

You don't have to be ex-Service to join....



Barely a day goes by that doesn't coincide with the anniversary of a conflict that cost the lives of British and Commonwealth Servicemen and women. The momentous struggles of 1914-1918 and those of 1939-1945 helped shape Britain, and define who and what we are today. The fact that the countries of Western Europe now coexist in peace and relative harmony with little prospect of future armed conflict within our borders is testament to the huge sacrifices made by past generations. British forces continue to serve in harm's way to protect our freedom and prosperity worldwide. The Royal British Legion (RBL) aims to ensure that their sacrifices are never forgotten, and that members of the British armed forces, veterans and their families receive the support and care they need.

The Droxford & District Branch predates the formation of the British Legion as 'The Droxford Branch of the Comrades of the Great War'. This year marks the centenary of the foundation of the British Legion on 15th May 1921 with Field Marshal The Early Haig as its first President. The British Legion was awarded its Royal Charter in 1925, becoming the Royal British Legion.

Subject to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, we aim to meet four times a year, usually at Droxford Village Hall, with a speaker on a range of interesting subjects. A curry supper delivered from the White Horse is available for those who have booked. There's also an annual general meeting, an annual dinner, a summer drinks party, a Grand National draw and a pub-style quiz night. Apart from selling poppies in support of the annual appeal, we are not otherwise actively engaged in RBL fundraising activity. We observe the annual Remembrance Sunday service at one of the local parish churches. As you would expect, being so close to Portsmouth and other military centres, many of our members are ex-Service but an increasing number are civilian. All are equally welcome.

As a member of the RBL (Droxford and District Branch) you would not only be able to 'do your bit' to support the British armed forces but also help keep remembrance alive. This is not glorification of war - far from it; anyone who has witnessed the ravages of armed conflict will be quick to dispel this myth. It is however through remembrance that we can truly appreciate over 75 years of peace that has existed in Western Europe and ensure that 1½ million British and Commonwealth subjects who gave their lives in two world wars and other conflicts are never forgotten. The Roll of Honour for Soberton and Newtown is also included in this website.

For more information or to join RBL (Droxford & District Branch), please contact the Membership Secretary – Phil Burton at pjb585@btinternet.com or 01329 836215.



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2021 Programme of Meetings and Events

Due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, the following programme is provisional and subject to change, postponement, or cancellation. Meetings will either take place in Droxford Village Hall or via Zoom, commencing at 7.00 pm. Details will be confirmed by email prior to the event. Members without email should contact the Branch Secretary (01489 877800).

January

Monday 11th “*The Golden Age of Piracy*” presented by Angus Konstam, historian and author (by Zoom).

March

Monday 8th “*Drones and the Psychology of Remote Warfare*” presented by Dr Peter Lee, BSc, MA, PGCAP, PhD, Reader in Politics and Ethics at University of Portsmouth and Assistant Director (Academic) RAF Cranwell.

April

Thursday 8th Grand National Draw organised by Mrs Elizabeth Parker.

Friday 23rd
7.30pm

Pub-style Quiz

May

Monday 10th “*The New World Order or Disorder*” presented by Rear Admiral Dr Chris Parry, CBE, PhD, historian, and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Swansea.

June

Thursday 17th Summer Drinks Party to celebrate the Royal British Legion’s Centenary at Exton Cottage, Allen’s Farm Lane, Exton SO32 3NW by kind permission of Mr and Mrs David Frere-Cook.

September

Monday 13th “*A Prison View*” presented by Commodore Angus Somerville, Royal Navy, Branch Member and Chairman of Winchester Prison Independent Monitoring Board.

October

Monday 18th
7.00pm for 7.30pm RBL Centenary Dinner (venue to be confirmed).

November

Monday 8th Annual General Meeting followed by commemorations to mark the centenary of the Royal British Legion and refreshments.

Sunday 14th
10.50 am

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE
at St Mary and All Saints’ Church, Droxford.

Non-members are always welcome when we have a speaker. Please aim to arrive at Droxford Village Hall or log into Zoom by 6.50pm (contact Branch Secretary for login details). There’s no charge but donations are always appreciated.



ROLL OF HONOUR (SOBERTON & NEWTOWN)

S/N	Surname	First names	Rank	Unit	Age	Date of death	Where fell or memorial	Local connection
THE GREAT WAR (1914-1918)								
N	BEVIS	Jack	Private	21st Infantry Battalion, 2nd Canadian Division	33	28/08/1918	Haucourt	Chiphall, Wickham
N	BEVIS	William	Private	Leicestershire Regiment	36	13/04/1917	Arras	Chiphall, Wickham
N&S	BROWN	Frederick Robert (a)	Private	1st Battalion Hampshire Regiment		26/04/1914	Ypres	
S	BUCKSEY	John W	Private	2nd Battalion Hampshire Regiment		06/05/1918	Hazebrouck	East Hoe Cottages
S	DEADMAN	Harry	Boy 1st Class	Royal Navy	16	26/11/1914	<i>HMS Bulwark</i> Sheerness (g)	West Street Soberton
N	DOREY	Frederick George(b)	Stoker Petty Officer	Royal Navy	44	26/11/1914	<i>HMS Bulwark</i> Sheerness (g)	Soberton
N	FIELDER	Arthur Bertram	Sergeant	6th Field Artillery Brigade, Australian Imperial Force	24	04/04/1918	Bailleul	Laurels, Soberton Heath
N (p)	FISHER	James	Private	1st Battalion Wiltshire Regiment	29	24/03/1918	Arras	Bunns Lane
(q)	FOWLER	F W	Stoker Petty Officer	Royal Navy (<i>HMS Vernon</i>) (r)	48	20/03/1918	Soberton Churchyard	West Street Soberton
N	HILLIER	Dennis Claude	Private	King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry	21	28/10/1918	Tezze, Italy	St Martin's Corner
S	LONGMAN	Thomas	Private	15th Battalion Hampshire Regiment	17	15/10/1916	Seine Maritime	Soberton Heath
N	LUTMAN	Emanuel James (c)	Private	15th Battalion Hampshire Regiment	36	13/08/1917	Ypres, Menin Gate	Boarhunt
N	MELLISH	Sydney Alfred	Private	8th Battalion Hampshire Regiment		14/10/1917	Bagdad, Iraq	Soberton Heath
S	MESSAM	Alfred Walter	Private	15th Battalion Hampshire Regiment	25	24/03/1918	Demancourt	Soberton Heath
N&S	MESSAM	Oliver Nehemiah	Private	Royal Army Service Corps	24	20/01/1918	Dar Es Salaam	Inglenook, Soberton
S	MESSAM	William Oliver	Private	2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment	31	16/12/1918	Kalamaria, Greece	Soberton Heath
S	NEWELL	Leslie	2nd Lieutenant	1st Battalion London Regiment	23	02/09/1915	Pas de Calais	
N	PYLE	George Wallace (d)	Gunner	Royal Marine Artillery	23	12/10/1918	Vadencourt	Hoe Gate Farm
S	RYE	Robert William	Private	Royal Marine Light Infantry, Royal Naval Division		23/04/1917	Pas de Calais	Ingoldfield Cottage
N	SCARDIFIELD	Wilfred Withers	Corporal	1st Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry	27	04/10/1917	West Flanders	Newtown
S	SEARLE	Alfred John	Private	Royal Marine Light Infantry		04/06/1918	Soberton Churchyard	Cold Hill Soberton
S	SEARLE	William John	Private	2nd Battalion Essex Regiment	31	12/05/1915	Ypres	Liberty Road
(q)	SETFORD	James	Shipwright 1st Class	Royal Navy (<i>HMS Vernon</i>) (r)	58	14/07/1918	Soberton Churchyard	h/o Eiley Setford
S	TWYNAM	Godfrey	2nd Lieutenant	11th Battalion Border Regiment	25	18/11/1916	Beaumont-Hamel	Soberton House
S	TWYNAM	Hugh	Lieutenant	Royal Naval Reserve	29	19/01/1917	<i>HM S/M E36</i> North Sea (h)	Soberton House
S	TWYNAM	John	Staff Sergeant	1st South African Mounted Rifles	32	30/11/1914	Bethlehem, Free State Africa (i)	Soberton House
S	TWYNAM	William H	Corporal	7th Infantry Battalion, Canadian Division	33	24/04/1915	Ypres	Soberton House
SECOND WORLD WAR (1939-1945)								
N	CROOK	John	Able Seaman	Royal Navy	18	07/01/1944	<i>HMS Tweed</i> North Atlantic (j)	Wickham
N	EMERY	Frank Chandler	Chief Petty Officer	Royal Navy	38	14/09/1939	<i>HMS Royal Oak</i> Scapa Flow (k)	Newtown
N	HUTCHENS	Eric Frank	Lance Corporal	16th Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment	23	30/09/1943	Salerno	Soberton
S	KERLEY	Daisy Mary	civilian	National Fire Service	30	09/02/1943	Winchester/buried Holy Trinity	Kennel Cottage Droxford
S	LEGGETT	Harry Oswald	Sergeant	25th Field Regiment Royal Artillery	25	13/12/1941	Alamein	Soberton
N	LINSELL	Bernard John (e)	galley boy	Merchant Navy	20	26/09/1940	<i>SS Port Denison</i> North Sea (l)	
N	PINK	George Frederick	Driver	Royal Army Service Corps	20	29/05/1940	Dunkirk	Newtown
N	PRATT	Albert Arthur Percy	Private	4th Battalion Hampshire Regiment	23	06/03/1943	Tunisia	Newtown
S	STEEL	Douglas Merson	Instructor Commander	Royal Navy	44	24/05/1941	<i>HMS Hood</i> Denmark Strait (m)	Soberton
S	TANNER	Reginald Percy	Commander DSC	Royal Navy	37	22/05/1941	<i>HMS Gloucester</i> Crete (n)	
N	WARBURTON-LEE	Bernard	Captain VC	Royal Navy	44	10/04/1940	<i>HMS Hardy</i> Narvik (o)	Soberton Mill
N	WHITE	Robert Samuel	Private	Hampshire Regiment	21	02/10/1940	North Africa	Wickham
IRAQ 2007								
(f)	DLUGOSZ	Eleanor	Private	Royal Army Medical Corps	19	05/04/2007	Basra	Swanmore
Notes:-								
(a) Assume 'E R Brown' shown on Newtown memorial is same person as 'F R Brown' on Soberton's as there is no E R Brown listed for Hampshire Regt on CWGC* website								
(b) No trace of Dorey with initials 'F G' on CWGC website. Could only be SPO (not CPO) F W Dorey.								
(c) Although shown as M J Lutman on Newtown's memorial, he was known as Manny which would explain the error.								
(d) Initials shown incorrectly (?) as W G on Newtown memorial.								
(e) The only Linsell recorded on CWGC website is Bernard John who was Merchant Navy not Royal Navy as shown on Newtown's memorial.								
(f) RAMC medic serving with the 2nd Battalion Duke of Lancaster's Battle Group whose Warrior Armoured Vehicle was the victim of a roadside bomb. 4 lives lost. Commemorated at Swanmore War Memorial but mother now lives in Soberton.								
(g) Pre-Dreadnought battleship exploded at anchor off Sheerness when cordite charges stowed against boiler room bulkhead 'cooked off'; 736 lives lost and only 17 survivors.								
(h) Sunk with all hands following collision with HM Submarine E43 near Terschelling, an island off the Northern Netherlands.								
(i) Killed by lightning strike.								
(j) Frigate of 5th Escort Group torpedoed by U305 South West of Ireland; 83 lost from ship's company of 127.								
(k) Battleship torpedoed by U47 whilst at anchor in Scapa Flow with loss of 833 men from ship's company of 1,234								
(l) General cargo ship sunk by German bombers off Aberdeen; 16 lives lost.								
(m) Battle cruiser sunk during opening engagement with <i>Bismarck</i> and <i>Prinz Eugen</i> ; only 3 survivors rescued from a ship's company of 1,418.								
(n) Cruiser sunk by German dive bombers during the Battle of Crete; 722 men lost from a ship's company of 807.								
(o) Destroyer lost during the First Battle of Narvik during which Captain Warburton-Lee (Captain (D) 2nd Destroyer Flotilla) won a posthumous Victoria Cross.								
(p) Also on Denmead War Memorial								
(q) Not recorded on Soberton or Newtown war memorials but in CWGC maintained graves.								
(r) <i>HMS Vernon</i> (hulk) was the Royal Navy's torpedo school moored in Portsmouth. It later became a shore establishment which is now Gunwharf Quays.								
* Commonwealth War Graves Commission.								

