



(Kilmington Branch BR246)

NEWSLETTER- FEBRUARY 2009

Commander Stafford Seward, OBE Royal Navy

Prior to his departure from Southern Arabia after a 3 year tour of duty, our only Serving member who perused our two monthly Newsletters published on the Kilmington web site, sent a message to the Chairman thanking the Branch for its support to our Armed Forces as they continue the battle against global terrorism. Stafford has enjoyed a few weeks at home and, as a result of a few shots which you may have heard coming from the woods, £262 was raised on the shoot held in memory of his father Alan, which the Chairman forwarded at his request to that very worthy Charity "Help for Heroes". He is about to depart to Chad on his next assignment, where he will be working with the United Nations to cope with the many refugees from Darfur. We may be able to look forward to an Annual Lecture "From Southern Arabia to Chad" in the Autumn!

Branch Committee Meeting - 1 Dec 08

Among the subjects discussed at the meeting was the Branch RBL Standard mounted in St Giles' Church. The Secretary explained that it was the original one purchased in 1927 and, although it is kept there, it is not officially "laid up". However, it is in a fairly delicate state and could never be paraded. The Committee did consider replacing it some years ago but thought that the cost of £800 plus would better be spent on the Poppy Appeal.

RBL Devon County Annual Conference

The Secretary represented the Branch at the Annual Conference on 10 Jan 09 held at the Honiton Branch Club HQ. County President, Rear Admiral Ric Cheadle, CBE, DL welcomed delegates and introduced the RBL Head of Membership Support and Development, Hugh Philips, who reported that more veterans and their dependents than ever were being supported by the Legion. RBL HQ believes that the "Honour the Covenant" Campaign proved to be very successful and "Return to Rationing" had resulted in 1,500 returns already. Over £26 million had already been raised for the Poppy Appeal this financial year and over 40 million poppies were distributed. The sale of the Pall Mall HQ had released £5 million to RBL funds. Some 33,000 new members were recruited in 2008 but 15,000 were lost, some attributable to the closure to a number of Clubs.

The County Manger and Secretary reported that the move of the County office to Alphington where they share premises with SSAFA was much more satisfactory. It was reported that Devon residents contribute on average 70p per head to the Poppy Appeal in comparison to the national average of 56p. A 20% increase in urgent welfare cases had occurred in Devon and Branches were urged to support the County Welfare Fund with donations. A rolling 3-year plan for the County was considered and approved by delegates to boost support for the RBL Mission to Safeguard the Welfare, Interests and Memory of those who are serving, or have served, in the Armed Forces. After the

election of County delegates to the National Annual Conference and the presentation of awards, the conference closed with the return of Standards, and the National Anthem.

Funeral of Gladys Hubbard

The funeral service for Gladys Hubbard who died aged 88 was conducted by the Rev'd Alistair McCollum in St Giles' Church on 13th January. The Tribute was given by the Rev'd Nigel Freathy to a Church packed with relatives of her own and her late husband, Bert, who died many years ago; there were also many friends from the Village and members of the Branch. While she had no connections with the Armed Forces she had been a great supporter of the Branch over the past 15 years and had been a Poppy Appeal collector.

Spring Coffee Morning - 25 Apr 09

The Village Hall has been booked for the Branch Annual Spring Coffee Morning on Saturday 25 Apr 09 at 10.30 hours. Please support the occasion as all profits will go to the Poppy Appeal. The usual stalls will be available and items for them and the Draw would be most welcome. Any new ideas for fund raising on that morning would be appreciated.

Branch History

The Secretary, Michael O'Flaherty, has compiled a history of the Kilmington Branch, many items drawn from the first Branch Committee Minute book found recently in Joyce Double's loft. The Minutes from 1967-82 are missing and anyone that can shed light on their whereabouts is asked to contact the Secretary. The historical record will obviously be kept as a permanent record and updated progressively, but Michael has arranged to publish it in three instalments in Postscript and it will be included on the Village web site.

Annual Outing

The Annual Outing, which has been a popular event for many years, will be planned shortly by your Committee but we would be most interested in any suggestions from members as to where they might like to visit. Please contact the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer with your views.

Diary Dates

The evening steam train trip in aid of the Poppy Appeal along the River Dart from Buckfastleigh to Totnes and return will take place on Tuesday 16th June departing at 7.30 pm. The Armed Forces Weekend in Plymouth is scheduled for 27/28 June. The Devon County RBL Rally will be held at Okehampton Army Camp on Sunday 13 Sep 09 in conjunction with a Military Heritage Weekend there. The Devon County Festival of Remembrance at Exeter University will take place on Thursday 5 Nov. Details of these events will be published in due course.

Membership

Branch Membership now stands at 116 and your Committee is anxious to recruit more members to boost our support for the Armed Forces, the veterans and their dependents. Please encourage your neighbours and friends to join and pass any suggestions to boost our numbers to the Chairman or Secretary.

Monthly "Get-Togethers"

These informal monthly events alternating between the Old and New Inns on a "buy your own" principle are proving very popular. The next ones held at 18.00 hours are on Friday 6 Feb in the New Inn and Friday 6 Mar in the Old Inn.

(B W LAVENDER)
Chairman
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30 January 09