

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

Message from the National Chair

As part of our commitment to keeping everyone better informed, I write to update you on a number of key developments in how we are leading our charity into the future.

1. Future strategy: At this year's Annual Conference in Newport, our Director General Mark explained that one of our top priorities was to start work on a new strategy for RBL. The Board of Trustees and the Executive Board have now started a process to define and shape the charity for the next 5-10 years to better understand and meet the challenges of our Armed Forces Community. We expect this process to take around nine months, which will allow us to launch the future strategy at Annual Conference in Harrogate next May. Along the way, we will also be seeking inputs and discussion about the future shape of the RBL, and will share thinking at the County Chair seminars, at County Conferences early in 2025, and through other comms channels. I will provide regular updates on progress in my letter shared after each Board of Trustees meeting.

2. Building unity – the Newport Agreement: Our focus on improving how we all work together for the good of our beneficiaries has continued. As I mentioned in my speech at Conference in May, we have been working on building a new understanding and a new commitment across the three key leadership groups - the Board of Trustees, the Executive Board and the Membership Council. Members of each of these groups met a number of times earlier this year and have agreed a written set of commitments, which we are calling the Newport Agreement. It has now been signed off by the Trustees, Mark and his team and the Membership Council and we will share this for discussion at September's County Chairs meeting before sharing it more widely. I wish to take this moment to thank all those who gave their time and experience to help shape this Agreement, and believe it creates a significant and clear marker in our readiness to work better together.

3. Future leadership: We are committed to inviting more people to get involved in the leadership of our charity at all levels, whether at local, regional or national level. Having looked into why vacancies are often so difficult to fill, we have concluded two things: (a) that the needs and expectations of each role are not fully clear and therefore

understood, and (b) that we don't do enough to equip potential leaders with what is needed to succeed in these roles. We are working on solving both of these issues, and we launched the new Aspire Leadership programme for members earlier this year, which a number of you have already attended. This programme has proved highly valuable and the feedback has been strongly positive. I would encourage all of you with an interest in taking on leadership positions to apply to future programmes.

4. Future elections: We are finalising the packs in the coming weeks for one of the most significant rounds of elections across the leadership of the RBL. To take up office from May 2025, we will be seeking a new National Chair and National Vice Chair, together with Trustee and Membership Council positions. We have reviewed the elections process to make our expectations as clear as possible for these critical leadership roles; to provide information and support to anyone who might be considering standing for election; and to help them demonstrate through the application process how their RBL or wider experience might stand them in good stead. To achieve this, and following the lead set by the Board of Trustees in recent years, each of the candidates will be asked to go through an assessment phase ahead of standing for your votes. Our ultimate aim, and our responsibility, is to ensure that the Board of Trustees and the Membership Council are as effective and capable as possible; and through the new Aspire Programme, and through the added information and support available, we want to encourage leaders from across RBL membership to come forward. A series of optional briefing days for all interested parties will be held this Autumn, both in-person at Haig House and via MS Teams. For early diary notice for anyone interested, the dates are: Wednesday 16 October; Wednesday 13 November; and Wednesday 11 December 2024.

5. Future governance changes: You may remember that last year the Board of Trustees proposed some changes to our



**Canadian forces of British 21st Army
Group capture Dieppe 1st Sept 1944**

Royal Charter in respect of how the National Chair is appointed, and to the role of the National Vice Chair. Annual Conference 2023 did not support these changes. The Board has listened carefully, and reflected further, and decided against bringing these Charter changes to next year's Annual Conference. Further, we are not progressing any work on changing the size and make-up of the Board, which was also under consideration last year. The Board remains committed to improving our governance over time, but I believe this is the right decision for our governance and the right decision for the unity of our charity as we reshape our strategy and work to rebuild trust, and strengthen leadership capability, across all groups across the RBL.

As ever, please come back with any queries or thoughts on what I have shared here - we are always stronger as a charity when more people are heard and have the chance to challenge what's going on. I would ask that you share this letter with your local members who may not have email access.

Finally, attached is a summary from most recent Board of Trustees meeting held on 18 July 2024.

Jason Coward
NATIONAL CHAIR



Feedback - National Board of Trustees meeting 18 July 2024

Newport Agreement. The Board of Trustees approved the Newport Agreement which had been written by representatives of the Board of Trustees (BoT), Membership Council (MC) and Executive Board (EB). The agreement seeks to solidify how the core groups will continue to work together to improve relationships and our ways of working. The agreement will be formally shared with County Chairs at the County Chairs Conference in September and ultimately be reflected in the Membership Handbook.

Director General's Report. Mark Atkinson reflected on his first 6 months in post. He noted the multiple Committees and Board meetings he has attended and the opportunities he has had to engage with the wider membership, colleagues and external partners. Mark also provided an update on the delivery of the strategic priorities. He also highlighted the appointment of Clare Waterworth as Chief of Staff. Following the untimely passing of Vice Admiral Sir Clive Johnstone, Mark and I attended the funeral. Since then, we have kept in contact with the family and offered support on behalf of the RBL. There will be a memorial service held on 10 September 2024 and the Board agreed that Sir Clive would be honoured permanently by way of an award.

Appointment OF RBL National President. The Board agreed that the next term for National President would commence from the 1 October 2024 and end at Annual Conference 2027.

Finance Report and Budget 2024/25. The Board noted the Finance Report which showed improvement against the previously forecasted figures for the period. The Board approved the budget for 2024/25. It was in-line with our financial strategy which aims to reduce our operating deficit over the next 2 years.

Approach to the Elections of National Officers and Trustees 2025. The Board approved the new role descriptors for the National Officer and Trustees. They also approved the screening process which will help to strengthen the Boards profile. These elements of the elections process were developed in accordance with Rule 5.2 of the Schedule to the Royal Charter (Rules of the Royal British Legion).

Annual Conference 2024 Motions. The Board approved the recommendations for the motions that were carried at the 2024 Annual Conference. Out of the 14 motions and 1 motion of urgency, 7 of these were upheld and 2 required further consideration.

Charter Motions Annual Conference 2025. Following a recommendation from the Mark and I, the Board agreed that it would not re-table Charter Motions at the next Annual Conference in May 2025. The matter would be reviewed following the election of the next National Officers.

Strategy Planning Session. The Board had a dedicated session to discuss the strategic direction of the Charity laying out the foundations for the development of a new strategy.

Jason Coward
NATIONAL CHAIR



Training Matters

Specific training is a requirement for all County and Branch Officers and, those volunteering for BCS. Additionally, it is highly recommended for Branch and County Committee members. To do that training, you have to be registered on the 'Discover' Training Platform. Let's start with the disappointing news, get that over with quite quickly, and then, in the words of that D:Ream pop hit of 1993, "Things Can Only Get Better".

The not so good news is that in the whole of the County, only 66 persons have registered on the Discovery Training platform and, of those: 17 have not enrolled on any course and 12 people have enrolled on 43 different courses and then not started them. Further, of those 66, some are committee members or BCS supporters so, if you are a Branch Officer, it does not make good reading! With the number of Branches within the County we should have in excess of 200 people registered on Discover

The better news is that the other 37 people who are already registered on 'Discover' have completed 111 courses between them.

Or via the Discover URL: <https://learn.britishlegion.org.uk>
Once you are on the registration landing page, you just need to:

1. Fill in your details ensuring that the username and email address are the same.
2. We recommend that you use a personal email rather than an 'RBL.community' one
3. Enter your County/District/Area code as "Hampshire"
4. Enter up to four roles that you hold, this will personalise the training.

Once you submit, it can take up to two days to validate your registration, after which you will be sent login details and you can start your training.

There are also course available relating to the use of Office 365 and MAOP.

Branch Management Training

Courses 426, 472 & 473 form the 1st phase of Branch Management training. Course 358 comprises two elements, a one day in person training session followed by a 1-hour webinar. Currently, Branch Officers are required to complete the first phase before they can enrol on Course 358. However, we have agreed with the Learning and Development (L&D) team at HQ that CTOs can deliver an extended 1-day course which covers both courses 426 and 358. Anyone who has completed the online training will be able to join the 1-day course but at a slightly later start time. We will notify L&D that you have completed that training and they will update your profile on Discover. The

Data Protection and Safeguarding courses will still need to be completed online before you are signed off as having completed the Management training

Courses Still in Development

The County/Branch Secretary courses are expected to be delivered in September. We will advise Secretaries and County committee members once they become available. There will also be courses for 'County Conference Committee', 'County Youth Officers' also expected in the autumn. Finally, they are developing some Conference delegate related courses

The Recruiting Advisers Course has been reviewed by CTOs and CROs is ready for launch.

In Person Training

I will be looking to deliver three in-person courses in the very near future; two in the south of the county and one in the north. For those Chairmen that have accessible club/meeting places that can cater for @20 persons and they are willing to act as host please contact me.

John Davies

County Training Officer

Hampshire.CTO@rbl.community



To make it easy, you can get to the login / registration page using the QR code



Code	Course Name	Type
EC126	Lone Working	E-Learning
ILT028	Branch Community Support: New Supporters	ILT (Instructor-Led Training)
ILT029	Branch Community Support: Refresher	ILT (Instructor-Led Training)
ILT030	Branch Management	ILT (Instructor-Led Training)
EC257	County Management	E-Learning
ILT031	County Management	ILT (Instructor-Led Training)
ILT032	County Training Officer (CTO) Course	ILT (Instructor-Led Training)
ILT049	County Recruiting Officer (CRO) Course	ILT (Instructor-Led Training)
EC237	Branch Management	E-Learning
EC247	Branch Treasurer Course	E-Learning
IEC003	Data Protection (Membership)	E-Learning
IEC004	Safeguarding Adults (Membership)	E-Learning
EC248	LOMAS Training	E-Learning
ILT074	Branch Community Support: New Supporters (Online)	ILT (Instructor-Led Training)
EC255	Independent Examiner Course	E-Learning

Basingstoke during the Second World War

In August 1940 orders were given to the German Luftwaffe to conduct bombing raids over the United Kingdom in an effort to target industrial and military areas. Coastal areas were targeted at first but later bombing was increased inland and churches and residential areas were added to the list of targets. On August 16, 1940, Basingstoke was attacked in the afternoon by German bombers when workers were leaving for their homes. Church Square and Church Street were hit by three bombs and at least eight people were reported killed. St Michael's Church and the Methodist church were both badly damaged, along with the rectory grounds in Church Street. All the windows of St Michael's Church except one were damaged. The Methodist church was also badly damaged and needed to undergo extensive restoration. Casualties included a man who was beheaded by shrapnel while riding his motorbike and sidecar in the area. The passenger escaped with a small wound to the chest.



Basingstoke Church Square. Church Street. 16 Aug 1940, eight people killed. Photo source - internet.

A bomb also hit houses in Burgess Road causing extensive damage and one loss of life. The windows of the Basingstoke Museum situated in the Mechanics' Institute Building, (now the Willis Museum on Market Place) was closed until repairs could take place in 1943. This was the most severe of the aerial bombardments on Basingstoke. Others also occurred from time to time. Later in the year a bomb was dropped on Southend Road, at Brambley's Grange and areas on the outskirts of the town. St Vincent's School in Cliddesdon Road was severely damaged on 24 October 1940 and one person was killed. Fortunately the school children were not present at the time.

One local resident recalls the attack. He was in the back garden of his house, talking to the woman who lived next door. The man saw the bombers flying overhead and warned his neighbour to get indoors. The man dashed into his own house and took shelter under the kitchen table as a bomb exploded. The exterior walls of the house withstood the blast, but most of the interior walls collapsed. He was saved from injury by the table. His neighbour, however, was shot dead by an air gunner of the aircraft and was found dead in

the back garden.

The bombing raids saw the construction of both public and private air raid shelters across the county. In November 1938 Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain appointed Sir John Anderson in charge of Air Raid Precautions. Anderson was responsible for the Ministry of Home Security. His responsibilities covered all central and regional civil defence organisations, such as air raid wardens, rescue squads, fire services, and the Women's Voluntary Service, and as such, was also responsible for providing public shelters. Sir John Anderson commissioned an engineer by the name of William Patterson to design a small and cheap shelter that could be erected in people's gardens. They were to become known as Anderson shelters and the first one was erected in a garden in Islington, London on 25 February 1939. From the outbreak of the war in September approximately 1.5 million shelters were initially distributed to people living in areas that were vulnerable to air attack by the Luftwaffe. During the entire war a further 2.1 million were constructed. The shelters were issued free to those people who earned less than £250 a year. People on a higher income were charged £7.

The shelters were made from six curved sheets bolted together at the top, with steel plates at either end, and measuring 1.95m by 1.35m. The shelter was able to accommodate four adults and two children. The construction of the shelters required them to be half buried in the ground and earth was then placed on the rooves for added protection. DW



Basingstoke Church Street. Damage to houses. Photo - internet.

Petersfield VJ Day Commemoration

The Petersfield branch of the RBL celebrated VJ Day on the 15th August. The event was co-ordinated by the Petersfield Town Council with participation from the RBL branch.

The event was attended by the Mayor and Councillors / Officers as hosts. The Mayors Cadet, EHDC Petersfield Ward Councillors, Petersfield RBL, 1927 Sqn ATC, Churchers CCF and TPS CCF were all on parade.

By way of background Victory over Japan day (VJ Day) is the day when the Japanese surrender was announced in the United Kingdom (15th August 1945). This signified the end of the Second World War and the formal surrender was signed on 2nd September 1945. Petersfield Town Council marked the occasion in line with their Armed Forces Covenant promise to acknowledge and support military anniversaries to Commemorate or by Act of Remembrance as guided and advised by appropriate national organisations.

The parade formed up at 10h45 at the War Memorial and the Service of Remembrance was held at St Peter's Church.



Japanese Surrender
August 1945



Japanese Surrender diorama at
Sentosa



Petersfield Far East
Memorial stone

Yateley and Hawley Branch - The Belgian Connection

London, 13th July. Belgium is the only non-Commonwealth country allowed to parade their troops in uniform and carrying arms through London. This privilege was granted by King George V in recognition of the heroism and sacrifice of the Belgian army during WW1. The Belgian King and Queen attended the annual ceremony on 13th July in memory of soldiers who lost their lives in WW1 and WW2. Belgian and UK veterans, and a detachment from the Belgian Forces attended.

On 7th July the Belgian Defence Attaché, Colonel Bruno Plaetsier, attended an annual remembrance ceremony at Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey. Col (Retd) Nick Fox (a trustee of The Secret WW2 Learning network) addressed the gathering on the life and death of Belgian-born Lt Henri Gaillot, nicknamed "Grandpère" because of his age, who was caught while serving F (French) Section of SOE in occupied France. He was executed at Buchenwald concentration camp in 1944 and he is listed on Brookwood's Memorial to the Missing 1939-45.

Wreaths were placed by Colonel Plaetsier on behalf of the Belgian Embassy in London; by Rudy Peleman (a member of Yateley and Hawley RBL) on behalf of the Fraternelle des Parachutistes, and Nick Fox on behalf of SECRET WW 2.

The entourage then moved to the Belgian plot and thereafter to the monthly ceremony of the Brookwood. Rudy is second right wearing a maroon beret in the bottom photo taken at the Brookwood Cemetery. He is a member of Yateley and Hawley RBL. Ishbel Thomson (Yateley and Hawley RBL)



Droxford and District Branch News

RBL Droxford & District member and Newtown resident, Commander Charles Wylie OBE RN, a Korean War veteran who served for 40 years in the Royal Navy, joined a team of RN sailors to row across Portsmouth Harbour on 12th August, the day after celebrating his 91st birthday. He was accompanied by Lieutenant Commanders Hugo Mitchell-Heggs and Nic Hall, both seasoned Atlantic Ocean rowers. The trio embarked on Captain Jim, the boat used by Royal Navy Team HMS Oardacious which helps promote mental health awareness and raise money for charity.

Despite not having rowed - called pulling in the Royal Navy - for 70 years, Charles Wylie quickly found his rhythm. Reflecting on the experience, he said, "it just came back naturally" and that rowing again "made me feel 31 not 91." He added: "I miss the sea, so I was in my element out there."

This isn't Cdr Wylie's first daring exploit; he completed a parachute jump with the Army's Red Devils last year, raising more than £23,000 for Alzheimer's Research UK. His wife, Jean has been battling dementia for the past decade, and Charles is determined to continue fundraising, with plans to abseil down Portsmouth's Spinnaker Tower next year. Watch this space!

To contribute to this worthy cause, please visit <https://www.justgiving.com/page/charles-wylie-1678789500363>. BRAVO ZULU Charles! Cdr Rob Scott RN, Branch Secretary, Droxford & District RBL



Ecchinswell Memorial North Hampshire



WORLD WAR ONE

Sergeant Charles William Goddard 24th Bn Rifle Brigade
Sergeant Innes Douglas Boyce 5th Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Corporal Sydney Greenaway 5th Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Lance Corporal Josiah Sheppard 6th Bn Wiltshire Regt
Private Frederick Allen 1st Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private John Frederick Henry Appleby 1st/4th Bn Hampshire Regt
Private Ernest Beauchamp 1st / 4th Bn Gloucestershire Regt
Private John Cooper 2nd Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private Frank Cooper 4th Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private George Caleb Cox 6th Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private George Elliot 1st / 5th Bn Gloucestershire Regt
Private Dan Fosbury 6th Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private Ernest Hill 8th Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private Edward Charles Holmes 11th Bn Hampshire Regt
Private Leslie Hubert Stratton 10th Bn Essex Regt
Private Richard James Jenkins 2nd Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private Frederick Lawrence 1st Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private Frank Lawrence 5th Bn Royal Berkshire Regt
Private Frederick John (James) Miles 1st Bn Hampshire Regt
Private David George Oliver 1st/4th Bn Hampshire Regt
Private William Thomas Stratton 2nd / 4th Hampshire Regt
Private Gerald Stephen Wickham 7th Bn Canadian Infantry

WORLD WAR TWO

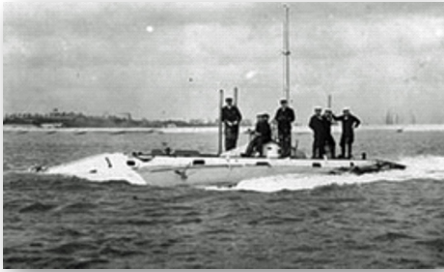
Francis Bowsher
Richard Albert Gunter
Cecil George Hiscock
Alfred Thomas Thame
William George Thame



The Trade - Royal Navy

In the opinion of Admiral Sir Arthur 'Tug' Wilson in 1901 submariners are no better than tradesmen and their dastardly craft 'underhand, unfair, and damned un-English'. Later, as First Sea Lord in 1910, he became an exponent of submarine warfare, although it's doubtful his opinion on the piratical nature of submariners changed. Indeed, it became traditional for British submariners to fly

the Jolly Roger after successful war patrols.



The first Royal Navy submarine was HM Submarine Torpedo Boat No 1 or 'Holland 1'. Completed in 1901

Holland 1 as the first of 5 boats, she was small at just over 100 tons and 64 feet long with a range of only 20nm at 7 knots. She had one torpedo tube with three 18-in torpedoes. She sank undertow for disposal in 1913. Her wreck was located and salvaged in 1982 and is now in the Royal Navy Submarine Museum at Gosport.

Submarine development continued with the 'A', 'B' and 'C' classes. With petrol engines on the surface and electric motors dived, the 'As' were plagued with problems but were improved upon with the 'B' and 'C' classes. All lacked endurance and firepower and were mainly consigned to coastal defence. The 'D' class were a huge improvement with diesel engines for surface running and recharging batteries. A further improvement on 'D' boats was the 'E' class which became the mainstay for Royal Navy submarine operations during the Great War, excelling during the Gallipoli campaign and in the Baltic. At 178 ft long, 'E' boats displaced 665 tons and had a range of 3,000nm at 10 knots. Their maximum surface speed on diesels was 15 knots. They had four 18-in torpedo tubes, five in later boats, a 12-pounder deck gun and a crew of 30.

There were several other small classes, many experimental, culminating in the 'L' class that was an improvement on the 'E' boats and the small 'R' class that could achieve 14 knots dived. There was a perceived need for boats to operate with the Grand Fleet and this resulted in the ill-fated 'K' class. These were huge boats for their time: 339 feet and displacing 2,000 tons. Powered by oil fired boilers and steam turbines, they had a range of 12,500nm on the surface at 10 kts but could achieve speeds of 24 knots. Battery power was maintained while surfaced by a single diesel generator and four electric motors, giving them a speed of 8 knots dived. The 'K' boats were not a success and became known as the 'Kalimity' class due to their many accidents. None were lost to enemy action, but the 'Battle of May Island' (an exercise) sank 2 and badly damaged 3. The last 4 'K' boats were cancelled and replaced with the 'M' class. Smaller than the 'Ks' and with diesel electric propulsion, these mounted a single 12-in battleship gun, and one was even converted to carry a seaplane. They were not a success either and only 3 were completed.

The Germans were slow to realise the potential of Unterseebooten (U-boats) and focussed instead on the ultimately futile attempt to challenge Britain's Grand Fleet. Despite some tactical success at the Battle of Jutland in 1915, the German High Seas Fleet failed to wrest control of the North Sea from the Royal Navy or alleviate the latter's blockade of German imports. Prize Rules requiring warships to stop, search and ensure the safety of crews before sinking civilian vessels removed the U-boats' advantage of stealth and surprise; consequently, it was not until declaration of unrestricted U-boat warfare in 1917 that Germany was able to seriously threaten Britain's maritime trade. Although a fleet of 20 million tons of merchant shipping (2/5ths of the world total) enabled Britain to continue trading, some 8 million tons was sunk by U-boats. Eventually the rate of attrition was eased by introduction of convoys and better anti-submarine weapons and tactics.

In the interwar years submarine development continued although undermined, particularly in the Royal Navy, by pressure to enforce an international ban on submarine warfare. Germany had been banned from operating submarines under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, although continued to maintain core skills by building submarines for and training foreign navies. In the 1930s, the main submarine fleets were France (100 boats), USA (85), Italy (75), Japan (72) and Britain (53). As part of Nazi Germany's rearmament programme, U-boat construction resumed and, by 1939, 57 boats were in commission, although only 24 were capable of oceangoing operations. With subsequent emphasis on the German U-boat threat, it is often forgotten that Italy led the Axis forces in submarines in the opening phases of World War 2 with 115 boats in commission. Type XXI (U2540) now on display at Bremerhaven. Amazingly, given the success of U-boats during the Great War, Nazi Germany still aspired to rebuild her surface fleet. Plan Z, initiated in early 1939, was for a fleet of 10 battleships, 4 aircraft carriers, 3 battlecruisers, 8 heavy cruisers, 44 light cruisers, 68 destroyers and 249 U-boats to be completed by 1948. Some progress was made but the German surface fleet was never a match for the Royal Navy and was systematically destroyed. Its development served to delay production of U-boats, although 1,162 were eventually built. 968 of these were destroyed and 153 surrendered to Allied forces in May 1945.

The Royal Navy built some new classes during the interwar period. The largest of these was the 'S' class of which 62 were built in three groups during the 30s and 40s. At 814 tons and 217 ft in length, 'S' boats were similar in size to the Type VII U-boat - the mainstay of the German submarine fleet. The Type VII had a faster surface speed (17 as opposed to 14 knots) but similar when dived. As commerce raiders, U-boats needed a higher speed for transit and torpedo attacks which were mainly carried out on the surface.

With re-emphasis on U-boat operations, Germany developed larger submarines such as the Type XIV 'Milch Cows' that could replenish other U-boats at sea, thereby

extending their range and endurance. They also introduced snorkels so submarines could recharge their batteries when dived. American submersibles had in fact used snorkels during the Civil War, so it's perhaps surprising it took so long to adopt such equipment. The ultimate U-boat design was the Type XXI with speeds of over 17 knots dived and much longer endurance. Fortunately, only 118 were completed with only 4 operational before Germany's surrender. Some surviving boats were used by Allied navies and as 'blueprints' for diesel-electric boats built in the aftermath of the war – notably British Porpoise and Oberon classes, Soviet Whisky class and US Tang class. As with the Type XXI, these were designed to operate mainly dived using snorkels, more efficient batteries, streamlined hulls, casings and fins, and no deck guns.

In 1939, with 45 million tons, Britain still had the largest merchant fleet – 33% of the world's total. U-boats sank some 12 million tons of a total of 21 million tons lost by the Allies to all causes. Germany eventually lost the war because Britain had an effective convoy system and, with American assistance, could replace merchant ship losses. Improvements in U-boats and tactics, including wolf pack operations, could not keep pace with developments in Allied sensors, weapons, intelligence, and tactics. Had Germany concentrated her resources on U-boats in the first place and enjoyed better cooperation with the Luftwaffe, results might have been very different; certainly, the Type XXI could have been a game changer. Conversely, on the other side of the globe, American submarine operations were highly successful, albeit on a smaller scale, interdicting Japanese trade and helping to eliminate their surface fleet.

Although lagging Germany in submarine development and overall numbers, Britain's priorities were different. Royal Navy submarines were used for clandestine purposes and more limited operations in the Baltic and Mediterranean, interdicting supplies for Rommel's Afrika Korps in North Africa, and latterly against the Japanese. We also produced a new type of midget submarine or 'X' craft as they became known, similar in size to Holland 1. The latter were used for inshore operations, including attacks on the Tirpitz and Japanese ships in Singapore harbour. At its peak, the Royal Navy had 88 submarines in commission with 74 plus 7 midget submarines lost – many due to mines. Of the newer classes of submarine, the 'T' and 'A' classes would be modified with more streamlined casings and fins to serve until the 1960s. HMS Andrew was the last British submarine to mount a 4-in deck gun. An 'A' boat (HMS Alliance) and an 'X' craft are on display at the RN Submarine Museum in HMS Conqueror flying the Jolly Roger on returning to Faslane having sunk ARA General Belgrano.

Soviet submarines were active in support of the Allies, though relatively low-key during World War II. The USSR was however quick to realise their potential during the ensuing Cold War. Unlike Nazi Germany, they did not seek to compete with the surface fleet of the dominant maritime superpower (now USA rather than Britain) and posed a major threat to NATO in the North Atlantic.

A breakthrough in submarine design occurred in 1952 with the construction of the world's first nuclear powered submarine, USS Nautilus. Commissioned in 1954 at 3,500 tons, Nautilus was powered by a nuclear reactor that

generated steam to drive 2 turbines and 2 shafts, giving a dived speed of 23 knots. Theoretically, the boat had unlimited endurance with main limitations food and crew fatigue. The first true submarine had arrived. The Soviets were quick to follow with the November Class in 1958 and the first British nuclear submarine HMS Dreadnought was commissioned in 1963. Dreadnought used a similar propulsion system to the US Skipjack Class with geared steam turbines driving a single shaft at a speed of some 30 knots. Dreadnought was followed by the all-British boats of the Valiant Class.

Given the NATO designation SSN (Ship Submersible Nuclear), these vessels are also known as Hunter Killer or Attack boats with the primary role of destroying enemy submarines. The Valiant Class was followed by Churchill, Swiftsure and Trafalgar Classes, and today's Astute Class (7,500 tons). The Churchill Class HMS Conqueror holds the distinction of being the only SSN to sink a belligerent vessel after she torpedoed the Argentinian cruiser General Belgrano during the 1982 Falklands War.

The most significant change offered by nuclear submarines is as a platform for the nuclear deterrent. The Americans led the way, closely followed by the Soviets. Britain followed with 4 Resolution Class Ships Submersible Ballistic Nuclear (SSBNs or 'Bombers') using the American Polaris missile system. At 7,500 tons, these boats could carry 16 ballistic nuclear missiles with a range of 2,500 nautical miles. Each boat had two crews to ensure at least one SSBN was always on patrol. The SSBN has proved to be the most effective means of deploying a strategic nuclear weapon system; easy to hide and difficult to find, unlike land-based missiles or strategic bombers. For this reason, Polaris was replaced by Trident which has twice the range, operated by four 15,500-ton Vanguard Class SSBNs; under current plans, these will be replaced by the Dreadnought Class in the 2030s.

From humble beginnings, submarines have superseded battleships and aircraft carriers to become the most powerful weapons of war yet devised by mankind. Indeed, it was prescient that Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher - in stark contrast to his

contemporary Admiral Wilson - remarked in April 1904: "It's astounding to me how the very best amongst us fail to realise the vast impending revolution in naval warfare and naval strategy that the submarine will accomplish!" But even the great Lord Fisher could not have foreseen the capacity of the world's SSBNs to destroy the planet several times over. But, perversely, it's fear of Armageddon that has averted major global conflict since 1945.

Cdr Rob Scott RN, Branch Secretary
Droxford & District RBL



HMS Conqueror flying the Jolly Roger on returning to Faslane having sunk ARA General Belgrano

Other News

Airborne Forces Commemoration Service

The Airborne Forces Commemoration Service takes place at Chilbolton airfield, Stonefield Park, Stockbridge SO20 6BL on Sunday 8th September 2024.

Ser No	From	Event	Location	Remarks
1	10h00	Veterans and guests assemble	Airfield	Refreshments available
2	10h30	HM Lord Lieutenant arrives	Airfield	
3	10h50	Standards and Veterans fall in	Airfield	Parade Marshal to supervise
4	11h00	Red Devils Freefall parachute display	Airfield	Subject to weather
5	11h20	March Past	Airfield	On conclusion of para drop. HML-L to take salute
6	11h30	Service of Commemoration	Marquee	
7	13h00	Reception	Village Hall	For invited guests
8	14h00	Disperse		

An Airborne Forces Commemoration Service will take place at Chilbolton Airfield on Sunday 08 Set 24. The event starts at 10h00 and commemorates those members of the airborne forces who took part in Op Market Garden. Principally this involved US 101 Airborne Division who took off from the airfield on 17 Sept 1944.

All RBL branches and guests are very welcome to attend. HM Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, Lt Gen Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL, Maj Gen Chestnutt CBE and the US Defence Attache will be in attendance.



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 South Atlantic Medal 1982



This medal was awarded to all British forces personnel who participated in the conflict for the liberation of South Georgia and the Falklands Islands in the south Atlantic. Period of qualification - one full day's service in the Falklands or South Georgia or 30 days in the operational zone including Ascension Island. A rosette on the ribbon indicates operational participation between 12 July to 21 October 1982. 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

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.