



Devon County Newsletter

Winter 2009

Diary Dates:

Train Trip
Buckfastleigh
Tue 16 June 2009

Armed Forces Weekend
Plymouth
27/28 June 2009

County Rally
Okehampton Camp
Sun 13 September
2009

Festival of
Remembrance
Great Hall Exeter
Thu 5 November 2009

Candlelit Carol Concert
St Andrews Church
Plymouth
Sat 19 December 2009

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The National Chairman has recently approved Life Membership to:

Mr E Rulton - Brixton Branch

Mr D Walker - South West Board of Trustee Representative

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN

I wish to thank everyone for their tremendous cooperation and continued support in ensuring that the Royal British Legion is represented in the local community. I am extremely encouraged by our members dedication to our fundraising and welfare activities and I thank you all for your commitment. May I take this opportunity to wish you all the seasons greetings and may you have a prosperous New Year.

RACE DAY AND POPPY APPEAL LAUNCH 2008



The Poppy Appeal Launch at Exeter Race Course was a media success. Our President is seen here with the County Chairmen, Ben McBean, David Hart, Standard Bearers and Poppy Man

DEVON COUNTY WEB SITE

<http://rbldevon.co.uk>

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY PUBLIC RELATION OFFICER

Media coverage in 2008 showed that Branches are increasingly taking responsibility for keeping the Legion in the public eye. Radio and TV coverage of the Poppy Appeal Launch in October and the Exeter Festival of Remembrance was instrumental in maintaining that momentum. Most Devon branches understand the need to maintain public awareness of the Legion's work and have in many instances used local newspapers, freebies and county magazines to spread the message. There are other outlets often ignored, namely county, district and borough news letters as well as in-house journals for cadets, scouts and guides, NHS and the emergency services. All that's needed is basic information, i.e. where, when, what, who, why, how and a contact name and telephone number. The rest is easy!

The County Rally will take place on 13 September at the Okehampton Training Camp. Branches are urged to make every effort to ensure this event has maximum publicity. Being staged at the same time as the Military Heritage Weekend at a very central location in the county should prove to be a grand opportunity for the Legion. Finally, Branches are asked to consider going on-line. It's the way ahead and certainly a great way of publicizing activities of local organizations such as the Royal British Legion. Contact the County Secretary or the County Public Relations Officer for guidance. Failure to recognize the potential of modern technological advances will in the long run adversely affect the Legion. And once a website has been established, it must be kept up-to-date!

SIDMOUTH LADIES HONOURED FOR 110 YEARS OF COLLECTING FOR THE POPPY APPEAL



Many congratulations to Mrs Hodges and Mrs Jackson of the Sidmouth Branch who were both awarded their 55 year badges for services to the Poppy Appeal at the County AGM

COMMANDO CHALLENGE

The Commando Challenge will be held on the weekend of 10th/11th October 2009 starting at Bicton Arena with the actual challenge taking place over Woodbury Common. Devon Air Ambulance will be the main local charity and the Royal British Legion - Poppy Appeal will be the supporting charity reaping 20% of the proceeds from sponsorship. Our commitment for this venture will be to provide 20/25 volunteers for the weekend. Volunteers will be asked to steward the event/count money during the weekend and maybe help with the catering. We have booked the gazebo for the two days and will be allowed to promote the Legion fully

Anyone who feels they can offer their services, either the Sat/Sun or entire weekend, please contact Carole Arnold at County Office.

For more detail about the challenge visit:

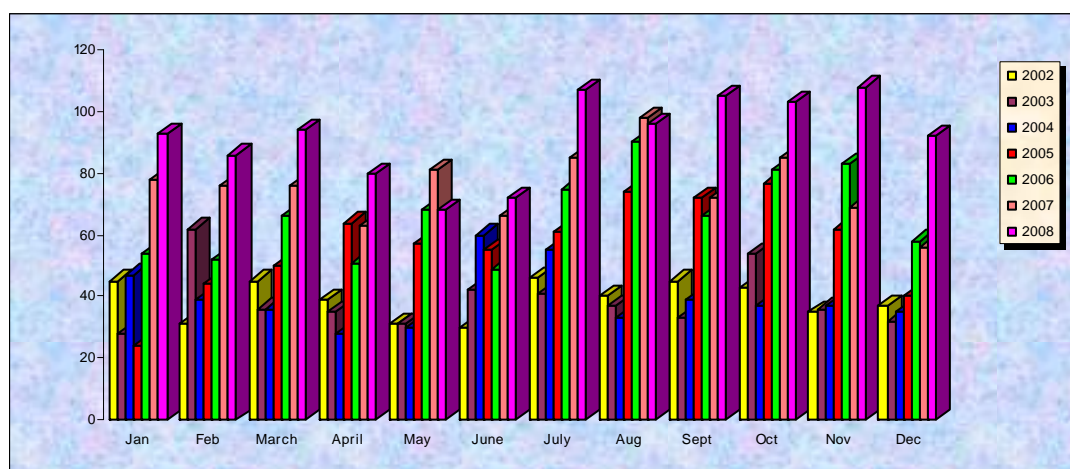
www.commandochallenge.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

The National Chairman recently announced that a Membership Review was vitally important to the future of the Legion and a project team is now in place to examine the future structure of the membership organisation in view of the declining membership. Member may express their views and ideas at anytime through:

membersviews@britishlegion.org.uk

Welfare Workload. 1106 new welfare cases were received in 2008, averaging approximately 92 per month, resulting in grants in excess of £850k. Historical details are shown on the graph below:



Professional Welfare Caseworker Training Course: With some 75 x Professional caseworkers on our books we have no plans to conduct any further courses at the moment, for reasons of capacity.

Volunteer Welfare Caseworker Training Course: 21-22 Feb With a capacity of 20 the attendance list is currently being drawn up, with priority allocations being made to those living within our busiest areas of Plymouth and Torbay.

RBL/CAB Benefits and Money Adviser. We welcome Jamie Macpherson as our new BMA in Plymouth, together with his assistant, James Blackmore. This enhancement to our welfare capability gives us much needed BMA cover in the busiest part of the county.

External Grants: We are delighted to have secured an RBL external grant for the charity, Alabare, to run on our behalf a 7 bed supported housing facility in Plymouth, as well as the position of a Tenancy Support Officer within the charity, PATH (Plymouth Access To Housing). These are further valuable enhancements to our welfare capability.

Fundraising Result As at 10 Jan 2009 our total was £70k up on the same time last year @ £764k. We are therefore anticipating another fantastic result for Devon's 2008 Poppy Appeal. Well done all!

Plymouth PAO Reorganisation We are most grateful to our CFR Carole Arnold, and all those who have contributed to the reorganisation of Plymouth's Poppy Appeal. It was no easy task (and there is still more work to be done), and it involved some sensitive 'boundary issues', but the proof lies in the result that witnesses a hugely improved result on previous years. Actual figures will be published in due course when the 'final count' has been made.

PAO Briefings. We plan to produce a similar briefing programme as for last year, probably with afternoon events, as they seem to be preferred to evening events. Details to follow in the next edition of this Newsletter.

Thanks If time and resources permitted we would send annual Christmas cards, combined with personal letters of thanks, to all those volunteer PAOs, Caseworkers, Standard Bearers, Committee Members, and numerous other 'worker bees' who together contribute to allow this sort of report to detail results of **the success story that is Devon RBL**. We are hugely grateful to one and all! Its not just our welfare and fundraising successes, as special mention must be made to all those who contributed to the running of the County Train Trip, the Race Day / Launch, the Festival of Remembrance, and the Woody Bay Armistice Day event, not to mention the numerous and extensive events that occur so regularly at Branch level. Everyone's efforts are hugely appreciated and valued.

Caseworker Annual Updating 2009

All existing Professional and Volunteer caseworkers should have received my letter inviting them to attend any one of the following Update Courses:

North Devon: Saturday 25th April, at Braunton RBL Club.

West Devon: Saturday 13th June, at Crownhill RBL Club.

East Devon: Wednesday 19th August, at the County Office, Exeter.

East Devon: Saturday 3rd October, at the County Office, Exeter.

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Payment of Affiliation Fees

All Branches now have their affiliation fees collected by Direct Debit in February/March each year through Head Office. Therefore, it is unnecessary for Branches to forward any monies or cheques in respect of new applications to the County Office throughout the year. A Statement showing all cards issued throughout the year will be sent in February each year to Branches with the end of year notification of the amount to be debited from accounts.

Application Forms

The current version of the Membership Form is MS4/08 which can be obtained from Supply Line on 01622 795815. Membership applications on any other type of form other than MS4/08, MS4/07 or MS406a now have to be returned to the Branch Secretary because the Data Input Centre will not accept any other version of the form. The main reason for the change of form is the requirement to comply with the Data Protection

Evening Steam Train Trip.

Organised by the Royal British Legion. Devon County.

**Tuesday 16th. June.
2009.**

**From
Buckfastleigh
To
Totnes
Return.**



**Depart
7.30pm.
Return
10.00pm.
Approx.**

**Enjoy a 7 mile journey along the enchanting banks of the
River Dart, hauled by a Heritage steam locomotive.**

A Fish and Chip Supper, prepared by the Fish & Chip Shop in Buckfastleigh will be delivered to the train prior to departure. Knife, fork and napkin will be supplied. The number of tickets for this has to be limited to 120, so get your order in early. Cost, Adults £11, Children £9. Please ensure you have your ticket when boarding the train to enable us to distribute your Fish & Chips. If people just wish to take the train trip (different colour ticket), cost will be Adult £8.50p, Children £6.50. There will be a different selection of snacks and usual drinks which can be purchased from the on-board buffet.

A Footplate Ride will be auctioned. A Raffle with good prizes will be run as usual.

All profits to the Poppy Appeal.

For further details, or to book tickets, contact:

**Mr. R Reynolds,
124B Torquay Road,
Newton Abbot,
Devon,
TQ12 4AH.**

Tel: 01626 366188.

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



The County Directory, Photo Album and the Newsletter are published on
Devon County Web Site: <http://rbldevon.co.uk>