



Circular

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION



Autumn Edition 2011

Issue 433



The Circular

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Contents

Introduction	2
Notices	3
Branch and County News	4-6
90th Anniversary Celebrations	7
Standard Bearers Update	8

Enclosures

Merchandise Form	1
Annual Conference 2011 Minutes	2
Annual Conference 2012 – Ticket Request Form	3
Llandudno Accommodation Form	4
Llandudno Information Leaflet	5
Affiliation Fee Form 2011/2012	6
Small Branch Record Form	7
Small Branch Audit Form	8
Branch Record Form	9
R & Ps (Branch only)	10
County Record Forms	11
INEs (County only)	12
Branch and County Treasurers' Notice	13

* Please note: Circular enclosures will vary according to distribution instructions.

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Introduction



Address from The National Chairman

Mrs Wendy Bromwich JP

The one good thing about getting older is that time seems to go by much faster (at least, that's my excuse!) Since Conference 2011, it seems all of you have been busy one way or another - the amount of fundraising events has been extremely encouraging and thankfully the weather has allowed us (most of the time) to enjoy them all!

As you know, I made an earlier promise to listen to your wishes. From all the feedback and letters we've received at HO, it seems that in some cases you want to move forward, and in others, you want to stay as we are. Well I am pleased to report that there is at present a team of dedicated past National Officers working long and hard to revise our Handbook, Bye Laws and numerous forms (special thanks must go to Mrs Maureen Cole OBE, Mrs Barbara Frankland and Mrs Doris Ingham OBE). Together with our National Parade Marshal, two of our past NPMs have also revised the guidelines for Standard Bearers. All of this will be reviewed by Central Committee late September and it will of course be on the agenda at Conference 2012. The fact that we are slipping in membership numbers is something that we as your National Officers and Central Committee are going to address at the next meeting. We have some ideas, which we hope you will agree with.

One thing that I do hope you will agree with is the new Women's Section INFO Sheet. Starting in October 2011, it will be distributed to Counties and Branches on a regular basis to keep you informed on what is happening within the WS, and updating you on issues such as Conference and events. We will also be issuing a sheet of names to let you know who is on the National Committees. We have formed one or two more ad hoc - these details will be advised once the information has passed through Central Committee again in September.

The Westminster Abbey RBL event is underway. However I would like to make clear that we have had no input into this and of course, the RBL have to comply with the powers that be at the Abbey.

A final note on Conference 2012; I was very surprised how lovely Llandudno is now - accommodation is not expensive but it's going fast. I'm sure all SBs will be pleased to hear the terrain is completely flat so it will be easy for us to walk around - which is just as well as the shopping is also very good...!

At this early stage of the County Conference season, I would like to wish your Officers and Conference Committee teams good luck, and for those Ladies entering SB competitions this year - enjoy it! I thought the DVD of Conference 2011 was good, and I hope you have had a chance to buy a copy, and see for yourselves.

I hope to see as many as possible of you as I attend County Conferences and meetings. The details of the Officers Seminars 2012 will be coming out soon.

Once again, may I wish all of you the best of luck with your Branch meetings, County Conferences and SB Competitions.

Best wishes, Wendy

Head Office Update

At the end of August, staff at HQ will be saying farewell to WS Welfare Officer, James Sheridan. In the years here at the Women's Section, we have seen him go from a single man about town to a responsible father. Having taken fatherhood by the horns, James will be leaving to take care of his daughter, Zara. He also plans to use this time to study and perhaps move from working in welfare provision to something quite different. We would like to take this time to thank James for all the years of dedication to the Women's Section and wish him only the best in his new adventures.

Address from the Conference Committee Chairman



I'm sure for most of you, the wonderful celebratory Conference held in Eastbourne is still fresh in your minds, yet here we are, already planning for Conference 2012 in Llandudno!

The town itself is often referred to as 'The Bay of Naples' of the North, nestling between The Great Orme and The Little Orme. Sitting at night in your seafront hotel or strolling along the vastly wide promenade in the day or evening, you could quite easily think you were abroad! Llandudno has a pier that stretches out to sea and on it there are small shops, an amusement arcade and cafes. Some years ago you could even get the ferry from the end of the pier to the Isle of Man!

There are lots of small hotels on the sea front and plenty of boarding houses to suit everyone's needs. The resort also boasts lots of shops from the well-known department stores such as Next and Debenhams, to smaller shops in Mostyn Street where you will find a variety of cafes and restaurants.

I have visited the RBL Club situated in Vaughan Street where I met the Club Chairman who assured me our ladies would be most welcome. It is quite a large club which serves very reasonable lunches on a daily basis. The club can also provide a concert and bingo evening for us, free of charge, on either the Tuesday or Thursday. But before anything is arranged, we really need to know if you the members would be prepared to go. *So please let Head Office have your thoughts on this.*

I hope I have given you a good insight of what Llandudno holds for us, so let's see a great turn out for our first ever Conference in Wales! All I want to say now is this: A very important part of our Annual National Conference is to debate motions, which, if passed, will help and assist those wives, widows and children of our serving and ex-service community. It is no exaggeration to say that over the past few years, Conference has suffered from a lack of motions and poor content. At Conference 1980, twelve motions were debated, which, compared to this year's five, is very disappointing. Now I'm quite sure Ladies there is something you want to shout about or have put right. If so, let us see more motions next year and hear some debate. After all, it is your democratic right!

Mrs Pat Chrimes, Conference Committee Chairman

FAO WS Caseworkers

Annual Interim Reports are now due. Please contact the Welfare Team to advise us on any delays in sending. All WS Caseworkers should also have an annual update. Please contact your local RBL Branch to schedule this. If you require any assistance, contact the Welfare Team on WSWelfare@britishlegion.org.uk or call 0203 207 2182

Fundraising Update

Grand Prize Draw Profit	£4678
Pyjama Jog	£4862.27
Stalls at Conference 2011	£4387.75
90th Anniversary Purse Presentation	£51,276.17

Annual Conference 2012 Accommodation Booking Information



You can now book your accommodation for Annual Conference 2012 **online**. To secure your booking and be eligible for discounted rates and offers, go to: <https://www.conferencebookings.co.uk/delegate/LCSRBLW2012> (link available on the WS Website). This will enable you to search and view a wide range of accommodation packages to match your requirements. Alternatively, please complete the Accommodation Booking form included in the enclosures and return to the address stated on the form.

Nowzad Book Competition

The lucky winners of the Nowzad Book Competition were Mrs A. McCallum from Northamptonshire and Mrs J Barber from Cambridgeshire. Both received a signed copy of One Dog At a Time and No Place Like Home. We hope you enjoy reading them!



Lest We Forget

We regret to inform you that these ladies have passed away...

Connie Norton and Janet Walsham – Both long serving members of Eastbourne Branch

Mrs Lyn Draper – Blackrod Branch

Lyn Draper served in the WS as past Chairman and Secretary of Blackrod Branch as well as President and Chairman of West Lancashire County. She sadly passed away on the 22nd April aged 89.



Rosalind Mary Hudson – Axminster Branch

Ros joined Axminster Branch on 18th September 2008 after moving to the area to retire. She devoted much of her life to her family, job and village; she was involved with the Church, the Mother's Union, the Conservatives and the WS until a fall in August 2010 which led to a broken pelvis and virtual confinement to her flat. Following yet another fall on the 14th July, she was admitted to the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital where, on the 21st June, she sadly passed away.

Mrs Olwen Bates – Ashted Branch

Olwen joined the WS in 1967 following her nursing career which started during WWII. She served on the committee for several years and was also Branch Secretary before becoming Branch President in 1997. Her work for the WS was second to none



and until ill health slowed her down, she was one of the most active and cheerful members of the branch. Her death on 26th June at the age of 96 is a great loss to all who knew her. She will be greatly missed.



Ascot Tea Party – Minster and Monkton Branch

Members from Minster and Monkton Branch hosted an Ascot Tea Party in a branch member's garden last June. The event, attended by 26 ladies and 4 men, raised £157 and those who didn't wear a hat were fined £1! On the same day, branch member Mrs Flotright (seated in the middle) celebrated her 95th Birthday and was presented with a cake.



Littlelover Branch celebrates 40 years

On the 16th May, Littlelover Branch celebrated their 40th Anniversary by inviting members from neighbouring branches who have supported them over the years. They had a splendid evening which included entertainment and refreshments. Pictured on the right is Mary Middleton MBE presenting the 40th Anniversary Certificate to Branch Chairman Olive Young.



Life Membership Award

Congratulations to Mrs Muriel Manley from Shawberry Branch, recently awarded a Women's Section Life Membership Award. Pictured left to right: Branch Chairman, Mrs Louise Wilson, Mrs Muriel Morley, award recipient, and Branch Secretary, Mrs Margaret Powell.



Congratulations to Mrs Lilly Agnes Wellan, aka "Cissie", who celebrated her 99th Birthday on the 13th March. Cissie joined

Harborne Branch on the 28th December 1928 at the age of 16 and has been actively involved in branch life ever since. She has served on the committee as Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman, and in 1988 she was awarded Life Membership. Cissie currently holds the position of Branch President.



Keeping fit the exotic way... Wareham Branch

At Group 4's social, members from Dorset Branches watched dancers keeping fit the exotic way!



Formby Branch celebrates 50 years

Pictured above are Formby Branch members celebrating the Branch's 50th Anniversary. A special Church service and parade was held to mark the occasion and guests included the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Dame Lorna Moorhead and founder member, Mrs Mary Thompson. After the Church service and parade, members returned to the club for a 'knees up' and a well deserved cup of tea!



London Colney Branch celebrates 80 years

London Colney celebrated their 80th Anniversary on Sunday 15th May with a Service of Thanksgiving. Chairman and members of London Colney Parish Council and Officers of Hertfordshire County Women's Section were among the guests, with members of WS Branches and RBL Branches from around the county. After the service, refreshments were provided in the Church Hall during which Mrs Barbara Todd, County Chairman, presented a National Certificate to the branch. Pictured left to right: Beverly Crofts, Branch Secretary and Standard Bearer; Gill Holpin, Treasurer; Joy Lintill, President; Susan Ward, Chairman and Pat Naseby, Vice-Chairman.

National Golden Award

Congratulations to Mrs Sadie Baine who received her National Golden Award last month. Sadie is a founder member of Antrim Branch and will be celebrating her 100th birthday on the 5th August! Pictured left to right; Mrs Sheila Thompsom, Northern Ireland District Chairman; Mrs Vera Rodgers, Antrim Branch Chairman; Mrs Joanne Andrew-Steer, President of Northern Ireland Women's Section and Mrs Sadie Baine, the award recipient.





Chatteris Branch celebrates 65 years

Chatteris Branch celebrated their 65th Anniversary in March with a Birthday party. Over 130 members and guests enjoyed the 1940s party theme and many dressed up for the occasion. The event raised £478.82 for the Benevolent Fund! Edna Papworth, Winnie Weedon and Phyllis Rayner, 3 of the Branch's longest serving members, prepare to cut the anniversary cake, kept in order by Barbara White, Branch President.



Desborough Branch celebrates 65 years



Botesdale and District Branch celebrates 50 years

Botesdale and District Branch celebrated their 50th Anniversary on the 17th May. A special anniversary cake was made to mark the occasion. Pictured above are founding members, Mrs K Cotton and Mrs D Miller, as well as Branch Chairman, Mrs A Sharp.



Ringwood Branch celebrates 50 years

Congratulations to Ringwood Branch which turned 65 years old in February! Two of the branch's longest and oldest members are pictured above cutting the anniversary cake.



Witham Branch celebrates 80 years

Witham Branch celebrated their 80th Anniversary at their May meeting with 87 members enjoying a great afternoon. Witham Branch was formed on 12th May 1931. Photographed above are Dawn Wilding, Janet Copsey and Elinor Palombi.



Lincoln Branch celebrates 80 years

Lincoln Branch members were joined by the Mayor of Lincolnshire and the Deputy Editor of the Lincolnshire Echo to celebrate their 80th anniversary in July. To mark the occasion, two commemorative cakes were made, one decorated with the original Women's Section Logo and the second with the current Women's Section logo.



Birthday Celebrations

Ilkeston Branch members Margaret Katz, Theresa Norman and Eileen White, are pictured left, celebrating their 80th Birthdays. They spent the afternoon with other branch members at a local restaurant in May.



Members of Castletown Branch celebrate the Royal Wedding in style!



The RBL and Women's Section unite at the Alter!

Congratulations to Jane Clark, Hertfordshire County Vice-Chairman, and Mr Alan Drury, RBL County Welfare Officer, who were married at St Albans Registry Office on the 25th March.



The Royal Garden Party

The ladies selected to attend the Royal Garden Party on 19th July had the special honour of being individually presented to HRH Princess Alexandra. After chatting to HRH about the work of the Women's Section, they were treated to afternoon tea which included cucumber sandwiches served with Earl Grey Tea! A spectacular afternoon was had by all! Pictured left to right: Miss Emma Kearsley, Mrs Helen Richardson, Mrs Dorothy Mottershead, Mrs Beryl Freeman, and Mrs Mary Miller. Also in attendance but not pictured above was Mrs Sheila Staley.



Armed Forces Day Celebrations

Pictured above is Margaret Earley, Nottinghamshire County Treasurer and Thelma Eason, Vice Chairman of the Nottinghamshire County Committee, selling merchandise on behalf of the Women's Section and the Poppy Appeal at the Armed Forces Day weekend in June. The County Committee raised £140 from the sale of WS merchandise and a large selection of produce over the two days, all of which was made by Thelma Eason. The event was held in the grounds of Nottingham Castle over the 25th and 26th June.



Winslow Branch

On the first Sunday in June, Winslow Branch manned a stall at the town's monthly Farmers Market. The branch seized the opportunity to publicise the role that the Ladies undertake in support of the RBL Branch and recruit more members. Branch and club members came along to offer their support and the Branch Welfare Secretary was on hand to answer any queries. We hope all your hard work proves successful!

Chatteris Branch Standard Dedication

Chatteris Women's Section Branch and Chatteris RBL Branch held a joint Laying Up and Dedication Service of Standards on Sunday 3rd July in their Parish Church. Over 250 members, guests and 15 Standards from around Cambridgeshire attended to make what was a most memorable occasion. Following an Inspection carried out by Major General John Sutherell (Retd) CB CBE DL, members and guests were invited for refreshments. Thanks were extended to Anne Wells, Assistant Secretary to the Section, for her generosity in donating the new Standard in memory of her parents Dorothy & Basil. Standard Bearer Janice

Baynes is pictured right with Clarissa Duggan and Claire Humphrey, the youngest members of the Branch who both joined on their 16th Birthdays, just a few days earlier.



Gorseinon & Loughor Branch Fundraiser

In a joint fundraising and awareness endeavour, Gorseinon and Loughor Branch set up a tin and soft toy stall at their local village fete. Their efforts seemed to have paid off as 2 new members signed up as a direct response to seeing them that day! Pictured on the left is Gotham Branch Chairman, Mrs Miriam Price with Vice-Chairman, Mrs Delyth Davies.



Southwick Green Branch celebrates 15 years of achievement

Pictured above are Southwick Green branch members celebrating 15 years of achievement! At every county conference, the branch has won prizes for one or more competitions and to date, they have achieved eight awards. Congratulations ladies – keep up the good work!

90th Anniversary Celebrations



East Preston and Kingston Branch

East Preston and Kingston Branch raised a commendable £520.07 during the Poppy Party weekend. The money collected came from a series of events including a coffee morning, festival market, tombola and a collection from their 90th Anniversary Tea Party. The picture shows branch members on their float.



Burton-on-Trent Branch

Congratulations to Burton-on-Trent Branch members who raised £470 during the Poppy Party weekend! Members also raised more than £20 on their penny trail. Pictured left to right are Mrs Janet Dean (President), Mrs Gwen Foster (Chairman), Mrs Jenny Mason, (Secretary and Standard Bearer) and Mr Andrew Griffiths MP



Olveston & District Branch

Despite atrocious weather conditions on the Sunday of the Poppy Party Weekend, a large number of people showed their support for the Legion's 90th Anniversary and attended the Open Garden in Olveston, South Gloucestershire. Joyce Parker (pictured), the group's longest serving member, cut the anniversary cake which was donated by the village bakery, The Crusty Loaf.



Verwood Branch

To celebrate the Women's Section's 90th Anniversary, Verwood Branch entered into the Verwood Carnival and won 1st prize in their class. In spite of inclement weather, all members completed the course wet and bedraggled but still had lots of fun!

Croxley Green Branch

On the 23rd July, Croxley Green RBL hosted a day of events to celebrate the Legion's 90th Anniversary. The first event of the day was organised by the Women's Section Committee. At one o'clock, branch members dressed up as Lyons Corner House Nippies to serve Afternoon Tea to guests and visitors. The hall was decorated with bunting, cargo netting and wartime posters. Over 60 people, young and old, enjoyed a choice of freshly prepared crust less sandwiches, home-made cup cakes, doughnuts, scones as well as fresh strawberries with cream! Following the afternoon tea, the ladies changed out of their Nippy uniforms and into their swing clothes for a two hour jive session! The last event of the day saw a final clothes change for a 1940s themed dance. A grand raffle was later drawn with all proceeds going to the Poppy Appeal.



Williton Branch

On 11th June, Williton Branch held a party on Williton Green to mark the Royal British Legion and Women's Section's 90th Anniversaries. There

were many stalls, including a tombola and raffle, as well as a bbq, refreshments and a variety of games for the family. Pictured enjoying the party are young local residents.

Pembrokeshire County

The magnificent setting of the famous Milford Haven Waterway, was the venue for Pembrokeshire's 90th Anniversary County Coffee Morning. It was followed by lunch and the County Meeting where Mrs Dora Loy, the retiring Wales Representative, was presented with a portrait of Haverfordwest by Mrs Mary Jackson of Narberth Branch. Following a vote of thanks to Mrs Loy for her hard work during her tenure, a warm welcome was given to Kay Scase who will take over as the new Wales Representative.



Gotham Branch

Gotham Branch provided an anniversary buffet for its members and held a cake auction to raise money during the Poppy Party celebrations. June Morley, Gotham Branch Secretary, made the Anniversary cake which was sold for £20 at auction!



Cumberland County

On 21st May, Cumberland County hosted a special tea party during its annual spring meeting to celebrate the Women's Section's 90th Anniversary. The meeting also included a competition for handicraft which was won by Keswick Branch, and a competition for produce which was won by Armathwaite Branch. Mrs Pat Berry from Central Committee attended as special guest.

The Judges Refresher Day Course

On Saturday 9th April, Grade A, B, and C Judges travelled to the East Midlands to participate in a Judges Refresher Day Course, held at Loughborough Grammar School. The Course, which had been requested by a number of Judges wanting the chance brush up on their competition judging skills, turned out to be a huge success.

The Course began with an introduction from the National Parade Marshal, Mrs Helen Richardson, and was then followed by a presentation on Personal Turnout, RBLWS Dress and RBL & Youth Dress.

Mrs Christine Spencer demonstrated a simple step by step guide on how to 'Block a Beret'. Needless to say, at the end of the demonstration Christine was inundated with questions!!! (Any Standard Bearer or Judge who is having difficulty in Blocking a Beret, please contact Christine - her details can be obtained from HQ or the National Parade Marshal)

During the morning session, Judges had the opportunity to discuss in groups and present what is required for their own kit before the competition day and before the competition starts, Dress Inspection, and well as the complexities of organising a Standard Bearers Competition!

Following a lunch break, Judges changed into uniform and each Judge was inspected on their Personal Turnout and the equipment required. Miss Carole Hoban shared and demonstrated her own technique, giving tips on how to buff shoes and get the best possible shine - all attendees were most intrigued! Under the watchful eye of the Directing



Staff, they were then given the opportunity to Judge a Standard Bearer Competition.

The final topic on the agenda was the Cane Drill for Marshals on Parade. Marshals were given the opportunity to give the orders and all others demonstrated marching whilst performing the Cane Drill movements - all of which proved very interesting and caused quite a stir!!!

On behalf of the Directing Staff, I would like to thank all the Standard Bearers who attended and everyone who helped - especially Mrs Sheila Fear, Mrs Pat Chrimes, and Brian and the staff at Loughborough Grammar School. Thank you to the Marshals who were interested enough to give their time up to attend and refresh their Judging

capabilities. The feedback from all you all was very encouraging and it seems to have been an informative, fun and worthwhile day!

We wish you all 'Good Luck' in your future Judging!

Mrs Helen Richardson (National Parade Marshal)



Welcome to The 'A Team'!

Congratulations to Miss Emma Kearsey (West Midlands Region), Mrs Deborah Stevenson (Northern Region) and Mrs Christine Spencer (Northern Region), who were awarded 'A grade' in their latest Standard Bearer Judging Assessments. All three were given the opportunity to Judge Regional Standard Bearers Competitions earlier this year and were assessed by the National Parade Marshal Mrs Helen Richardson. Mrs Richardson was extremely impressed by the turnout and professionalism of all three Judges and subsequently upgraded them to 'A' grade with immediate effect. Miss Emma Kearsey and Mrs Deborah Stevenson performed as National Judges at the 2011 National Standard Bearers Competition and Mrs Christine Spencer has been selected to judge the National Standard Bearer Competition next year in Llandudno. Well Done Ladies!



REMEMBRANCE SERVICE TO CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF LADY WINIFRED HILTON 1919-2010

A Service of Thanksgiving was held at St Mary The Virgin Church, Wirksworth on Saturday 2nd July to celebrate the life of Lady (Winifred) Hilton. Lady Hilton was a valued National Vice-President of the RBLWS for many years and was until last October, Derbyshire County President and President of four Derbyshire Women Section Branches, namely Bakewell, Chesterfield, Mickleover and Wirksworth. The National Chairman, Mrs Wendy Bromwich, attended the service along with the National Parade Marshal Mrs Helen Richardson, the National Standard Bearer Mrs Diane Marrazza, and Mrs Marilyn Cam who proudly carried Derbyshire County Women's Section Standard. The following Women's Section Branches were represented and Standards were carried by: Lynne Pheasey (Bakewell), Valerie Halls (Belper), Karen McDermott (Ilkeston), Brenda Sharratt (Melbourne) and Dawn Watkinson (Glossop)