

Minutes from: Newent & District Branch of The Royal British Legion.

Held 25th July 2024 Newent Memorial Hall.

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Post</u>
Richie Balding	Chairman
Keith Urch	Deputy Chairman, BCS Rep, Youth Liaison and Membership
David Sass	Secretary
Helen Axon	Treasurer
Pat Phillips	Deputy Padre
Rick Axon	Bar, Entertainment Member
Dave Pollock	Raffle Coordinator
Elaine Balding	
Tom Heseltine	
Jim Gardiner	
Steve Doyle	Guest
Jim Payne	Guest
Jan Sologub	
Adrian Dover	
John Price	
Peter Sara	Guest Speaker

1. Act of Remembrance.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1900 hours and asked everyone to think of the people who couldn't be with us due to ill health. He then read out the names of the members of the Parish who lost their lives in WW1 and WW2 during the month of August. He concluded with the Act of Remembrance.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Graham Barton, Julia Gooch, Sue Colborne, Jon Miles, Viv Miles, Susan Urch, Pat Price, Colin Britt, Susanne Britt, Simon Mason, Gordon Thorogood, Shaun Westmoreland, and John Price.

3. Guest Speaker – Peter Sara

The Chairman introduced Peter Sara who is the Marie Curie Senior Community Fundraiser for West Midlands and South West, Peter went on to give a very well received presentation about the history and ethos of Marie Curie and how they started caring for terminally ill patients with Cancer but now support anybody including carers with terminally ill conditions especially with end of life care.

His presentation covered a wide variety of topics and described the wide scope of the foundation's work and how its finances were used. He clearly explained that more support was needed and explained the ways in which people can help with funding.

The Chairman thanked Peter for his presentation and in turn Peter thanked the Newent Branch of the RBL for allowing him to present at this meeting, he went on to say a personal thank you to EB for all the time and effort she puts in as the local Marie Curie Box coordinator.

4. Chairman's Report.

Introduction

4.1. Branch Community Coordinator (BCC) Role

This month I've received the following information about the Branch Community Support (BCS) area:

“Over the past six months, the Membership Development team, with support from the BCS working group, have been concentrating their efforts on key BCS areas such as data collection, reporting, management systems, roles and promotional items. Their priorities are to improve the volunteer and beneficiary journey as well as provide a reliable reporting tool to manage BCS as a volunteering service. This is an ongoing piece of work, in which branch and member involvement is essential.”

What this means in real terms is that they are creating a new role called the Branch Community Coordinator who will not have any direct reporting commitments but will act as the liaison for National, County and other community groups and charitable organisations as well as becoming a mentor for BCS reps. The first draft of Terms of Reference are in production but not yet ready to be rolled out, once again if you fancy taking on this role, let me

know.

4.2. Royal British Legion Aspire Leadership Programme

I've been informed that the 2nd Aspire Leadership Programme will take place over the weekends of 11, 12 & 13th October and 24, 25 & 26th October 2024 and will be held at the Battleback Centre at Lilleshall, if anyone would like to apply and attend this course, let me know and I'll pass on all the details.

4.3. Veteran's Coffee Morning – 27 August 2024

Next month's Veterans Coffee Morning will take place at Manna Coffee House on 27 August 2024 starting at 10am, everyone is welcome to attend.

Finally

Don't forget that as normal if anyone needs help in any way at all please do not hesitate to get in contact, and if we can help, we will.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.

5.1. Purchase of RBL Hand Painted Wall Shield

Last month (**in item 6 – AOB**) the Branch voted to purchase an RBL Wall Shield to mount onto the newly made Standards Stand, when looking on-line to purchase the Shield the Chairman found that the RBL Shields are in the current sale at the poppy shop. The Chairman therefore managed to buy a 7" x 6" Hand Painted version for £13.61 (instead of the normal price of £54.99) with post & packaging costing £4.50 the total bill is £18.11 which is far less than expected

5.2. Newent Veteran Veteran 100th Birthday celebration.

Item 6.1. from May's minutes. This matter ongoing. The Secretary has asked the veterans daughter if she can find some photographs showing the veteran in uniform. She mentioned that there was a montage of some images showing him in uniform, with his service record and other memorabilia at her house. She offered to bring it in to show at the next meeting.

Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting were Proposed Keith Urch and seconded by Rick Axon and passed unanimously.

6. Reports by Officers

6.1. Branch Community Support (BCS)

6.1.1. General Information

Branch Remembrance: We remember those veterans, friends and Branch colleagues that are unable to be present this evening: we are here to assist and support both veterans and their families; you only need to contact one of your Committee.

6.1.2. Branch Welfare, Membership, Statistics, Community Support and Youth Liaison.

As a direct result of National Conference, there continues to be further changes within the structure of TRBL HQ and the way in which it delivers its services. TRBL HQ have recently issued information of a new role within the BCS arena, that of Branch Community Coordinator - more information to follow in due course.

6.1.3. Branch Welfare

The Branch continues to aid and support its members, veterans and supporters. Veterans and Branch Members may continue contact the RBL Helpline services via the national network on 0808 802 8080 and The Veteran's Gateway: <https://support.veteransgateway.org.uk>

6.1.4. FoD Armed Forces Support Network - The Veterans Covenant

Your representative, having attended a meeting of the FoD Armed Forces Support Network in the FoDDC offices, was invited to review the veterans' offering at The Wilderness Centre. More information is available to Members upon request.

6.1.5. Branch Membership

Subject to renewals, Branch Membership currently stands at 39 members.

We are saddened to report that one of our other local branches, Minsterworth, is being disbanded and memberships being transferred to Longhope. However, two of their local members live in Highnam, Steve Doyle and Jim Payne who have approached us and may well join our merry band: we look forward to welcoming them in

the near future. The Branch always welcomes new members and encourages them to attend forthcoming events, especially our Branch Coffee Mornings at Manna Coffee House on the Tuesday prior to our monthly Branch meetings.

6.1.6. Branch Statistics

The Branch continues to provide support to its current Members, new veterans moving into our community and a small number via the Telephone Buddy Network. In the event that members identify a comrade in need, they are encouraged to contact a Committee Member or BCS Representative at the earliest convenience. All communications are confidential.

Branch Statistics for this period are therefore as follows:

Total Number of Welfare visits	3
How many beneficiaries visited	2
How many visitors (Branch Community Supporters)	4
Total Welfare Expenditure	NIL
Telephone Buddies:	
Total Number of Calls made by Branch Executive	6
Telephone – How many beneficiaries called	4
Telephone – How many telephone buddies:	4

6.1.7. Branch Community Support and Youth Liaison Activities

Community and Youth Liaison your Branch Representatives continue to liaise with the many varied groups and youth organisations within our community. The process for TRBL Branch Affiliation continues.

6.1.8. Newent War Memorial

Requests for public funding have recently been published on behalf of The Newent War Memorial Committee via the Newent Focus and New Ad. All ideas and assistance to support this worthwhile project are most welcome. Private donations are welcome albeit a baseline funding application has been submitted to Newent Town Council to cover the initial cost of structural review and cleaning (circa £2k) in line with the planned completion date of October 2024. The total cost of the project is circa £10k to include a provision for ongoing maintenance.

6.1.9. Forthcoming Dates for TRBL Branch Diary

1. Remembrance Day Events: November is planning to be a very busy time for The Branch and Newent's community: more details to follow.
2. Military Wives Concert: A repeat of last year's successful event is planned to be held on 24th November in Newent's Memorial Hall: more details to follow.

6.2. Treasurer's Report

There have been no transactions this month. The balance stands at £1004.41.

The end of year financial report (Lomas) has been sent to the MEO. Other paperwork needs to be sent before the September deadline.

6.3. Bar & Entertainments Member.

6.3.1. Military Wives concert

The Entertainments member confirmed that all tickets and posters have been distributed for sale or display. He reminded members that volunteers to assist at the concert need to be at the Memorial Hall by 2pm on the day.

6.3.2. Dates for the Diary:

October 24th – 19:00 AGM Cheese and Wine

November 24th - 14:00 Innsworth Military Wives Choir Newent Memorial Hall volunteers by 2pm please

November 28th – Branch Meeting and Social Evening in Cobblers

7. Any Other Business

7.1. Potential New Members

The Chairman welcomed Steve Doyle and Jim Payne to the meeting both of whom were members of the sadly now closed Minsterworth and District Branch. RBL HQ have transferred the existing members of the Minsterworth and District Branch over to the Longhope Branch and both Steve and Jim are considering whether a move to the Newent Branch would be a better option. Jim and Steve thanked the Branch for the welcome they had received, the Secretary in turn would add both Minsterworth members to the distribution list.

7.2. Local Veterans 100th birthday celebrations.

The Chairman has spoken to the Newent Town Council Veterans Representative and outlined some of the ideas put forward for this very prestigious event, the NTC Rep volunteered to write to any local dignitaries on behalf of NTC and the Branch.

7.3. Royal Artillery Museum Open Day

The Raffle Coordinator announced the details of an Open Day and requested that the branch secretary circulate them to all members. The Secretary agreed.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The meeting closed at 20:33 with the next meeting set for 22nd August 2024 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall.

Meeting Agenda

Newent and District Branch The Royal British Legion

22 August 2024 in The Memorial Hall

1. Welcome and Act of Remembrance.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Chairman's Report.
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.
5. Reports by Officers.
6. Any Other Business.
7. Date of Next Meeting.