



# THE NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2019



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## The Duncan Trophy

In its 90 Anniversary year, the  
Henley & Peppard Branch received the  
organisation's Trophy for the most  
improved branch in Oxfordshire  
and  
a Certificate in recognition of its  
growing Membership

## Meetings are held on the 3 Monday of the month unless otherwise advised.

Venue – The Christ Church Centre, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 1AG

Talk 11.30 (please be seated by 11.20) Lunch 12 for 12.30

Please book for lunch by the Thursday before by phone

To Branch Secretary, on 01491 638885 or helentwalsh@gmail.com

### Dates for your Diary

**20•May - Mr Christopher Trelawny•-** Trinity House - The safety of shipping and the well-being of seafarers have been the prime concerns of Trinity House since being incorporated by Royal Charter in 1514.

#### **17 June - Branch 90th Anniversary Celebration**

Hobbs of Henley's boat, The Waterman, will depart at 12 noon and return at 4 pm and, as already advised, the cost to include a welcome drink and full buffet, is £37.50. There will also be a cash bar on board and a speaker to be announced. In order to secure your place on the trip, please send your cheque by Monday 20th May at the latest payable to "RBL Henley Branch" to our Treasurer, Martin Goodier, 16 Reades Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9LP

**15 July - Brig Malcolm Page** - Captain A. Gibb, DSO DSM, circa 1906-1922 in Somaliland, in the campaign against Sayid Mohamed Abdillahi Hassan (the Mad Mullah in British press parlance)

**19 August** - to be advised

**16 September - Malcolm Lewis** - 'The Fighting Temeraire'•Turner's 'My Darling'•the name the illustrious painter gave to his most famous painting which he refused ever to sell. •Malcolm Lewis, who is a member of the Society for Nautical Research, will talk about the ship which fought at Trafalgar and Turner's favourite painting."

**21 October - Lt Col (Retd) John Balding GM •OBE** ' Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal Operator' John joined the Army as a Junior soldier in the 'Ammunition Technician' trade. He held various appointments over his 40+ distinguished career rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel ,mainly in the world of Explosive Ordnance Disposal and was awarded the George Medal and OBE in recognition for his service.

**10 November** - Remembrance Sunday Lunch (after Parade and Service) 1pm Christ Church

**16 December - Christmas Lunch - Christ Church Centre**

## Branch's 90th Anniversary Celebration

We are delighted with the response to our invitation to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Henley branch of the RBL with a boat trip on Monday 17th June.

Hobbs of Henley's boat, The Waterman, will depart at 12 noon and return at 4 pm and, as already advised, the cost to include a welcome drink and full buffet, is £37.50. There will also be a cash bar on board and a speaker to be announced.

In order to secure your place on the trip, please send your cheque by Monday 20th May at the latest payable to "RBL Henley Branch" to our Treasurer, Martin Goodier as follows:

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RG4 9LP

Alternatively you may prefer to bring your cheque to our next meeting on Monday 20th May at Christchurch Centre. Remember that places on the boat are on a first come, first served basis, so please don't delay! We do still have available a limited number of spaces remaining at present if you would like to bring a guest. If you have any questions about arrangements please call our Secretary, Helen Walsh, on 01491 638885.

Further details will be sent out prior to 17th June but we are looking forward to being together and enjoying this special opportunity to commemorate the forming of the branch in 1929.



## The Waterman Courtesy of Hobbs of Henley





## Previous Talks

**21 January - Malcolm Page** The 1914-18 War did NOT end on 11 Nov '18'

**18 February - David Lees** 'D Day - A New Perspective'

**18 March • Rebecca Stephens MBE • Everest'**

Rebecca Stephens MBE is a British mountaineer, writer, motivational speaker and leadership coach. She was the first British woman to reach the summit of Mount Everest and the first British Woman to climb the Seven Summits.



**15 April - Dr Robert Treharne Jones**, known as 'The Voice of Rowing', has been commentating on the sport for more than 35 years. He has provided course-side commentary for countless world championships as well as the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing, London, and Rio.

For many years he commentated on the Boat Race on BBC Radio, and has also worked extensively for RTE in Dublin, and Eurosport television, covering many special events outside sport.

In 2007 he was appointed Head of Commentary at Regatta Radio, the pop-up radio station for Henley Royal Regatta. Since that time he has coordinated a training programme for would-be rowing commentators, many of whom have graduated to commentate at national and international level.

Robert started rowing at medical school in 1970, and during his competitive career at club level he won a number of trophies. He has been a member of 14 different clubs, including the captaincy of two, and the chairmanship of a third, and has recently been elected President of yet another!

In 1984 he was elected to membership of Leander Club, and worked for many years as the club's press and public relations officer, taking a particular interest in the club's history and archives. He was one of the contributing authors and photographers for Leander's bicentenary book, published in 2018.

As well as his rowing commitments Robert works as clinical director of a medical IT company, which develops software to help healthcare professionals manage long-term clinical conditions.

## Annual Town Meeting

**Chairman, John Green and Patron, Brig,(ret'd) Malcolm Page MBE attended the Annual Town Meeting at the Town Hall on Thurs 4th April.**

This annual event gives local organisations the opportunity to promote and report on their activities. This was a chance for your Branch to display the recently awarded Duncan Trophy and Membership Certificate on a table with copies of our newsletter and bedecked with the Branch Standard and copies of the Henley Standard (5th April) report of our most recent Branch meeting.

Light refreshments were served after the meeting and delegates mingled to exchange information about their various work.

At least 15 copies of our Newsletter were taken away which hopefully will result in a wider knowledge of the Branch and may even entice new members in due course. All in all a worthwhile evening. *John Green*



## Carterton Repatriation



Carterton Repatriation memorial 16/3/19 - The West Oxfordshire Branch of the RBL Bikers care for the upkeep of this memorial honouring the passing of the all too many cortege processions from RAF Brize Norton. The Union Flag at the site needed replacing and it was decided the old one should be framed and presented to the Bikers Branch.

In attendance was the County Deputy Lord Lieutenant, County Patron (David Mason) County Chairman (Lynda Atkins) and John Green carrying our Branch Standard.

More than 100 Bikers were there and their mass drive was spectacular!





## Operation Blue Sapper

It was already dark when I collected the Peppard and District standard from All Saints' Church on Tuesday 19 February. • It seemed strange to be visiting a cemetery long after sunset, however our Chairman had committed the Branch to support Operation Blue Sapper. • Despite my apprehension, the evening proved to be a moving and interesting experience.

The Henley detachment of The Army Cadet Force mustered at the Fairmile Cemetery to honour and remember Sapper Alfred Barnes. Alfred is one of the many nearly forgotten servicemen who died as a result of the First World War with no war grave and no family to contest his corner. He was buried in an unmarked grave and forgotten for almost a century until the plot was located by Mike Willoughby of the 'Not Forgotten Project'.

The Detachment refreshes Alfred's grave every year on the anniversary of his death; this was the 101<sup>st</sup>. The senior three-star cadets, under the direction of Lieutenant Fearn, set to work to renew the edges, remove the weeds and restore the slate chipping covering. The illumination was limited but sufficient. The photograph below shows the very satisfactory result after the Act of Remembrance and Wreath Laying, which involved the whole Detachment. In parallel with the restoration work the remainder of the Detachment toured the other graves of military interest decorating each one with a Poppy Cross.

Finally, the Army Cadet Force County Chaplain, The Revd Mark Newman conducted a moving Act of Remembrance. The Cadets played a full part in the readings and Exhortation. It was a privilege to carry one of our Standards in support of this memorable 'Operation'. *Lt Col Nicholas Launders*



## Henley's May Fayre



"John Green and Nick Launders manned the branch RBL gazebo at this annual event held in Market Place.

A combination of dry weather and multiple attractions including the traditional Maypole, Morris dancers, school choirs, many food stalls and tug-of-war ensured big crowds throughout the day.

Much interest was shown in our display of RBL memorabilia. Several copies of Mike Whilloughby's book 'Bringing Them Home' and Alan Mead's book 'Letters from Palestine' were sold. Copies of our Newsletter were distributed and at least one potential new member recruited!



The WW1 uniform worn by your Chairman drew many children to the stall, followed by their parents who donated generously to the Poppy Appeal. Total amount raised will be reported later when Annie Arscott (PAO) has been able to count and bank the proceeds. All-in-all a great day hopefully to be repeated next year."

## The D-Day Story

Cllr Gerald Vernon Jackson, Leader, Portsmouth Council said: "This June the city will be the focal point for reflection on the events of 1944. Veterans, military personnel and civilians will commemorate those lost and celebrate the achievements of the operation that sailed from Portsmouth 75 years ago.

It's fitting that we're revealing the programme of events for D-Day 75 at The D-Day Story - the museum which has captured the human stories of those involved in that epic event."

The D-Day Story opened last year after a £5m National Lottery-supported transformation and is the only museum in the UK dedicated to the Allied Invasion in June 1944

**Address:** Clarence Esplanade, Portsmouth PO5 3NT - Opened: 1982

**Opening Times** - Monday to Sunday 10am–5pm

## Plans to commemorate D-Day 75th Anniversary

The plans were announced in Portsmouth with a visit to the D-Day Story Museum by Vice Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Gordon Messenger.

Commonly referred to as D-Day, the Normandy Landings began on the 6 June 1944, when allied forces launched a combined naval, air and land assault on occupied Europe.

Events will be held in Normandy and around the UK this June. Portsmouth, where much of the landing force sailed from in 1944, will be the focal point of the UK commemorations and will host the UK national event on 5 June. The council is also planning a series of events over 5 days to reflect the area's unique role in one of the largest and well-known military operations ever.

The commemorative event will include a military parade along the seafront, music including performances by military bands, readings by VIP's and a flypast featuring period aircraft. Other features will include a Royal Collection Trust exhibition, screenings to show the Normandy Commemorations live and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. The first 'Portsmouth Revival festival' celebrating the food, music, dancing and vehicles of the time will also be held. Portsmouth's activity will culminate in a Sunset Concert for Heroes, acts include the Military Wives Choir and the D-Day Darlings.

Before sunset on the 5 June, MV Boudicca, a specially-chartered ship for 300 Normandy veterans, procured by funds from The Royal British Legion and a LIBOR grant from HM Treasury, will then transport veterans across the channel to Normandy escorted by a Royal Navy vessel, representing their famous crossing 75 years before.

The ship will accommodate the veterans for the duration of their visit to Normandy and is being provided to the veterans at no cost. Veterans who wish to travel on the ship should contact The Royal British Legion to register interest.

The key events will include an inauguration at the site of the Normandy Memorial Trust's British Normandy Memorial and The Royal British Legion's services at Bayeux Cathedral and Bayeux Cemetery before concluding with an evening of music and entertainment beside the beaches in Arromanches. Throughout the commemorations around 2000 current serving personnel will offer support to veterans both in the UK and in France, while also taking part in the various ceremonial events.



Combined with the launch the Defence Secretary has written an open letter to Normandy veterans and the wider community seeking help from any member of the public who may know a Normandy veteran, and asking them to contact The Royal British Legion to ensure they are aware of plans to commemorate D-Day and how veterans can participate should they wish to.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said: "75 years ago the forces of 13 Allied countries gathered in Britain before launching the historic operation to liberate Europe. Winston Churchill rightly said that D-Day was "undoubtedly the most complicated and difficult" operation that had ever taken place. This June we will show our veterans that the debt to them is never forgotten for the price they paid for the freedom and peace we now enjoy."

The Royal British Legion's Commemorative Events Lead, Bob Gamble OBE: said: "As we mark 75 years since the largest seaborne invasion the world has ever seen we salute the bravery and sacrifice of all those who took part in liberating Europe. We invite those who wish to attend the events to commemorate their historic achievements to get in touch with the Legion and join our all costs covered journey by ship back to France. The veterans will be the VIPs at this event and we will make sure their every need is catered for as they travel back to Normandy to take part in this landmark event."