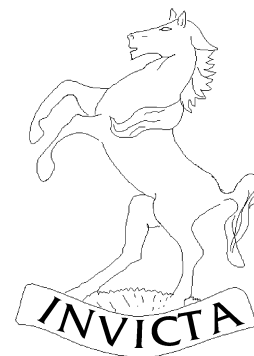




# KENT COUNTY NEWS

County Secretary  
Kent County Headquarters  
RBL Village, Aylesford, ME20 7NY  
Tel: 01622 717088 Fax: 01622 715332  
Email: [twest@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:twest@britishlegion.org.uk)



## APRIL 2010

### LEST WE FORGET

The following members have passed on since our last Newsletter

Mr D A Fenn  
Mr A Trusler

Chairman (1999-2005) Littlebourne  
President (2002-2008) New Romney

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

### **COUNTY CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

We must all take heed that the County Office is a working office and not a drop-in site. A lot of confidential things take place there and therefore personal visits need to be restricted. If you have a problem ring the office or e-mail if you are able and you will get the problem sorted without the need to travel to Aylesford. If you get the answer phone leave a short message and the County Secretary will get back to as soon as possible. If however you feel you must attend at the office in person please ring and make an appointment. The County Chairman and Treasurer will be in the office most Wednesdays to help you if required. Please remember the office is small and a lot of important work and discussions take place there.

Austin Walker  
County Chairman

### **COUNTY SECRETARY**

After almost three months in the role as County Secretary I am still getting mail addressed to Pat Cox. I would therefore be grateful if Branch Secretaries could make their officers and committees aware of the change. Many thanks.

### **BRANCHES AND CLUBS**

Attached are league tables showing the changes in membership by variation in numbers and by percentage variation within each Branch since the start of this Legion Year. Those above the green line at the top have all increased their membership over the past six months and those below the red line have lost members (although in the case of four branches this is just one member). Overall we have lost 732 members or 6.86%. Obviously most of those losses were the result of card returns and, in the case of most Branches, numbers are going up again. At the end of last year we had an overall loss of just 193 members, or 1.8%. Let's see if in the next six months we can reverse the decline and end up with an increase in membership.

The Herne Bay Sub Branch has now been restored to full Branch status. Thanks go to Whitstable Branch for acting as Parent Branch for the past year and a half.

## **MS1 FORMS & BRANCH ACCOUNTS**

Thank you to all the branches who have sent in their Accounts and MS1 forms. However, there are still a few branches with returns outstanding so if you are having problems with these then please contact me as soon as possible. Those branches with returns still outstanding are:

|                              |     |     |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Ashford                      | -   | R&P |
| Cranbrook                    | -   | R&P |
| Minster & Monkton            | MS1 | -   |
| St Margaret at Cliffe        | MS1 | -   |
| Sittingbourne & Milton Regis | MS1 | -   |
| Woodchurch                   | MS1 | -   |

## **MS4 APPLICATIONS**

I often receive MS4s complete with the blue and pink sections. Branch Secretaries / Membership Secretaries may not wish to retain the blue section but the new member should be handed the pink as his or her receipt. If they don't want a receipt that's fine but please don't send them to me as it suggests they haven't been offered them.

Also, in Section E, if you are ticking the box to say that they refuse to pay by DD then you should also tick the box to say that they have been asked to pay by DDSP in accordance with Legion policy. Again, by not ticking it, it suggests that they have not been asked to pay that way. Sorry about this but I'm the one who gets stick from on high if it's not done properly.

## **TRAINING COURSES**

Attached to this newsletter is a list of the National Training Courses for this year. Applications to attend are available through this office.

## **RECRUITERS**

There is a need for trained recruiters in the County who are able to tell the general public who we are and what we do and also attract new members to the Legion. Most volunteers attend a one day Recruiting Advisor (RA) course held here in the County, usually on a Saturday. This can lead to a full County Recruiting Officer (CRO) course which takes place from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon at a hotel. The next course is due to take place 17th to 19th September - probably at the Coventry Hilton. RAs and CROs are both National Qualifications and those qualified become part of the County Recruiting Team. If anyone is interested in then please let me know.

## **THANKS FROM PAT COX**

I should like to say "Thank you" to all the Branches and members who so generously contributed to my retirement presentation. The County Committee purchased a mirror and a picture and all your donations were presented to me in a cheque. The size of the cheque overwhelmed me and I can't say thank you enough for your kind thoughts. It enabled me to buy a new laptop and a camera and the rest will go towards my holiday this year. I enjoyed meeting and working with you all over the years and treasure the friendships that were forged. So again, thank you so much. Best wishes to you all. *Pat*

## **POPPY COLLECTORS**

Help us to keep our annual Poppy Appeal growing. Without volunteer collectors out there on the streets and without appeal organisers planning the collections, this great cause would grind to a halt. We urgently need to recruit more people as many of our current volunteers are retiring from active duty. Add to this the ever increasing demand on the Legion's services and you can see we need your help more than ever.

## **THE BIG LOTTERY FUND**

The Big Lottery's Heroes Return programme is under way again and I have received a few booklets at County Office with, hopefully, some more on the way. Please see the attached letter from the Big Lottery Fund for information and let me know if you would like a booklet.

## **BRANCH DONATIONS TO COUNTY FUNDS**

West Kingsdown and District  
Shoreham  
Elham Valley  
Minster and Monkton  
Sutton Valence

## **BRANCH AND COUNTY WELFARE - THE NEW WAY**

Most Legion members will know that, for many years, the Branch level of benevolent activity has been carried out by a Welfare Secretary - supported by a Branch Welfare Committee. The Branch Welfare Secretary role has a lot of strings attached to it but, in Kent, the only training for Branch 'welfare officers' has been the annual County Caseworker Update Course.

However, over the past 5 years, the number of Branches with a Welfare Secretary has steadily decreased to about half of the overall total, while less than a quarter of the Branches now have active Welfare Committees. Moreover, burgeoning legislation, IT and bureaucracy, and the increased complexity of case-working has meant the County caseworker update course has to be more focused on case management and Form A applications - making it all but irrelevant to Branch Welfare Secretaries.

The new title of Branch Welfare Representative has recently been introduced and we are taking the opportunity to separate out Branch and County responsibilities. Branch Welfare Representatives will not, in future, be responsible for carrying out casework (Form A applications) which will be case-managed at County level. All caseworkers were asked if they were prepared to carry out County Casework; those who wished only to carry out welfare in their immediate area have been advised of their future role as a Branch Welfare Representative. That said, we are prepared to discuss a change of role (subject to currency and CRB clearance) should anyone feel strongly they would prefer to operate at a different level.

In view of the above, it is planned to introduce dedicated seminars, focusing on the Branch Welfare Representatives' roles and responsibilities, and rules and procedures governing expenditure of Branch benevolent funds. The first Branch Welfare seminar will probably take place on 3rd July and all those with Branch Welfare responsibilities (even if they are also an active County Caseworker) will be invited to attend - preferably along with their Branch Treasurer.

The annual County Caseworker Update course will go ahead, exclusively for County Caseworkers, as previously advised, on 12 June 2010.

**But let us not forget that it remains down to all of us to identify and report cases of need, wherever they may arise in the ex-Service community in Kent. Anyone requiring Legion welfare assistance should be referred to the County Welfare Officers at County Field Office, who will arrange for an application to be made.**

## **COUNTY PARADE AT PADDOCK WOOD**

This year's County Parade takes place on Sunday 1st August and will be hosted by the Paddock Wood Branch. Please complete the attached form to give the Branch an idea of numbers.

### **BIRCHINGTON BRANCH BOOT FAIR**

The Birchington Branch is holding an indoor boot fair on Saturday 17th April. Please see the attached flyer for further information.

### **HERNE BAY BRANCH VETERANS DAY**

A D-Day Veterans Day will take place at the Herne Bay Branch on Friday 4th June. If you wish to attend this event please complete the attached form.

### **UTOPIAN OPERATIC SOCIETY**

The Utopians are performing a wartime show "**When the lights go on again**" at the Broadway Theatre Studio, Catford from Tuesday 7th to Saturday 11th September 2010 commencing at 7.30 each evening with a 2.30 matinee on the Saturday. The audience is encouraged to wear clothing of the era. Hand waving Union Flags will be sold to the audience and proceeds of these will go to the Royal British Legion. Tickets cost £8.00 to Legion members and are available now at the Box Office on 020 8690 0002 and any enquiries should be directed to [diane\\_ash@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:diane_ash@hotmail.co.uk).

### **CHARITY EVENING AT FOLKESTONE**

The Burlington Hotel in Folkestone is hosting a Charity VE Day Celebration Evening on Friday 7th May and all monies raised will go to The Royal British Legion. It consists of a three course Dinner and Dance at a cost of £25 per person and a raffle will take place during the evening. For more information please contact the Burlington Hotel directly on 01303 255301.

#### **MENU**

Tian of North Atlantic Prawns and avocado mousse  
served on baby spinach and wild rocket leaves

Roasted leg of lamb  
darted with garlic and fresh rosemary served with roast jus, redcurrant jelly and mint sauce  
or  
Mixed forest mushrooms and arborio risotto  
served with a parmesan tuille (v)

Traditional Spotted Dick  
served with custard

Fairtrade, organic tiki coffee and mints

### **BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL DAY - CAPEL LE FERNE**

To commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, a Service and Parade will be held at the National Battle of Britain Memorial, Capel le Ferne, Folkestone on Sunday 11 July. Standard Bearers of the Royal British Legion are invited to attend and take part. It would be appreciated if any Standard Bearer wishing to attend could fill in and return the 'tear off' reply slip on the invitation attached to this Newsletter.

### **YELLOW PAGES INVOICE SCAM**

Businesses across the country are being warned to watch out for bogus invoices that claim to be from directory publisher Yell Ltd in relation to its products and services. Trading Standards has teamed up with Yell to push out the warning about companies impersonating the publisher.

The warning comes following a number of complaints regarding receipt of bogus £499 invoices in particular from '**Yellow Pages 24**'. They claimed to be at 3 More London Riverside, London SE1 or more recently, 81 Oxford Street, London W1. The scammers seek to mislead customers into signing fake advertising contracts which sometimes result in repeated demands for payment by

phone. However, we are aware that in other instances they have used unscrupulous tactics in order to elicit a signature on a fax confirming the cancellation of an advertisement. Subsequently a fee of £499 has been demanded. Some complainants have reported threatening telephone calls. Bogus order forms are sent by e-mail or fax and contain lookalike "Yellow Pages" branding. In one instance, scammers have even set up copycat websites resembling Yell.com. The scams are sophisticated and run by complex overseas networks.

Yell customers should be particularly alert to any correspondence they receive containing contact, or bank account details in Holland or Germany. These misleading faxes, emails and websites can look like the genuine article, but have nothing to do with the real Yellow Pages. Our advice is to ignore any order forms and not pay these invoices.

Bethan Featherby  
Senior Trading Standards Officer  
Westminster City Council

**KENT COUNTY NEWS**

If anyone has any information they wish to share with the rest of the County please send it to me, preferably by e-mail, and I'll do my best to include it in these pages.

*Tony West*  
County Secretary