



"SANDBAG"

WINCANTON AND DISTRICT ROYAL BRITISH LEGION NEWSLETTER

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NEWS FROM THE BRANCH

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Secretary Arthur Pickup 01963-32952

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IMPORTANT : Next branch meeting 15th December at The Millers Inn 7.45 p.m.

Remembrance parade 2014

I think I would be right in saying that the parade this year was probably the most well attended for some time. We had substantial attendance from our youth groups with large numbers of our members, civic dignitaries and veterans with us. The weather was perfect yet again with a lovely blue sky, mild autumn afternoon. Once more the Wincanton Silver Band did us proud and we marched down the High Street to music mainly from the Great War. We had a very good reception from the public lining the street and many attended the church service. Although we were not able to publicise it in time it



was especially poignant this year because 1 Regiment Army Air Corps, who now have a substantial amount of married quarters in the town, held their Regimental Remembrance Service in the Parish Church in the morning. The collection from that will go to Poppy Appeal.

Again the very youngest members of our community, from the Brownies, Guides and Cubs placed a cross at the War Memorial for every person from the town who was killed in the two World Wars. We were also proud of our affiliated Army Cadets who were extremely smart and provided the standard bearer for the Union

Flag and our soon to be affiliated Sea & Marine Cadets too were exceptionally well turned out, the two cadets units are a great credit to us. Our standard bearer Martin Holmes carried the branch standard and Lt. Colonel Brown, Royal Marines, Deputy Commander, of The Commando Helicopter Force, took the salute. We were very pleased to welcome our new mayor Cllr. Martin Russell to his first Remembrance parade as mayor but extremely sad that it is the last parade for our MP David Heath, as he is standing down at the next election.



Remembrance - The Cenotaph

Last month I focused our Remembrance on the Unknown Warrior so I thought it appropriate to find the story of the Cenotaph, our national symbol of Remembrance.

The Cenotaph situated on Whitehall in London, began as a temporary structure erected for a peace parade following the end of the First World War but following an outpouring of national sentiment it was replaced in 1920 by a permanent structure and designated the United Kingdom's primary national war memorial. It was designed by Edwin Lutyens, the permanent structure was built from Portland stone between 1919 and 1920 replacing Lutyens' earlier wood-and-plaster cenotaph in the same location. The annual National Service of Remembrance is held at the site on Remembrance Sunday, the closest Sunday to 11 November (Armistice Day) each year. Lutyens' cenotaph design has been reproduced elsewhere in the UK and other countries including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Bermuda and Hong Kong.

The Cenotaph was originally a wood-and-plaster structure designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and erected in 1919. It was one of a number of temporary structures erected for the London Victory Parade (also called the Peace Day Parade) on 19 July 1919 that marked the formal end of the First World War that had taken place

with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919. As one of a series of temporary wooden monuments constructed along the route of the parade, it was not proposed until just two weeks prior to the event. Following deliberations of the Peace Celebrations Committee, Lutyens was invited to Downing Street. There, the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, proposed that the monument should be a catafalque, like the one intended for the Arc de Triomphe in Paris for the corresponding Victory Parade in France, but Lutyens proposed instead that the design be based on a cenotaph. The temporary wood-and-plaster structure had the same shape as the later permanent stone structure, and consisted of a pylon that rose in a series of set-backs to the empty tomb (cenotaph) on its summit. The wreaths at each end and on top were made from laurel rather than the later carved stone sculptures. The location chosen along the parade route along Whitehall was between the Foreign Office and Richmond House. The unveiling took place the day before the Victory Parade. During the parade itself, those saluting the temporary Cenotaph included the Allied commanders John Pershing, Ferdinand Foch, Douglas Haig and David Beatty. For some time after the parade, the base of the memorial was covered with flowers and wreaths by members of the public. Pressure mounted to retain it, and the British War Cabinet decided on 30 July 1919 that a permanent memorial should replace the wooden version and be designated Britain's official national war memorial. The announcement was made on 23 October 1919 that the Portland stone version would be a "replica exact in every detail in permanent material of present temporary structure". Lutyens had first heard the term "cenotaph" in connection with Munstead Wood, the house which he designed for Gertrude Jekyll in the 1890s. He designed a garden seat there, consisting of a large block of elm set on stone, which acquired the name "Cenotaph of Sigismunda" at the suggestion of their friend Charles Liddell, a librarian at the British Museum. The Cenotaph was constructed from Portland stone between 1919 and 1920 by Holland, Hannen & Cubitts. It was undecorated apart from a carved wreath on each end and a smaller carved wreath on top. The words "The Glorious Dead" are inscribed twice, once below the wreaths on each end. Above the wreaths at each end are inscribed the dates of the First World War in Roman numerals (1914 - MCMXIV; and 1919 - MCMXIX). The wreaths at each end are 5 feet (1.5 m) in diameter, while the one on top is 3.6 feet (1.1 m) in diameter.



The unveiling ceremony



The sides of the Cenotaph are not parallel, but if extended would meet at a point some 980 feet (300 m) above the ground. Similarly, the "horizontal" surfaces are in fact sections of a sphere whose centre would be 900 feet (270 m) below ground. It is 35 feet (11 m) high and weighs 120 tonnes (120,000 kg)s. This element of the design, called entasis, was not present in the temporary structure and was added by Lutyens as a refinement when designing the permanent structure. The architects waived their fee for designing the cenotaph, meaning that it cost £7,325 to build, a sum equivalent to £255,332 when adjusted by inflation in 2010. Construction began on 19 January 1920, with the original flags sent to the Imperial War Museum. The memorial was unveiled by King

George V on 11 November 1920, the second anniversary of the Armistice with Germany which ended the First World War. It was decided not to dedicate the memorial, as not all the dead it commemorates are Christian.

The unveiling ceremony for the Cenotaph was part of a larger procession bringing the Unknown Warrior to be laid to rest in his tomb located nearby in Westminster Abbey. The funeral procession route passed the Cenotaph, where the waiting King laid a wreath on the Unknown Warrior's gun-carriage before proceeding to unveil the memorial which was draped in large Union Flags. Whitehall, along with other areas of London, was the scene of celebrations on 8 May 1945 when victory in Europe was declared in the Second World War. More formal processions past the Cenotaph took place during the London Victory Celebrations on 8 June 1946. The Cenotaph had been designed to commemorate the British Empire military dead of the First World War, but this was later extended to include those that died in the Second World War. The dates of the Second World War were added in Roman numerals on the sides of the memorial (1939—MCMXXXIX; and 1945—MCMXLV), and the memorial was unveiled for a second time on Sunday 10 November 1946 by King George VI. The memorial is now also used to remember the dead of later wars in which British servicemen and servicewomen have fought. The Cenotaph was designated a Grade I listed building on 5 February 1970.



Our cadet units visit Commando Helicopter Force

Steve Lee led a Cadets Day visit to our adopted unit the Commando Helicopter Force at RNAS Yeovilton on 30th October. As well as both the Army Cadets & Sea & Marine Cadets Steve's son Brecon attended representing our youth members. They had a very full day visiting and it was good to see the cadets benefitting from their affiliation to us. Unfortunately the Air Training Corps cadets could not attend but were invited.

Important !

On 15th December which is our next scheduled meeting we will be holding an official Affiliation with TS Mantle VC, Sea & Marine Cadets at 8 p.m. The County Chairman, Youth Officer & Secretary will be in attendance when our cadets will receive official accreditation papers. There will NOT be a branch meeting that evening but we will meet at the Millers Arms, Silver Street where the cadets will perform drill and hold the ceremony - the branch will provide free a buffet. As it near Christmas it will nice to meet socially, and it would be a good chance to show our support for our cadets — please attend ! We will hold our committee meeting at 7.45 p.m. if you have anything you wish to bring up. For catering please advise Arthur if you are attending.

Visit to the Royal Hospital Chelsea

Paddy Fox has been with us twice in the last month, he must like it here !! Several people took the opportunity to ask Paddy if we could visit the Royal Hospital Chelsea again and I have set things in motion. We will visit the Royal Hospital in March for our first visit of the year. As the Royal Hospital do not do tours on Saturdays it will have to be a week day. Those who have done the visit before may like to come so I have included the option of dropping them at one of the main London shopping areas, there is also the option of visiting the excellent National Army Museum next door. Sloane Square tube station is nearby so the possibilities are endless. The coach will cost £20 and for those wishing to take the tour with Paddy there is now a charge imposed by the Royal Hospital of £8, payable only if you take the tour. Paddy joined us selling poppies at Morrison's on 1st November and he was guest of honour at a charity dinner in Horsington where half the proceeds will go to our Poppy Appeal (the other half going to Help for Heroes).

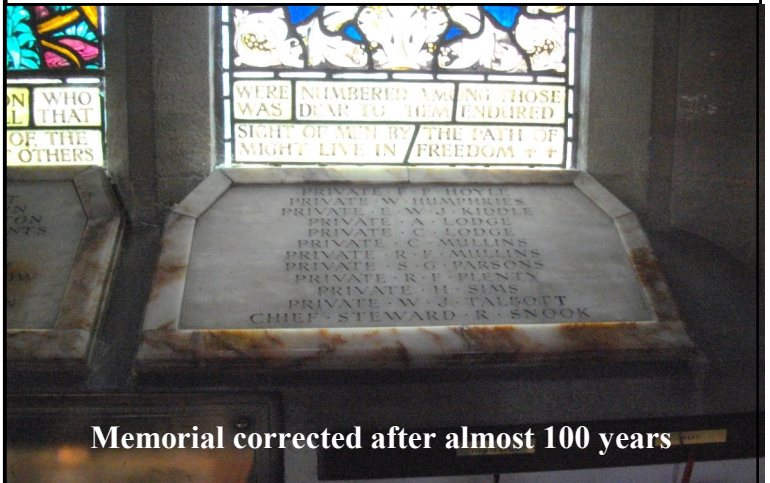


Coffee Morning launches Poppy Appeal

To launch Poppy Appeal this year we had a Coffee Morning on 25th October which raised £95. Arthur tells me already funds are coming in well and amongst other things we received £190 from Canada for the wreaths I took to Flanders and with donations and the raffle at the Unicorn a further £120. As you will realise it will take Arthur quite a while to count (we hope) all the poppy collection boxes but he says that they appear to be very full. We blitzed the pubs, Morrison's and cadets attended the race meeting at Wincanton Racecourse on 8th November with us.

Roll of Honour corrected

We were alerted earlier in the year by a relative of Walter Talbott, who was killed on the Somme in 1916, that his name was misspelt on the Roll of Honour in the church. Unusually the surname is spelt with two "T"s. I was able to get a stonemason and the name is now corrected on the memorial tablet, nicely in time for Remembrance Sunday. The family and other specific donations paid for the correction.



Memorial corrected after almost 100 years

Christmas lunch at the Millers Inn

As mentioned in Sandbag last month, the Christmas lunch will be at the Millers Inn again this year and again is over two days because of the numbers wishing to go. The dates are 17th & 18th December and the meal choice is either Turkey or Beef and either Apple Crumble or Christmas Pudding. Due to a misunderstanding the price is in fact £10. Please contact Arthur for a place. CAT bus is available by prior booking.