



The Warwick



October 2011

Warwickshire County Chairman

Our current Chairman Mr Philip Wilson was due for re-election at our 2012 Annual Meeting of County Conference however he took the decision not to stand for re-election to enable him to continue his involvement with the Membership Council.

In accordance with newly introduced governance procedures for the election of County and County Vice Chairman, all Branch Secretaries were sent a nomination form to enable them to nominate a suitable candidate for election as County Chairman. At the deadline date of Monday 12th September 2011, ??? Branches had submitted nomination forms however they were all for the same candidate Maj C H Parnham CStJ TD, our current Vice Chairman.

As there was only one candidate, this ruled out the need for any postal ballot. Maj C H Parnham will be elected as Chairman at our Annual Meeting of County Conference on the 7th January 2012.



they will contain any changes made since the introduction of the new forms last year. Each Branch have only been sent 1 copy and a copy of the form appropriate to that Branch.

More importantly please remember that **your accounts have to “preferably” be submitted by the 30th November. Your accounts must be accompanied by a bank statement as at the 30th September 2010 for each bank account shown on the accounts form and also a copy of the RBL Branch Authority to Disclose Information letter for each account is also sent with copy of the accounts..**

County 2011 Handbook

Amendments since last issue:
Bilton & Dunchurch: Now meet at the Bilton Bowling Club.



County Standard Bearer School

All Branches are reminded that Standard Bearer instruction is held on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the Drill Hall in Canley. All Standard Bearers are most welcome to come along and received guidance from the County Parade Marshall and County Standard Bearer.



Branch Information FormMS1

Please ensure that you use the edition I distributed to Branch Secretaries on the 24th August 2011. Please note however that the address was omitted for some reason so I ask that you add address details against each Branch Officer listed. This information is required for the 2012 County Handbook. Only 1 copy is required by this office however it must be completed fully as it provides the information for the County Handbook. Signatures of all elected Branch Officer's and Committee Members must also be shown on Page 4. MS1's **have to be in by the 31st December 2010.**



Branch Treasurer's

On-Line Branch Accounts

From the 1st October 2011, Treasurers' were to be able to complete their annual accounts on-line. Unfortunately due to technical problems that could not be resolved, the introduction has been delayed until 1st October 2012.



Annual Branch Accounts

We have reached that time of the year again when Annual Branch Accounts will be produced. You should have received the package sent out by Head Office to each Treasurer and I ask that the guide notes for completion are read as again this year there are some changes in procedure.

Please remember that you must use the blank accounts sent out by Head Office in September as

2011 Festival of Remembrance

This year we had 12 Branches request tickets for this year's Festival of Remembrance which used up our allocation of 45 tickets. 3 Branches requested tickets for participation in the cenotaph Parade.



British Legion Memorabilia Collectors Club

www.legion-memorabilia.org.uk Expressions of interest for those interested in joining the B.L.M.C.C should be sent to the Secretary Bob Rankin, 36 Albert Street, Newcastle under Lyme, ST5 1JR. Tel: 01782 444246.



Authorised Travel Expenses

The new rate of payment from Branch Funds for travel expenses is now 45ppm.



County Community Fundraiser

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email lwootton@britishlegion.org.uk or telephone 07717421063 with your thoughts.



County Website

We have a much improved new County web site and our Web Manager is Ian Read see <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/warwickshire>

All Branches are encouraged to submit articles and photographs for inclusion under their own Branch name.



Leamington Spa Branch Article Poppy Party June 2011

The Leamington Spa Branch were pleased to assist Whitnash Town Council in holding a Poppy Party on the weekend of the 11th/12th June.

The weekend started on the Saturday with a Treasure Hunt around Whitnash, NAAFI at Whitnash Club, tea at The Ritz at The Lawns Residential Home and a Blitz Ball in the evening again at Whitnash Club. Whilst all this was going on there were displays of a field hospital, tanks, Cadets on parade and many other attractions including stalls two of which included a Tombola of "Pick a Poppy" both manned by members of the Branch.

On the Sunday there was a service at St. Margaret's Church and standards were paraded.

In all a great time was had by all throughout the weekend.

At the beginning of July the Chairman, President and Secretary of the Branch were invited to the Mayor of Whitnash Civic Service and reception and there they were presented with a cheque for £2,500 for the Poppy Appeal.



Articles for Newsletter

Please remember this Newsletter is primarily for letting Branches know what is going on within our County. It would be very nice to receive articles from Branches for inclusion.



Branch Poppy Appeal Launch 2011

Those Branches holding their own Poppy Appeal Launch and would like details to be included in a Press Release being organised by Lisa Wootton our Community Fund Raiser should contact her with details on 07717421063 or email to Lwootton@britishlegion.org.uk



County Standard Bearer Competition

Held on Saturday 8th October at Rowington Village Hall. This year we had six competitors including a guest from Herefordshire County. The competition was won by Ms Beth Slade of Nuneaton Women's Section. Second was Mr Fred Guy from Arley who will be the County Standard Bearer for 2012. Third was Ms Grace Reynolds from Nuneaton & Stockingford and will be the 2012 Deputy County Standard Bearer. Mr E Jones from Coventry No4 was the winner of the Novice Competition.



County Chairman's Report

The past three months have been exceptionally busy for many of us within this Legion County as we continue to mark the Legion's 90th Anniversary year. One of the highlights in August was the Alcester RBL Garden Party at Malt Mill Lane Centre on the 6 August. Followed by the Colin Grazier GC, Memorial Service held at Twogates and Wilnecote on 21 August attended by the Chairman of the Staffordshire County Council with a strong local community presence. The Annual Fete at Galanos House on 3 September proved to be most enjoyable with the Leamington Spa Branch of RBL presenting a very generous gift of a camera and photographic printer for the benefit of the residents. The Fete was well attended and provided an ideal opportunity for many to meet both residents friends and guests. A Sausage and Mash Luncheon on 6 September with the Claverdon & District Branch together with the Rowington RBL Branch proved most enjoyable, especially the surprise in the bag being a very well deserved National Life Membership Award for Joe Cardell for 64 years continuous service to the Legion. Others present received well deserved Poppy Awards. Followed by a visit that night to the Colehill Branch whose members actively support County Recruiting initiatives, being also present at Galanos

on the 3rd.

All Branch Chairmen within Warwickshire were invited to attend a meeting at Bedworth on the 10 September – those that did found the meeting most constructive especially my presentation on *The Changing Face of the Legion and the challenges we all face*. The meeting also proved an ideal opportunity to network and introduce our new Community Fund Raiser Lisa Wootton.

Those who did not attend our 90th Anniversary Cathedral Concert in Coventry missed a truly memorable and spectacular evening, with the Band of the Royal Air Force College Cranwell, the Worcester Male Voice Choir and the Boy Choristers of Coventry Cathedral supported by the Organist. Our guests included the Director General of the Legion and Deputy Lord Mayors of both Coventry and B'ham with their wives.

Our County President, together with representatives drawn from across the Legion family in Warwickshire attended the Legion's 90th Anniversary Service in Westminster Abbey on the 20 September.

The County Chairmen's Seminar was held at Staverton Park with the National Chairman and Executive Directors present on 23/24 September. The depth and breadth of matters discussed is such that space does not permit a full summary. What is abundantly clear is that an actively participating Membership is key to the Legion's future, which will be covered within our Annual Report. It is my intention to convene a Special Meeting of all Branch Chairmen to appraise them of the issues arising, including those from the Membership Council presentation at Staverton ideally in late November

The 28 September saw a very well attended Welfare Updating Course with many caseworkers present at Bedworth. Casework is the silent service it operates 365 days of the year spare a thought for those who give freely of their time to help the less fortunate. The County welcomes volunteers who are able to assist in some way either with Hospital or Housebound Visiting, or as one of our local ambassadors in Schools promoting the true purpose for which the Legion exists. Likewise we should never turn away those who are prepared to help in some way unless there are very good reasons for doing so. Effective Legion teams rely on the ability of all to function in harmony together. Two days in London with the Membership Council on the 5/6 October was followed by the Legion County Standard Bearer Competition at Rowington Village Hall on 8 October with more competitors than in previous years, organised jointly with the County Women's Section. The Midlands County Chairmen meet at Bedworth on the 12 October, before then we have the County Committee Meeting on the 11th.

Our Plans are developing well for the Launch of Warwickshire's 90th Annual Poppy Appeal -very heartening to see that the Warwickshire Poppy

figures exceeded £700k for 2011. Equally pleasing to see the extent of planned activity across the County by way of individual Poppy Launches and events for this our 90th Appeal.

The above is intended to give you a flavour of the extent of Legion activity, acknowledging that the County Officers are often in daily contact with the County Secretary. We are indeed fortunate in having an extremely efficient County Office and whilst members have been quite rightly upset that they have not all received their Annual Membership cards this year on time – the problem of non receipt is down to external distribution difficult ties with the card provider and Email. Steps are being taken to quickly resolve these difficulties so that they do not arise again

Between now and the County Conference in Warwick on the 7 January 2012 there remains a fair amount of work to be done to ensure that everything functions smoothly on the day. As Branch members you elect one or more delegates but that does not prevent you from attending as a visitor should you wish to do so. It's your County, it's your Conference. There are Branches within Warwickshire who have joined the electronic age and communicate via social media whilst others prefer Stone Age methods by word of mouth which leads to mix messages and non attendance at events due to poor communication. All Standard Bearers are welcome to attend Conference providing they have the agreement of their Branch Officers to do so. The Standard is the visible means by which we are known - the Legion badge when worn daily is a reminder of 'service not self' and encourages others to enter into a dialogue with the wearer of the badge, likewise the veterans badge.

Philip Wilson, County Chairman



Help For Heroes

The Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes

The Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes (H4H) do different things as charities supporting the Armed Forces. Help for Heroes is a fundraising and grant-making organisation, concentrating primarily on raising funds for building projects.

The Legion has a wider remit and is the first port of call for a wide range of help for the entire Armed Forces Family. We care and campaign for all those currently serving and their dependants, as well as veterans - today and for the rest of their lives. The Legion is the guardian of the Military Covenant and our campaigning activity has recently focused on persuading the Government to write into law the principles of the Military Covenant. This is vital to honour the unique nature of Service and ensure that no disadvantage is experienced as a result of it by Armed Forces personnel and their families.

Welfare is at the heart of the Legion. We spend nearly £1.4 million a week delivering health and welfare support to members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families - including benefits, legal and careers advice; care in residential homes; help in the home for veterans; and free holidays for the children of Armed Forces personnel and carers. In 2010 we responded to over 160,000 calls for help. We have provided financial assistance to more than 16,000 Service personnel and recent veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan operations. We are there for our beneficiaries whenever they need us at life's critical events.

We have represented one-third of all the appeals for higher compensation payments arising from injuries suffered in Afghanistan. Our campaigning won compensation worth over £40 million for our most seriously injured heroes and those ill as a result of Service. We help rehabilitate the physically injured and to train and resettle others into civilian life. We provide direct support to Service widows and other dependants.

Our members are a vital force within the Legion; H4H is not a membership organisation. We are also actively recruiting new supporters using social media such as Facebook, Legion Live and Twitter. The success of our message is borne out nationally by the huge support for our fundraising, which has seen record Poppy Appeals year on year. The Legion now has more followers across social media than any other charity.

The Legion actively partners with other charities - particularly those in the same sector and especially on the delivery of welfare services to those most in need. For example, working with the RAF Benevolent Fund and Citizens Advice Bureaux we provide the highly successful Benefits & Money Advice Service which helped over 8,000 beneficiaries with unmanageable debt last year.

Naturally, given our huge remit, we would want our members' branches to concentrate on raising funds for the Legion's work, including through the Poppy Appeal. While our constitution does not permit County and Branch formations to donate funds raised for the Legion to other charities, we are a major grant giving charity, providing grants to such as Combat Stress and St Dunstan's for specialist welfare services. We have worked successfully with H4H in the past on national fundraising projects, with both charities benefiting from the additional income generated and the high level of public support for the Armed Forces. The Legion and H4H are currently partnering with the MoD in the Army Recovery Capability programme to help wounded, injured and sick Service personnel recover and either return to duty or move successfully into civilian life. We have committed to investing up to £50 million in this programme - the largest single donation in the Legion's 90-year history. This includes £20m for four Personnel Recovery Centres in the UK: H4H is

funding the physical building of these centres; we are funding their operating costs for the next ten years. In addition, the Legion is funding the creation and operation of The Royal British Legion Battle Back Centre which will use adaptive sports and adventurous training to help Service personnel recover. This Centre is due to open in September 2011.

