



# The Royal British Legion

## Banwell Branch

Patron: His Majesty The King

### Newsletter – August 2024

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**Chair's Foreword** - Welcome to our August 2024 issue of the Branch Newsletter – and I hope you are enjoying the summer months – I certainly am and have been away in my campervan for a couple of short trips. This year we commemorated the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings by partnering up with Banwell-Potigny Twinning Association and Friends of Banwell Primary School putting on an Afternoon Cream Tea at Banwell Castle. Guests were greeted by the Worle Army Cadets – adding a touch of military history to the occasion and the choir of Banwell Primary School opened the event with a song. Fortunately, the weather was good and we managed to raise a fantastic sum of £739 which was split between the charities. My thanks go to all those who helped make this event a success. Sadly it will almost certainly be the last commemoration of the greatest seaborne assault in history and will soon be confined to the history books.



Next year will be the 80th Anniversary of VE (Victory in Europe) Day on 8<sup>th</sup> May and VJ (Victory over Japan) Day on 15<sup>th</sup> Aug. Whilst we tend to commemorate VE Day more so than VJ Day, VJ Day officially marked the end of World War – the Committee are yet to discuss whether we will be putting on another event.

This month we say goodbye to our Chaplain – Meg Slings – who moves on to become Superintendent of Bude and Holdsworth.



A very fine spread was provided for her leaving service. On behalf of the Branch I would like to thank her for the support she has given since becoming our Padre and to wish her the very best in her new role.

For those that are receiving this edition electronically and were unable to attend our last Branch Meeting please see links to the presentation and notes that I presented at the meeting which providing key elements that I took from the National Conference: [National Conference Update Presentation](#) and [National Conference Notes](#). For those without access to the internet but would like to see the presentations then please contact me direct.

I look forward to welcoming you all to our September Branch Meeting.

**Penny Mottram**  
Chair

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## **From the Secretary**

How time flies; I cannot believe it is time for the August Newsletter. As I write this I have an 11 month old fox red Labrador running around – very distracting – John and I are looking after her for my niece for two weeks while she and her family are away in France. However I must now concentrate. I draw your attention to the details in the Remembrance Circular that I sent out earlier as it was, and is, time and electronically sensitive. If you wish to attend the Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph then please read the details carefully.

As regards September onwards the committee are still organising the programme which, if it is not detailed at the end of this newsletter, I will get out as soon as possible. However please do not forget the AGM in October the formal notice for which will accompany the newsletter, nor the

dinner at The Full Quart on 26 October. If you have any suggestions for the menu for the dinner then please send them to me asap but before the end of August at the latest.

Returning to the AGM the committee decided not to conduct a postal vote this year as, apart from the very first year it was held when it was very successful, later years had no virtually reply. However should you wish to nominate anyone for a particular post then please contact me and likewise if anyone would like to take on a post. As you know officially all Committee posts stand down at the AGM and need to be nominated, proposed and seconded again for the following year. We really would welcome new committee members so please think about standing. I can always send you a 'job' description if you are interested. This year's AGM will again have a supper and hopefully a speaker. I shall keep you informed of details.

Finally I am composing this month's newsletter as our editor is not well so I am doing my best following his layout. Best wishes for a speedy recovery Tony.

**Gill Fawcitt**  
**Secretary**

## **The National Memorial Arboretum**

In May John and I visited the National Memorial Arboretum to take part in the service to commemorate/remember those who died at Monte Cassino in 1944 - 80 years ago. This was one of several services held at the Arboretum this year and what a wonderful place it is to hold such services. We spent the whole weekend there and still did not see it all and I understand that more land is being purchased to extend the commemorations. We had been before but not for some years and there was so much more to see.

The area covered is extensive with numerous pathways, seats, benches, quiet glades, the river walk and countless memorials, both collective and individual, giving one a sense of peace, thoughtfulness and tranquility. It also helped that we had a glorious sunny and dry weekend. If you have not been then I would recommend going but be prepared for plenty of walking although there is a 'passenger' train that takes you around certain areas.

Below are just a few of the photographs I took and they show some of the range of memorials there. There was a large extensive area dedicated to the War in the Far East which was thought provoking. Some surprises too but I hope I have illustrated the range.



Monte Cassino



Bevin Boys memorial



The Falklands



River Plate



RAF Association



Polish Second Corps



Royal Veterinary Corps



The train



Railway Memorial



The Burma Star Memorial Grove



Captain Sir Tom Moore trail



GPO Mmemorial



**These speak for themselves**

Not only was the setting impressive but the help and knowledge from/by officials in the Memorial was so good. Well worth a visit but would recommend you take your time wandering round.

**Gill Fawcitt**

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### **From the Membership Secretary**

Membership remains steady at 47 and as you know we are continuously look for ways in which to increase our members so any ideas, please let the Committee know.

As per the Motion passed at Annual Conference, please note that your core membership fee will increase by £2 per year with effect 4 Sep 24 and a further £2 per year through to 2028 as follows:

- From 4 Sep 24 - £20 per year
- From 4 Sep 25 - £22 per year
- From 4 Sep 26 - £24 per year
- From 4 Sep 27 - £26 per year
- From 4 Sep 28 - £28 per year

In addition and as passed at our AGM last year, the Branch membership fee will also increase from £3 per year to £5 per year which means that for 2024 renewals your total membership fee will be £25.

**Penny Mottram,  
Membership Secretary**

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### **Five things you might not know**

#### **... Our War Pensions & Armed Forces Compensation Scheme**

Our War Pensions & Armed Forces Compensation Scheme service supports the serving and veteran Armed Forces community through the compensation process for injuries or conditions caused by or made worse by service, which includes representation at tribunals.

1. The biggest cohort of beneficiaries we support are over 65, closely followed by the 35-40 age bracket.
2. The condition we support the most are those with musculoskeletal injuries, including issues with knees, hips and backs – common injuries sustained when moving while carrying heavy weights. The second most common conditions that we see are mental health conditions including anxiety and depression, adjustment disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and complex PTSD.
3. Last year the service represented beneficiaries at over 1,300 tribunals, which averages out to around five tribunals each working day.
4. We are a diverse team: we're based across England, Wales and Northern Ireland; 12 colleagues are veterans; many of the team have experience in other parts of RBL – including as a case officer, area administrator, membership support officer, poppy appeal manager, outreach officer, and advice and information officer; we are proud to have five Invictus Games gold medals in our team!
5. The legislation used by the War Pensions Service dates back to the War Pensions Act 1921 – the same year the British Legion was formed. This legislation was brought in to pay compensation in relation to pensions, grants, and allowances to men and women who had been disabled or to the dependents of those killed during service in World War 1 (and some earlier engagements).

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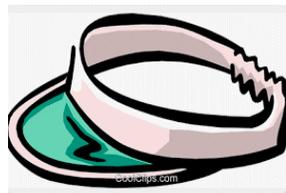
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### **Editor's News**



**The Editor will be back for the next issue**

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## **Contact Us**



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## **2024 Branch Meetings and Events Diary**

19 September Branch Meeting  
 17 October AGM  
 26 October Dinner at the Full Quart  
 10 November Remembrance Sunday  
 11 November Remembrance day  
 21 November Branch Meeting