



The Royal British Legion
SOMERSET COUNTY & BRISTOL

Newsletter

January, 2012

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A bumper
version of
From the
Branches

An MBE

County
Conference in
pictures

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Above the Somme, 12 November, 2011.

See Article

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Newsletter Issues

January; March; May; July; September; November.

Contributions to County Office in writing, please, including email, by 20th of the preceding month. All articles will be attributable, anonymous items will be ignored. County reserves the right to edit, amend or omit items as necessary.

Cover Photograph

The cover photograph shows the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing. It was taken by a camera mounted on the wing of a replica Airco DH2 WWI aircraft as flown by the RFC in 1916. It was piloted by Stewart Smith and the photograph is reproduced by permission of Primetime Media. The flight was to have taken place over the memorial as part of the Somme Branch annual 11/11/11 Remembrance event. However, as ever, the Somme weather decided to join in with such a serious dollop of mist that we couldn't even see the top of the memorial, so the aircraft was grounded. You can see more of the aircraft on www.primetimemedia.co.uk Other contact details are as follows: Primetime Media Ltd. Merrywood Studio, Chapel Lane, Sibsey, PE22 0SN | 01205 750055

Reports from Groups and Branches

Banwell

Obituary - Roger Bollem



Mr Roger Bollem, seen here in the centre of the photograph, was born in Belgium in March 1930 and passed away in June 2011. He was in the 1st Regiment Belgium S.A.S. and had been a member of Banwell Branch since 2005.

B. Godden, Branch Secretary.

Bristol Group

The Bristol Group Chairman Mrs Vicki Phillips was out and about with Bristol's Poppy Appeal fund raisers and other Remembrance activities.



Mike Muddle at Cabot Circus



Reg & Eve Gardiner at The Galleries,



Display Boards at Cabot Circus



E. Dixon, Sainsbury's Brislington



Last Post at Arnos Vale Cemetery



Poppies laid by St. Annes Junior School, St. Annes Park Junior School & Hillcrest Junior School.



St. Silas Branch standard bearer Mr. J. Tipler at Arnos Vale cemetery



Pete Nutt playing Last Post at Cabot Circus

Frome Branch

A Busy Night for Frome Army Cadets

Somerset Army Cadet Force personnel, Royal British Legion dignitaries, family and friends gathered at the Cadet Centre in Keyford, Frome on Tuesday 13 December 2011 for a night packed full of military music, awards and prize giving.



Mr Shaun O'Connor, Royal British Legion Frome Branch Chairman, presenting Platoon Commander Captain Martyn Day with the Affiliation Certificate.

The main focus of the evening was the affiliation of the platoon with the Royal British Legion. Frome are the latest of several Somerset Army Cadet Force detachments to share an official link with the charity, entitling the cadets to wear the certified Royal British Legion badge with their uniform. The cadets have given up their free time on many occasions to raise funds and assist the Frome Branch of the Royal British Legion



in raising awareness of their vital support work to ex and serving members of the Armed Forces. Thanks to the generosity of the people of Frome, the cadets collected nearly £600 towards this year's Poppy Appeal.

The visitors were also treated to a first class rendition of some well known musical pieces played by the Frome Platoon element of the cadet Silver Bugle Band. Afterwards a new Army Cadet Force Standard for Frome was blessed by the Somerset Battalion Padre, Reverend Stuart Boyd. Six probationary recruits took the Army Cadet Force oath and were formally presented with their Rifles beret badges initiating them as fully fledged army cadets.

Frome Platoon had its own prizes to award and promotions to announce; Laura Burbage was promoted to the rank of Cadet Sergeant Major and Bugle Major Paige Starr was voted Best Cadet as well as being made up to



Frome Branch Standard and the New Platoon Standard

Cadet Colour Sergeant. Cadet Corporal Daniel Bingham, who recently finished second in a South West Army Cadet Force bugle competition, was appointed Bugler to the Commandant for the next 12 months. The title of Most Improved Bandsman went to Cadet Emily Hodges and young Cadet Bethany Pang was named Champion Recruit.

In address to the Adult Instructors, cadets and guests, Normandy Company Commander Major Barry Angus said 'Normandy has done

extremely well this year and won the title of Best Company in the Battalion. I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone at Frome Platoon for their significant contribution to this success.’ Images by Peter Russell LBIPP:

Bruton Branch

Reciprocal Presentations with 815 Naval Air Squadron, Yeovilton

In March 2011 Bruton Branch was honoured to be affiliated with 815 Naval Air Squadron based at Yeovilton and the occasion was marked with the exchange of plaques. Although aware of the Air Station’s operational involvement in current conflicts, henceforward the Bruton Branch took a greater interest in 815 Squadron particular commitments. This affiliation is a great honour for the Bruton Branch especially as the squadron took part in our Remembrance parade and service with Lieutenant Karl Weston reading a lesson in the Church service.

The squadron is the largest helicopter squadron in the world and the largest aircraft squadron in Europe. The squadron is currently composed of a Headquarters and approximately 26 Small Ship's Flights. The Headquarters are responsible for training, maintenance and doctrine for the aircraft. The Small Ship's Flights operate embarked in Type 23 Frigates, Type 42 Destroyers, Type 45 Destroyers and RFA's all around the world

In drafting our letter of congratulations on the Squadron’s Battle Honour Day “The Battle of Taranto” (11th November 1940) and researching the battle it was discovered that a “*Battle of Taranto*” stamp existed. The Marshall Islands launched its History of World War II commemorative series on September 1, 1989, with a single stamp marking the Invasion of Poland. Like the war itself, the series spanned six years ending on September 2, 1995. The 17th of the 100 is a set of 4 stamps of 2 paintings; one depicting 815 Squadron Swordfish taking off from HMS Illustrious and the other of ships of the Italian Naval Fleet under attack.

The artist commissioned for these paintings, identified on the stamps is Brian Sanders. Some spirited





L-R: Graham Lilley (Branch Secretary), Mrs Anna Groskop (PAO, Committee, County Councillor) Commander Louis Wilson-Chalon RN, Philip Heavey (Branch Chairman), John Clarke (Branch Member).

Andrea Doria, RM *Conte di Cavour* between the Squadron and Legion crests.

The presentation to 815 Squadron was made at Yeovilton on the anniversary of the Battle of Taranto 11th November 2011 after observing the 2 minutes silence. The Branch Chairman Major Philip Heavey (Retd) presented to framed picture to the Commanding Officer, Cdr Louis Wilson-Challon RN.

The squadron were kept in the dark as to what the 'presentation' was so they were greatly surprised and pleased with such a Taranto Day memento.

The guests - members of the Bruton Branch – were themselves as greatly surprised and pleased by the presentation from the squadron of a mounted Lynx helicopter rear tail rotor blade signed by all the squadron officers.

The plan for early 2012 is the installation of the rotor blade in the Town's Community Hall combined with the engraving of Sergeant Ben Ross's name on the War Memorial under "Post 1945" and re-dedication of the memorial to coincide, hopefully if commitments allow, with a fly-past of 815 Squadron aircraft.

investigation followed which resulted in finding Brian Saunders, now living in Safron Waldon. He no longer owns the copyright to the pictures, by the company who does - Uncover Corporation in USA, An exchange of emails and telephone calls to Cheyenne resulted in Brian Saunders making copies of the pictures and gifting them to the Branch. The pictures were mounted in a presentation frame above a mint copy of the Tab Block of 4 stamps: HMS *Illustrious*, *Fairey Swordfish*, RM



L-R: Cdr Louis Wilson-Chalon RN, Philip Heavey (Branch Chairman), Lt Karl Weston RN.

Philip Heavey

Riders Branch

The Riders Branch have asked us to thank those Branches who invited them to attend events in the last year and to apologise to anyone whose events they were unable to attend. Branches wishing to involve the Riders can contact them through their Secretary, Suzi Heale, www.rblr.co.uk or on 07795 412571 or 01823 451482.

Also, they are proposing to hold monthly meetings for the “Riders” in various locations in the county and would like to offer anyone from County Office an open invitation to attend. These meetings are going to be informal, but give our members a chance to have their say and find out what is going on in the county. They will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 19:00hrs

Proposed Dates and locations are as follows. (Some locations to be confirmed/found)

17th Jan – Podymore Inn, Podimore, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8JF

21st Feb – Street RBL Club

20th March – Keynsham RBL Club (TBC)

17th April – Weston Super Mare (Location TBC)

15th May – Minehead RBL Club (TBC)

19th June – Taunton (Location TBC)

17th July – Yeovil (Location TBC)

21st Aug – Street RBL Club

18th Sept – Keynsham RBL Club (TBC)

16th Oct – Weston Super Mare (TBC)

20th Nov – Minehead RBL Club (TBC)

18th Dec – Taunton (TBC)

“Also if anyone from a local Branch would like to meet with us they would be most welcome as well. “

Congratulations!

Many congratulations to Somerset Women’s Section County Chairman Mrs. Pam Whitehead, MBE, on her award in the New Year’s Honours List for services to Avon & Somerset Constabulary. Well done, Pam. Richly deserved! *(Word is that we’ll have to call her “Sir” now!) Mind how you go.....*

Pedal 2 Paris 2011

Congratulations and well done to Mark Groves from Somerset who took part in the Pedal 2 Paris. He personally raised £1320 and sends grateful thanks to all those who supported him. The trip had its highlights and incidents, not least during the first leg from Greenwich to Dover when a motorist knocked one of the riders off his bike, putting him in hospital for an operation on an injured shoulder. The motorist didn't stop!

Day 2 started in Calais with wreath laying ceremonies with local dignitaries and continued with 27°, sunshine, a number of challenging hills and the great support of residents cheering them on through small villages. The day ended in Abbeville.

Day 3 saw them leave Abbeville after a wreath laying ceremony to commemorate the 67th anniversary of the town's liberation by British soldiers on 3 September, 1944. After a civic reception at the lunch stop, the day concluded after a ride in 35° conditions at Beauvais with yet another reception and ceremony. Here special mention was made of the work and sacrifices being made by British and French forces working together in Afghanistan.

Day 4 was the ride into Paris, sadly, without the sunshine, the heavens opening just after lunch. Mark says that 296 riders together was an incredible sight and it was fantastic to ride into the city of Paris with motor cycle outriders, a police escort and all the support vehicles. Turning the final corner to see the Arc de Triomphe ahead was a great sight. The riders were met by family and friends and were awarded with their medals before what Mark describes as "the very moving and concluding ceremony" at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

In conclusion, he asks us to encourage and support any family or friend to take part in this ride for the RBL.

Well done to Mark and all the others who made the trip!

Regional Standard Bearers Competition

This year's Regional Standard Bearers competition takes place on Saturday 25th February, 2012 at the Wesley Centre, Chapel Street, Camborne, Cornwall - TR 14 8EG. The event will start with the Men's competition in the morning and the Women's in the afternoon. Times were still to be confirmed at the time of going to press.

County Conference

The Conference attendance was 112, including the Union Flag, both County Standards, 7 Branch Standards, guests, County officers and officials, and 37 delegates representing the County's Branches. Principal guests included Lady Gass, Lord Lieutenant of the County; Lt.Gen Sir John Kiszely, KCB, MC. National President of the RBL; Commodore Paul Chivers, OBE, CO RNAS Yeovilton; County Chairmen of our neighbouring Counties.



Left to Right:
Brig. David
Godsal, MBE,
County President.

Commodore Paul
Chivers, OBE, CO
Yeovilton.

Lt.Gen Sir John
Kiszely, KCB,
MC, National
President, RBL.

Maj. Rikki Peters,
MBE, County
Chairman.

Principal Officers for the coming year:

County President: Brig. D.H. Godsal, MBE

County Chairman: Roger Duddridge

Vice Chairman: Denis Cruze

Dep. Vice Chairman: Robin Dowdeswell

County Treasurer: Mike Evans

Five well-deserved Lord Lieutenant's Awards:



Brian Summers



Doreen Smith



John Headford



Denis Cruze



Rikki Peters



Delegates, guests and members:



The Standards



The Presentations



The Presentations (cont)



Charging the County Standard Bearer



A Leaving Gift for the Chairman



On behalf of the members and Branches, the President presented the retiring Chairman with a laptop computer.

And finally....



Don't ask!

Double Hills

Early advice: Double Hills 33rd Anniversary Parade will take place on Sunday 2nd September 2012. Muster will be at 14:00hrs at Tenniscourt Road Recreation Ground, Paulton Village.

Weymouth - 2012

The 2012 Weymouth and Portland Armed Forces Day Festival will take place between Saturday 23rd and Friday 29th June, with the Service and Parade on Sunday 24th June 2012. Parade participation forms will be sent out on request to:

Charlotte Sheppard
Events Officer

Weymouth & Portland Borough Council
North Quay, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8TA
T: 01305 838512

E: c.sheppard@westdorset-weymouth.gov.uk

or alternatively can be downloaded from
www.visitweymouth.co.uk

NB: please remember that this is NOT a Legion event, we are just invited to attend. However, because we are representing the Legion, the Legion Ceremonial Handbook rules apply, especially in respect of turnout, etc. for Standard Bearers. Bookings for a place on the parade should be made as above, so that accurate assessments can be made by the organisers for support services, etc. Further information can be obtained from Bob Curry, (RBL Division Parade Marshal).

SOMERSET COUNTY
STANDARD BEARER TRAINING
2012

Month	Day/Date	Time	Venue
January	Tuesday 17th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 21st	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
February	Tuesday 21st	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 25th	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
March	Tuesday 20th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 24th	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
April	Tuesday 17th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 21st	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
May	Tuesday 22nd	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 26th	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
June	Tuesday 19th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 23rd	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
July	Tuesday 17th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 21st	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
August	Tuesday 21st	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 25th	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
September	Saturday 1st	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
			(Competitors Only)
	Saturday 8th	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
			(Competitors Only)
	Saturday 15th	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
			(Competitors Only)
	Saturday 22nd	1400–1700	Highbridge Community Hall
			(Competitors Only)
	Saturday 29th	0830–1600	County Standard Bearers Competition
		Start 1000hrs	Highbridge Community Hall
October	Tuesday 16th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 20th	1400–1700	East Huntspill Village Hall
November	Tuesday 13th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 17th	1400–1700	East Huntspill Village Hall
December	Tuesday 11th	1900–2100	East Huntspill Village Hall
	Saturday 15th	1400–1700	East Huntspill Village Hall

Standard Bearers are expected to turn out for training in uniform that complies with the Ceremonial Handbook – see ch.6.2 for full details.

Notes:

Please ensure that a note is placed in your Branch Minutes that the Standard is being used at Training on the giving dates—otherwise you and it will not be insured.

Due to HQs withdrawal of the Training budget, the County is paying for Saturday Training.

But this is likely to be reviewed at the January County Conference, it is possible that the Standard Bearers may have to pay for Saturday Training again.

New Standard bearers are welcome in at any time and will be not expected to be in full Uniform until established. Please encourage anyone you think may be interested.

If any Branches have redundant Standard Bearing equipment such as slings, gauntlets, etc.

And would be prepared to donate it for Standard Bearer training, please contact a member Of the Ceremonial Team (details below).

Ceremonial/Training Team as at 15th November 2012.

RBL County Ceremonial Officer

Vacant

RBL County Parade Marshal

Brian Summers Tel: 01823 660454.

Parade Marshal.

Alan Goodall Tel: 01934 820945.

Parade Marshal.

Mike Wool Tel: 01934 862724.

Parade Marshal.

John Moore Tel: 01460 65174.

Parade Marshal.

Dave Sidwell Tel: 01275 392610.

Parade Marshal.

Roger Prince Tel: 01823 272694.

Events Diary – 2012

February

Sat 25th Regional Standard Bearers' Competition
Camborne, Cornwall. (see small ad.)

March

June

Sun 24th Weymouth Veterans Week Parade & Service
(see article for further information)

July

August

September

Sun 2nd Double Hills 33rd Anniversary Parade, Paulton
(see small ad)

Sat 29th County Standard Bearers Competition
Highbridge Community Hall

Events Diary - 2013

January

Sat 12th County Conference
Venue to be confirmed

If the Events Diary is looking a bit sparse, it's because information is not reaching those who assemble it. If you have an event to appear, please submit the details **IN WRITING** (including email) to the County Secretary, well in advance, remembering that the Newsletter goes out bi-monthly. Over to you!