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County News

**The Newsletter of
Worcestershire
County**

Summer 2011 Edition

County Rally

The 2011 County Rally was held on Saturday 2 July, on the Meadow In Catshill, near Bromsgrove. Hosted by Lickey End Branch, the service was led by the County Chaplain, Canon David Salt, with the 90th year anniversary prayer led by Lickey End's Chaplain, Reverend Neil Bennett.

There was a good turn out of standards from the Worcestershire branches, with the parade led by Pensnett Boys Brigade Company.



After the service, Blackwell Concert Band provided the entertainment, while visitors were able to visit the many stalls, partake of tea and cake and enjoy a nice sunny afternoon in Worcestershire.

Thanks go to Lickey End Branch, to Birmingham County for the use of their Mobile Display Unit, and all of the standard bearers who made the march and service a great event

1921 Shoulder to shoulder with all who Serve **2011**

WELFARE NEWS

These are two case studies that have been used in a press article promoting The Royal British Legion in Worcestershire.

1. This 86 year old was confined to his house as he had very little mobility and although he could manage inside with sticks or a walker he could not go outside. He had angina and had also had suffered a heart attack and then a heart bypass. He wanted to have some freedom back and be able to go out to local shops.

He was provided with an EPV.

He wrote:-

I wish to thank everyone for the use of this wonderful electric scooter. It has given me a new lease on life which I will be forever grateful. I have been to the local shops and done my own shopping, first time for two years and been to the local park and already feel that I am less of a burden to other people'

2. A 75 year old man living alone suffered a stroke two years ago and his mobility has suffered along with him having arthritis. He had lived in his own property for 30 years without central heating having always been an active person he never felt the need for it but since his stroke his movement had slowed considerably and his health was severely poor when it was cold. He would never have been able to afford to install this himself living on a basic pension. He approached for help with installing heating and with a grant from Health Through Warmth and The Royal Signals Association towards the cost the balance provided by the legion the heating was installed and he will not have to endure another winter in a freezing cold property.

He wrote:-

'I have my home back again. I have been sleeping in the living room on the settee in a sleeping bag for the last few years. The upstairs was a no go area at night during the winter months. Thank you so much for all your efforts to assist with my heating problems'

Annette – County Manager

Contact details: - asummers@britishlegion.org.uk or 01905 621934

Katie – County Managers Assistant

Contact details: - khumphries@britishlegion.org.uk or 01905 621051

GET KNITTING

Across the country, The Royal British Legion has worked with volunteers and local Wool Shops to knit Beanie Hats, for our troops, as this was identified as something they needed. In September this year. 2nd Battalion The Mercian Regiment will be going to Afghanistan. They have very strong links with Worcestershire, and they would be very pleased to receive the hats. Annette has been coordinating the project locally, and has the support of a local shop, Hopmarket Wools in Worcester. They are offering a discount of 50 pence per ball of wool, and a simple to follow pattern will be given away free with each purchase. Finished hats can be left at the shop, along with the wool band, or dropped off at the county office in Ombersley.

I was invited to a Poppy Appeal Collectors award night and again made enquiries of the Bugle, but was again unable to discover it's whereabouts. My second visit to the club was a few years later, and to my amazement there hanging behind the bar was the one and only SILVER BUGLE.. On enquiring with the stewardess I was told that it had been found in a box that had lain in the home of Mary Joy, Poppy Appeal Coordinator for the County and that some one had hung it behind the bar as an ornament.

With the passing of time Bromsgrove Royal British Legion closed yet again and the elusive SILVER BUGLE went missing again. On the night of 19th May 201, in the 90th year of The Royal British Legion, the Chairman of Bromsgrove Branch announced that at their 90th year anniversary event a SILVER BUGLE would be used to sound the Last Post.

If this is that SILVER BUGLE, then those of the younger generation are now trustees and are asked to remember those that went before and how much it meant to them.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM and all that SERVE.

Bill Goode.

ARTICLES FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

As this is **your** newsletter if you have any news or forthcoming events then please send them to the County Press Officer. It is intended to publish a newsletter on a quarterly basis, so we need input from our members and branches.

Alan Kelly. E-mail: alan@alkel.co.uk. Telephone: 0121 445 2574.

REPATRIATION WOOTON BASSETT

We do not know whether we will be witnessing another Repatriation here in Wootton Bassett. As from 1st September the Repatriation of our boys and girls who have paid the ultimate price will be handled by RAF Brize Norton and Oxfordshire County Council will be responsible for informing people of any future repatriation dates and times. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support you have given. It is not just Wootton Bassett people who have been here in the town, but a lot of people who have taken the time to travel to be with us to pay respect and honour to our troops. This has given comfort to those who have lost their loved ones, and moral support to those boys and girls serving overseas. On 31st August it is planned to have a Sunset Ceremony to mark the end of repatriations as we know them at present. During the ceremony the Union Flag which has been lowered to 'half-mast' on each occasion, will be taken down, ceremoniously folded and handed over to the Oxfordshire people on 1st September, as a mark of continuation of repatriations.

Anne

Repatriation Liaison Officer for Wootton Bassett RBL

LIFE OF A SILVER BUGLE

What I am about to relate was either told to me in part or events that have concerned me in my life time.

Some time between the Great Wars a SILVER BUGLE was presented to the Bromsgrove British Legion by the Worcestershire Regiment. Sometime during the 1939/45 war or just after, the SILVER BUGLE went missing. It was feared that it would not be seen again.

So the story goes after the war my dad George Goode, who was a founder member of the Bromsgrove British Legion and Veteran of North Africa, went on a coach trip with other Veterans of Burma, most who had been in the 8th Battalion Worcester Regiment Territorial's. The trip was over the border into a neighbouring county, " and we all know what that meant". During one of the many stops my dad noticed a SILVER BUGLE hanging behind the bar and asked if he could take a look at it. The landlord readily agreed and my dad took it to show the other lads.

It remained on the table until they decided to leave with the SILVER BUGLE. The landlord demanded it be left at the pub, so he was told of the history and asked how he had acquired it. He had bought it off a bloke and said that no one was leaving with it unless a price was paid, and force would be used if necessary. He was told very clearly that a price would not be paid, that force would not be a problem, and if he wanted his money back he would have to speak to the seller as the SILVER BUGLE was definitely going back to Bromsgrove British Legion. It came back to Bromsgrove!

On my return from Suez in 1957 I was invited to Bromsgrove British Legion by my dad for a drink and saw the SILVER BUGLE for the first time. At this time I met Arthur Graham, a Veteran Of Arnhem, who had been my dad's best mate from the 8th Battalion and who had also been my Sergeant Major and Band Instructor in the Cadets. He later related the above to me.

The SILVER BUGLE remained at Bromsgrove British Legion Club, in Worcester Road, for many years, as I often observed it when there with my dad. After my dad passed away in 1973 and I had now moved to Worcester, I transferred my membership to Worcester City Branch.

With working nights, and bringing up a family I was unable to visit Bromsgrove Royal British Legion and was that the club had indeed closed until I was told about it by an ex-committee member while at work at Garringtons. On asking him about a photo of the 8th Battalion that had hung in the club which had belonged to my dad, and of the SILVER BUGLE, I was told that a lot of the stuff had been taken and put into storage in case other premises should be found in the future.

I made many enquiries of the years, and eventually was able to track down the photograph but not the SILVER BUGLE. Eventually Bromsgrove Royal British Legion re-opened on The Birmingham Road.

TENBURY WELLS BRANCH

Tenbury Wells & District Branch were represented at the "1941" weekend held on the 9th/10th July 2011 The standards of the RBL and the Royal Naval Association Tenbury Branch took part in a parade through Tenbury culminating in a drum-head service. Over the two days the branch gained three new members for the RBL and collected over £100 in donations for the Poppy Appeal.



ORGANISING AN EVENT?

Are you holding an event for The Royal British Legion, but don't have the required kit? If so, Alan Kelly, our Press Officer has the following available, to borrow, free of charge, for RBL events:

- 6m x 3m White gazebo, with sides.
- 6m x 3m White gazebo. No sides.
- 3m x 3m White gazebo.
- 3m x 3m Blue gazebo.
- 6ft trestle tables, that folds in half to fit into boot of car. X2.
- Blue tables clothes to cover 6ft tables, with white decoration piece. X 10.
- Large electric tea urn. X2
- Large tea pots. X 2
- Blue padded folding chairs. Will fit into boot of car. X 24
- White lectern.
- Small petrol generator.

The County Office has available various PVC banners and pop up banners promoting The Royal British Legion, as well as posters and literature.

90TH ANNIVERSARY TEA PARTY

On Saturday 4th June, Royal British Legion members in the county, aged 90 and older were invited to an afternoon tea party at Kidderminster Town Hall. In total, 34 members along with partners or carers attended and were entertained by two musical acts whilst enjoying wine, tea, cakes and strawberries. The Lord Mayor of Kidderminster officially opened the party and then spent time at the tables talking to our members.



STOKE WORKS & HANBURY BRANCH

Following our successful visit to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, last year, our enthusiastic supporters, especially the poppy sellers, determined we would visit Bletchley Park this year. An introductory talk from Dr Mark Baldwin (contact Cleobury Mortimer Branch) had set the scene for some of us. With a group booking made, to provide necessary refreshment and the help of a guide, we left the Recreation Club in Stoke Prior in our charabanc – or what Harris's now provide instead.



The story of Bletchley Park is a good one and it is well told. The simple history is interesting enough, but the personalities and code-breaking dimensions add significantly to it. The tour of the buildings was expertly described, provoking plenty of questions about the displayed material. The importance of the intelligence gained was effectively brought out, as was the part played by the development of computing.

Without telling more of the story itself, I can say that our members were delighted with their excursion and the excellence of services provided at the Park. If you haven't been, it's time you planned the trip . . .

CENOTAPH CEREMONY 2011

The Royal British Legion will once again be co-ordinating the Contingents attending the Cenotaph Ceremony & March Past on Sunday 13 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.

For further information or for an application form to attend, please contact Shaun McCarthy, County Secretary on 01905 621458 or smccarthy@britishlegion.org.uk

Note that completed applications must be received at Head Office by 31st August

ANTIQUES ROADSHOW

BBC1 television's 'Antiques Roadshow' will be recording a special edition of the programme at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire on Thursday 1st September. The show, which is due to air on Remembrance Sunday, will be presented by Fiona Bruce, along with a small team of antiques experts. All are welcome to come and watch the filming, which will take place between 9am and 5pm.

Participants in the filming have been selected in advance following an appeal at the end of a programme last year. As a result, the public will not be able to bring personal objects for valuation.

The show's resident Arms and Militaria specialists, Graham Lay and Bill Harriman, will be joined by Hilary Kay and Paul Atterbury, both of whom have extensive knowledge of objects with an interesting social history. The screening of Antiques Roadshow is expected to further build the national and international profile of the Arboretum, which is part of The Royal British Legion family of charities. Filming is scheduled to take place around a wide range of different memorials on the site, describing the stories behind them and illustrating the wide diversity of the organisations and individuals represented within its 150 acres of wooded parkland

The team feels incredibly honoured that the Arboretum has been chosen to host this special Remembrance episode of the Antiques Roadshow. It further confirms that it is the place "Where our Nation remembers". This is expected to be a very busy day at the Arboretum, so those wishing to visit and watch the filming are advised to come early and to use the signposted Park and Ride service. Please call the Arboretum on 01283 792333 if you have any questions.

Approximate Schedule:

9am to 5pm	Armed Forces Memorial
9am	The Beat
10:40am	Shot At Dawn
11:40am	Polish Armed Forces Memorial
2:20pm	Civil Defence Memorial Grove
3:00pm	Far East Prisoners of War
3:40pm	Royal Naval Review
4:20pm	National Ex-Prisoner of War Association Memorial

COUNTY WEBSITE

Don't forget to visit our Website on a regular basis for all the latest news.

www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/worcestershire/groups--branches

LICKEY END SMASH POPPY APPEAL TARGET

Lickey End Branch have triumphed in not only achieving the target that they set but smashing it before August!

Branch Chairman, Dale Carter, reported “ When my Secretary and I got involved with the poppy appeal for the first time last November we set a very demanding target of £4000.00. Lickey End had previously hovered around the £2000.00 mark but we felt we should stretch ourselves and see if we could double it by October. The donations from the County rally have now taken us over the £4000 mark” .

SPECIAL OFFER TO COUNTY MEMBERS

All members of the Worcestershire British Legion can get 10% off any work undertaken by Memorials of Worcester. Furthermore all new headstones come with a free 10 year guarantee.

Memorials of Worcester is an independent family owned and run monumental masonry business. Tom Adams has been in the industry since 1996 and is one of very few fully qualified Stonemasons working as a Monumental Mason in Worcestershire. He established Memorials of Worcester with his wife in 2010.

After successfully completing an apprenticeship at Bath College Tom soon realised that he had a passion for Monumental Masonry in particular. His eye for detail and excellent craftsmanship ensures every last detail is perfect.

During his years as a Stonemason Tom has gained valuable knowledge and experience, which in turn have allowed him to develop his skills within the trade. Results driven and being very passionate about his work Tom felt that he could fill a gap in the market for excellent quality craftsmanship at sensible prices.

His services include:

- New Memorials
- Second Inscriptions
- Restoration work
- Monuments, Plaques and Vases

He will also conduct home visits by prior arrangement

Tom has also served with the British Army and has previously been commissioned to create bespoke tour memorabilia out of stone. It is because of his time within the army that he would like to give something back to others who have also served as well as their families.

Please see their advert for contact details.

LONDON POPPY WALK 2011

It was July last year when my wife Jayne and I were exploring the historic area on the south bank of the Thames when we noticed numerous people walking around wearing Royal British Legion t-shirts armed with what looked like a quiz sheet. Eventually curiosity got the better of us and Jayne approached one such fellow and enquired what they were up to. ‘The Poppy Walk’ was the reply and seeing that we looked none the wiser they went on to explain that it was an annual sponsored walk around London to raise funds for the Royal British Legion; there was also a quiz to do en route. We both thought what a wonderful event this would be to take part in.. As 2011 marks the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Royal British Legion, each participant was asked to raise £90 in sponsor money if possible. When we added together the number of people we work with at our day jobs (Department for Work Pensions) and our night jobs (behind the bar in the local pub – sign of the times!!) we thought we should be able to raise £180 between us.

When we started collecting sponsors we were amazed at the generosity of people who were extremely keen to give. Helping our armed forces personnel past and present seems to have struck a chord with people recently and whilst collecting boxes can be found in many establishments, to raise money through a sponsored event was to many a refreshing change. Sponsors from the pub were also growing as staff members were all collared along with regulars and also those who attended the weekly quiz. In addition to this there were a few donations via JustGiving, family members, the local branch of the Legion (Halesowen branch) and members of the Local History Group to which I belong.

The day of the walk arrived. On arrival at Haig House we registered, were issued with our t-shirts and the all important map. After a quick change that would have impressed Mr Benn, the walk commenced. The route seemed pretty straightforward and was circular in nature covering many familiar landmarks. There was also a twenty question quiz to be completed en route to test the keenness of the eye.

Leaving Haig House the route took us to the south bank at Blackfriars Bridge via Southwark and then on towards Westminster. We then crossed the Thames at Westminster and battled through the throngs of tourists around Parliament Square where one of the questions was to name the statue of a famous British Prime Minister. Depending on your point of view and political persuasion it was a toss up between Winston Churchill and David Lloyd George. We played safe and went with the former.

We were then directed onto Whitehall via the entrance to the Cabinet War Rooms, emerging opposite the Cenotaph. We were delighted to find a small bonus in the Annual Belgian Cenotaph Parade taking place so we took time out to watch the wreath laying service. We then made our way up Whitehall and continued our journey into The Strand. Continuing along The Strand we passed from the City of Westminster into the City of London where the term ‘localised showers’ took on a new meaning. As soon as we passed Temple Bar the heavens opened again so with a quickening of the pace we decided to take the advice of the route planner and take a look inside St Clement Danes, the RAF Church.

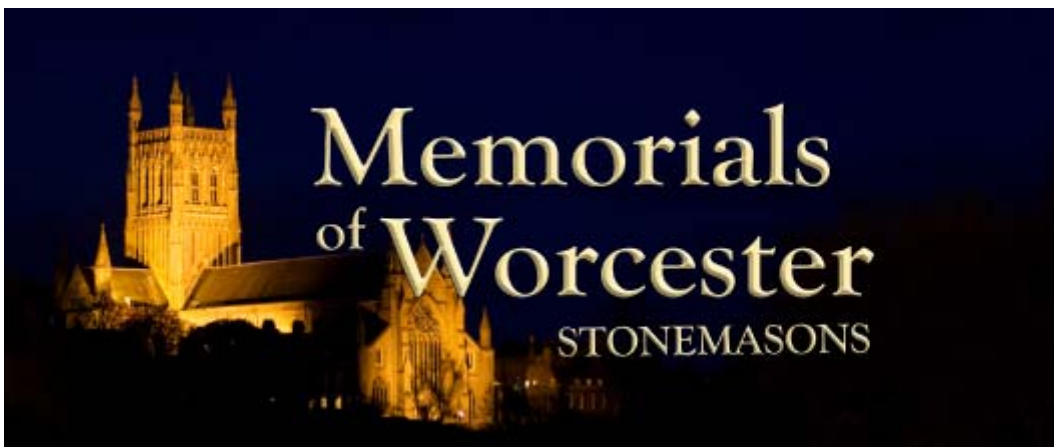
After this brief stop we entered Fleet Street and on towards St Paul's Cathedral. Passing St Paul's we entered the Financial District of the City of London. From here we were sent past The Monument and the famous Pudding Lane, out onto London Bridge and the home stretch. Some three and a half hours after setting off we arrived back at Haig House and received a hearty congratulations from the staff. An added bonus was that we completed the quiz with all twenty correct answers and earned ourselves a very nice porcelain 90th anniversary mug.



On returning home we decided to add up our sponsor sheets to see how much we should raise when all monies are collected. We were astonished when the calculator showed the figure £865.00! This figure has since increased as people have donated money as we have collected from others once they have learned what we did. We are pleased to say that our hopes of raising £180 between us have now gone beyond all our expectations as we top the £900 mark.

We would like to express our thanks to all those who have pledged money to us, even greater thanks to those who have so far paid up and also to the staff at Haig House for organising such a wonderful event – we hope to see you again next year!

Paul Finegan
Halesowen Branch.



For further details please contact Tom & Zoe Adams:
Tel: 01905 456 603 or 07599 648 553.
Email: memorialsofworcester@yahoo.co.uk
Website: www.memorialsofworcester.co.uk

‘WHAT’S ON IN THE COUNTY’

Monday 29th August. Kidderminster Branch are staging an event to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the RBL. It is taking place on the College car park, next to the RAFA Club on New Road. It will start at 10.00 and run through until 15.00. Attractions will be: Bikes and Trikes from the Riders Branch, classic cars, kick boxing demonstrations and numerous stalls.

Thursday 8th September at 2 pm. Saint Philips Church, Webheath, Redditch. A dedication for 90 years of The Royal British Legion. Details from Canon David Salt.

Thursday 15th September. Nicci Pugh, author of “White Ship Red Crosses” will be giving a talk about her experiences on the Hospital Ship SS Uganda. 19.30 at The Royal Oak in Tenbury Wells. Admission is just £2.00

Saturday 22nd October. County Standard Bearers Competition at Witton School, Droitwich. 14.00 Start.

Saturday 29th October. Poppy Appeal Launch. The Guildhall, Worcester.

If you wish to publicise your event here, please let the County Press Officer have the details.

BERYL EADES

Bill Goode and the family of the late Beryl Eades would like to thank everyone who attended Beryl's funeral on Friday 19th August.

LANDS END TO JOHN O’GROATS

Saturday 7th May saw a team of cyclists pass through Worcestershire as part of the Lands End to John O’Groats charity ride, organised by Absolute Challenges, as part of The Royal British Legion Battleback Challenge Ride. This was a 940-mile ride, in 11 days. Despite the appalling weather, the team had travelled from Gloucester over the Malvern Hills to make the first stop at Newlands. Here they were treated to hot bacon sandwiches before continuing their journey northwards. Members of the county committee helped man two stop areas. In total, £25,000 was raised for the project.



Tony Hartley-Woolley (County Chairman) with cyclists