

### BOROUGH OF BURY VETERANS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

#### NOVEMBVER 2020

COVID SUMMER EDITION ISSUE NUMBER NINE

# Remembrance 2020

We all know about Remembrance Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in November, the nearest Sunday to

Armistice Day 11 November, a particular heart felt and sombre event for all our members. Another event hit hard by the Covid pandemic, a usually big event in Bury, this year no marching parades, no road closures, no crowds. I think we would all agree that no cenotaph should be barren particularly at Remembrance time and so as an Association we had individuals laying wreaths at the cenotaphs in Bury, Tottington and Unsworth our usual attendance. This year however, we also laid wreaths at Middleton and Bolton, I suspect these may be added as permanent fixtures in future years. No formal ceremonies



were allowed, and we also had to avoid 1100 hrs to de-conflict with the Civic Mayor, we honoured the fallen with the Eulogy and 2 minutes silence prior to laying a wreath at each cenotaph. Hopefully we can all be on parade next year.



# **Association President**

A difficult year for all of us in so many ways not least with the continuing saga of Covid-19 Pandemic, when will it end, no one knows but not for some time yet I would wager. We have put this newsletter together to up date members on what we have been up to in the last 6 months or so, in some ways not our usual content but does reflect our willingness as

veterans to help others in need. It also shows we have many friends within the wider the community willing to donate time and effort to worthy causes. There is still a tremendous amount of work going on behind the scenes, securing funds not only for when lockdown is over, but also for now so that we can assist members who find themselves in more difficult and testing situations. When we can all meet up again, we will be organising a reforming party, we will also hold an AGM at the earliest opportunity. For now, please take time to read through, hopefully you will find this edition of interest. Finally, should you find yourself in need of assistance then please do use the contact details at the bottom of page twelve. Stay safe and stay well.



# Bury Asda Poppy Stall 2020

This important commitment, along with others, has seen some changes to how it is fulfilled due to the pandemic, we have had to abide by lockdown and social distancing rules. We have done well to cover the stall in Asda Bury for most of the usual 15 days we usually cover. Thank you to those that volunteered, also to Kelly and Andrew Robinson who were due to take part but sadly the stall had to close down early due to changing rules, and to those that would have volunteered in normal times. A total of £751 was raised via the card machine, cash figure TBC. We also had members in Asda Radcliffe & Pilsworth and Lidl Radcliffe, well done to all that volunteered wherever the location.



### **Veterans Garden**

Not long into the lockdown the Association received a call from the son of one of our members Eric Wilson RN saying that their fathers garden had become overgrown and given his age and also shielding he was unable to look after his garden which in his sons words was his pride and joy.

On hearing this Roy and Owen contacted Eric's son and arranged for a day and time for us to visit Eric's home to do whatever we could for him. We called round and whilst we are no Alan Titchmarsh we were able to return his garden back to looking like he would normally keep it.



Eric's son was very appreciative for what we had done for his father.

### For the Fallen – VE Day 75

As the country was entering into Covid lockdown in April, it was recognised that it would have an effect on the VE Day commemorations. Victory in Europe Day is an iconic event in Europe when at the cost of millions of lives Nazi Germany was finally defeated, normally there would have been a big parade with a march past of veterans along with the laying of wreaths but sadly because of lockdown this had been cancelled. Bury MBC were trying to do events to mark the occasion including an online zoom event and they turned to the Borough of Bury Veterans Association to see if there was anything that could be done. The idea of a video centred round "For the Fallen" by Laurence Binyon was born. The call went out for volunteers from the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force, Civ Div, from GMP and from the NHS. There were ample volunteers wanting to take part including Owen Dykes' two daughters. Each verse was allocated to a volunteer and over three days all was filmed on mobile phones and with the talents of Terry and Jackie White's son Tom, everything was stitched into a high quality finished product. The video went public on the 6th May with Bury Council posting it on their web site and sharing it, on Youtube with over 500 views and has been shared across social media. A proud moment to commemorate VE Day under extreme circumstances but it also showed how veterans can achieve anything in all conditions.

The Contributors.



### For the Fallen

BY LAURENCE BINYON

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children, England mourns for her dead across the sea. Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit, Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres, There is music in the midst of desolation And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young, Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow. They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted; They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again; They sit no more at familiar tables of home; They have no lot in our labour of the day-time; They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound, Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight, To the innermost heart of their own land they are known As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust, Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain; As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness, To the end, to the end, they remain.

# Battle of Britain 80th Anniversary

With the current situation, it looked like there would be no commemorations for the RAFs finest hour. The RAF & RAFA had taken the decision to not hold the usual Westminster Abbey Service & across the country there was a reluctance to celebrate in any way shape or form this David v Goliath moment of the RAFs history. We at BOBVA are however lucky to have an excellent working relationship with the local council in Bury and following discussions with them, it was decided a brief socially distanced commemoration could take place. In BOBVA we are lucky to have Robert Walsh at 97, a WW11 veteran of 130 Sqn, a tail gunner on Halifax bombers as part of the Association. On approaching Robert about laying a wreath, he accepted without hesitation.

On the day, Paul Newton the Association RAF Chairman, as well as the Chairman of the local RAFA

Branch carries their Standard & Roy Counsell attended with the Association Standard. With a variety of members attending, it was great to see 8 veterans parade. Owen Dykes laid the wreath on behalf of the Association and John "Jacko" Pearce a former member of both the RAF & RNZAF recited For the Fallen.

Whilst this year may have been a reduced commemoration, it had a real sense of poignancy with reduced numbers & a beautifully respected 2mins silence. It is hope that next year we will all be able to attend & that members of the Council & other local Associations will be present to help us commemorate. To those who came; Thank You



A special mention to both Vivienne Newton & Anthony Dalton-Hughes whose photographs have been used in several local newspapers & will also appear on the next edition of the RAFA magazine AirMail.



# Poppies In The Window

Contribution By Owen Dykes.

"PARADE FALL IN" echoes outside the Bury town hall.

One last swig of the hip flask before it goes back in the pocket.

Berets and head dress given a last brush before being put on, straight and cap badges over the left eye.

Blazers buttoned and medals straightened, poppies straightened with the leaf at 11 o'clock.

Standard bearers to the front and the bands strike up.

To the sound of the drums, the order is given, and the parade moves off.

However, 2020 is different, COVID 19, lockdown and social distance are the keywords that dictate our lives.

Parades have been cancelled or down graded to simple wreath laying ceremonies.

Poppy selling is few and far between.

A time of the year when the public give their thanks and show respect for Veterans and members of the Armed Forces by wearing a poppy given to them by a Veteran as they drop a hand full of change in the collection tin.

A time of the year when Veterans remember fallen comrades from wars and conflicts in far off lands.

The individual names on the memorial mean something to a father, mother, wife, husband, son, or daughter.

In 2020 during a time of pandemic when fallen comrades should be remembered, Poppies in the Window is a chance to show a sign of respect for Veterans and members of the Armed forces.

Poppies in the Window is a chance to remember men and woman who gave their lives in the defence of this great nation.

Poppies in the Window is a chance to educate the younger generation the meaning of Remembrance and the poppy,

Poppies in the Window is to give thanks and honour Veterans, members of the Armed forces and men, woman that fell in battle in defence of this great nation.

Encourage the younger generation to colour in a poppy, join them as they colour in the poppy and be creative, put it in the window and come the  $11^{th}$  hour of the 11 day of the  $11^{th}$  month stand for 2 minutes so the ghost of fallen Veterans can see that even in a time of global pandemic

"we will remember them "



# Things we've done

AS AN ASSOCIATION, WE ATTEND PARADES AND SERVICES IN BURY AND AROUND THE SURROUNDING AREAS, MOST ON A YEARLY BASIS. WE HAVE STANDS AT EVENTS LIKE "YANKS ARE BACK IN SADDLEWORTH", WHERE WE INVITE PEOPLE TO TALK TO US, HAND OUT INFORMATION AND OVERALL HAVE A GOOD TIME. WE ALSO HAVE MERCHANDISE AND SOMETIMES RUN FUNDRAISERS LIKE TOMBOLA'S AND BAKE SALES.

WE HAVE RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS: THROUGH FOREVER MANCHESTER WE RECEIVED FUNDING FROM AUTO TRADER COMMUNITY FUND AND THE 247 PEOPLE FUND (247 CAR FINANCE). GREGGS FOUNDATION COMMUNITY FUND. THE PITCH FUNDING. AMBITION 4 AGEING.

SO FAR THE FUNDING HAS PAID FOR THE FOLLOWING TRIPS: INTERNATIONAL BIRMINGHAM TATTOO. NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM. BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL FLIGHT. NATIONAL ROYAL NAVY MUSEUM. RAF COSFORD AIRSHOW. YORKSHIRE WARTIME EXPERIENCE. EDEN CAMP.



TO SEE IMAGES AND MORE, WHY NOT HAVE A LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE. OR YOU CAN FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM.

## Tommy 10k

Contribution By Owen Dykes.

Want to join me in supporting a good cause? I'm raising money for Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) and your contribution will make an impact. The Tommy 10k is an RBLI fund raising event; a 10k walk, run, or wheeled event for you to do alone or with friends.

There are 3 different challenges dependant on ability.

1. THE CORPORAL – 1x 10k in a month;

2. THE PARATROOPER/COMMANDO - 10k a week for 4 weeks;

3. THE SPECIAL FORCES -10k a day for 10 days = 100k!

I have opted for the 10k a week for 4 weeks challenge.

I've included information about RBLI below:

To be the leading provider of employability services to the disabled and disadvantaged in the Armed Forces community and partner of choice for individuals and organisations in the provision of care, support and employment to those who are disadvantaged by disability, health condition or social welfare need.

Please visit the following web address to donate: https://www.facebook.com/ donate/337347861023729/2740304746212301/ STRAVA

Whether you donate £5 or £500. Every little bit helps. Thank you for your support.

# BoBVA DIY SOS - Veteran Style

By Leanne Murphy, April 2020, I got a call about a veteran who may be struggling due to them having an unusable bathroom and may have no heating or hot water too. After speaking to Chris and Roy we decided that Roy and I would attend the veterans house and see how they are coping. Quickly it became apparent that they had been struggling for a while, the bathroom was in disrepair and their boiler hadn't worked in a while.

We got to work, I spoke to Terry Morley who helped get the quick funding for the boiler, and within a month a new boiler was fitted and he had hot water and heating. We then approached Daz Taylor who put a quote together to get the funding from SSAFA. Whilst the funding was pending calls were made to contacts in the trades and those contacts cascaded down their own contacts. The response was remarkable, with donations of time and materials coming from across Lancashire and nationwide.

There was a delay to work commencing due to a nationwide shortage of plaster. When Monday day One arrived Denis was packed off to Ribby Hall complete with a weeks rations donated by Lidl for a well earnt rest from his busy retirement, and so that worked could be completed without him being under the builders feet, although difficult given he is as short as Daz.

Overall, a well planned and managed project, roof fixed, boiler replaced, bathroom renovated, house decorated and spring cleaned. The work progressed without any major hitches, a true testament to military planning, that is until the target day of Friday, the very final morning, just hours before the big reveal, when the tilers labourer had an issue with an unruly tile, however that's a story for a future newsletter issue. Always remember no plan survives contact, always have a plan B, alls well, that ends well and the reveal was on time with a very emotional and appreciative Denis.

None of the above could not have taken place without the kind donations from many people. Our appreciation and thanks go to all the following, in no particular order, for their hard work and donations to the project:

Darren Taylor — DTaylor Property Maintenance. Dave Stott (ex army) — Elite Tiling, Manchester. Sam Aston — Direct Tile and Stone Horwich. Martin Chapple — Tile Master Adhesives Chorley. Lee Smith — Bathroom Northwest. Martin Allen — branch manager Howdens (Bury). Ray Porter (ex army) — Fostering Changes. Gareth Lovatt and Josh Lomas — Travis Perkins Salford.

Andy Brookes—Plumber. Lidl Stores (Bury). Vicky Maddox — Decorating. Gemma Maddox — Cleaning. SSAFA Bury. WW Flooring Bury. Anonymous donor — carpets.



### **Veteran Rehoming**

Contribution by Paul Newton & Owen Dykes.

Often, we talk of veterans being resilient, but sometimes people don't realise the depth of that resilience. We recently had an RN veteran relocate to the area. They were initially to stay with their RAF veteran sister for a few days prior to being rehomed in the area. Then C19 happened! What was meant to be a few days became a few weeks and then longer. In normal circumstances this would not be an issue, but when one is a single bedroomed flat & the other is sleeping on a mattress on the flat annex floor. This was not a sustainable situation, so the two veterans came to us for advice & support.

Since the formation of the Borough of Bury Veterans Association we have established excellent relationships with Bury Council, local community groups, community organisations and with SSAFA, so after a consultation with both Veterans the wheels were put in motion to help them both.

First thing that was needed was living accommodation, so working with Bury council and the housing authority within a





couple of weeks a place in sheltered accommodation was secured but next challenge was there was no basic needs such as a fridge, microwave, kettle or a telly to watch.

So Owen put out a Charlie Charlie one call out across social media and community groups that BOBVA have a relationship with, and the response was over whelming, comments on the social media post were rolling in and the beep of the personal message and within the space of a few hours, the general public had stepped up and were offering everything, we had offers of fridges, freezers, microwaves, kettles, TV, furniture and bedding was even offered, offers to come and do a clean were even offered, after several hours enough stuff had been pledged that could outfit a small flat several times over, it got to point that people had to be respectfully declined as we had been overwhelmed. Members of the public even stepped forward with gifts of cash so that the kitchen cupboard could be stocked, a community group called Supporting Sisters even stepped forward with the offer of food parcels every two week for two months so that he wouldn't go hungry and to top everything off Greater Manchester Police stepped forward with an offer of purchasing a TV.

Moving day came and went pretty fast, a work party of volunteers paraded and with all hands on deck everything including a happy Veterans was soon moved in, fridge freezer

plugged in and stocked, kitchen cupboard stocked, rubbish cleared away, kettle plugged in and a brew to celebrate moving in but more importantly two happy Veterans who had a big weight lifted off their shoulders and smiles radiant out.

# **Meet our members**





ROBERT WALSH RAF - 1941-1946: I HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR 2 YEARS, UPON JOINING I WAS MADE VERY WELCOME AND HAVE MADE QUITE A FEW NEW FRIENDS. THE MEMBERS WERE GENUINELY INTERESTED IN GETTING TO KNOW ABOUT ME AND MY TIME IN THE RAF. IN JOINING THE ASSOCIATION I HAVE BEEN ON SEVERAL TRIPS TO PLACES I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GO ON MY OWN. I FEEL IF I NEED ANY HELP OR SUPPORT FROM ANYONE THE VETERANS ASSOCIATION WOULD BE THERE FOR ME.

YOU MIGHT'VE SEEN ONE OF OUR MEMBERS, OWEN, IN THE SHINING A LIGHT ON SUICIDE CAMPAIGN. WHERE HE SPOKE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES.

> AFTER BEING DISCHARGED FROM THE MILITARY OWEN UNKNOWINGLY SUFFERED FROM POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD), AND THIS CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGES THE COMMUNITY TO TALK ABOUT SUICIDE, TO REACH OUT IF THEY NEED HELP THEMSELVES OR IF ARE WORRIED ABOUT SOMEONE THEY KNOW.



HTTPS://WWW.SHININGALIGHTONSUICIDE.ORG.UK/OWEN/

## Pause For Thought

#### The Final RV

Contribution By Roy Counsell.

During this difficult time a lot of things have changed, we can't see relatives unless in a bubble, we

can't see friends but one of the hardest things has been the changes to funeral and how many people can attend. As we all know this can be a very stressful time for all, for family and friends both civilian and military alike and we have learnt over the years that for some families and military friends a show of respect can help ease the grief. So, we as an association, and with the blessing of the families, provide a fitting farewell to those ex members of our military family by parading our standard to help say goodbye. The pandemic has not stopped me with our Standard, along with other members representing the association at least 6 times at funerals while still complying with the government social distancing advice. Each time the families concerned have thanked us and said it was what they would have wanted. I hope that with us still providing this service during this time we have shown ourselves to be in



keeping with the highest military standard and bearing. Our heart felt condolences to all that have passed during this difficult time.



# Military Quiz

#### Round One: Military History:

- 1. In what year did the Indian Rebellion (also known as The Mutiny) take place?
- 2. At what battle in 1815 did Napoleon surrender to the British?
- 3. The Battle of Monte Cassino took place in which country?
- 4. What year was the Royal Air Force formed?

5. What was the name of the Royal Navy submarine that sunk the Argentine ship ARA General Belgrano during the Falklands War?

6. In which sea did the Battle of Jutland take place in 1916?

7. Which US General in WWII later became the 34th President of the United States of America?

#### Round Two: Military Hardware:

- 1. Which main battle tank did Challenger Two replace?
- 2. What was the operational range of the Spitfire?
- 3. In what year was the upgraded SA80 (A2) introduced to the British Army?
- 4. To which Class does the aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales belong?
- 5. What was the name of the standard riffle used by British soldiers throughout WWI?

6. How many rounds per minute can the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) lay down when operated by a two-person crew?

7. What was the name of the Royal Air Force's high-altitude strategic bomber, operational from 1956 to 1984?

#### Round Three: Famous Military Faces, Places and Honours:

- Which former Army Sergeant won two gold medals at the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens?
  What is the name of the successful businessman who was once dishonourably discharged from the
- Royal Navy for trying to throw his commanding officer overboard?
- 3. In which English county is RAF Benson?
- 4. To the nearest thousand, what is the current population of Gibraltar?

5. Which military base is situated next to a famous natural beauty spot on the Jurassic Coast in Dorset, England?

- 6. How many Royal Navy recipients of the Victoria Cross has there been?
- 7. Who starred as General Melchett in the TV series, Blackadder Goes Fourth?

#### Round Four: General Military Knowledge:

1. Which current Formula One driver and former World Champion served in his native country's armed forces before becoming a professional racing driver?

- 2. Which fictional submarine is the focus of a 1990 film starring Sean Connery?
- 3. What Royal Navy rank does Ian Fleming's James Bond hold?

4. Who wrote the novels featuring the character Richard Sharpe which later became a successful television series on ITV?

5. In 1917, Roland Bradford VC became the youngest man to attain the rank of General in modern British military history, but how old was he?

- 6. What was the shortest life expectancy of a Royal Air Force pilot during WWII?
- 7. What is the British Army's earliest battle honour?

(All answers next newsletter issue).

### More Remembrance 2020



### Dad's Army Word Search

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WALMINGTON ON SEA PIKE WILSON HODGES ST ALDHELMS SWALLOW BANK SERGEANT JONES STUPID BOY WALKER REVD FARTHING DON'T PANIC CHIEF WARDEN LANCE CORPORAL

FRAZER MAINWARING GODFREY VERGER HOME GUARD CAPTAIN

Source: www.wordsearch-puzzles.co.uk

If you have a story and any pictures that you wish to share that we can use for our next newsletter please feel free to send them to our email or postal address and if we can use them then we will.

Our thanks to all contributors in this edition especially to Anthony Dalton-Hughes for all the great photos.

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