

**NEWS FROM THE BRANCH**

Chairman Rob Dickinson

**April 2022**

Branch secretary  
Steve Lee 01963-34374

**40th Anniversary of the Falklands War 2nd April 1982 - 14th June 1982**



This year we commemorate and Remember the Falklands War . We shall be holding a short Service of Remembrance and wreath laying ceremony on Tuesday 14th June at 11am at the Memorial Hall War Memorial as well as hosting a talk on the war by Major (Retd) Simon Carew Price, 2nd Scots Guards who was Company Commander of the right flank at the battle for Tumbledown Mountain during the war. The talk will be held at the Memorial Hall on Friday 10th June 2022 from 7pm until 9pm. Details of the talk can be found on page 4 and a reminder of all events will be published nearer the time. We shall also be adding a Falklands commemoration display to the War Memorial Gates thanks to the help of Neil Anderson.

**Poppy Appeal Update**

In Wincanton we raise a significant amount of money every year for the Poppy Appeal and this year we collected £7,273.87p at Morrisons and £7,169.00 around Wincanton. £14, 442.88p so far in 2021/22. We won't get the final total until October. Every year I seem to lose a few volunteers, over the years the same few have done more than their fair share but covid has increased who I have lost. Last year we picked up some great people who freely gave their time to do a few shifts at Morrisons collecting. Everyone who does a shift at Morrisons always says that they enjoy it and that they are astonished at peoples generosity. I also do my very best to allocate shifts based on peoples availability and try not to take advantage of peoples good will, however some last minute cancellations do sometimes make it difficult. You do not need to be a RBL member to volunteer to collect money but if you feel you could spare an hour or two during the two week lead up to Remembrance to do a shift at Morrisons it would be greatly appreciated. Each individual has their own collecting tin which is handed straight in after their shift so no responsibility to look after the money. This year I will also be looking for extra help with collecting at the Race Course and also delivering poppy boxes in the Wincanton area. If you are interested in being involved then please drop me an email on [oldiescottage@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:oldiescottage@hotmail.co.uk)

## Remembering the Falklands War

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of the Falklands War. On 2nd April 1982 Argentina invaded the Islands and on 5th April the British Government dispatched a Naval Task Force. The conflict lasted for 74 days when Argentina surrendered on 14th June. Of those that made the long journey 255 were killed and 775 were wounded. Over the years I have been able to visit and record several Falkland Memorials and a friend was able to visit the actual Islands a few years ago and very kindly took photos for me.



Liberation Memorial - Port Stanley, Falkland Islands



National Falklands Memorial - Cardiff



Falkland Memorial Chapel - Pangborne College, Berkshire

## County Conference 2022

Once again this year the County Conference was held virtually via a Zoom meeting and as Branch Secretary I was able to attend. The Conference is always very informative and gives a really good idea of all the good work that goes on here in Somerset. Below is the address given by Robert McDonald, County Chairman.

*'In this our Centenary Year I had hoped to be discussing our plans to commemorate such a special occasion. In due course we will (I will come back to the subject later). When I sat down to write my comments I thought here we are a year on from our last Conference, what has changed? What am I going to say to the members who have been through another year of lockdown, reprieve, and then lockdown, again. Still not sure of how the next year is going to evolve and allow us to get back to where we were before the pandemic. How do I as your Chairman encourage you all to believe that will. There have been many events happening in the county, despite all of the restrictions. I only have to look through my diary to confirm that you have all continued to carry the name and the character of the Legion forward in all of your communities around the county. I have received messages from many of the leaders and individuals in your towns and villages. I have been able to visit many of these locations, during the breaks in lockdowns and experienced, first hand some of these events. Wells Cathedral, Bishopsworth, Bridgwater, Chard, Burnham-on-Sea, Weston-super-Mare, Crewkerne, Whitchurch and Pensford, Portishead and many more. A real sense of community has evolved to the point that some have been formally recognised. I would like to congratulate Wells Branch. They have received the Freedom of the City of Wells and at the same event Derek Cooper, the PAO for the area and a prominent member of the branch, for his individual work - Citizen of the Year award. There are other individuals who have been recognised and received awards. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate them all for the recognition of all of their efforts on behalf of their members and the communities they live in. May it continue. There are other achievements that have continued to ensure that we maintain our profile in the county. Our most important role has been, and will continue to be, the care in our community. Ensuring that our members who need our help and support, get that support. Whether it is a phone call, home visit, shopping, hospital/ care home visits or attending members funerals. These are our primary roles. We have during this year lost many dear friends. In particular my Deputy Vice Chairman, Pat Dun and more recently our County Vice Chairman, Martin Heale. We will, in due course, be holding a service of remembrance to enable us to show our respect for the time that they as individuals gave to the Legion. The pride in all that they did for the ex-service members and their dependants. You will be given plenty of notice of the time and place in due course. To ensure we are able to maintain this profile we have our County Community Support Committee, led by Dennis Cruze and his team. During the year Dennis has been working with the team in London, developing the new strategy on Community Care. It is hoped that the new initiative will be announced in the Spring. BCS has continued to develop. It continues show the work that is under taken at branch level. Please keep the statistics coming forward. I have been able to speak to the DG, Director of Membership and the Director of Operations. I was able to make representations on your behalf, having listened to your concerns during my visits or your phone calls. I hope you will see an improvement to the services. I wish to address you now on the administration of our branches and membership. All that I have mentioned so far has been open matters. Achievements, high profile. But there are the daily issues of running a branch. In most part this is done very well and is supported by the members. Unfortunately, there are a few branches that are run on a shoe string and are not supported by their members. We have to ensure that our branches have a fully functioning committee to ensure the branches survival. We do have one branch that is going through the process of closing down. We have a County Supported Branch. We have another that is struggling to find a committee. It has a branch strength of over 200 members. We really do have to look to our laurels on this issue. Having said all of the above there are branches that have reformed or have found a new committee. Dundry, Bishopsworth and Portishead. There are others. There are also other branches that have continued to maintain a good profile and to continue to recruit. Even during the pandemic. Shepton Mallet and Whitchurch and Pensford, that I know about. I am sure there are others. I have also been able to attend the presentation of a Gold Badge to Tony Goddard from Wincanton Branch. Our MC Rep, Phil Davies was able to attend to present the badge. I was able to attend the Double Hills ceremony in Weston Super Mare, an important period of remembrance. There was also the County Photo Exhibition that has been travelling around the county. Initiated by the MSO. We, Jean and I, were invited to Christmas Lunch with Clevedon Branch on the 1<sup>st</sup> December. (continued on page 4).*



*Many branches have reached their 100 years commemoration. I was invited to Minehead Branch to present them with their new 100 year Pennant to fly on their branch standard. My final act before Christmas was to send a Christmas card to our affiliated ship, HMS ECHO. We exchange e-mails or letters two or three times during the year. I wished them a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and safe journey from you all. The only other area that I have not touch on is the Poppy Appeal. Whilst it does not come under my direct control, we have, over the last few years had to step into the breach to rescue the situation. It was mainly through illness. We had to maintain the high profile throughout the County. There had also been supply issues. Again, representation have been made on your behalf. There has, also been issues with the lack of PAO's in some areas. PAO's and volunteers do not have to be legion members. But it is a good way to recruit!! As a consequence, changes have been made. The results of those changes, some of your PAO will have experienced some difficulties. You will be aware that the CFR's have changed. The new CFR is in place now and will be contacting the PAO's and introducing himself during the coming year. We should make him welcome and support him and the PAO's in all that they do throughout the year. I believe we have done well this year despite all of the difficulties. I would like to thank all of you for the time and effort that you have given this year. Finally. We have had a lot of time to reflect and in some cases some committee members have decided to step down. Some have decided to leave the Legion altogether. I would ask them to rethink that decision. I have managed to persuade a couple back. It is time to move forward. We know what we have to do. We must never forget our promise to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the two world wars and in all of the conflicts since, right up to the present day. This year we have the Queen's Jubilee and also the Falklands 40 Commemorations. Once again, we would not be able to do all that we do without the support of our MSO, Kate Hurley and the County Committee. It is my privilege, as your County Chairman, to thank you all for everything that you have done in the last year. To wish you well for the coming year and to taking the County forward into the next 100 years'.*

## **Talk - 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Falklands War 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1982 - 14<sup>th</sup> June 1982**

Wincanton RBL will be hosting a talk on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at Wincanton Memorial Hall, BA9 9JX from 7 pm until 9 pm. Major (Retd.) Simon Carew Price formerly of the Scots Guards will be presenting a talk with slides on the Falklands War. Simon was Company Commander of the Right Flank, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Scots Guards at the Battle for Tumbledown Mountain and will look at how the war came about, details of the war, from a Scots Guards perspective, and his experiences during the war. Entry on the door will be £5, tea and coffee will be available and all proceeds will be divided between Wincanton RBL and the Scots Guards Charities. For further information please contact Steve Lee on 07551191070 or email [steve-clare1@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:steve-clare1@tiscali.co.uk)

## **Wincanton Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club**



Welcome to the Wincanton Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club. We are a group of veterans & serving members of Her Majesty's Armed Forces, & like other Veterans Breakfast Clubs around the country & overseas, our ethos is mutual support; it works because we all have a similar humour & outlook & the social life we now enjoy is like our service days. Since Saturday 28th July 2018 we have been meeting on the last Saturday of the month at 09:45 in the Stables at; The Dolphin Hotel, Wincanton, BA9 9JF. Club Admin - Neil Anderson. **\*Following the Breakfast on 30th April The Dolphin will also be screening the Army v Navy Rugby match.**

Email; [wincantonafvbc@gmail.com](mailto:wincantonafvbc@gmail.com) All services veterans (If you can cope with the banter), turn up at The Dolphin Hotel & you will be made welcome.