

**Henley on Thames Branch
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**

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Report to the Town Meeting – 22 April 2010

The Henley on Thames Branch continues to flourish and has had a busy and successful year. We have continued to meet monthly at the Rugby Club and, during the winter, have had a programme of talks before lunch. We attended the Mayor's Remembrance Parade, albeit with depleted numbers, followed by lunch at the Rugby Club. We also had a first class Christmas lunch there. We are most grateful to the Rugby Club for allowing us the use of their premises.

Sadly we lost out two surviving Dunkirk veterans in the past year. The Dunkirk Veterans' Association Standard is in our custody, but will be laid up in one of the Henley churches in due course.

Brian Hughes, our Standard Bearer and champion Poppy Appeal collector, was again successful in the County Standard Bearers' Competition and is again the County Standard Bearer. He is also on parade close to the John Radcliffe Hospital whenever the body of a service man or woman returned from Afghanistan is taken to the hospital by hearse from RAF Lyham.

Our Poppy Appeal total is approaching £17,500, with some months yet to go. Apart from the cadets of the Air Training Corps, who have collected regularly for us for several years, the Army Cadets did a sponsored march that yielded £463, while Morrigan House, Gillotts School raised £344 36 for the Poppy Appeal. The involvement of the young people in this way is most heartening. We are looking at ways in which we can strengthen our links with the Cadet Forces.

We are in the process of acquiring Peppard Branch as a sub-branch of Henley. This is a part of a slow process of closer working with other Branches in South Oxfordshire, as our numbers decline. Lt Col Peter Balkar, formerly President of Peppard Branch is now the President of the combined organisation.

We look forward to another busy year, during which we will be marking the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. We have one veteran of that campaign, Robin Appleford, who was shot down over Kent. Later he served in the Desert Airforce and flew in the Victory Parade.

Our programme for 2010/11 will include the Poppy Collection, Remembrance Sunday Parade, a boat trip on the Thames, our 'Third Friday' meetings and lunches – with talks again in the winter, Remembrance and Christmas lunches.

As always, we are most appreciative of the support of the people of Henley and their generosity in donating to the Poppy Appeal.

The Legion's mission is to safeguard the welfare, interests and memory of those who are serving or have served in the Armed Forces.

Registered Charity: The Royal British Legion, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA
Registered Charity Number: 219279

POPPY SUPPORT

For Service people past and present and their families