

World War two Naval hero commemorated in Tamworth

See story on pages 2 & 3



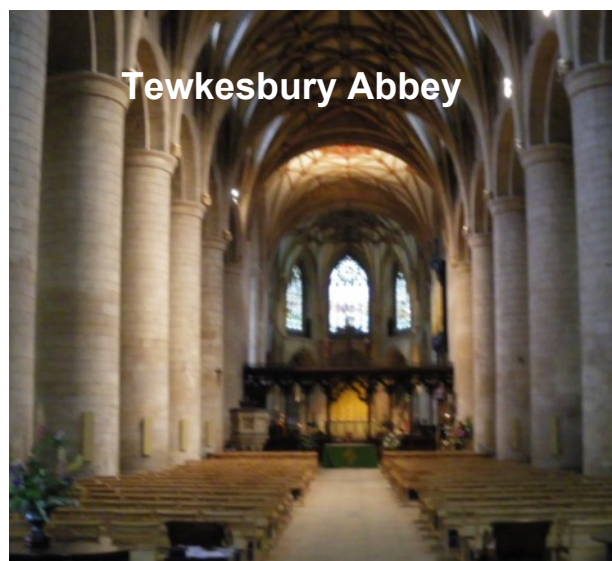
Branch Standard on Parade.

Our Branch Standard performed honours on 24 Aug 23 at the funeral of Dave Street (RIP) in the magnificent surroundings of Tewkesbury Abbey, alongside the RBL National, the RBL National Branches District, the RBL Hardwicke and District Branch and the RSA Loughborough Branch standards. A bugler from The Royal Welsh Regiment played the Last Post and reveille. We don't usually report on members' funerals but the high esteem and respect with which Dave Street was held was evidenced by a huge attendance of well over 300 people including his family, friends and colleagues from the Gloucestershire Constabulary, Legion members and of course friends from the Y Services community.

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Branch Standard on Parade in Memory of Tamworth WW2 Hero

A special memorial service was held in Two Gates, Tamworth on Sunday 20 August to commemorate Tamworth's heroic Able Seaman Colin Grazier and his sacrifice. The event was attended by the Mayor of Tamworth, other civic dignitaries, the RBL Warwickshire County Chairman, Tamworth RBL Branch Chairman, Legion members and representatives of local organisations. Wreaths were laid followed by the playing of Last Post and Reveille. Several Branch Standards were on parade including our own carried by Branch Standard Bearer, Dave Lawrence



The congregation was told of the events in October 1942 when U-Boat-559 was attacked and brought to the surface. After a request for volunteers on board HMS Petard, Colin Grazier together with Lt Anthony Fasson swam across to the submarine to retrieve documents and equipment that might help with the war effort. They were followed by Tommy Brown, a 16-year-old NAAFI canteen assistant in a small boat. Fasson and Grazier handed the items to Tommy on the surface and returned to the submarine to search further for more documents.



HMS Petard, 1942

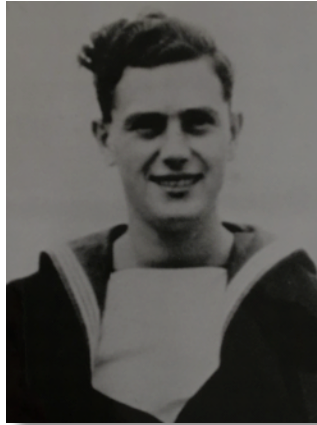
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Branch Standard on Parade in Memory of Tamworth WW2 Hero

Sadly, Grazier and Anthony Fasson were unable to get off before it sank and went down with the submarine. They managed to retrieve the latest Enigma machine and code books which were of great help to those working at Bletchley Park. Colin Grazier and Tony Fasson were awarded the George Cross posthumously for outstanding bravery and steadfast devotion to duty in the face of danger. Tommy Brown was awarded the George Medal.



First Lieutenant Tony
Fasson GC, RN



Able Seaman Colin
Grazier GC, RN



Tommy Brown, GM



A view of U Boat U-599
Conning Tower in 1942

Brown was 15 when he enlisted, lying about his age to join the NAAFI. He was posted to join HMS Petard, a "P-class" destroyer built on Tyneside by Vickers Armstrong.

Unfortunately, with all the attention the submarine incident attracted, Tommy's real age was noticed by the NAAFI authorities, and he lost his post and got shipped back home.

Tommy Brown himself sadly died in 1945 in another act of heroism, trying to save his youngest sister from their burning home.

A bench in a quiet corner of the Y Services Memorial Garden bears a plaque in memory of these three naval heroes.

BRANCH DEMOGRAPHICS

Here's a look at our Branch demography with such riveting details as members' age range, gender, how they pay membership fees, whether or not they are signed up for Gift Aid and a list of locations for the several members who live and work outside the UK.

TOTAL BRANCH MEMBERSHIP	429
Male	368
Female	61
Age Range	34 - 103
Direct Debit	350
GB Cheque	4
Credit/Debit Card	55
Paypal	20

LOCATIONS MEMBERS LIVING &/OR WORKING OUTSIDE THE UK	
LOCATION	MEMBERS
Spain	5
Germany	3
Cyprus	4
Belize	1
Czech	1
France	1
Hungary	1
Malta	1
Phillippines	1
Sweden	1
USA	3

AGE	
AGE RANGE	MEMBERS
20 - 30	0
30 - 40	4
40 - 50	37
50 - 60	100
60 - 70	135
70 - 80	110
80 - 90	27
90 - 100	2*
100+	1*
Age withheld	12

GIFT AID

GIFT AID	YES	212
GIFT AID	NO	217

Gift Aid

Gift Aid costs you nothing. It simply allows The Royal British Legion to reclaim tax on your membership subscription and/or donations if you are a **UK tax payer**. If you already created a membership account log on to The Royal British Legion Self Service Portal at: [Log In \(britishlegion.org.uk\)](https://britishlegion.org.uk) and tick YES to agree to Gift Aid.

The Royal British Legion Self Service Portal is a secure area where you can manage your membership details. If you have not yet opened a membership account you can do so at: [The Royal British Legion](https://britishlegion.org.uk) and complete the required information. Don't forget to make a note of the password you will need to create.

*1 Member was 103 years old on 28 Aug 2023 and was sent a Birthday card from the Branch

*1 Member will be 100 in Oct 2023

Chairman's Message

Dear Members,

August has turned out to be as unbusy Branch activity wise as July, no doubt because many people will be sunning themselves in exotic locations or Skegness.

Our Standard bearer Dave Lawrence has been busy again with appearances reported elsewhere in this newsletter.

There has been a really pleasing increase in the number of members using easyfundraising to make online purchases. Thank you to everyone who has signed up and making use of this easy way to raise funds for the Poppy appeal.

Our Branch membership has remained steady of late at 429 and once again I would encourage all members to seek out old comrades from Y service days and encourage them to join our specialist RBL National Branch.

A reminder that contributions to the Branch newsletter are always welcome, see details at the foot of this page

Regards to one and all.

Jim McDermott
Branch Chairman

Happy Birthday

We don't usually report Branch members' birthdays but a member reaching the grand old age of 103 is worthy of note. Member, Mrs Mary Watkins who lives in a care home in East Grinstead Sussex reached her 103rd birthday on 29 August 2023. A Birthday card was sent to Mary on behalf of the Branch.

MEMBERSHIP

Branch membership
currently stands at
429 members

MEMBERSHIP

A warm welcome to
new members

Ian Stockley

And

Rachel Wilkins



Editor's Note:

Contributions to the monthly Branch Newsletter are always welcome on any topics members think will be of general interest. We aim to provide uplifting stories as well as Branch news 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 for text is unformatted MS Word and any photos, cartoons or pictures should be submitted separately, please, as JPEGs.

easyfundraising.org.uk

We gained an amazing **SIX** new contributors to the easyfundraising scheme during August 2023, taking our supporters total to **115**. Purchases large and small all attract a donation from the vendor. This month we raised **£42.36** taking our overall total since we joined the scheme to: **£2,629.80** which has been donated to the Poppy Appeal.

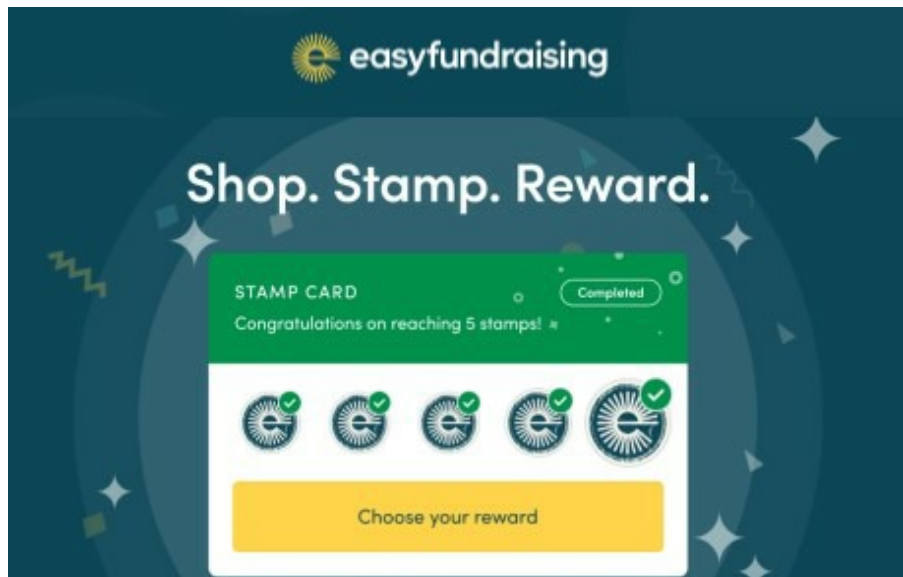


You can view our cause page and sign up at:
<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rblyservices/>

Thank you one and all for your kind contributions

Points Mean Prizes

Easyfundraising continues to be one of most popular, year-round ways for Branch members to raise funds for the Poppy Appeal. Easyfundraising is the scheme that keeps on giving and they have recently added a new incentive – a stamp card. Earn a stamp for every online purchase via easyfundraising and when five have been collected, you can select an award, OR donate the award value to the Poppy Appeal.



Jim McDermott has his card marked!

Via easyfundraising I recently purchased my car insurance, new reeds for my clarinet, some stick-on badges for my grandson, a replacement iPad cover and some stationery. These purchases completed my stamp collection and my reward? – A cup of coffee from Nero's (yippee)! or a £2.00 donation to the Branch Poppy appeal. I don't drink coffee so the £2.00 will go to the Poppy Appeal along with micro donations from my 5 purchases. So, it's a way of making free donations with little effort. Go to:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rblyservices/> for details of how you can become an easyfundraiser.

ENDS