

HENLEY & PEPPARD BRANCH
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - NEWSLETTER
Autumn - 2016



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Editorial

Hearty congratulations to John (The Hobble) Green and to Stan Ainsley for successfully completing the Nijmegen Marches and who are now suitably be-medalled. They have raised over £3000 for the Poppy Appeal and there is still time for you to add to that total, should you wish. Blisters permitting, they will be penning an article about it all, to appear below.

Congratulations too to our indefatigable Poppy Appeal Organiser, Shirley Lees. She is standing down after four highly successful years. What is more, she has identified her successor, who (we are assured) is like Shirley “but more so”. We look forward to meeting her.

While Shirley has found her replacement, Stan Ainsley is still looking for his replacement as Secretary. Can anyone volunteer or suggest a possible candidate?

During the past two months, we took two looks at WWI; the dismal year of 1916, when Jutland was not even a draw and the Somme Battle a long drawn out three months of carnage. At our August meeting we will be welcoming the County Chairman Lynda Atkins

Branch Meeting and Branch Lunch Dates

15 August	In general the timings are as published below – unless otherwise advised
19 September	Talk 11.30 (please be seated by 11.20)
17 October	Lunch 12.00 for 12.30
*13 November – Lunch only @ 12.30	NB All Branch Meetings, Lunches and Talks are held in the
19 December 2016 – Christmas Lunch	Christ Church Centre unless otherwise advised

Branch & Other Events and Dates for your Diary

Monday 15 August

Branch Lunch and talk by John Green and Stan Ainsley

Nijmegen Marches

John and Stan will give an eye-watering account of their achievement with slides and stories of daring-do – all undertaken to raise money for the Poppy Appeal. Guest of Honour - Lynda Atkins, the new County Chairman.

Friday 19 August

Cholsey and Wallingford Railway

A British Legion Special - Fish & Chip supper on 19th August

‘Enjoy a British classic meal while traveling through the Oxfordshire countryside on our heritage train’.

Phone 07799381535 for additional information and bookings

Saturday 3 September

‘Town Hall Dance’ In case you have this in your diary please note that this event has been cancelled this year.

Thursday 8 September

ABF the Soldiers’ Charity visit to the Defence Capability Centre (DCC) Defence Academy, Shirvenham

NB - A Form and additional information is attached below.

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Monday 19 September *Branch Lunch and talk by Bill King*
'Dad's Underground Army'

Monday 17 October *Branch Lunch and Talk by Air Commodore (retired) Dr Tony Wober,*
Museum guide at the National Maritime Museum in Sydney.
"A Tour of Captain Cook's Endeavour"

Weekends 28/10 to 12/11 *in the Old Fire Station Gallery*
A photographic essay on the First World War by Michael St Maur Sheil
'Fields of Battle Lands of Peace 1418'
We are seeking sponsorship for this exhibition. Please contact Shirley if
You have any ideas for sponsors.

Sunday 13 November *Lunch only*

Monday 19 December *Christmas Lunch* 

Report on Previous Events

Monday 20 June *Branch Lunch and Talk by Malcolm Page* **'Battle of Jutland'**
Guests of Honour - The Town Clerk, Janet Wheeler joined us for lunch and a
celebration to mark the Queen's 90th Birthday. A Certificate of Appreciation from
the Branch to Louise Hasting, Information Centre Manager at the Town Hall, for the
much appreciated help she has accorded us over the last twenty years. Louise was
unable to join us, but Janet kindly agreed to pass the certificate on to Louise with
our warm thanks.

Monday 18 July *Branch Lunch and Talk by Alex Manning* **'The Somme – A War Walk'**.
Alex delivered a thoroughly researched, deeply moving and sobering presentation
to an appreciative assembly. Thank you Alex.

Membership

The membership renewal process is coming around again and for most of us this is the 1st October. The Membership Subscription has risen by £1 to £20 per annum of which £3 stays here in your Branch and £17 is paid to Head Office. The Committee have kept the Branch subs at £3 for a very long time but have decided that any future Head Office increases will be matched by a reduction in the Branch subs. This means you can expect the fee to be fixed at £20 for 2-3 years

For those of you that joined after 1st October 2015, your renewal date is 12 months from your joining date.

Welfare

The Legion is launching a new Community Support scheme which includes welfare activities. The Committee has decided to concentrate on the following areas: 'Telephone Buddies', 'Home and Hospital Visiting' and 'Bereavement Support' (especially at funerals). A leaflet explaining the scheme in more detail this will be issued soon. The success of this will depend on the number of volunteers available locally. Our thanks go to those already involved.

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Poppy Appeal – Past Events

Aliquando Chamber Choir Concert - 14 May

The Aliquando committee are happy to be in a position to make a donation of £215 to the Poppy appeal as a direct result of the concert in May this year. The overall amount in addition to the £198.68 bucket collection on the night, makes a respectable total of £413.68.

Somme Regatta collections

Regatta kindly gave us the opportunity to offer Somme commemorative pins and poppies on Friday 1 July as part of their commemorations of the centenary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme, which included an exhibition in the Prizes tent and a two minutes silence. It was a fitting reminder of how the sport of rowing lost so many to the conflict. In total, £3 483.64 was raised for the Poppy Appeal in and around Stewards Enclosure and at Leander, including a generous contribution from Leander themselves in memory of the 30 members who were killed during the Battle of the Somme.

Many thanks to all who helped with the collections. Anyone who would like a Somme commemorative badge, please contact Shirley Lees or Nick Lauanders.

Cadets Walk

At their drill hall in Friday Street on Wednesday 6 July, the Henley Detachment of the Oxfordshire Army Cadet Force presented the Henley-on-Thames and Peppard Branch of the Royal British Legion with a total of £305 raised through sponsorship of a 10-mile walk the cadets completed around Harwell last May. The Henley Detachment, or Nivelles Company, Oxfordshire Battalion (The Rifles) ACF to give them their full title, is a vibrant organisation that meets every Wednesday at 7 p.m.



Seven cadets aged between 12 and 17 from the Henley Detachment, together with three adults and cadets from other Oxfordshire detachments, took part in the walk.

The detachment's commander, Second Lieutenant Tom Fearn, is an old hand at this annual event, but for many of the cadets it was the furthest they had ever walked.

The cheque was gratefully received by John Green and Alex Manning, the branch's Cadet Liaison Officer.

Nijmegen Marches – 200km/125 miles in 4 Days

The Royal British Legion Henley-on-Thames and Peppard Branch Chairman, John Green and Secretary, Stan Ainsley, last week completed the Nijmegen Marches in the Netherlands to raise money for The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

The Nijmegen Marches first began in 1909 and this year was the 100th Event with over 50,000 people from all across the Globe taking part.

John, aged 81 last week, and Stan, a little younger, walked 50km each day for 4 consecutive days, totalling 200km / 125 miles in the hottest week of the year, with temperatures in the 30s every day.

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The before photo shows John and Stan during a preparatory walk along the Thames towpath and the after photo shows them proudly displaying their medals and enjoying a well-earned beer!

If you would like to support them, then please go to their Just Giving pages

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/StanFourDayMarch

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/JohnFourDayMarch

or contact them direct on;

07935-755905 for Stan or 07747-016081 for John



Poppy Appeal – Future Events

Poppy Appeal Annual Dance - 3 September - In case you have this in your diary please note that The dance has been cancelled this year.

Fields of Battle Lands of Peace 1418 - Friday 28 October to Wednesday 15 November

A unique portrait of the First World War battlefields, Fields of Battle Lands of Peace 1418 is a powerful photographic exhibition by Mike St Maur Shiel, which tells of the healed scars of the war through our only living witness, the battlefields themselves. Once places of devastating violence, we now see landscapes of great beauty, testament to peace and remembrance. Over time, nature has transformed the battle fields, creating a link between modern times and the personal dramas those landscapes now hide.

It is coming to Henley to Old Fire Station Gallery from Friday 28 October to Tuesday 15 November. We desperately need a lot of volunteers to man the exhibition, particularly at the weekends, so it can be open for as many hours as possible.

Unlike the small army of collectors, who go out in all weathers for the Poppy Appeal, this is a cushy indoor job that will certainly involve a seat and if you ask nicely, even a heater! It would be very much appreciated if you could offer some time to sit at the exhibition and smile at people as they come in. That's the sum total of the job description! Please contact Shirley Lees.

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Talk by Mike St Maur Shiel - Thursday 27 October

On Thursday 27 October at 7.30 p.m., the photographer will be speaking about the exhibition at the Council Chamber of the Town Hall. Please diarise.

He comments as follows:

It was whilst on a visit to Dunkirk with my father, who had fought there in WWII, that I first became aware of the close attention that soldiers pay to the ground which surrounds them and the way in which their vision of a battlefield extends not to miles but just the yards, even feet, which they can survey without themselves being seen. It was my friend, the historian, Richard Holmes, who shaped this further by insisting that my pictures should not just be an emotional response to a battlefield where men had died, but should seek to tell the history, the stories of the men who fought there.

The following quotation by First World War veteran P. J. Campbell, written at the end of the war, inspired the exhibition:

*They were everywhere... they would not be lonely,
there were too many of them.
I saw that bare country before me...
...but the country would come back to life...
They would lie still and at peace below the singing larks, beside the serenely flowing rivers.
They could not feel lonely, they would have one another.
And they would have us also ...we belonged to them, and they would be a part of us forever.*

Poppy Appeal Launch - Saturday 29 October

Sam Brown and her ukulele players have once again kindly agreed to launch the Poppy Appeal in the Market Place on Saturday 29 October. The mayor will buy the first poppy at 11 am. All are welcome.

Somme film – Tuesday 8 November

Definitely a date for your diary - watch this space for detailed information in due course.

News

John Green laid wreaths on behalf of the Branch at the CWGC cemetery at GOMMECOURT and at FONCQUEVILLERS to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first day of the Somme Offensive.



The assault by the 46th North Midland Division (Territorials) was as disastrous as elsewhere on that tragic day. This extract from a captured German report of the action says it all. !.....

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.....a violent bombardment overwhelmed our trenches and swept away most of the wire....but the attackers were repulsed with hand grenades...strong skirmishing lines were met with heavy machine gun fire...the enemy continued to press forward but were repulsed everywhere...the ground was covered with English dead....'.

John Green's father's regiment 1st/8th Sherwood Foresters and others suffered up to 70% casualties with virtually every officer either killed or wounded with little ground gained.

Personnel in the group photo are:

Brig Berti Woolnough, - Sir John Peace, Lord Lieut of Nottingham – Col Merryweather, Commandant Notts ACF – Mayor of Foncquevilliers - John William Green – and assorted others.

Stop Press

Our Standard Bearer, Brian Hughes was awarded the Town Medal on 6th of May this year and was proud to have received this recognition from the town where he was born and brought up. However, as the official nomination, printed verbatim in our last magazine, contained a number of inaccuracies, Brian would like to correct and set the record straight for posterity .

Here in his own words;

“I started RBL Poppy collections in Henley 1995 and over 21 years collected £57,255.85 Although the nomination mentioned that I collected regularly for the 1940 Dunkirk Veterans Association, the Dunkirk Vets don't have a collection. However, I did collect £10,104.95 for the RAFA Wings Appeal (not the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund).

I carried the Branch Standard (not County Standard) at 79 Repatriation Parades at the John Radcliffe Hospital honouring 175 service personnel killed in the recent conflicts – thankfully no more! I have also carried a Union Flag, Henley RBL Branch Standard and the Henley Branch Standard of the Dunkirk Veterans at Dunkirk Beach Memorial and Dunkirk Town Cemetery, also the Menim Gate, Ypres Ceremony and various cemeteries, too many to list, in France and Belgium over the last 16 years.

I attended a Memorial Service at Gillotts School with Malcolm on only one occasion (not numerous occasions) and once gave a little talk at a nursery school about the poppy. The previous Poppy Appeal Organisers I served with over the last 21 years were Pam Stuart (not Ward), Mary Mackintosh, Col Stuart Thompson and now Shirley Lees. “

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To:
 Brigadier Peter Walker
 ABF The Soldiers' Charity
 Denison Barracks
 Hermitage, Thatcham
 Berkshire
 RG18 9TP

Tel: 01635 204433
 Email: peter.walker205@mod.uk

From:

Tel:

E-mail :

ABF THE SOLDIERS' CHARITY VISIT TO THE DEFENCE CAPABILITY CENTRE (DCC)
DEFENCE ACADEMY, SHIRVENHAM - THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2016

Programme

0915-1000 – Arrive at main gate, book in and drive to DCC (coffee/tea available until 1000 in DCC).

1000-1100 – Split into two groups – tours of Artillery and AFV Wings.

1100-1115 – Break for coffee/tea and biscuits.

1115-1215 – Two groups swop around.

1215 onwards – Opportunity to examine exhibits in more detail and then depart.

Lunch

1300 - Lunch at Woodman Inn, Fernden, for those that wish to book this (for details of lunch see enclosed leaflet about the Woodman Inn).

The DCC has on display a wide range of Armoured Fighting Vehicles and Artillery pieces (see enclosed leaflet). The instructors will provide briefings on some of these but visitors will also be able to get into and onto many of the exhibits as this is a Defence learning centre not open to the public, not a museum where the public are not allowed to get 'hands on' experience.

Please complete the table below to show your requirements and those of any guests you bring with you:

Name	Tour	Lunch			Any special dietary or mobility requirements
		One Course	Two Courses	Three Courses	
		£20	£12	£14	

* I enclose £ being the total costs for the tour and any lunch meals requested.

* I enclose a donation in addition to the cost of my tickets of £

* I am unable to attend the event but would like to make a donation of £

* Please delete as applicable

I enclose a cheque made payable to: "ABF The Soldiers' Charity"

Signed: Date:

It would be appreciated if you could reply by 10 August 2016 as an early reservation will be required if we are to secure the medieval banqueting hall at the Woodman Inn for lunch. In addition, with numbers being limited to 50 for what should be a fascinating tour, this event is likely to fill up very quickly.

The Woodman Inn



A warm welcome awaits you at the Woodman Inn Country Pub and Restaurant, Fernham in Oxfordshire.

This charming 400 year old country pub nestles in the beautiful Vale of the White Horse. Here at The Woodman Inn we pride ourselves on serving fine ales, selected wines and quality food.

Owner David Bryant has over 30 years experience in the business, so when you visit our charming Country Pub and Restaurant you can be sure of a warm welcome and some delicious food.

The Woodman Inn is a Free house, so you know you can rely on finding well-kept real ales poured straight from the barrel.

From Peter Walker:

The Woodman can cater for small gatherings or parties of up to 50 people in its medieval banqueting hall. If there is sufficient interest from our group this facility will be offered to us.

By September the menu shown will be different but the price structure will remain the same.

Lunch Menu

Homemade Soup of the Day

Served with crusty bread and butter

Pâté De Campagne

Luxury pâté with Plum and White Onion Chutney with a petit pain

Potted Garlic Mushrooms

topped with Taw Valley Cheddar

Mains

Ballotine of Chicken

Classic Herb Stuffed Leg and Thigh cut served with Mushroom Fettuccini, Fine Green Beans and Red Pesto

"The Woodman" Prime Beef Burger

topped with "Taw Valley" cheddar - Bacon, tomato relish, served with gourmet chips and homemade onion rings

Our own Beer Battered Cod

served with garden peas, gourmet chips and tartar sauce

Desserts

Belgium Chocolate Fudge Cake

served with Luxury Chocolate Ice Cream

Profiteroles

served with Belgium chocolate sauce

Luxury Ice Cream (2 Scoops)

Madagascan Vanilla, Belgium Chocolate or Strawberries & Cream

One Course £11.95 - Two £13.95 - Three £14.95