

(Kilmington Branch)

NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2007

Poppy Appeal - 2007

Some £1758 was raised from the house to house collections, static boxes and the Remembrance Sunday Church collection this year, to which £185 will be added as tax rebate from gift aid envelopes. Thanks are due to the Poppy Appeal collectors and all those that contributed. A further £109 was raised from the Quiz Night in the New Inn on Remembrance Sunday for which there were three Branch teams; thanks are due to Brian and Denise Jenkins and to Clive Garner who compiled and conducted the quiz so well. The total was some £250 up on last year, a good indication of the concern felt for the welfare of our Armed Forces personnel, their dependents and veterans.

Remembrance Sunday

St Giles' Church was packed for the United Royal British Legion Service of Remembrance on Sunday 11 November, conducted jointly by the Vicar and the Rev'd Lincoln Jones, our Branch Chaplain. The local Baptist Moderator, the Rev'd Mike Hornsby, gave an excellent Address; the Lessons were read by the Branch Secretary and Chairman respectively. Many Village residents and Branch members assembled at the War Memorial for the Two Minutes Silence marked by maroons to signify the anniversary of Armistice Day at which the Chairman took the salute. While the second maroon launched, it failed to fire much to the dismay of Michael O'Flaherty and Gerry Hurford, the firing team! A wreath was laid by Gp Capt Brian Lavender on behalf of all Branch members and Village residents. After refreshments in the Baptist Church, 29 members lunched in the Otter Inn at Weston where the carvery proved to be delicious and we were looked after very well. The general feeling was that this event should be repeated next year.

South Molton Cup

The Branch has been notified that it will be presented with the South Molton Cup for recruiting 27 members during the past year, far better than any other Branch in Devon. The presentation will take place at the Devon County Annual Conference held in the Honiton Branch Club House on 12 January 2008. This is a great achievement but we must continue to seek additional members in line with the aims of the Royal British Legion.

Realities of Conflict

Major Giles Timms MC brought home the unpleasant and unpredictable realities of conflict experienced during operations by the 3rd Battalion the Parachute Regiment against the Taliban in Afghanistan during his excellent power point presentation in the Village Hall on 26 October. There was a good attendance by Branch members and Village residents and the Seaton, Axminster and Colyton Branches were all represented.

Giles gave a fascinating account, and many were in awe at the difficulties faced and the bravery shown by the soldiers, and saddened by the casualties and deaths of some of our young men. The Chairman thanked Giles for highlighting the fact that the Poppy Appeal was even more vital now and that the campaign to support the Military Covenant was very relevant. £169 was collected in the Admiral's Jug which will be sent to the Poppy Appeal. The Chairman presented Vera Hoskins with a bouquet of flowers to mark her last day at the age of 93 as Branch refreshment co-ordinator after many years.

Branch AGM – 5 Nov

Following the Act of Remembrance for five members deceased over the year, and the usual reports by the Chairman, Secretary, Welfare Secretary, Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator and Treasurer, the annual accounts were accepted and a vote of thanks given to our auditor, Gordon Dendle. The draft Branch Bye Laws were then considered and approved unanimously; they would be forwarded to the RBL Devon County HQ for endorsement. The President took the Chair while Brian Lavender was re-elected as Chairman, Michael O'Flaherty as Vice Chairman and Secretary, and Roger Lovegrove elected as Treasurer. Ill health prevented Maurice Andrews, our retiring Treasurer, from attending the meeting but the Chairman subsequently wrote to him on behalf of all members and thanked him for handling our accounts so well over several years. Committee members were then re-elected consisting of Maurice Andrews, Merrie Acton, Janet Robertson, Ted Dutton, Gerald Hurford and Elizabeth McGregor.

Devon County Festival of Remembrance

Eleven members of the Branch joined 46 members from the Axminster District on the coach for the most impressive Devon County Festival of Remembrance in the Great Hall of Exeter University on 8th November. The ceremony was conducted in a most professional and moving way with the Band of the Royal Marines, Lymington, playing the Royal British Legion march as Branch Standards were escorted in. Representatives of the ex-Service Associations followed and then the Regular and Reserve Forces to their individual Service marches. The Cadet Forces, War Widows Association and Russian Veterans were all positioned, before the Union Flag was slowly marched in to "Land of Hope and Glory". The Men of Morchard, a group of 11, provided very amusing musical entertainment following which nearly a thousand in the Hall joined in community singing of wartime songs. Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Squire an ex-Chief of the Air Staff and Falklands veteran gave an excellent Address prior to the Service of Remembrance conducted by the Rev'd Tom Hiney MC, the new Honorary Chaplain of the Devon County British Legion. The exhortation was given by Major General A Keeling, the County President. The whole performance was to a very high standard and members are advised not to miss this first class event next year.

Autumn Coffee Morning

A very successful Branch Coffee Morning was held in the Village Hall on 24 Nov with some 84 in attendance. £628 was raised for the Poppy Appeal thanks to the sterling efforts of the stall holders, those that donated items for the stalls and draw, the draw organisers and those that provided refreshments under the co-ordination of Kath Summerfield.

Death of Mrs Lillian Millett BEM

The Branch was represented by the Chairman, Betty Parkinson and Merrie Acton at the Service of Thanksgiving in Shute Church on 6 November for the life of Lillian Millett, conducted by the Rev'd Nigel Freathy. Both Lillian and her Squadron Leader husband who predeceased her served in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War; a Poppy Wreath was sent "In Remembrance" by the Kilmington Branch.

Monthly "Get Togethers"

These continue, and the dates for the next meetings at 1800 hours on the Fridays are: 7th December – New Inn, 4th January – Old Inn, 1st February – New Inn.

Future Events

The Committee will be considering and planning events for next year at its meeting on 3 December.

Seasonal Greetings

All members of your Committee send their best wishes for a very happy Christmas and the best of luck in the New Year. Let's all say a prayer and/or propose a toast to our Armed Forces on active duty as we are enjoying ourselves on Christmas Day.

1December 2007
(B W LAVENDER)
Chairman