



'Y' SERVICES
(GARATS HAY)



September 2020

GREAT RESPONSE TO Y SERVICES MEMORIAL APPEAL

**Appeal raises
£6215
in
one month!**

On 2 September we launched an appeal to raise funds to refurbish the Y Services Organisation Memorial Garden at the NMA. £8,000 is needed for this work. Full story on page 2

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RIP

We regret to announce the death of Branch member Lt Col Ian Henderson, Intelligence Corps. May he Rest in peace



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The response to the appeal for funds to refurbish the **Y Services Organisation Memorial Plot** at the National Memorial Arboretum has been excellent. In just one month we have received donations totalling **£6215** which means we are very close to achieving our target of **£8,000**.

The total comes from just 110 donations, so if among our 438 members you somehow missed the appeal there is still time to donate – no amount is too small. If every Branch member made even a small contribution, we would easily achieve our target and get the refurbishment underway. In case you don't know, the memorial is owned and managed by the Branch and why this appeal and the memorial are important and relevant to what we do is beautifully summed up in a remark made by Dave Low along with his donations

"It represents 23 years of my life and the lives of many more of my good colleagues, friends and passed servicemen and women."

Other donors have dedicated their donation to a fallen comrade.

Thank you to everyone who has donated.

Full details of how to donate – right here: <https://gf.me/u/yvymzm>



REMEMBRANCE 2020

The Branch Remembrance service at St Mary in the Elms church Old Woodhouse will this year be a very small affair with limited attendance. The service will be conducted outside the church on the small grassed areas opposite the war memorial. There will be representatives from the village and from the Loughborough Branch of the Royal Signals Association. Our Branch will be represented by Dave Lawrence who will parade the Branch Standard, accompanied by Branch Chairman Jim McDermott who will lay a wreath. There will be no congregation.

We are confident that Branch members will make their own arrangements to remember the fallen in whatever way is possible during the pandemic.





BRANCH AGM 2020

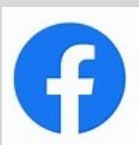
As at today's date (30 September 2020) no face to face meetings are permitted due to Covid19 restrictions which seem set to continue for some time. As a result, we are planning to hold the Branch AGM online in some way. This will necessitate both careful planning as well as a much reduced agenda. More details on this in due course.



Legion National Conference 2020 Feedback

The Legion Annual Conference 2020 took place online and the Branch was represented by our two delegates Karen Brutnell and Dave Lawrence. They participated online and reported back on the results of voting for the 10 motions debated. Thanks to Karen and Dave for giving up their time to represent the Branch at this important event. A 4 hour long Youtube video of the conference is currently available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWN1GNorfMA&t=10s>

Motion (Abbreviated for space)	RESULT
1. Rescind proposal to close Break Centres and the Handy Van Scheme	Carried
2. Management Council to examine competing activities during Poppy Appeal	Carried
3. Increase Membership Fee by £1	Carried
4. Automatic enrolment of armed forces personnel on discharge	Defeated
5. Serving member of armed forces who are Branch Standard Bearers be permitted to parade in service uniform	Carried
6. No confidence vote in Trustees	Carried
7. Standards to exist in places where there is no Branch	Defeated
8. Pay expenses to carers of members attending events and functions in an official capacity	Carried
9. Resident veterans to have right of internment in Germany	Carried
10. War Widows Grant-in-Aid extension to family members	Carried



Keep in touch every day via our Facebook group 'RBL Y Services'

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1253401141501009>



Listening to the enemy in World War 1 - Continued

This item continues from last month with another extracted narrative from academic research about Sigint in World War One.



During the First World War British Army signals intelligence personnel who were German speakers, were designated as 'Interpreter Operators.' They listened to enemy and friendly messages that had leaked from telephone lines or were transmitted through the ground. Drawn from diverse ethnographic backgrounds, these men offer up a fascinating case study of an army harnessing language skills to support their military endeavours. They also highlight a paradoxical challenge facing all intelligence organisations: that in order to understand an opponent you must often employ those with close personal or familial connections to that enemy.

In 1979 the Imperial War Museum's historian Peter Simkins interviewed Oswald Croft, an octogenarian who had listened to German trench telephone traffic during the First World War. During their discussion Croft confessed that, because of his advanced years, he struggled to remember details of the actual eavesdropping. He was also shaky on technological aspects. But, unsurprisingly for oral history, he was more lucid with regard to the generalities of his experiences and surroundings on the Western Front.

Apparently struggling with the vagueness of some of Croft's answers, Simkins tried to coax him into clarifying his military status within a frontline intercept station in 1916:

PS: Were you under the Royal Engineers when you were doing this? Were they in charge of the signals? Or was it – were you still sort of infantry?

OC: There wasn't a proper boss, if you know what I mean. It wasn't like, you know – I was a [Lance] Corporal, I didn't see any other corporals, and I don't remember if there was anybody else. But there were no officers or anything like that [...]

PS: It seems rather curious to me that a thing of this supposed importance doesn't seem to have any sort of structure, if you like.

OC: It had, because you see everything, well, they didn't want to know about whether the lines were put out [properly]. All they were interested in was this machine and what information was to be got from this machine. And therefore I suppose I must have been the important one.

Unknown to Simkins, at that stage of the war the military status of men like Croft was actually rather fluid. But more importantly, and almost inadvertently, Croft's second reply highlighted the centrality of linguists within these listening stations.

From September 1916 these linguists were designated as Interpreter Operators (Wireless), a separate trade within the Royal Engineers. Taking a long view, because their *raison d'être* was to provide signals intelligence linguists, it can be argued that these Interpreter Operators (IOs) were British army's first formally-recognised intelligence trade group.

...Continued overleaf



Listening to the enemy in World War 1 continued

Who were these IOs?

To those who encountered them, the IOs were notably different from stereotypical 'Tommies'. Speaking to a post-war audience, one signals officer described how the system had 'produced rather heterogeneous drafts, one including a clergyman, two conjurers and a Russian chef'. A former signals intelligence officer wrote that they were 'trained young men of the clerical breed [and] experts in dialectical German'

A telegraphist employed in IToc stations recalled that: "Among the interpreters were two educated and one ignorant Russian, two Swiss – uneducated – and two British. The latter two were very efficient men. One was a journalist, the other a courier, interpreter and entertainer."

Abridged from: Beach, J and Bruce, J (2020) British signals intelligence in the trenches, 1915–1918: part 2, interpreter operators. *Journal of Intelligence History*, Vol 19 Issue 1



RBL TRAINING SURVEY

The RBL Training Team has asked us to cascade the following message about training to all Branch members:

The Membership Training Team is acquiring a Learning Management System (LMS) with Phase One focusing on those holding Branch and County official positions to support them in their role. Most of these courses and guidance will be based around specific Legion business needs, such as Branch Treasurer and County Management. This will ensure consistency amongst Branches and Counties' governance and compliance requirements.

There will also be courses and guidance available that are more generic in nature such as conflict resolution, presentation skills, first aid and social media training to name but a few. These would be available to the wider membership and especially aimed at those who carry out duties in a non-official capacity such as managing a branch or county Facebook page or volunteering at Branch and County events. We want to find out how many members would need to or be interested in accessing these courses be it for Legion activities or personal development reasons. Please can you answer the following questions to help us gain a better understanding of the number of people these courses would apply to. The survey will remain open until 7 October 2020. Please click the link to complete the survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YTDKD8W>





Current Branch Membership



Branch Condolence Card

The onset of Covid19, the Lockdown and subsequent restrictions means we have been unable to offer bereaved families the opportunity to have the Branch Standard paraded at a loved one's funeral.

We do of course continue to make contact with a bereaved member's family and extend condolences on behalf of the Branch.

In addition, we are in the process of designing a Branch bereavement card as an additional way of offering condolence and perhaps some little comfort at what can be a very sad and distressing time.

Recipes for the Branch Recipe Book



CORN BEEF HASH

Due to the large number of submissions for this issue the much awaited recipe for Corn Beef Hash has been held over until the Christmas issue (probably).

New recipes for our Branch collection always welcome

Editorial note:

Contributions to this monthly Branch Newsletter are always welcome on any topics members think will be of general interest. We aim to provide uplifting stories and attempt not to duplicate messages already sent from RBL HQ. Copy should be sent by email, to the editor Jim McDermott at jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com Preferred format is unformatted MS Word and any photos, cartoons or pictures should be submitted separately as JPEGs

During Covid19 Lock-down and semi Lockdown and local restrictions and early closing and anything else you can think of, we have attempted to produce Branch Newsletters with a much greater content than usual for your entertainment and hopefully enjoyment.

Technical stuff

This newsletter is originated in MS Word Typeset in Serif PagePlusX9 and compiled as a PDF. Using Adobe Acrobat, the PDF is stored on the Branch Web site and hyperlinked as a button in MailChimp and distributed to all our 400 plus members with an email address Primary layout and hyperlinks are designed for PCs



PROJECT ROSE

It appears to be the season for histories to be written or updated and this item will be of particular interest to those of our members who served in the Intelligence Corps. Members of the Intelligence Corps Association (ICA) will know that, in this the Corps' 80th anniversary year, a small and beautifully designed book has been produced which provides a colourful and interesting overview of the Lightside of the Corps with just a smidgen of mention of what is known euphemistically as the Darkside. The book was not meant to be a comprehensive history but a new project, 'Project Rose' aims to highlight historic events in the Corps history.



Lord Ashcroft, Vice-Patron of the Military Intelligence Museum, is producing a book on the Intelligence Corps. You may be aware of his support for the Armed Forces and his interest in gallantry, having produced several books on the subject and exhibiting his collection of VCs and Special Forces medals at the IWM. This will not be a standard history of the Corps. While the book will describe the regimental ethos, customs, organizational development and specialties of the Corps, from 1914 to the present day, it will concentrate on a number of individuals who have worn our cap badge and illustrate how they started out as ordinary people yet went on to achieve extraordinary things, with courage, determination, skill and imagination. It will be exciting and pacy, rather than academic.

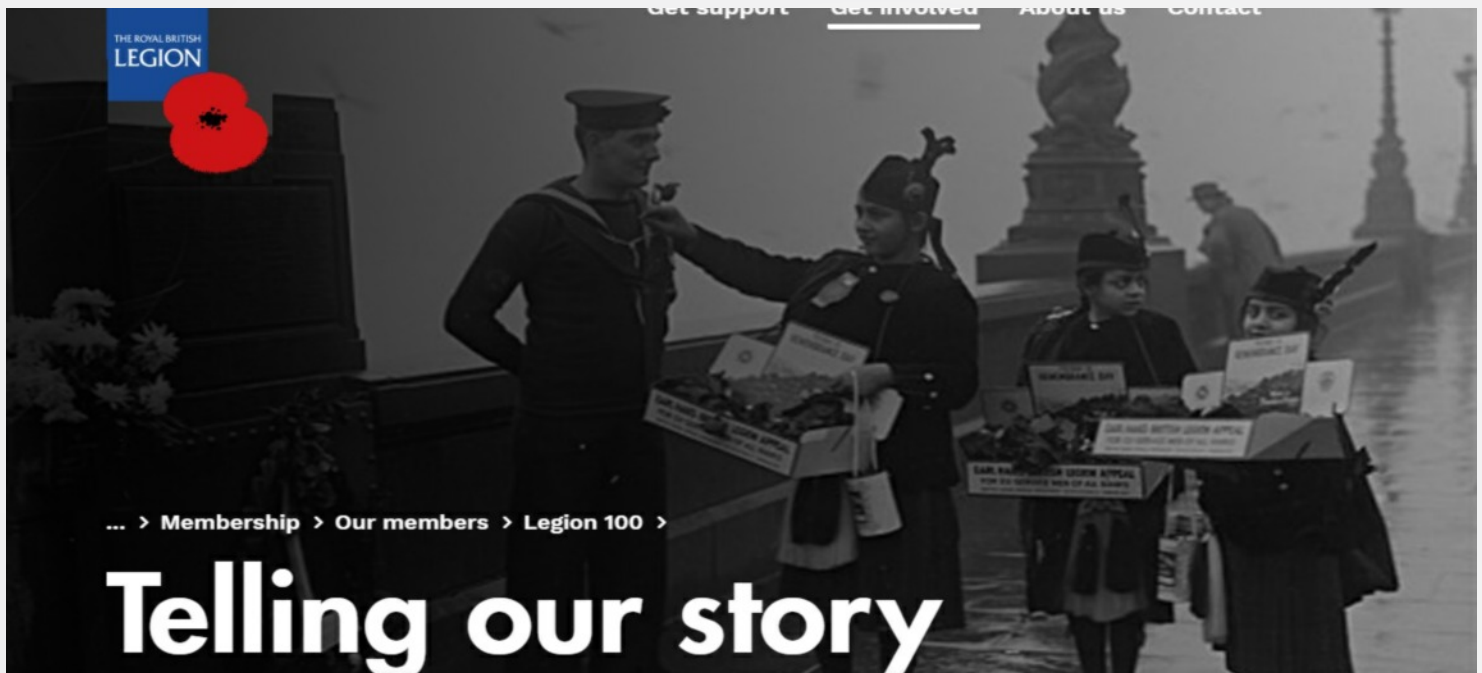
The book is a team effort, led by two former Directors of the Corps - Mick Laurie and Mark Hallas, and the project has the support of the Colonel Commandant and Corps Colonel. The book will not embarrass, concern, or put at risk any past or present member. There will be no politics and the book will only include 'policy' where it is necessary for contextual reasons.

While we have extensive and documented material covering the First and Second World Wars and the immediate post-WW2 period, we need additional material to cover the later post-war campaigns – Borneo, Aden, Northern Ireland (*see below*), Cold War BAOR, Oman, Falklands, Gulf War (1991), Bosnia/Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Iraq and Afghanistan. We need serving and retired members of the Corps to offer themselves for interview, telling their stories. Every individual will be accorded the level of security they feel they need, either through unattributable explanations, or through name changes. It will be carefully proof-read and everybody involved will have an opportunity to see the passages that concern them before it goes to print. It will be offered to the Disclosure Cell at Chicksands and note will be taken of any concerns.

John Condon, a former member of the Corps and past-Chairman of the Military Intelligence Museum, is coordinating the research and preparing the material from which the narrative will be written. Initially, so that we can build the picture of those who will be happy to tell their stories, please email John Condon at john.condon1@btopenworld.com

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact mlaurie@me.com or Mark Hallas mjhallas@hotmail.co.uk.

There will be, of course, special considerations with regard to Northern Ireland and currently a suitable mechanism for dealing with these concerns is being explored, while still covering this long and vitally important period of Corps history.



RBL 'Telling Our Story Project

This project, which was announced in the last issue of this newsletter, ends today 30 September 2020. Hopefully members have made submissions; we know that within the Branch Committee stories with supporting documents and photos have been submitted, including items on the formation of the Branch, the creation of the Y Services Memorial at the NMA, the story of the poem written for the Branch wreath which went to Ypres during GP90 and the ways, as a National Branch, we raise funds for the Poppy Appeal. During the Legion's centenary celebrations in 2021, items will be selected from the 'Telling our Story' project to literally tell the Legion's story. Otherwise, it is understood that Branch stories submitted will be stored electronically and will eventually be accessible in some way online.

INTELLIGENCE CORPS BLAZER

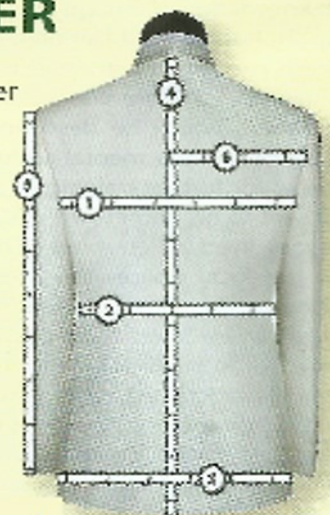


Orders are now being taken for the Intelligence Corps Blazer which is available in both Gents and Ladies cut. Waistcoats are also available in the same colours.

The blazer/waistcoat will be tailored to individual specification – it is recommended to get your measurements taken by a professional tailor. The measurements required are shown in the image (right).

£230 FOR THE BLAZER
£100 FOR THE WAISTCOAT

Order and Measurement forms are available from



WO1 Charles Lamb, email: charles.lamb198@mod.gov.uk



A RIGHT KNEES UP !

The information here about knee and hip operations is published frequently on social media but for those who may have missed it and have a hip or knee problem:

As a veteran, you can ask for a referral to a specialist Orthopaedic clinic at The Robert Jones & Edith Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7AG. Here, there is a specific Veterans Clinic run by Lt Col Carl Meyer, an Army Reserve consultant surgeon who also works with 202 Field Ambulance and Reserve Hospital.

This service is specially for military veterans (anyone who has been in regular military service, including national service) who need their hip or knee arthritis assessed and, if appropriate, have joint replacement surgery. Outpatient clinics are held fortnightly at RJAH. (Normally on a Wednesday)

The starting point is for you to obtain a NHS referral through your GP - Ask to be referred to the VETERANS' HIP & KNEE SURGERY SERVICE at Oswestry - and ask your GP to make a named referral to Lt Col Meyer

Your records at your GP need to be annotated with the NHS issued codes for military/veterans and photocopies of your red discharge book/discharge record should be taken as proof that you are a veteran.

Military medical codes

- 13J1. Military veteran
- 13JY. History relating to Military Service
- 13qo. History relating to Army Service
- 13q1. History relating to RN Service
- 13q2. History relating to RAF Service
- 13q3. Served in the Armed Forces

Lt Col Meyer wants to "do" more operations for veterans, but he has two problems:

1. finding the patients, he knows that we are out here, it's letting us know he's there for us.
2. getting the money from the NHS, but, the more ops he does the more money they will give him, therefore the more ops he can do.

If this sounds like something which will help you then please make contact direct by email to

rebecca.ann.jones@rjah.nhs.uk Fax: 01691 404067 Tel: 01691 404344

