SE1 1AA.

Military Corrective Training Centre - March to the Tower, 15 June 2016



The MCTC staff soldiers marched all the way from Colchester to the Tower on 15 June 2016 to raise funds in aid of the Poppy Appeal. GLD Standard Bearers joined them at Aldgate East to march the last mile to the Tower of London. More photos of the event here:-

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/96629202@N06/albums/72157669720155496>

As a thank you, all Standard Bearers that took part on the day have been invited to the MCTC in Colchester where they will be treated to a tour of the centre and lunch in the GSM Mess.

Standard Bearer Training Dates 2016

- July 13th
 - August 10th
 - September 14th
 - October 12th
 - November 9th
 - December 14th
- No need to book, turn up with sling, gauntlets and standard at the Army Centre
213 Balham High Road
Balham
SW17 7BQ.

GLD good wishes to Her Majesty The Queen on her 90th birthday

