

## AGM 2022

### FALKLANDS BRANCH ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

POPPY INN 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022 starting at 7.30pm

#### Present:

Chris Locke, Mark Brook, Nancy Locke, Jonathan Lett, Jeremy Clarke, Jenny Clarke, Sarah Maskell Bott, John Maskell Bott, Wendy McPhee, Sharon Barnes, Ian Barnes, Hegg Hegarty, Taff Davies, Rachel Barratt, Tim Mean, James Bates, Becky Clark, Andrew Brownlee, Danny Pea, Zaki Al-Kharmin, John Childs (JC), Allan Maxwell, Fiona Maxwell, David Morgan, Shirley Morgan, Karl Henry, Derek Clarke

#### Apologies

Becky Rees, Lynn Brownlee, Tamsin Harris, Bob French, Richard Hyslop, Marvin Clarke, Keith Biles, Kathy Biles, David Lewis, Pam Lewis.

The Chairman opened the meeting with the Exhortation and welcomed everybody, he said it was a delight to see everyone, thanks and welcome new members and new faces, Karl Henry, Ian and Sharon Barnes, Danny Pea, Becky Clark, Hegg, Rachel and Zaki.

#### PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS by Commodore Lett

The Chairman introduced Commodore Jonathan Lett, Commander British Forces South Atlantic.

"It's a pleasure to be here as Honorary President, the first AGM he'd been to due to leave last year when JC stepped in on his behalf, so it's great to be here and to reflect 2 years on, it was 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 that he arrived. Good to look back with Covid, getting through Covid and lifting of restrictions and Landing Day and Liberation Day passed in a blur with VIP guests, a Minister and Commandant General RM. My most vivid memory was taking the Minister to the Rose Bar, the governor told me it was a good idea! The Governor and I were both in uniform, there was a piper playing in the street, the FIDF were there in uniform and BSFAI personnel in uniform too and we don't drink regularly in uniform, an outstanding memory and the rest of it was a blur.

We've had the celebrations around the Platinum Jubilee and then the sad passing of HM The Queen and I'm sure we've all got our memories, our touch points of Her Majesty. I don't have a personal one, my experience was I was a Royal Navy career manager at one stage so I was managing Naval Officers of Commander rank but I happened to be managing the Equerry to Her Majesty. I remember when he was promoted, the signal comes out at ten o'clock in the morning and Her Majesty wanted to call in the Equerry to tell him he was promoted personally. So my insights, detailed insights about her, came through him and he would use one word and it was 'duty'. It was about her sense of duty, how important duty was to her and what duty meant to her and that is my abiding memory of the queen, duty to the very last moment.

JC said in his notes that I should say goodbye, I think he's trying to get rid of me but it's not goodbye yet, I still have seven months to go. I look back and the record I will have will be that I have been here the longest of the CBFs. There have been thirty-four Governors and thirty-two CBFs. And there is still a lot I want to achieve in my final 7 months. If I said Landing Day and Liberation Day were busy then my goodness November is going to be even busier, for me Remembrance starts 5<sup>th</sup> November when Rear Admiral Chris Parry arrives with a group, and Remembrance runs through to the 25<sup>th</sup>

November. The most significant part is actually what we are calling 'Op Corporate Veteran', not the Royal Visit or the Minister that's coming, but the 130 Veterans and Next of Kin sponsored by the Secretary of State but on our Voyager. The party is made up of 23 next of kin, 44 veterans, and 63 companions. In total 439 people applied but the criteria was set at people who haven't been before or had not been in the last 15 years. And what do we want to get out of it? For Veterans/NoK hopefully closure, for young service people it should bring history alive. For the wider community its acknowledging 'freedom isn't free'. The RBL have worked hand in glove with us on whose coming down, and will support them on their return through welfare services.

As we reflect on 1982, we also reflect on events in Ukraine, knock on effects fuel costs, financial crisis etc. RBL is making support available to forces personnel in the UK, changes in behaviour due to this uncertain world may well cause RBL to be called upon to help a new generation of veterans.

It's been a real honour to be Honorary President of RBL Falkland Islands and I would like to thank you all for your support.

The Chair thanked Commodore Lett for speaking and the insight into Corporate Veteran.

#### MINUTES

The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and there were no Matters Arising.

#### CHAIRMANS REPORT

Once again I am pleased to report that the branch has continued to make use of Zoom Conference Call facilities for conducting our monthly meetings. While I accept this is perhaps less than ideal from having face-to-face meetings it does ensure that our members in the UK can continue to be part of the Committee. In particular, having Richard Hyslop as part of our team, has been a huge benefit especially during this year of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Falklands War. Also being able to keep Tamsin as our Secretary and Bob French as our IT man on the Committee has been invaluable. My intention is to maintain these monthly meetings, although if at all possible, particularly during the summer months when John and Sarah are in the Falklands, is to hold a face to face meeting with Zoom links back to the UK whenever possible.

It has been another busy year for the branch where we I feel we continue to punch above our weight considering our remoteness and relative small membership. The year has been dominated by the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorations which began on Jan 9 January with an ecumenical service at the Memorial Wood. The Branch was represented by myself and Jenny Clarke our Standard bearer and my wife Nancy. It was a moving event with all 258 names who lost their lives in the conflict read out.

#### SWG

For me the year has been very much focused on coordinating the Falkland end of setting up the Standing With Giants Installations, first beneath Sappers Hill in June and then for tomorrow's set up at the Cross of Sacrifice. This has needed a huge amount of organising and I am indebted to all those who helped, particularly the teams from BFAI and Nigel Bishop Solutions. Without their help this project could not have been undertaken.

Plans to get Dan Barton, his son Luke and Air Cadet Lucy Taylor to the Islands to help with the installation were tricky to say the least, with Dan having his place on the airbridge rescheduled 5 times and at one point completely cancelled. However with perseverance we managed to push

through the issues and they were with us for a very busy three days out of their intended 12 day visit. We manage to set up all 258 Silhouettes and then get Dan and his team to most of the mountain tops along with silhouettes and wreaths for photo shots and drone footage. Perhaps for me the most symbolic was recreating the famous image of RM Corporal Peter Robinson 'Yomping' into Stanley flying the Union Flag from his radio aerial. We managed, we think, to find the exact spot where the photographs was taken. They also went out to your bay and fitted in an early morning call on Governor Nigel Phillips. All in all it was a huge success but just a shame their time was very compressed.

#### RBL Branch Standard

John Whitby had been our Standard Bearer for a number of years but on completion of Sarah, his wife's contract, they both left this year. However I am delighted that Jenny Clarke or Rees as she was before marrying into the Clark Family, volunteered to take over this important duty. Thank you Jenny for offering to undertake this vitally important role within the Branch. Since taking over Jenny has attended most of the memorial this year.

#### Noel Rogers Award

In May the Brach was nominated for the Noel Rogers award, which is given to an Overseas Branch which returned the highest funds from their Poppy Appeal against the Branches membership numbers. So a big thanks you to everybody for achieving this prestigious award. I had hope we would have it with us tonight but unfortunately RBL HQ have had a few issues with the Shield. Initially I was going to collect it while in London early this year, however they admitted they had lost it two days before my intended visit. A new one was quickly made but they then then forgot to post it on to J-S MB who have just flown back to the Islands. However I am hopeful that on our third attempt, Richard Hyslop will be bring it to the Islands later this month.

2022 saw the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, a celebration of and tribute to the Queen's long reign. Sadly 2022 also saw that reign come to an end and a huge outpouring of thanks and celebration of the Queen's long life and devoted service was fitting. Although greatly saddened by the Queen's passing it was a great privilege for me to be in London during the week of mourning. Although not in an RBL capacity I was honoured and yet humbled, to be asked to be part of Her Majesty's funeral procession representing the both the UK and Falkland Islands Maritime sectors. Slow marching through Whitehall, passing the dipped Royal British Legion Branch Standards at the Cenotaph, was for me a moment in time never to be forgotten.

#### Socials

Throughout the year we have held monthly social evenings alongside a number of afternoon events on public holidays including Battle Day and Liberation Day. As always these events would not be possible without the dedicated help an support from Mark Brook our Poppy Bar Manager. Thank you Mark for all that you do for the Branch it is hugely appreciated especially your work in coordinating the wreaths and running the Poppy Appeal collecting tins.

#### Bank

While not publicised, is important that members know the Branch has had on-going issues with Standard Chartered Bank and our Bank account which, without warning, was frozen for, for 4 months. The reasoning for taking this action remains somewhat of a misty but with tighter controls on money laundering it is understood the Bank have been looking at all charity account holders –

just a shame they never told us they were going to do this. The issue was finally resolved by registering the Falklands Branch with the Local Charity Commissioners and although under Royal Charter, we can never a local charity, the RBL Falklands Branch is at least registered in the Falklands. This was undertaken just in time the Poppy Appeal and I am indebted to Keith Biles for finding our way out of this very uncomfortable position. I d believe without a bank account we would have found it very difficult to run this years Poppy Appeal and would certainly not been able to hold the Poppy Ball.

In summing up the year has been full of highs and lows but it whatever way you look back on 2022 I feel it will be a remembered as a remarkable year. The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Falkland's War, The passing of our much loved Monarch, the return to visiting tourism in the Islands and the anticipated visit of the Princess Royal. Thank you to everybody who has supported the Branch during the past year and very look forward to next year which, although as far as I know will not have an additional Bank Holiday, will be a Coronation year.

#### VICE CHAIR'S REPORT

Mark Brook expressed his thanks and those of the committee to member, during a busy year.

Throughout the year he was told 35 wreaths BFSAI laid, total ordered for 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was 250 wreaths. A big thank you to all who supported, especially CWO, Tony Duckett, for overseas wreaths.

A large donation from the Poppy Appeal was £800 last year, tins have now gone out for this year Biggest thing this year was 40<sup>th</sup> commemorative lapel pins, big thank you to ProInstal for point of contact/sale for RBL they have made approx. £750 so far.

He noted that Covid meant that some of the fund raising items were not available this year due to interruption in manufacturing.

He expressed a vote of thanks to Chair, Chris Locke.

#### SECRETARY'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer was not available for the AGM but had forwarded the Accounts with her apologies. £5,000 of the funds in the general fund would be transferred to the Poppy Appeal at the end of the year.

Any concerns or questions can be referred to the Treasurer for answers. As usual the accounts were checked by Alison Baker and she was thanked in her absence.

The Chair thanked Becky in her absence for all her work on the accounts and her continued support to the Branch.

#### OTHER REPORTS

## Welfare

The Chair was delighted that John and Sarah Maskell Bott had got back from the UK just in time for the meeting and warmly welcomed them. They have done sterling work with the purchase of a riser reclining chair, a washable one is on its way in a container and should arrive shortly or by the end of November.

If members knows of anyone who needs the benefit of either the riser/recliner chair or indeed the wheelchair owned by the Branch they should get in touch with the Maskell Botts or Chairman.

## Conference 22

This year's conference was held in London at the Queen Elizabeth Centre, Chair was unable to connect via the remote access which was a shame. Next year's conference is in Torquay in May which Chair hopes to attend. There was a plan that Bob French would attend in person to receive the Noel Rogers award but that didn't transpire and it was sent to Richard Hyslop at the FIGO office.

## Overseas Wreaths

This was covered by Vice-Chairs report. We are grateful to BFSAI and in particular the CWO Tony Duckett for fulfilling this duty on the Branch's behalf.

## Membership

Thanks to Chris and branch for being able to part of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it's a privilege. Membership stands at approximately 56 although not all are resident in the Falklands. Renewing online is still problematic.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

<b>Position</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>
Chair	Chris Locke	Jeremy Clarke	John Maskell Bott
Vice Chair	Mark Brook	John Maskell Bott	Jeremy Clarke
Secretary	Tamsin Harris	Sarah Maskell Bott	Nancy Locke
Treasurer	Becky Rees	Derek Clarke	Hegs Hegarty
Membership	Tim Mean	Jenny Clarke	Wendy McPhee
IT Expert	Bob French	David Morgan	Danny Pea
Committee Members	Keith Biles		
Taken as one vote	Richard Hyslop	Sarah Maskell Bott	Taff Davies
	Nancy Locke		
Welfare	John & Sarah Maskell Bott	Chris Locke	Mark Brook
All votes were unanimous			

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:**

Jonathon Lett reflecting on Corporate Veteran, great response from community, what are local RBL doing. Chair as Mark to respond, Mark explained that the Poppy Inn would be open Thursday and

Saturday evening from 7pm then 1pm to 5pm on Remembrance Day. Chair also mentioned that the 40<sup>th</sup> Committee are sponsoring 13 independent veterans, not part of Corporate Veterans, who will attend the Poppy Ball.

CBF grateful that RBL Branch are offering support in the Poppy Inn throughout the period as a comfortable and safe space. He will try to bring the Minister, Rt Hon Dr Andrew Murrison, People Veterans and Service Families Minister, veteran himself serving 16 years in Royal Navy as Surgeon Commander.

Chair said maximum exposure for the Poppy Inn is vital at this point.

CBF thanked Chair and his wife for their incredible double act, Mark and the other officers including Tamsin and Becky

### **Standing with Giants**

Tim Mean – impact of SWG, particularly with the schools was very worthwhile. Especially the Sue Whitley profile outside FICS, the impact was well worth the effort.

Ian Barnes expressed how spectacular in the snow the image created at sunset was.

Wendy McPhee asked how many were going up for Remembrance, the answer was 258 at Cross of Sacrifice, some at the churches, and a couple at the Welcome to Stanley sign.

The Giants will be taken down approximately 26<sup>th</sup> November so that the Royal Visitor will see them, which will be during the working week.

Heggs introduced himself and was welcomed.

### **Remembrance**

Chair is going to the Junior School to give a talk about Remembrance invited by Tim Mean, FICs are doing Pennies with Poppies again and the money will again be added to the appeal

Chair asked best way of communicating, had been using Facebook but do people prefer emails? Andy Brownlee suggested a WhatsApp Group, a number of people agreed. Chair will send an email to members to get contact numbers.

### **Poppy Inn update**

Still don't know what's happening to the building, we have a rolling monthly contract with FIG, there has been an ExCo paper and it may become government offices.

### **Socials**

Chair expressed thanks to Mark for keeping the Inn Bar running. Hopefully we will have more bingo and social nights in the Poppy Inn over the next year.

### **Meeting Closed 21.08**

FALKLANDS BRANCH BAR COMMITTEE AGM 2022

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

POPPY INN 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022 starting at 8.30pm

### Present:

Chris Locke, Nancy Locke, Mark Brook, Jonathan Lett, Jeremy Clarke, Jenny Clarke, Sarah Maskell Bott, John Maskell Bott, Wendy McPhee, Sharon Barnes, Ian Barnes, Jason 'Hegs' Hegarty, AW Taff Davies, Rachael Barratt, Tim Mean, James Bates, Becky Clark, Andrew Brownlee, Danny Pea, Zaki Al-Khamiti, John Childs, Allan Maxwell, Fiona Maxwell, David Morgan, Shirley Morgan, Karl Henry

### Apologies

Becky Rees, Keith Biles, Kathy Biles, Pam Lewis, David Lewis, Marvin Clarke, Lynn Brownlee, Richard Hyslop, Tamsin Harris, Bob French, Stuart Walker

The Bar Committee AGM took place immediately after the Branch AGM.

### Bar Manager Report:

Mark Brook explained that the Bar had been busy with the regular monthly Social evenings as well as the quiz and bingo nights. Sadly Lynn Brownlee remains in the UK whilst her parents remain unwell and also during the year the Bar Committee Chair John Whitby left the islands at the end of his wife's contract term. Mark Brook expressed his thanks to John for his efforts but indicated that new members for the committee were essential.

The Poppy Inn bar had been able to transfer the sum of £500 to the Poppy Appeal account.

### Election of Officers

The election of officers took place as follows:

Position	Name	Proposer	Seconder
Chair	Mark Brook	Nancy Locke	Chris Locke
Bar Manager	Mark Brook	Chris Locke	Andrew Brownlee
Secretary	Lynn Brownlee	Chris Locke	Jason Hegarty
Treasurer	Alex McShane	Jeremy Clarke	John Childs
Committee Member	Jenny Clarke	John Maskell Bott	Wendy McPhee
Committee Member	Jeremy Clarke	James Bates	Karl Henry

The meeting closed at 9.08pm