

Our mission is to safeguard the welfare, interests, and memory of those who are serving or who have served in the Armed Forces

The Royal British Legion's National President, Vice Admiral Sir Clive Johnstone (rtd) KBE, CB died suddenly on Sunday 12th May at age 60. Vice Admiral Sir Clive Johnstone KBE CB served from 1985 to 2019 in the Royal Navy and had served on a variety of ships including minesweepers and aircraft carriers. He also served ashore in various staff roles focussed on procurement, people, policy, and operations. Sir Clive was knighted in the 2019 New Year's Honours.



Vice Admiral Sir Clive Johnstone KBE CB was RBL National President for a short period, having been appointed in May 2023, and took over from Lieutenant General James Bashall CB, CBE. His loss will be felt across the charity and the Armed Forces community. Thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Alison, and their two daughters, Phoebe and Emily.

A private family funeral is to be held later on this month and the Ministry of defence and the Royal British legion are working together to arrange a memorial service. Details will be announced later. An on line Book of Condolence has been launched on line at <https://www.online-tribute.com/SirCliveJohnstone>. There will also be a physical Book of Condolence in Haig House available until the end of August which anybody who would like to sign if they are in London. DW

The Flame of Freedom

The Flame of Liberty arrived in the UK on Tuesday the 14th May at Portsmouth International Port and a reception was held by the Portsmouth International Port authorities, the Royal Navy, the RBL and Brittany ferries. The Freedom Flame is known as the Flamme de la Liberte and has been burning since 1923 at the tomb of the unknown soldier under the Arc de Triomphe. The President of France, Mr Emmanuel Macron is the chief patron. The flame was transported from Cherbourg to the UK in convoy with military vehicles and 44 young French people on Brittany Ferries' ship Galicia. When the Galicia arrived at Portsmouth Harbour it was accompanied by a flotilla of military and historic vessels, including the following - a Serco tug, an SMS tug, HMS Medusa, HSL 102, MGB 81, X2 Royal Navy P2000 and the French Schooner Etoile.

In Portsmouth, two Dodge trucks and some jeeps from World war Two were on hand to greet the party accompanying the Flame. There was also a Guard of Honour consisting of French and UK personnel as well as Royal Marine Band drummers, a Padre, and the Royal British Legion national standard. The group of personnel and vehicles made a short procession to the port terminal where the ceremony was held with naval and civic officials, including Royal Navy's Cdre John Voyce (Commander of Portsmouth Naval Base), the Portsmouth City Council's Deputy Lord Mayor Gerald Vernon-Jackson and Helen Patton, General Patton's granddaughter. As the Freedom Flame left the the Royal Marine Band Corps of Drums conducted a military Beating the Retreat. DW



Cdre John Voyce- Portsmouth Naval Base Commander, Deputy Lord Mayor - Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Ms Helen Patton, (granddaughter of General Patton), Vice Adm Herve Hamlin, Attache of the French Ambassador.



Hampshire County Chairman, Tim Russell and the RBL standard bearers who were present at the ceremony.



D Day 6 June 1944

D Day 6th June 1944

The planning for D Day began in April 1943 by a combined Allied staff. The planning relied on a number of factors that included the availability of manpower, equipment and information concerning the German forces deployed in France, who for some time had been expecting an invasion. The Germans prepared the French coastline by building coastal defences consisting of landward and seaward minefields, artillery emplacements, machine gun nests, concrete bunkers and deployments of units over an area from the Netherlands, Belgian and French coastline along the English Channel. The build up of USA and Canadian troops took place from as early as June 1942 and by the end of 1943 there were 790 000 US troops in Britain.

Intelligence was gathered in order to determine the best possible place to cross the Channel and an elaborate deception plan was put in place to confuse the Germans as to where the landings would take place. Dummy airfields and installations were created as well as imaginary army formations to give a false impression of the actual build up. Security was at its highest. The raid on Dieppe was considered a practice run for D Day but was not very successful.

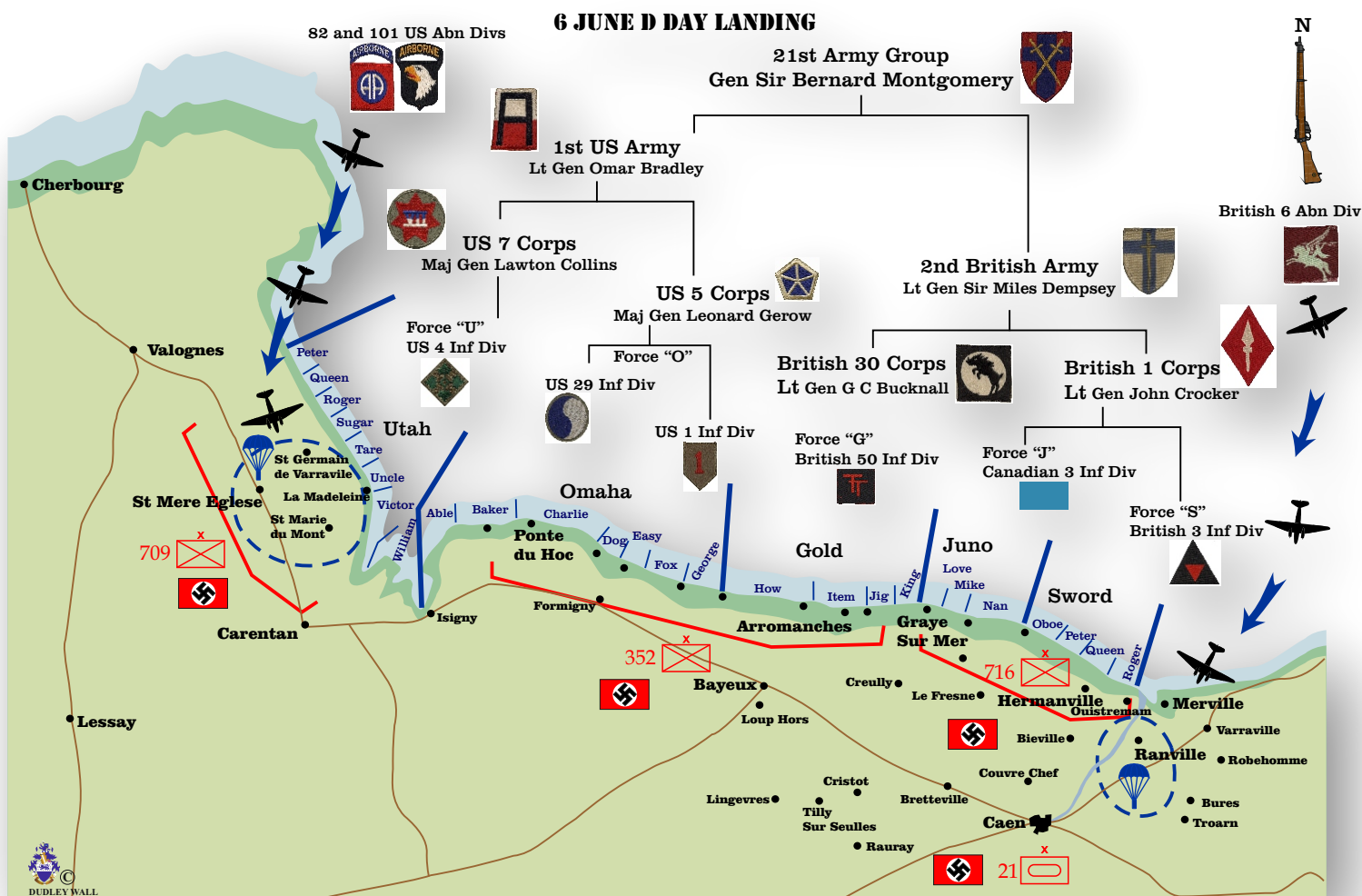
The weather also played a crucial role. It dictated when the landings could take place. The build up of vast quantities of logistics including the construction of large concrete blocks that were to be towed by ship to the landing area to create artificial harbours (Mulberry). Under sea pipelines were

also laid closer to the time to allow for the delivery of fuel for the invading force. By the time Operation Overlord (the code name for D Day) was to start there were 6500 naval vessels available in the harbours along the southern coast, as well as 11,500 aircraft to support the invasion and there were 194,000 Allied troops ready to deploy. The Germans had 815 aircraft and 57,000 troops on the ground in defence. Their navy was largely restricted to staying in harbour.

The ground force (21 Army Group) was under command of general Bernard Montgomery. The plan allowed for the deployment by sea of the 1st US Army with two corps under command and a total of three infantry divisions followed by armour. The British 2nd Army also consisted of two corps with two British and one Canadian Division for the landings. Two US airborne divisions deployed to secure the western flank and one British airborne division secured the eastern flank.

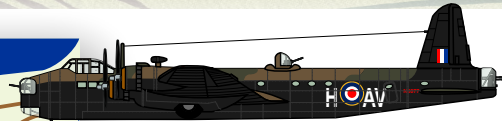
By the end of the day 15,000 troops had been landed at a cost of 9000 casualties. The German forces reacted and tried to push armoured units forward in the area of Caen and elsewhere. The Allied forces were able to consolidate a strong beach head and in the next weeks were able to advance into France.

It was the beginning of the end of the occupation of France and North Western Europe. DW



OPERATION OVERLORD - 6 JUNE 1944 CAPTURE OF PEGASUS BRIDGE

D DAY LEFT FLANK 6 JUNE 1944



Short Sterling 218 Sqn



Airspeed Horsa glider



Oxfordshire
and Buckinghamshire
Light Infantry
cap badge



Airborne formation flash

It was crucial that the Allies capture the Benouville Bridge in an effort to ensure that the British forces could break out from the coastal area of Normandy and to prevent German armour deployed inland from interfering with the landings along the Normandy coast. It also allowed for the advance into France to liberate that country before the final push of the war into Germany. In order to do so an airborne operation was launched on the night of 5 June 1944. The immediate objective was to prevent German armour from crossing the bridges and attacking the eastern flank of the landings at Sword Beach, and to prevent the British 6th Airborne Division from being cut off.

The force consisted of 181 men, led by Major John Howard, all of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (specialist glider borne infantry). The force took off from RAF Tarrant Rushton in Dorset, southern England in six Horsa gliders to capture two bridges - Pegasus Bridge, and Horsa Bridge. The bridges are vital crossing points over the Orne River. The force comprised of D Company (reinforced with two platoons of B Company) of the 2nd Battalion, Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (2 Ox and Bucks LI) ; 20 sappers of the Royal Engineers of 249 Field Company (Airborne); and men of the Glider Pilot Regiment who flew the gliders. Five of the Ox and Bucks LI gliders landed within 47 yards (43 m) from their objectives at 16 minutes after midnight. The German defenders of the bridges were completely surprised and the British force were able to capture the bridges within 10 minutes. Two men were killed in the action. They were Lieutenant Den Brotheridge and Lance Corporal Fred Greenhalgh. Greenhalgh drowned in a nearby pond when his glider landed. Lieutenant Brotheridge was mortally wounded as he crossed the bridge in the first minutes of the assault and was the first member of the Allied armies to die as a result of enemy fire on D-Day.



LZ at Pegasus Bridge
Photo Imperial War Museum

One glider, which was to capture the Orne river bridge, landed at the bridge over the River Dives, some 7 miles (11 km) away. Its soldiers advanced through German lines towards the village of Ranville where they linked up with the rest of the British forces. The Ox and Bucks LI were reinforced at 03.00hrs by Lieutenant Colonel Pine-Coffin's 7th Parachute Battalion. They, in turn, linked up with the beach landing forces of Lord Lovat's Commandos.

One of the first officers of the 7th Parachute Battalion was Lieutenant Richard Todd. He was an actor by trade and nearly two decades later, played the Glider on the LZ. Pegasus Bridge in the role of Major Howard in the film *The Longest Day*. DW



Horsa glider on the LZ.
Pegasus Bridge in the background
Photo Imperial War Museum

Remembering Greenham Common USAAF personnel World War Two



Air photo of Greenham Common base



Photo of Air Crew

Front row left to right
Lt Charles A Crooks, Pilot
Lt John P Mockus, Co Pilot
Lt Lewis F Thompson, Navigator
Lt Bernard "Bill" Wilson, Bombardier (Bill was replaced before leaving Langley Field VA for the UK)

Back Row left to right
Sgt Burt H Frazier, engineer
Al, radio operator (no other info)
Sgt Lloyd "Slim" Cain, gunner
Sgt Joseph M Mandula, lower ball turret gunner
Sgt Richard W Miller, tail gunner
Sgt John F Bradley, upper turret gunner

Lewis, Burt and John Bradley were not flying on the day of the accident and Bill Wilson did not deploy overseas with the crew.

Info from the wife of Lt Mockus.



8th US Army Air Force badge



Pilot's qualification wing



Aircrew qualification wing

Constituted as the 306th Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 28th January 1942 and activated on 1st March 1942. The Bombardment Group were allocated B17 aircraft and trained for operational duties in the USA before being deployed to Great Britain in August - September 1942. The Bombardment Group was allocated to the 8th US Army Air Force in September 1942 and was based at Station 111 at Thurleigh. The Bombardment Group was moved to Greenham Common in preparation for operations over Europe. Greenham Common was also the air force base where the US 101st Airborne Division was based for D Day and took off from there.

After a bombing run over Kassel in Germany on 15th December 1944, B17 aircraft 43-37633 flown by Lt Charles A Crookes was involved in a mid air collision with B 17 aircraft 43-38019 (also of 306 Bombardment Group) over Greenham Common and the crews of both aircraft were killed.

Pilot - Chas Crookes ;

Co-pilot - John Mockus;

Navigator - Elija Slocum;

Bombardier / tog - Harry Polderman;

Flight engineer/top turret gunner - Wayne Laubert;

Radio Operator - Albert Seaberg;

Ball turret gunner - Joe Mandula;

Waist gunner - Lloyd Cain;

Tail gunner - Dick Miller.

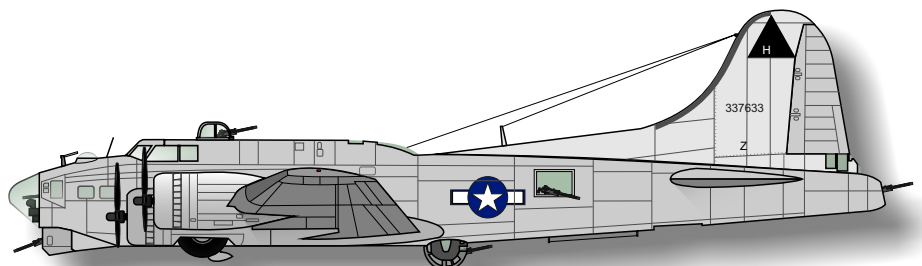
(9 Killed in Action).

16 Killed in Action in total.

The aircraft was salvaged after the accident.



2Lt John Mockus



B17 aircraft (337633) flown by Lt Charles A Crookes
368 Bomber Sqn USAAF



Squadron badge

Halifax crash site memorial Petersfield



A rededication ceremony was held to commemorate the loss of RAF 10 Squadron Halifax bomber (number 9492) call sign Zulu Alpha Golf, that was on its return to its base in Yorkshire after the completion of a sortie over the Ruhr when it crashed on the edge of Liss Forest on the night of 14 April 1942. Pilot Officer Richard Pryce Hughes (a member of the RCAF) was killed in the incident when the badly damaged aircraft crash landed. Pilot Officer Hughes guided his stricken aircraft well away from houses and ordered all of his crew to bail out to safety before finding an appropriate place to bring down the aircraft. The chairman of Liss Forest Residents' Association, Tony Grant said that the memorial has been in place since 1992, and the rededication ceremony would be an opportunity for local people to be re-aquainted with the knowledge of the incident. David Spear, the great nephew of Pilot Officer Hughes also attended the rededication ceremony which was attended by local residents as well as descendants of Pilot Officer Hughes and representatives of the RAF. A fly past by a Chinook helicopter from RAF Odiham was part of the ceremony. Photos from David Lloyd

Petersfield Branch Going Strong

The Petersfield branch of the RBL was formed on the 19th July 1921, just a few months after the inception of the British Legion on the 15th May of the same year when four servicemen's organisations were amalgamated to form the British Legion. The purpose of the Legion and its branches was to care for those service personnel and their families who had suffered as a result of service during times of war and peace.



The Petersfield branch continues to do its valuable work to this day. The branch has held its monthly meetings in a variety of locations in the town. Over the years the branch has vigorously collected funds for the Poppy Appeal and their efforts culminate in remembrance Sunday each year. The branch has also organised various branch activities and field trips in an effort to keep their membership informed and active in all matters of remembrance. Trips have included visits to local venues such as Fort Nelson, Tangmere RAF museum, and Brooklands. They have also visited places further afield and have completed battlefield tours to Ypres, Waterloo, the Somme, Normandy, Arnhem, Berlin and the Ardennes.



At home the branch has participated in remembrance activities to remember VE Day, VJ Day, D Day, and the Armed Forces days. The branch meets at the Red Lion in Petersfield on the second Wednesday of the month from 19h30. New members are always most welcome. David Lloyd

Petersfield Spring Festival in Photos



Petersfield Spring Festival
SATURDAY 25TH - MONDAY 27TH MAY 2024
PETERSFIELD TOWN CENTRE
| SAT 7PM-10PM | SUN 10AM-10PM | MON 10AM-6PM |



rbl.org.uk

Aspire Leadership Training

The RBL Aspire Leadership Programme is now open to all members if they wish to apply. The purpose of the Aspire Leadership Programme is to develop and equip leaders for the future within the RBL. It is intended to prepare those members of the RBL who may wish to take up a leadership position. This includes members of national and local branches, counties, the Women's Section and overseas branches.

If you have an aspiration to be a County or Branch Chair, Membership Council Representative or Trustee then please apply. The programme will support and equip you with the skills and development required to be in a leadership position in the future.

Module one takes place on the 5th, 6th and 7th July 2024 and Module 2 is on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th August 2024. There is a selection process and for those who are successful, accommodation will be booked for them to attend.

Applications close at 5pm on the 7th June. We have 15 candidate places available and will confirm who has been selected on 14th June. If you have any queries about the programme please contact L&D@britishlegion.org.uk. You can also contact the County Training Officer by email at Hampshire.CTO@RBL.Community

Branch Membership Fees

RBL Membership Services have reminded us that the new financial year starts on 1st October 2024. If a branch wishes to adjust their branch membership fees they need to contact Membership Services by the 10th June 2024 to request the introduction of new fees or to adjust existing ones. Branches may wish to consider whether to introduce or adjust a branch administration fee or a joining fee to support the administrative costs associated with engaging and recruiting members. If this is the case, please contact Membership Services as soon as possible.

If branches wish to maintain their current branch fee structure into the next financial year then no action is required on the part of the branch. If Branch Membership do not hear from branches by 10th June 2024, they will proceed with existing rates. Further information on branch fees and instructions on how to submit your updated fees to Membership Services or to introduce new fees is available from them.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the RBL community. Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please contact membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk.

Bitterne Local History Society

Bitterne Local History Society is in the process of writing a short history of The Tinnars, the Woolston Branch of the RBL, which sadly closed last year. The Society is appealing for any assistance with information or photographs that they could use in their record of the history of the RBL branch. This request is from the editor of the BLHS magazine as below -

"The Tinnars, the Woolston Branch of the RBL, reputedly had one of the first branch buildings in the UK. Bitterne Local History Society received some artefacts from the Branch when it closed and would now like to compile a history of the Tinnars. We would welcome memories of the branch, particularly from during or around WW2. We would love to hear from people who have knowledge or photographs of the branch back to its origins as a 'Tin Hut'. One item we received was a banner that had several dates on which we would love to understand, including 10 September 1971 and 28 June 1921. Anyone who would like to contribute, so that the name Tinnars is not forgotten, should email BLHSeditor@gmail.com or write to Steve Adams, 231 Peartree Avenue, SO19 7RD.

Many thanks in advance.
Best Regards, Steve

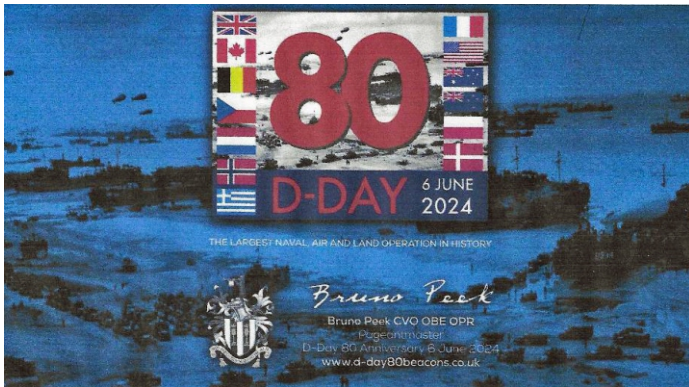
From Steve Adams
Editor, BLHS Magazine - 'BYGONE BITTERNE'
Bitterne Local History Society - www.Bitterne.net
Facebook: <https://tinyurl.com/yysreand>

Hampshire Memorials - Old Basing



Other News

Copythorne D Day Event



Copythorne and District Branch are participating in a D Day Memorial event on 6th June from 19h30 to 21h15 at the Copythorn Parish Hall. New forest and surrounding areas were very involved as thousands of service personnel were stationed there in readiness for the campaign. All are invited to attend.

The event is organised by Copythorne Parish Council, Copythorne Parish Hall Committee, Copythorne and District Royal British Legion and Copythorne History Society. The Cadet Band and a Fish and Chip van will be present.

Contacts - Clare Mills (023 80812167) or Roy Farmers (02380812504)

Poppy Appeal Matters

Our Poppy Appeal Manager for Hampshire North is recruiting. There are a couple of vacancies for Poppy Appeal Organisers in Hampshire North that need to be filled. This is a worthwhile cause and gives an opportunity to contribute to the welfare of our armed forces and veterans. The vacancies are at - Farnborough ASDA. Income approx. £8/10k. New standalone District. No cash counting involved. Droxford. Income £3.5k Heckfield. Income £1k Worldham. Income £200 Liss. Income £5k. The position of PAO for Farnborough Morrisons has been filled.

If you can help please contact Sarah Ferris
Phone - 07742 762988
Email - SFerris@britishlegion.org.uk

Petersfield Branch Armed Forces Drop-In Centre

Armed Forces Drop - In Centre at Winton House Centre, 18 High Street, Petersfield, GU32 3JL. First Thursday of the month from 16h00 to 20h00. Come along and reminisce over a brew and cake. "Serving those who serve: a place to unwind and connect with others". armedforces@petersfield-tc.gov.uk

Standard Bearer Training Dates 2024



Hampshire Standard Bearer Training 2024

	EASTLEIGH Pavilion on the Park 1 Kingfisher Drive, Eastleigh, SO50 9LH	ASH Ash Manor School Manor Rd, Ash, Aldershot GU12 6QH
Please arrive ten minutes before training starts to prepare yourself and your Standard		
January	No Training	Tuesday 9th 18:50 - 20:00
February	No Training	Tuesday 20th 18:50 - 20:00
March	Sunday 17th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 12th 18:50 - 20:00
April	Sunday 14th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 16th 18:50 - 20:00
May	Sunday 12th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 16th 18:50 - 20:00
June	Sunday 9th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 18th 18:50 - 20:00
July	Sunday 14th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 9th 18:50 - 20:00
August	Sunday 11th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 6th 18:50 - 20:00
September	Sunday 8th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 10th 18:50 - 20:00
October	Sunday 13th 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 15th 18:50 - 20:00
November	Sunday 3rd 13:00 - 15:00	Tuesday 5th 18:50 - 20:00
December	No Training	No Training
Please note: All Standard Bearer should attend two training sessions a year, and be physically fit enough to carry the Standard, as agreed when they signed the yearly MS1 Form.		
Annual RBL Conference Newport 10th - 12th May 2024		
Hampshire Parade Marshal: David Graham		
E: Hampshire.ParadeMarshal@rbl.community M: 07597 455112		



The 1939 - 1945 France and Germany Star



This medal was awarded to all British and Commonwealth forces that fought in France, Belgium, Netherlands, or Germany from 6 June 1944 to 8 May 1945. Service in the North Sea, English Channel and the Bay of Biscay also counted. Prior eligibility for the Atlantic Star or Air Crew Europe Star entitled personnel to a bar France and Germany on the appropriate Star already awarded. If a recipient was first awarded the France and Germany Star and then the Atlantic Star then only a bar "Atlantic" was worn on this medal. Bomber Command air crews were awarded this medal. DW

County Contact Details

Postal Address for Hampshire County Committee
Hampshire & IOW MEO (or Name), Royal British Legion, 199 Borough High St, London SE1 1AA

RBL Website: www.BritishLegion.org.uk, County Website: <http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/hampshire>

Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/groups/hantscountyrbl/ Facebook Email - Hampshire.web@rbl.community

Poppy Appeal - www.facebook.com.poppy.HamsphireRBL

Contact us

It's your newsletter!!!

If anyone has any articles that they would like published in the Newsletter then please contact the editor (Colonel (Retd) Dudley Wall MSM MMM) with any information or articles by the 20th of the month at:

HampshireLinkDW@yahoo.com

ALL LEGION ENQUIRIES

(including Welfare requests) should be directed to the national call centre

0808 802 8080

County Personnel

Patron Lt Gen Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL

County President Col Andrew King

County Vice President Brian C.N. Soffe

County Vice President Robert G. Knight

Chairman Tim Russell Hampshire.Chairman@rbl.community

Vice-Chairman Robert Bartlett Hampshire.vicechairman@rbl.community

Secretary Melvyn Cole hampshire.secretary@rbl.community

Treasurer Ges Brown hampshire.treasurer@rbl.community

Independent Examiners - G.S. Brown and M. Davis

Committee members - Secretary Melvyn Cole, John Davies, Paul Holyoake, Brian Mansi, Avril Mitchell, Vic Thorn, David Barton

County Management Board: Tim Russell, Robert Bartlett, Ges Brown, Melvyn Cole, John Davies

Conference Committee: Chairman Brian Mansi, Secretary Avril Mitchell, Pat Prior BEM QVRM, Melvyn Cole, Nigel Thomas,

Rev John Morley

Cups Sub-Committee: Avril Mitchell, Pat Prior BEM QVRM, Brian Mansi

Annual Conference Delegate: Tim Russell

Poppy Appeal Manager North: Sarah Ferris

Poppy Appeal Manager South: Claire Smith

Regional Poppy Appeal Manager: Clare Peppiatt

Poppy Appeal Coordinator - North: Vacant

Poppy Appeal Coordinator - South: Pat Prior BEM QVRM

Principal Recruiting Officer: VACANT

County Training Officer: John Davies

Community Support: VACANT

CCSC: VACANT

Clubs Liaison: Paul Holyoake

Communications Support: Dudley Wall HampshireLinkDW@yahoo.com

County Webmaster: Avril Mitchell Hampshire.Web@rbl.community

Youth Officer: Steve Slack Hampshire.CYO@rbl.community

Events Support: VACANT

Parade Marshall: David Graham, Deputy Parade Marshall: Andy Cassidy

County Standard Bearer: Pete Pullin, ppullin@britishlegion.org.uk

Deputy County Standard Bearer: Andy Cassidy

County Youth Standard Bearer: Natalia Szymkiewicz

Ceremonial Support: David Graham, Karen Graham

County Padre: Reverend David Roache

Golf Officer: Rick Bourne

Membership Engagement Officer: Holly Church, Membership Engagement Manager: Martin Pelling

Membership Council Representative: Gerry Nunn

Public Relations Officer: VACANT

Independent Examiners: Ges Brown, Mike Davis

UK Honours Awards: County President, County M.E.O.