

# It's COME HOME!



A framed panel from the original Branch Standard has been returned to the Branch as Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College in Old Woodhouse holds it's last passing out parade.

See full story on page 2

Get involved with Easyfundraising, the painless way to raise funds for the Poppy Appeal. See page 3

## Contents:

1. Branch Standard Panel returned/  
Bernie McCormick RIP
2. Welbeck closure
3. Chairman's message/Membership/  
Legion Elections/Committee News
4. Emergency payments/Summer Gathering
5. Re-Dedication event - Update

## RIP

**It is with great sadness that we record the death of Bernie McCormick (Int Corps)**

# It's COME HOME!

In March 2021 the Government announced the closure of the Defence Technical Officer and Engineer Entry Scheme (DTEES). As the first stage of the Scheme, Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College (WDSFC) has been closed and its last passing out parade was held at the end of July 2021

The site built on the former Garats Hay Barracks, well known to many of our members, remains MOD property and will be looked after by the Ministry of Defence Guard Service (MGS). Our Branch has maintained good relations with the college over the years with a particular highlight being their involvement in GP90 in 2018 when college students competed to write a short poem for our GP90 Wreath. The winning poem attached to the Branch wreath was carried by Branch Vice Chairman Dennis Weir accompanied by our Standard carried by Dave Lawrence at Ypres on parade with thousands of other Standards. The wreath was laid at the Menim Gate in Ypres.



Since 13 November 2006 a framed panel from the original Branch Standard has hung in the college reception area to record the historic link with our Branch and the former barracks. Branch Chairman, Jim McDermott, never one to miss a photo opportunity, collected the banner during the last week that the college was open.

The Ministry of Defence is working with the Department for Education and other stakeholders to seek the continued use of the College site as a centre for education or possibly for future use by Defence. Rumours abound as to possible future tenants including:

The [redacted] Organization

The Centre for [redacted]

HQ The [redacted]

Redacted by Rumour Control .



## Branch Chairman's Message

There is usually little to report in the summer months when most folk are away sunning themselves on the continent or snorkelling in the Caribbean (other locations and pastimes are available).

This year, for obvious reasons most holidays away have been curtailed and your Branch Committee has been busy getting the Y Services Memorial at the NMA looking neat and tidy and organising a very successful Summer Gathering in Chippenham.

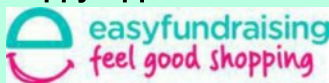
Our Welfare rep (it's now termed Branch Community Support) Karen Brutnell has dealt successfully with two cases (thanks Karen) and our loyal band of easyfundraising users has maintained a steady trickle of funds to our Branch Poppy Appeal efforts (see our usual ad below).

A couple of folk will be leaving the Branch Committee in November and volunteers, please, to take their place(s) will be greatly appreciated.

Finally, I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the Re-dedication event at the NMA on 7 September. In the meantime stay fit, safe and well.

Jim McDermott  
Branch Chairman

### 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://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rblyservices/?invite=1DZNV&referral-campaign=s2s>

## Membership

Our current Branch membership stands at c437. The Legion Membership Department recently advised that they accept that there is a problem with the membership software which reports weekly totals to Branches and this is being investigated. We are pleased to hear this.

New members are always welcome so please do not hesitate to point any potential members from the Y Services world you may know in the direction of Peter Derrick on email:

[y\\_services.memsecretary@rbl.community](mailto:y_services.memsecretary@rbl.community)

## LEGION ELECTIONS

**Legion elections are due soon to elect a Legion Vice Chairman (that's for the Legion, not the Branch). Watch out for details by email in the coming weeks.**

## Branch Committee News

Branch Committee members Linda McDermott and Bob Oldfield will be stepping down from their positions on the Branch Committee at the Branch AGM in November 2021 on completion of their terms of office plus an additional voluntary year because of Covid. We are keen to fill these places and if you would like to become involved in the business of running the Branch please do contact Branch Secretary John Swann on email:

[y\\_services.secretary@rbl.community](mailto:y_services.secretary@rbl.community)

### 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](mailto:jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com) Preferred format is unformatted MS Word and any photos, cartoons or pictures should be submitted separately as JPEGs.

## Emergency payments from Branch funds - Welfare

Branches are now authorised to make immediate financial grants, not exceeding £200, to beneficiaries in emergencies prior to a formal case review. The aim is to provide help immediately and is a move by the Legion to reduce the time for a welfare case to be taken up, from 17 to 3 days, along with a single named person to handle the case throughout, rather than sending someone in need from one department to the next.

The Legion help line is:

**0808 802 8080.**

Lines are open from 8 am-PM every day. The Legion is here to help members of the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force, veterans and their families.

### **Correction.**

The article about the NMA mentioned a June Nicholls, it should read Joan Nicholls. My apologies.

The Editor.

## Summer Gathering 2021

With the easing of restrictions we were able to go ahead with our 2021 Summer Gathering in Chippenham (23-25 July) We had our usual Committee meeting on the Friday afternoon followed by a superb barbeque at the home of Branch President Eric Sambell - thanks Eric and Kay, it was a great evening.

Saturday saw those attending disperse to visit the REME Museum at Lyneham, others to Bath to view the SS Great Britain and others to admire the quaint Cotswold Stone cottages in the area, Saturday evening we all gathered in Chippenham's finest hotel The Angel (according to locals) and wined and dined, swung several lanterns and put the world to rights until late.

Thanks to all who attended and contributed to raising the magnificent sum of £220 for the Poppy appeal.

Note: Sadly no pics as the Editor has been away and has not had time to obtain permissions to comply with GDPR.

### **Summer Gathering 2022 Where?**

All sensible suggestions considered.  
Email our Branch Secretary

## Re-Dedication of the Services Memorial Garden - Update

Plans for the re-dedication ceremony at the National Memorial Arboretum are being finalized. The ceremony is scheduled to start at 1415 hrs on 7 September 2021 at the Y Services plot and will be moved indoors to the NMA Chapel to commence at 1430 hrs should the weather prove inclement.

For security, safety, seating and following current Covid guidance all visitors must be registered in advance.

If you have already registered your attendance with Branch Secretary John Swann you will receive detailed joining instructions by mid August.

If you have not registered and do wish to attend, please contact John via email on: [Yservices.secretary@rbl.community](mailto:Yservices.secretary@rbl.community)  
**by Friday 6 August at the latest**

The re-dedication of the Y Services Memorial Garden is an important event for the Branch which is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the plot.

Why not make a day of it; arrive in the morning take a tour around the NMA, lunch in the NMA restaurant and then on to our event in the afternoon.

Note that whilst there is no entry fee to the NMA, if travelling by car, you are obliged to purchase your parking in advance online (£4.00). Details of how to do this will be in the joining instructions.

Pic to right shows Branch Standard Bearer Dave Lawrence on site before the pathway was replaced



**Wanted:** A serving or retired RAF member willing To say a pray during the ceremony. Volunteers please email: [Yservices.secretary@rbl.community](mailto:Yservices.secretary@rbl.community)

ENDS