

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION (KILMINGTON BRANCH) SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019

Greetings from your RBL Committee, we hope this finds you well and in fine fettle! At least as I commence this year's Spring edition I am looking out on blue skies, white clouds and sunshine, which of course is in stark contrast to the snow and ice of last year! Unfortunately it is with much sadness that I have to commence this report with the sad news that Mrs Eileen Green recently died at home in Silver Street, Kilmington at the age of 93. Her husband George, was a Fleet Air Arm pilot who was involved in the attack on the Bismarck. Eileen and George were long-standing members of the Royal British Legion and our thoughts are with their family.



After the spectacular events of last year you will be pleased to know that this year will be slightly quieter! Certainly your committee were pleased to hear that I had no intention of attempting to eclipse what we achieved in 2018. I think you will all agree that we owe our committee a huge vote of thanks for all their achievements in 2018, it was certainly a remarkable year in which our small RBL community staged an incredibly varied programme that went well beyond everyone's expectations and to top it all, you smashed all previous records for the Poppy Appeal by raising just over

£15000 throughout the year 'Thank You all so much'. So to 2019; nationally, there are two major events; the 75th Anniversary of D-Day and also the 50th anniversary of the deployment of British troops onto the streets of Northern Ireland in 1969 (Operation Banner). We all know a great deal about WW2, however, we are inclined to forget the events that were closer to home. Over 300,000 service personnel were deployed to Northern Ireland over 38 years. In total 1441 UK Armed Forces personnel died as a result of operations in Northern Ireland or paramilitary actions in other countries. To mark this significant anniversary the Legion will be hosting a commemorative event at the NMA on the 14th August 2019 and we will keep you all up to date as more details become available. On to other news; first and foremost our membership currently stands at 125, which is slightly down on previous years, however, we are actively seeking more members to join our cause. Please encourage those you know to join our incredible social organisation and if you need any assistance please do not hesitate to contact either our membership secretary John Watts, or any of the committee. Please remember you don't have to be, or have been a serving member of the Armed Forces to join, we welcome everyone; and it is not compulsory to dress like this! HONESTLY! At our March committee meeting we were given an excellent update by Nicola Hodgskins, Case Officer, RBL Devon. Nicola gave an overview of her role as Case Officer for the whole of Devon right up to the Somerset border. Very few branches know about the work that the Case Officers do and she is anxious to rectify the situation. She explained that there are many levels of help and advice that they can provide but that they look at cases holistically covering everything from form filling to benefits, housing advice and social services. One of the biggest problems they encounter is social isolation and their outreach team deals with problems relating to alcohol, drugs, mental health issues, etc. Nicola outlined several distressing case studies to illustrate the work they do and the complexity of some of the cases. Just to provide an idea of the scale of the problem, currently there are 470 cases across Devon and Cornwall and each Case Officer looks after 50-70 cases. Nicola works out of the Plymouth office, and has one of the biggest areas to look after with only 2 volunteers to help her. All members of the committee were very grateful to Nicola for her explanation of her work, which for the first time clarified what 'Devon Welfare' does. Moving on, our next event will be our annual Spring Coffee morning which



will take place on Saturday 13th April at Kilmington Village Hall, where you will be able to enjoy some very jovial company while topping up on all your spring/Easter necessities (look out for the posters). Our next event thereafter will be our summer outing on 19th June. The proposal this year is to travel to Totnes by coach and then take the Dart River cruise to Dartmouth, where individuals can have a leisurely stroll and take lunch in their own time. On the way back to Kilmington the coach will then take us to Slapton Sands to look at the Tank memorial commemorating Exercise Tiger; a D-Day training exercise for the US Army which came under attack from German E-boats and resulted in 639 casualties. Approximate cost at this stage is £22 per head, however, this will be confirmed when final numbers are known. If you are interested then please let your shepherds know or contact any of the committee members. A possible visit to the National Arboretum is still at the planning stage. of course our monthly get togethers continue at the New Inn, Old Inn and Tuckers Arms, Dalwood on the first Friday of each month; the next being at the Tuckers Arms on Fri 5th April, so please come and join us for a jovial pint, glass of wine or just a good chat!

 **The Royal British Legion**
SPRING COFFEE MORNING

Plants, Goodies, Cakes, Etc.
10.30 - 12.00
Saturday 13th April
KILMINGTON VILLAGE HALL
£1.50 Entrance with Tea / Coffee & Cake
LIVE ON 

Finally, please see below the new dates for your diaries, I look forward to catching up with you all.

Dates for your Diary:

Fri 5th Apr – Get together 6.30pm in the Tuckers Arms
 Sat 13th Apr – Spring Coffee Morning – Kilmington Village Hall
 Fri 3rd May – Get together 6pm in the New Inn
 Fri 7th Jun - Get together 6pm in the Old Inn
 Wed 19th Jun – Annual Summer Outing
 Fri 5th Jul – Annual BBQ at Fernwood Farm
 Sat 27th Jul – Village Fayre & Flower Show – RBL BBQ
 Fri 2nd Aug – Get together 6pm in the New Inn
 Fri 6th Sep – Old Inn & Annual lecture in Kilmington Village Hall
 Sep – Possible WW2 visit to France (TBC)

Cdr Staff Seward OBE RN Rtd
 Chairman RBL Kilmington Branch