

BRANCH NEWSLETTER

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



'Y' SERVICES
(GARATS HAY)



January 2021

LEGION RE-BRANDED

Following extensive research over three years, the Legion has launched its new logo as part of an overall rebranding exercise.

Details in a Q&A document were sent to all members with an email address last week. Your Branch Committee will be closely examining the technical requirements for using the logo in print and online and will shortly, as appropriate, upgrade our resources to reflect the new brand.

We very much hope that the rebranding will have the desired effect of making the Legion both more recognisable to the general public, especially the younger generation, as well as more closely associating the Legion with the Poppy Appeal.



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Branch Chairman's Message

Things are pretty quiet Branch activity wise but there are enough items, hopefully of interest, to fill this month's Branch Newsletter. Work on the Y Services plot at the NMA has been delayed due to the pandemic but we hope that work will begin soon.

Re-dedication of the site has also, obviously, been delayed.

This Branch Newsletter is just one of the ways we try to keep members up-to-date and we try not to repeat material already distributed via other channels. For example, all Legion members who have provided an email address (and have opted IN), will receive the regular RBL Membership e-newsletter. You can, of course, also keep in touch via our own FaceBook Group on 'RBL Y Services.'

We look forward to a time when we can all be out and about* enjoying life and carrying on the good work of the Legion. A lengthy video is available of a webinar which took place on 18 January 2021 explaining in detail the background to the Legion re-branding and how the Legion presents itself. Click the link below to access the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/758100758424814/permalink/761702698064620/>

In the meantime, as a Branch, we carry on as usual, providing support when needed, condolence to bereaved families, fundraising, performing acts of remembrance, maintaining the Y Services Plot at the NMA and, when we 'get back normal', meeting up, in person, at Branch events.

Jim McDermott
RBL Y Services Branch Chairman

*Question: Is it possible for one to be out and not about?

Branch Membership

Branch membership fluctuates throughout the year but we have remained steady this month with a total of **439**



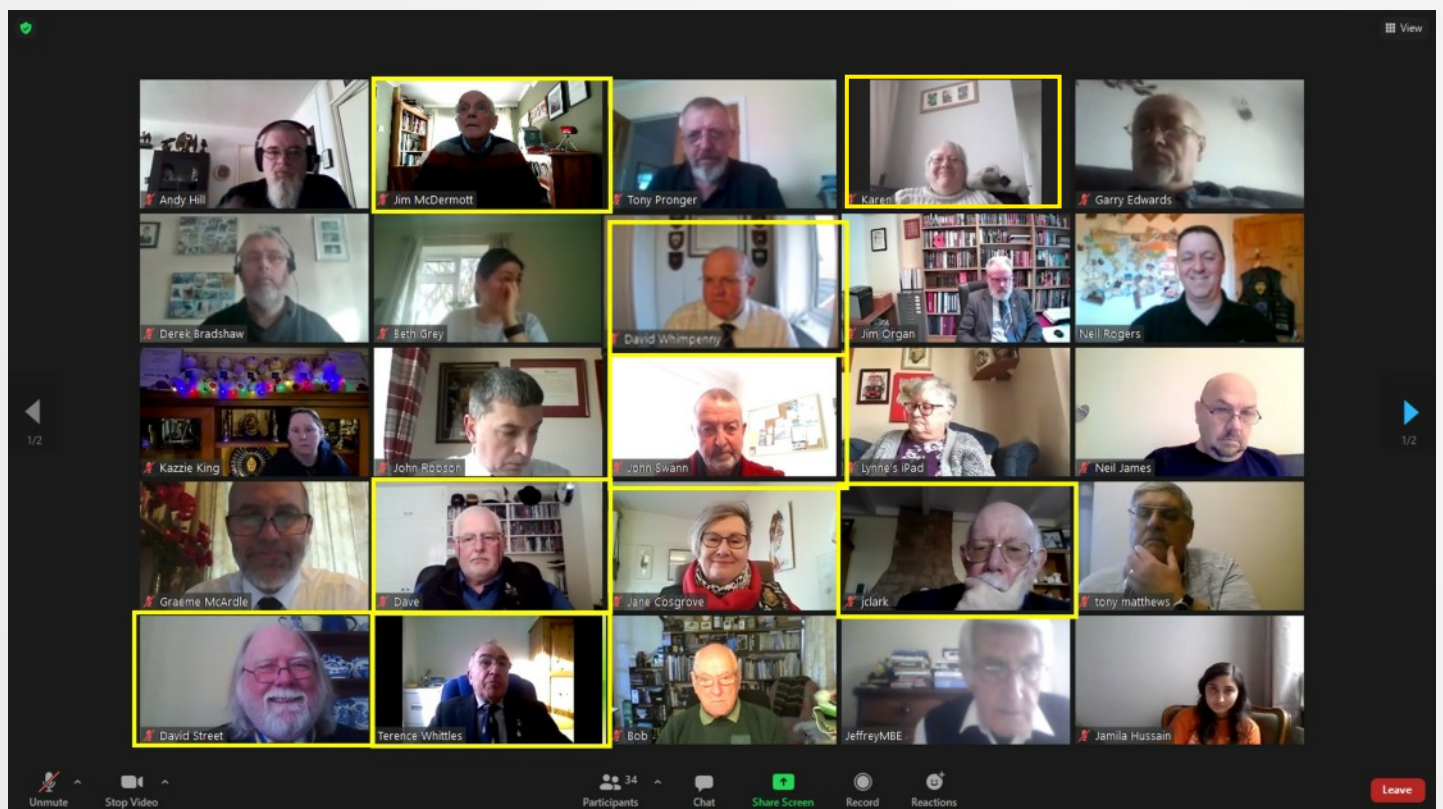
Thanks to David Whimpenny for this great shot of the Y Services Memorial at the NMA, taken on 29 Dec 2020.

Note that in most circumstances Branch correspondence should be addressed to the Branch Secretary: yserVICES.secretary@rbl.community



National Branches District - Annual Meeting

The National Branches District held its Annual Meeting on Saturday 23 January. The meeting (via Zoom) was attended by delegates from almost all the National Branches with our own Branch being well represented by 8 members: Terry Whittles, NBD President; Dave Street, the NBD Committee Chairman; John Clark, NBD Membership Council Rep; Jim McDermott, NBD Committee member; John Swann Branch delegate and Karen Brutnell also a Branch delegate. Branch member and Legion Trustee, David Whimpenny, delivered the keynote speech.



RBL Y Services Branch Members highlighted in yellow frames. [pic taken with permission of all those shown]

National Branches District - Other News

Congratulations go to Branch member and National Branches District Committee Chairman, Dave Street, who has been elected to the Legion Membership Council (MC). He will be stepping down as Chairman of NBD and will take over from MC member John Clark.



Keep in touch every day via our Facebook group 'RBL Y Services'
<http://tiny.cc/qb27tz>



Pathway - Garats Hay to Woodhouse Eaves – Help Needed.

This item has been posted and re-posted on Facebook in the light of detailed information concerning legal requirements. It is set out here as an appeal for help, especially to non FB users.

This appeal may be of interest to members who spent some of their military service at Garats Hay. It concerns a footpath which runs from Garats Hay to near the pubs in the village of Woodhouse Eaves; there are also shops in the village, apparently! The aim of this exercise is to gain support by way of 'evidence' that the footpath has been used over an extended period.

If you did use the footpath please help make the route a 'right of way' by providing written evidence. Yes, in 2021 it is still the case that 'evidence' to support this case has to be on paper! A form and a map have been provided (see the links in the covering message to this Newsletter). The aim of the evidence form is to supply the County Council with accurate information in connection with an alleged right of way. This may be a bit of a chore but if you can help, please do.

Note this is a genuine request for help and not a police trap to catch historic trespassers!

The appeal for help from Woodhouse Parish Council

"Woodhouse needs your help. If you were based here, can you remember using the path from Forest Road across the meadow to join the footpath between the two villages, en-route to the shops etc? IF there is evidence that the footpath has been used for 20 or more years then it can be added to the 'definitive map of public rights of way'. If you walked the path to or from Woodhouse Eaves that way, even if it was 20, 30 or 40 years or more ago, please be kind enough to complete the evidence form and map and send it to the Parish Council.

A legal requirement is that people should not be guided to the path by marking it on a map before they fill in the form, so the map provided is blank – BUT if you did use the footpath you will know the route. For orientation on the blank map, Old Woodhouse/Garats Hay is to the top right of the map and the village of Woodhouse Eaves is to the bottom left. The consideration process will be particularly interested in the most recent uses but will want to know of the historic ones too."

If you can help, please complete the form by hand and answer as many questions as possible, noting that Year used/not used, is more vital than month. Then highlight the route on the blank map, sign the map and send both map and form by post (or drop it in) to:

Woodhouse Parish Council
50a Main Street
Woodhouse Eaves
Loughborough
LE12 8RZ

Please note: You will find links to the Evidence form and the Map in the covering message sent with this Newsletter.

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



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



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Poppy Appeal Fundraising the Easy Way



We continue to raise funds for the Poppy Appeal year round using this really easy system.

To register and attract a donation every time you make an online purchase with any of the thousands of participating retailers GO TO:

<https://tinyurl.com/y4fjs9pw>

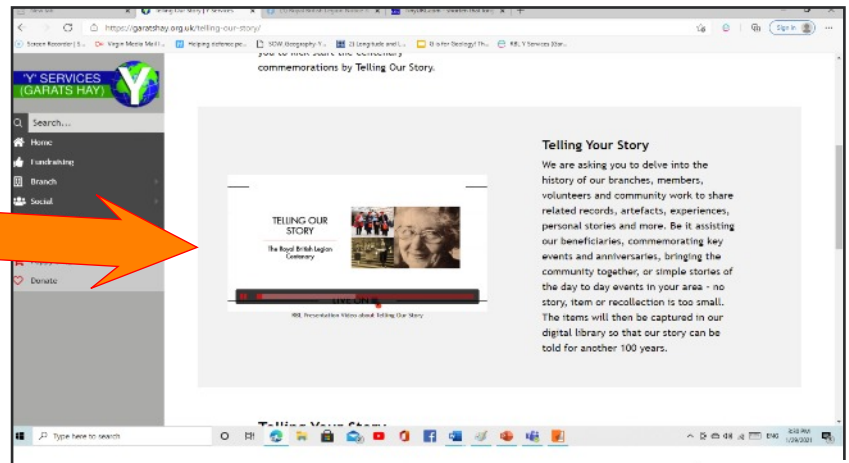


Telling Our Story

The Legion has produced a video about the Telling Our Story project. There is still time to add your story to the archive. Have a look on:

<https://garatshay.org.uk/telling-our-story/>

When you get to the page, click on the video here. Note that it takes a few seconds to start and the narrator the starts again - but a good watch nonetheless!



"No, we only deliver, we don't chew it for you first!"

This was found online and thought too good not to share:

Since younger folk today have their own text codes (LOL, OMG etc) the oldies decided not to be outdone and have developed their own codes:

A TD	At the doctors
BFF	BFF Best Friends Funeral
BTW	Bring the Wheelchair
BYOT	Bring your own teeth
FNIW	Forgot where I Was
GGPBL	Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery Low
GHA	Got Heartburn again
TFT	Texting from toilet



The importance of Market Research

JMcD



British Signals Intelligence in the trenches, 1915–1918

The IOs' military life was rather different to that experienced by other British soldiers, especially those in larger units such as infantry battalions. The location and activities demanded by the IOs' military role shaped their relationship with the wider military environment. Like other specialist intelligence collectors, such as flash-spotters, sound-rangers, and the Lovat Scouts, they were deployed to dispersed and static locations where they remained for lengthy periods of time. These IToc stations were usually located in dug-outs or the cellars of destroyed buildings towards the rear of the British trench system. According to the army's 1917 guidelines, IOs should have been rotated out of the stations every third week, a tour of duty very similar to those of the artillery. However, the IOs were also detached sometimes to intelligence duties in the rear for extended periods and this would have reduced their 'trench time' overall.

Assuming enemy messages could be intercepted, the May 1917 guidance for IToc stations gives us some insight into the core work of the IOs. First of all, the IO on duty had to record which wire loop or earth had detected the message, along with the details of the enemy call signs and their Morse equivalent. Then, 'every conversation [was] written down in conversational form and, wherever possible, a separate line and number given to each speaker'. Space was to be preserved for subsequent, side-by-side translation. Similarly, Morse messages had to be noted along with remarks on the strength of the enemy buzzers. Any cipher messages were to be recorded verbatim, including details of how the speaker had chosen to pronounce any four-number groups. And all of this was to be done at speed and probably by candle-



light. Given a 'noisy' signals environment and that many messages would have been barely audible, even after amplification, this 'live logging' would have been very challenging. Clearly this role demanded considerable mental focus when working on the amplifier during a busy period. The IOs also experienced all the normal stress and danger of a troglodyte life in the trenches. Additionally, the continual need to manhandle sixty-pound batteries to and from

the trenches was a particular irritation for the IToc stations' personnel. Understandably, some suffered from health difficulties, both physical and mental. For example, one man's subsequent claim for a disability pension blamed his 'heart and lung trouble' explicitly on 'too long periods in dug-outs'. One IO 'broke down with strenuous work at a listening post', while another developed 'nervous, suicidal thoughts'. It is also possible that IO service was a factor in the post-war suicide of a third man.



British Signals Intelligence in the trenches, 1915–1918

Theoretically, the ITOc stations were manned by nine men with a corporal in command, but they often operated with fewer personnel due to leave, sickness, or other mundane reasons. Significantly, the stations were usually some distance from the headquarters of their parent signals unit. Their officers made near-daily visits to the stations, but they did not stay for long periods and almost certainly not overnight. This contact was augmented by station personnel, particularly the commander, making trips to the rear to rendezvous with officers or senior non-commissioned officers to replenish the amplifier's batteries or pick up rations. Additionally, there were occasional visits by local sector commanders and their intelligence officers, or technical checks.



The disciplinary context is also important. Extracts from an IOs war diary provides considerable insight painting a picture of how he commanded his team as much by negotiation as by the formal authority of his rank. His account also suggests that disciplinary matters were usually resolved internally, suggesting a rather consensual command relationship between their wireless officer superiors and the ITOc station commanders. The primary explanation for this blurring of the rank hierarchy probably lies in the IOs' backgrounds, two-thirds had professional or commercial civilian occupations, a significantly greater proportion than the thirteen percent of wartime other ranks who had the same 'white collar' employment. In these circumstances it is perhaps unsurprising that one wireless officer annoyed his superiors when he admitted treating the IOs 'as equals' because of their 'superior education' in comparison to other signallers. Similarly, underlying class-based resentment towards the IOs might explain them being seen as 'odd men out' and apparently 'disliked by all'

A secondary factor may have been that IOs as a group were generally older than the junior wireless officers who directly supervised them. However, it should be noted that a differential in officers/other ranks' maturity was not unique to IOs and quite normal within the wider RE(SS), where signals officers were predominantly in their twenties while most signallers were mostly divided evenly between their twenties and thirties. This rather light-touch supervision also helped the IOs make the most of their off-duty time. When combined with special 'intelligence' status and passes, long periods in one area, and often French language skills, they were able to take full advantage of the relaxation opportunities available behind the lines. [Final episode, next month]