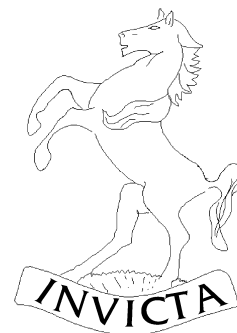




# KENT COUNTY NEWS

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**August 2011**

***BRANCH SECRETARIES: PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ITEMS IN THIS MONTHLY CIRCULAR SHOULD FORM PART OF YOUR REPORT***

## **COUNTY CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

I expect like me you were all surprised to hear of the sudden death of Doug Pursglove. He was a respected County Parade Marshall, County Standard Bearer also an important member of the Paddock Wood and District Branch. He will be greatly missed and our thoughts go out to Eve and his family.

I'm afraid I am still getting reports from Branch Chairmen, Treasurers and Membership Secretaries that they are unaware of the contents of these newsletters. Too many Membership Secretaries have said they are unaware of the recent changes to forms. Branch Secretaries must ensure that information is passed on.

The Membership Seminar, held at the Capel Morris Centre on 13th July included a very good presentation from the Head of Membership, Mr Bob Gamble. I am sorry to say that only 39 members turned up on the day despite 52 having said they would be attending. Those 39 represented just 21 out of the county's 81 branches which I find very demoralising. Of the remaining 60 branches, 6 had said they would be attending but didn't turn up, 24 said they could not or would not attend and there was no response from the other 30. I'd just like to thank those that did attend and hope that you found it worthwhile. Bob Gamble certainly appreciated it and took some valid points away with him.

It's disappointing that only 36.7% of our members pay by DDSP. This is the best way for subs to be paid and also saves money. I would like to see this figure rise to at least 50% this year. Our gift aid stats are better at 50.11%. This costs the member nothing except to put a tick in a box so let's get this up to at least 75% this year. This would bring more money into the General Fund and help keep the Membership Fee down.

There are still events for the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary taking place - I attended a very pleasant evening at Elham Valley Branch at their Gurkha presentation.

The Standard Bearers Competition is on Sunday 9th October and I would like more of our Standard Bearers to enter this year. Chairmen, please urge your Standard Bearer to enter.

*Aussie Walker*

## **DONATIONS TO COUNTY FUNDS**

The following donations have been gratefully received:

Woodchurch Branch - £30

Euromobilty - £50

Raymond and Blanche Lawson Charitable Trust - £5,000

## **IN MEMORIUM**

Donations have been received in memory of:

Mr Peter Sellars - £570

Mrs Marion Stevens - £416.60

## **COUNTY DIRECTORY**

Attached are replacement pages for the County Directory. The changes concern the County Officers, the Ashford and Paddock Wood Branches and the Halstead and Littlebourne e-mail addresses. I also include an up-to-date list of the County Poppy Appeal Organisers.

## **BRANCH AND CLUB BANK ACCOUNTS**

Some branches and clubs have recently returned their DDSP Rates Report showing a change in bank account details. These details are held on the membership database so that the branch or club subscription (not the Membership or Affiliation Fee) of those members who pay by DDSP may be paid to the appropriate branch/club. If incorrect details are held then the branch/club will not receive those payments. It is everyone's interest to let me know as soon as any bank details change so that the appropriate form can be completed and returned to Head Office.

## **BRANCH FUNDS INITIATIVE (BFI)**

For the information of Branch Chairmen and Treasurers I am attaching the rules of the BFI for those that may be interested. I hold copies of the necessary forms. Please note the first three paragraphs contain information that is relevant to all branches, whether they have funds with the BFI or not.

## **COUNTY PARADE**

This year's County Parade takes place on 7th August at Maidstone's All Saint's Church, Maidstone. Due to the high cost of road closures there will be no formal parade through the town but all Standards and guests should muster in the gardens of the Archbishop's Palace at 2pm. The service will commence at 3pm. A good turn out of Standards and Members would be appreciated. Letters have already gone to Branch Secretaries with a proforma to be returned.

## **MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION FOR ANNUAL RENEWAL**

- Affiliation Fees are now to be called Membership Fees.
- The Membership Fee will increase £1 this year to £12. This starts on 1 Oct 2011. Conference voted to increase the fee £1 per year for the next 6 years.
- Please note that the Legion membership year ends on 30 September. Applications made from 1st July will be charged the annual membership fee for the following year (£12) and will receive their Membership Card with an expiration date of October of the following year (i.e. up to 15 months of Membership).
- Replacement cards will not be issued as of 1st June. Exceptional circumstances will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Letters showing "Proof of Membership" may be issued should they be required.

## **ISLE OF THANET FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE**

Tickets for this prestigious event, which takes place at the Margate Winter Gardens on Friday 28th October, are now available from the Winter Gardens Box Office. The numbers are 01843 296111 and 292795. Branch Standards are most welcome, the more the better, so to book a place for your Standard please phone the County Chairman on 01843 224805.

## **COUNTY STANDARD BEARER COMPETITION**

The Annual Standard Bearers Competition and the Novice Standard Bearers Competition, combined with the Womens' Section Competition and the Youth Competition, will be held at the TA Centre, London Road, Ditton, Kent ME20 6DB on Sunday 9th October 2011 commencing at 1 pm. It is hoped that Branches will encourage their Standard Bearer to participate and, in addition, it is hoped that members will come along and give the maximum support to the competitors. Doors will be open from 11.30 am.

The application form is attached to this newsletter and should be returned to County Office by 16th September.

## **YOUTH AFFILIATIONS**

As the recently appointed County Youth Officer, I would just like to remind everyone of how to affiliate a youth group to your branch. It would appear that some branches are sending paperwork directly to Head Office where it goes astray, with the result that no affiliation certificates are received. If you are planning an affiliation it would be very helpful if you would first inform me. I can provide all paperwork necessary for an affiliation but it is essential that it is returned to me and NOT SENT DIRECTLY TO HEAD OFFICE! I can be contacted on 01303 862779 or by email [sjfos@fsmail.net](mailto:sjfos@fsmail.net) Of course, if you would like any help at all regarding affiliations or youth members, please do not hesitate to contact me. I'm here to help!

*Susan Foster*

## **ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL CONCERT**

After the highly successful concert at Canterbury Cathedral in May our second concert will be held at Rochester Cathedral on Saturday 1st October commencing at 7.30pm. The second half will include a repeat performance of the 'Last Night at the Proms' type finale that proved to be so popular at Canterbury. Tickets at just £10 each will go on sale shortly and can be obtained either from County Office or from the Visitor Centre in Rochester High Street. See the attached flyer for details.

Your help is requested in publicising the concert as widely as possible to ensure we get a 'full house' so that we can boost the 90th Anniversary funds to the full. Further copies of the flyer, in A3, A4 and A5 sizes, are available from County Office.

## **90TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS**

I have included an idea of some of the Branch led 90th Anniversary Events that have taken, and will be taking, place in the County. These are just some of the events and I apologise if you have run an event but it is not listed. If you have held your event, please let us know how it went and how much you raised. We want to show everyone how well Kent supported the 90th.

*Jane Taylor* CFR (East Kent)

## **THE BIG LOTTERY FUND**

Second World War veterans can apply to be funded to visit the areas where they saw active service. Please see the attached letter which gives more details.

## **WELFARE**

Wednesday 29 June 2011 saw another successful Poppy Supporters Day, this time at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park near Hythe. The highlight of the day was a presentation given by three of our Poppy Ambassadors who spoke about the help they have received from The Royal British Legion and how it had changed their lives. Once again, Michael Hallam, who some of you may remember from Chilham Castle last year, gave an imaginative presentation based around the problems he has with his short term memory loss.

You can read more about our Poppy Ambassadors at [www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/kent](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/kent). Both the Welfare and Fundraising teams were available during the day to chat through problems and answer questions from over 160 attendees. The sun shone and the tea and coffee flowed and the day was deemed another huge success. Our thanks go out once again to all our volunteers who make it all possible.

Our Veterans Outreach Support drop-in centres held on the third Wednesday of every month continue to be a huge success. If you know someone who would benefit from a visit to VOS, please contact the County Office on 01622 722292 for more details or visit [www.voskent.co.uk](http://www.voskent.co.uk) Please see the attached flyer for details of the next session on 17th August at the Capel Morris Centre.

## **CENOTAPH CEREMONY**

The Royal British Legion will once again be co-ordinating the contingents attending the Cenotaph Ceremony & March Past on Sunday 13th November 2011. All those who have served in Her Majesty's Armed Forces under British Command are eligible to take part. In addition a limited number of non Ex-Service Legion members may join the March Past. Full details of how Legion Members can participate in the March Past are shown on the last page of this year's Remembrance Weekend Special Circular previously sent to all branches.

Completed applications forms for tickets must be returned to the County Secretary by 23rd August and tickets will be despatched from Head Office during September. Because of the date I have to submit the applications to Head Office, any application received after the due date will not be accepted. If any members require a carer for the day (one carer per participant) they must also be in possession of a ticket which must come out of our allocation.

I must remind members that they are likely to be standing in Whitehall for at least 1½ hours prior to the March Past then marching for a distance of over 1 mile, possibly in inclement weather.

## **THE POPPY SHOP**

The Poppy Shop is now up and running and their items can now be seen on their web site at [www.poppystore.org.uk](http://www.poppystore.org.uk) A copy of their price list is attached to this newsletter although it is a few months old. I am assured it will be replaced shortly.

## **BRANCH ACTIVITIES**

The Canterbury Branch is presenting a Festival of Music and Song at the Salvation Army, White Horse Lane, Canterbury at 7.30pm on Saturday 17th September. Music includes the Salvation Army Canterbury Corps Band and the Snowdown Colliery Welfare Male Voice Choir.

The Tonbridge Branch will be holding their Parade and Service of Re-Dedication on Saturday 24th September commencing at 6pm followed by a reception at the Angel Centre, Tonbridge at 8pm.

Please see the attached flyers for further information on the above.

## ASHFORD BRANCH



The sponsored walk of the West Highland Way and walk up Ben Nevis is now completed. The photograph shows me at the start of the walk. The journey was certainly a challenge - it rained for 4 of the 6 days and it was a little miserable at times. Good old military jokes like 'it isn't training if it isn't raining' spring to mind. I was very lucky on the last day to have a good day to go up Ben Nevis (3 hours up and 4 to come down) and the views were magnificent. A personal thank you to Allan Black who kindly accompanied me on day 4 of the walk between Crianlarich and Bridge of Orchy.

For those of you who have already sent me the money - many thanks. For the remainder who would like to sponsor me please send a cheque made out to Ashford Royal British Legion to me at 103 Rylands Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent TN24 9LR.

*Tony Hall*

## CHARTHAM BRANCH

Chartham Branch is holding a 90th Anniversary Parade on 11th September 2011. Muster at the Branch building Bolts Hill, Chartham, Canterbury CT4 7JX at 12.45 for 13.15. We will have the Rochester Pipe Band to march to St. Mary's Church and to march back to the Legion building after the service. There will be a buffet and refreshments afterwards. All Standards are welcome to attend (as are Branch officers and members) and that includes Women's Section Standards so please pass this on. For further information, please contact the Branch Secretary, Ann Austen at [annjaneausten@aol.com](mailto:annjaneausten@aol.com) or on 01227 731385.

## BIRCHINGTON BRANCH

I would like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who supported our Summer Fayre and to all the helpers, members and shopkeepers who donated prizes. Also many thanks to those who worked hard setting up and clearing away on the day. We managed to raise the magnificent total of £666.41p. One raffle prize remains unclaimed - Yellow 388 (name on ticket - Warren, but phone number given is incorrect). Please ring 843334 to claim the prize."

## BIRCHINGTON BRANCH

On 22nd June we held a Charity Golf Day at London Beach Golf Club in Tenterden which was run for the benefit of the Legions' 90th Anniversary and also for Wittersham Church, in equal shares, and our members actively participated in promoting and organising the big day. The Legion share to date (there may be a small amount more depending on Gift Aided donations) is £2,699.70.

### **ELHAM VALLEY BRANCH**

On Friday 8th July the Elham Valley Branch held a very successful evening to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Gurkha Rifles, who are based nearby in Shorncliffe. Visitors to the occasion, amongst whom were Aussie Walker and Anne Hill, were piped into Elham Village Hall by the Regiment's Pipe Major and then were able to chat to 15 riflemen who had brought along guns, sniper rifles and other equipment.

Major David Jones and Lieutenant Charlie Russell gave an excellent presentation with photos about the Regiment's recent tour to Afghanistan and we learned about the challenges of living with the local people and the local authorities. All the service personnel present have served at least once in Afghanistan and it was fascinating to hear of their experiences. The net proceeds from the event - amounting to £1,048 - were split evenly between the Poppy Appeal and the 1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles.



### **SITTINGBOURNE & MILTON BRANCH**

On Saturday 9th July the Branch, along with the Sittingbourne Branch of the Buffs Association, attended the Menin Gate parade. The Chairman, Mr Fred Langworthy, laid a wreath accompanied by the Standard Bearer, Mr Norman Williams. £30 was raised for the Poppy Appeal.

### **STAPLEHURST SUB-BRANCH**

The Branch is holding an Open Evening on Friday 16th September entitled "Where does the Poppy money go?" The speaker is Mrs Ann Hill. The aim is to explain to Poppy Collectors, Legion members and the general public how the money 'in the pot' is used. The meeting starts at 8 pm at Staplehurst Village Centre, South Hall, which is located on the A229 in the middle of the village.

### **SUTTON VALENCE & DISTRICT BRANCH**

The branch held a successful coffee morning on behalf of the 90th Anniversary and raised the sum of £358.35.

## **THE BRITISH MILITARY TOURNAMENT**

Tickets are now on sale for the British Military Tournament 2011 which will be held at Earls Court on 2nd, 3rd and 4th December. It's an unforgettable opportunity to marvel at the skills of the Armed Forces while raising much-needed funds for three charities. Set within a dazzling arena production, the British Military Tournament 2011 focuses on the story of 'the special relationship' between the United Kingdom and the United States.



The programme includes: Over 700 participants, including active combat servicemen and women plus musicians from the UK and US, skilled historical American Civil War re-enactors, over 100 horses and modern military vehicles, the legendary Field Gun Run, the Musical Drive of the King's Troop, the White Helmets (Royal Signals Motorcycle Display Team).

Performance times are 7.30pm Friday 2nd, 2.30 & 7.30pm Saturday 3rd and 12.00 & 4.30pm Sunday 4th December. Performance time is approximately 2½ hours including an interval.

Ticket prices are £29.75, £39.75, £49.75 for Adults, £22.75, £30.75, £37.75 for Children 16 years and under and £65.75 for VIP Tickets. Booking and transaction fees apply. Please note that the show is not suitable for children under five. Tickets are available from Ticketmaster (0844 248 5026), EC&O Earls Court (0870 903 9033) and See Tickets (0871 620 7051).

Tickets for disabled patrons should be booked directly with Earls Court - the telephone number is 020 7370 8078. Half price tickets are available for disabled patrons and carers (one carer per booking). Prices are £14.90 per ticket for seating on the wheelchair platform on Level 1, £19.90 for seating on the wheelchair platform on the ground floor, and £19.90 for seating within the section reserved for ambulant disabled patrons.

## **BOOK NEWS**

I have completed a three-volume book entitled '*In Continuing & Grateful Memory, The Menin Gate*'. Major Tonie and Mrs Valmai Holt have kindly written the introduction and supported the project. The books contain a history of the Menin Gate, has individual cameos on nearly 1,500 of those commemorated on its panels, and is profusely illustrated with photographs, illustrations and maps. I have attached a copy of a flyer for those that may be interested - every sale helps! I am selling the book via: [www.remembering1418.com/the-menin-gate-p-7.html](http://www.remembering1418.com/the-menin-gate-p-7.html) which may not be the most exciting website but it just about suits the purpose.

It is my first publication however I have a number of others in the same series in production that will be published later in the year. I am also about to reprint twelve 'out of print' books in a series entitled '*I Was There*' concentrates on reproducing the books published by families as a tribute to their son who was killed. The books are long out of print and I have written a second section with a commentary on many of those who are referred to in the original text. Each book, with its letters home from the front, give a fascinating insight into the life in the front line and their activities both in and out of the line. These will become available at the end of August.

*Paul Foster*

*Tony West*

County Secretary

Email: [twest@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:twest@britishlegion.org.uk)



## LEST WE FORGET

Notification has been received that the following members have passed on:

Mr Doug Pursglove  
County Parade Marshal  
Secretary & Treasurer Paddock Wood Branch

Mr Derek Bee	Ashford Branch
Mr Kenneth Custance	Birchington Branch
Mrs Joan Read-Milne	Downs Branch
Mr Richard Richardson	Hawkhurst Branch
Mr Themtan Dalal	“
Mr Roy Gleason	Knockholt Branch
Mrs Jean Hogben	Minster & Monkton Branch
Mr Reginald Coombes	Ramsgate Branch
Mr Colin Scorey	Royal British Legion Village Branch
Mr James Stone	“
Mrs Helen Pennells	Sandgate Branch
Mr Denis Frain	Woodchurch Branch - Standard Bearer
Mrs Doris West	Woodnesborough & Ash Branch



*Our deepest sympathies go to their families and friends*

