Royal British Legion Report

How We Are Structured

During the past 12 months, we have bid farewell to Fiona Mills, who was responsible for the Poppy Appeal, and Mr. Ed Macfarlane, our Branch Chairman, who relocated to Hayling Island in July last year. We express our gratitude for their valuable contributions and wish them well in their future endeavours. As a result, three significant changes have taken place:

- Firstly, I have been appointed by the committee to succeed Ed as the new Branch Chairman.
- Secondly, I have transferred my previous role as the Branch Treasurer to Mr. Alex Charlesworth, who now also joins us on the committee.
- Thirdly, the committee has welcomed Antonia Sims, who replaces Fiona in representing the Poppy Appeal.

Our Activities

We made a slight change to our fundraising activities at last year's village fete by inviting my former regiment, 11 EOD, the bomb disposal regiment, to participate. Additionally, we were fortunate to have the head of the London Metropolitan Police Bomb Disposal Section attend the event. We raised nearly £900 for their charity, the FELIX Fund.

In addition to fundraising at the fete, we organised a remembrance-themed creative art competition for the school children, which was presented in the RBL Gazebo.

In November, we organized and attended Remembrance Sunday events, both at the memorial and the church service. Despite lower attendance, the event was successful.

Recently, we coordinated the VE Day ceremony at the village memorial, during which members of Kirtlington School read aloud details of residents with connections to VE Day.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank non committee members Barry Grinham, Tony Brett and Dudley Brewer for their ongoing support, and a reminder, you do not have to have served in the military to be a member of the RBL.

Looking Forward

As I become more accustomed to my new role as Branch Chair, we will enhance our communication regarding upcoming events.

- We have been invited to open the village fete, Sat 28 June, where we will also host our RBL Stand. I hope again to display some artwork from the school
- We may have a small presence at the Polo in Memory of Lt Colonel Rupert Thorneloe, to be held on Sat 5 July
- We aim to organise an evening at the village pub in celebration of the 80th anniversary of VJ Day on either 14 or 15 Aug.
- We will organise Remembrance Sunday, 9 Nov.

Lastly, if you've not yet joined us, please do. Annual membership is £20. You can do as little or as much as you wish, and you do not have to be a veteran. Membership is via the RBL website and select Kirtlington for your Branch.