



# The Derbyshire Legion



The Magazine of the Royal British Legion in Derbyshire  
Registered Charity No. 219279

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## COUNTY CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTARY



I extend a warm welcome to our new magazine "**Derbyshire Legion**". This publication has been produced by the County, for the County. It is an initiative which depends for its success very much on the support of all Derbyshire Branches and their members. It is most important to note that our editor can only produce a magazine if he has something to "put in it." Please send any Branch news of events, photographs, articles, stories, etc in fact anything that you think would interest other members in the County to John Irwin. I am looking forward to receiving comments, about the new magazine, from Branch Secretaries so that the County Committee can decide on the way forward with this publication.

The intention is to continue with the monthly Newsletter "**Derbyshire LegionLetter**" which will contain, amongst other things, events that are to **take place in the future**, whereas the Magazine will contain reports of events that **have taken place**. As an example; major events, such as the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our organisation, will be the subject of separate communication to all Branches and also detailed in the Newsletter, as and when required, but details of these events will be reported in the **Derbyshire Legion**.

**Bernard Page**  
County Chairman

## The Editor of The Derbyshire Legion

I served nine years in the Territorial Army in a sub unit of the regular Army 10 Ord Sup Bn RAOC (now 9 Regiment RLC) 1973 - 82 and finished as a corporal. Serving in London, Aldershot, Germany, Denmark and Norway. In March 2000 I joined the Long Eaton Branch. I volunteered to be editor of the Branch Newsletter which I created in September 2002 (We decided to change the newsletter into a magazine in September 2006). In October 2004 I became Treasurer when Colin Harrison stood down at the AGM. Since March 2006 (Len Cowley had to stand down due to ill health as Secretary) I have been doing all the administration for the Branch as Secretary, Treasurer and Editor of the Branch Magazine with the help of the Branch Committee. I will be standing down as Secretary at the AGM in October 2010.

Recently while looking for some information on the Derbyshire County website I saw the appeal for an editor for the RBL Derbyshire County Magazine. Having always enjoyed producing the Branch Magazine I thought I would like to produce one for the County.

Not everyone has access to a computer and the internet, unfortunately Group meetings are not well attended, so a magazine is one way to inform Branches of what County and Branches have been doing during the year.



John P. Irwin

## Presentation of a Gold Badge To Dilys



On Monday evening 26<sup>th</sup> July at the Wheatsheaf Inn at Wirksworth Mrs Dilys Elliker was the recipient of a Royal British Legion Gold Badge for her services to the Wirksworth Branch, the Standard Bearers Association and Derbyshire County over many years.

At the Branch meeting, I presented the badge and paid tribute to the work that Mrs Elliker had done, and was continuing to do, at Wirksworth and throughout the County. Her current appointments include Secretary of Wirksworth Branch, Standard Bearers Association and County Conference Committee together with a member of the County Committee. The award was well deserved and that Mrs Elliker should wear her new badge with pride.

**Bernard Page**  
County Chairman

### The Derbyshire Legion

is edited by Mr. J P Irwin  
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or by post to  
82 Bridge St. Long Eaton, Derbyshire NG10 4QQ

## Mr David W Abberley

County Vice President & President of Mickleover Branch & Club.

It is with deepest regret that the County announces the death of David, and whose funeral took place at all Saints Church, Mickleover, on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July and which was followed by a wake at Mickleover RBL Club.

David had been a member of the Royal British Legion since 1962 and was a long time member of the County Committee being County Vice Chairman until ill health forced him to take a back seat a year or so ago. He will be well missed.

Our sympathies are extended to his widow Jean and his family of Sandra and Stephen.

**Bernard Page.**  
County Chairman



## The Royal British Legion at 90 Events in 2011

We would like your contributions in connection with next years celebrations of the 90th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion.

There will be plenty of events going on at County and Branch level all year long so you have no excuse not to send your pictures and stories to me so I can publish them in your magazine to mark the event.

The Long Eaton Branch (formed 24<sup>th</sup> July 1921) and eleven others in the County were formed in 1921. If your branch is one of them, let us know after the event what you did to celebrate your Branch "Founding Day".

RBL Derbyshire County events will be covered complete with pictures and published in this magazine.

It is hoped to publish the next edition of **The Derbyshire Legion** in December or January

**John P. Irwin, Editor**  
**OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE  
RECRUITING TEAM**

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With the Summer upon us the team have been busy at various events, thus far mainly in the South of the County. Armed Forces Weekend saw three teams in action, one under Phil McKenna at the two day South Derbyshire Festival of Leisure, aided by the Swadlincote Branch. In the City Centre at Cadet 150 the Oakwood Branch under the watchful eye of Eddie Dobson were also in action.

At Elvaston Castle where the Derbyshire show was being held, the new marquee was proudly paraded by Helen Chesshire, Colin and Janet Picken, Dilys and Ron Elliker, aided and abetted by Stuart Allen.

This attracted admiring glances from all who saw it, including a little green eye from another County Chairman! It was a resounding success with many enquiries ranging from membership to welfare. Others just wanted to chat, these included members of the Riders Branch with whom we now have a very good connection.

The highlight of the day was a visit from the Mayor and Mayoress of Derby who were accompanied by the Chair and consort of South Derbyshire District Council.

Did I say highlight, in fact that came later in the afternoon, when the Chairman of the Show Committee presented us with the Leigh Farms Cup for being the best trade stand in the show.

Two weeks later the marquee was at the Overseal Gala, assisted by Deano from the Riders Branch, he proved a tremendous hit with young and old alike. The following saw us at the Air Training Corps open day. Both events proved to be very worthwhile with more members recruited.

**Marquee:**

Branches and Groups may book this to aid recruiting and other activities. All bookings MUST be done via the County Recruiting Officer, who has to attend the event.

Whilst bookings are being taken for next year, these are all provisional until the County and 2011 event programmes have been finalised.

**Membership Seminar:**

Held at Allenton in May it was attended by some 18 delegates from ten branches proving to be a most worthwhile event. In addition to the guest speaker, we were delighted to welcome the National Chairman elect, John Farmer and the acting Community Fund Raiser Helen Chesshire who both gave presentations.

It is hoped to run another event in the North of the County when a venue and date can be arranged. If you are interested in attending please do let the CRO know.

**Recruiting Advisors Course:**

The long term plan is to have at least one recruiting advisor with each branch, some interest has been shown following the membership seminar, and one will be arranged in the South of the County as soon as practicable, followed by one in the North.

It is hoped that all will realise that by holding events in the North and South we are hopefully reducing travelling and increasing attendance.

Regarding recruiting and the above courses please contact the County Recruiting Officer, Stuart Allen 01283218177 or Email: [esa105@hotmail.com](mailto:esa105@hotmail.com)

**2011 Events**

Whilst some events are still in the planning stage the following County Events are now confirmed, with further details to follow:

January 15<sup>th</sup> Official Launch to include the Launch of the prize draw, at Mickleover.

March 25<sup>th</sup> Civic reception for the eleven founding branches at County Hall.

April 3<sup>rd</sup> Church Service at Chesterfield.

May 7<sup>th</sup> Concert in Derby Cathedral.

June 10/12 Poppy Party Weekend

The following is provisional

June 18<sup>th</sup> Derby Market Square

Possible garden party at Chatsworth House.

When arranging events please try not to clash with any of the above.

**Branch Events:**

12 June Chesterfield Marquee provisional

28 August Church Service at Wirksworth this is confirmed.

**Stuart Allen, County Recruiting Officer**



Are you aware you have your very own pipe band here in the East Midlands?

The LRC Royal British Legion Pipe band is based just outside Loughborough, within easy reach of all the midland counties.

The band regularly attends a variety of functions including Legion parades, fetes, carnivals, weddings, ceilidhs and concerts. You can hire a piper, highland dancer, mini band or full band.

The band uniform consists of black jackets and kilts of ancient hunting MacRae tartan, topped off with the blue and gold hackle, colours of the Royal British Legion.



We are always keen to invite new members to join our happy band, ever thought "I'd love to be able to do that" and then forgot about it again? Well now is your chance, we have top quality tutors on hand with a wealth of experience in teaching young and old alike in:-

- Bagpipes
- Bass drumming
- Tenor drumming
- Side drumming
- Drum major

Our tuition is free, all we ask is a small weekly fee towards the cost of hiring the hall.

Once you achieve the standard required, you can become a playing member of the band. Your uniform will be issued to you free of charge and you too could find yourself playing alongside the band of the Blues and Royals, accompanying an orchestra or on parade with the Legion.

Want to learn some more? Then visit our website [www.lrcpipeband.co.uk](http://www.lrcpipeband.co.uk) or contact our secretary, **Anders Hobson on 07504 578863**

**Left: The LRC Pipe Band at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffordshire.  
Below: At Beaumanor.**



## Focus on Crich

Nestling in the Derbyshire hills 8 miles northeast of Derby is the village of Crich, a village full of character. When a television series called “Peak Practice” was on our TV screens it was where they filmed the series and they called it “Cardale”.

Crich is also the home of the “Crich Tramway Village” (The National Tramway Museum) set in a limestone quarry with period street scenes, including the facade of Robert Adam’s beautiful Derby Assembly Rooms, damaged by fire and subsequently demolished.



**Facade of the old Derby Assembly Rooms at Townend**  
Picture from the Crich Tramway Guide Book

There are several exhibitions and a variety of vintage trams from all over the world.



**Tramcar 1297 from Glasgow built 1948 in the Exhibition Hall**  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010

**Crich Tramway Village**  
**Crich Matlock Derbyshire DE4 5DP**  
**Tel: 0870 758 7267**

**Website: [www.tramway.co.uk](http://www.tramway.co.uk)**

A tramway was originally constructed by George Stevenson to carry limestone from the Cliffe quarry to the lime kilns at Ambergate. Limestone is still mined at the quarry.

Other industries included lead mining from Roman times and the limestone was quarried for lime burning and road making. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century there were many lime kilns in the village centre. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century saw a new local industry develop that of framework knitting. These were installed in out-buildings or in upstairs rooms. By 1857 there were about 100 such frames in the village of Crich, framesmiths would set them up and repair them for the workers.

Crich has many old gritstone cottages and other buildings, with its Norman nave, columns and font, St. Mary’s Church being the most important dating from 1135. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century the chancel and tower were added, the clerestory and porch a little later.

A 14<sup>th</sup> century effigy of a bearded man in a long frock in the north aisle recess is thought to be of Sir William de Wakebridge. The whole family is believed to have been wiped out by the Black Death.

Monuments to German Pole, Godfrey Bereford and John Cray are also there.



**Crich Church**

Built in 1765 there is also a Wesleyan chapel, believed to be the oldest still in use in the country. When the chapel stood on common ground skirted by packhorse tracks John Wesley came to preach here in 1766.

## The Crich and District RBL Branch

Meet at the Black Swan, Browns Hill Crich on the second Sunday of each month at 11.00 am.

Secretary: Mr M G Adderson Tel: 01773 857037

## The Sherwood Foresters War Memorial, Crich

The Memorial in the form of a lighthouse tower stands on the former site of a signal beacon at the summit of a 1,000 foot hill at Crich, above the A6 road from Derby to Matlock. It was dedicated in 1923 in memory of the 11,409 of the regiment who gave their lives in the Great War 1914-1918. After the Second World War 1939-1945 a plaque was added in memory of the 1,520 men who lost their lives in that conflict. Every night the beacon light burns to remind us of that heroism and sacrifice so it is not forgotten. Every day the memorial is open, visitors climb to the top gallery of the tower for the wide view over eight counties, weather permitting. A separate Memorial was built in memory of the men from the Sherwood Foresters, Worcestershire & Sherwood Foresters and now the Mercian Regiment who have died in all the "small wars" since 1945. The last time I was at the Memorial in August 2009 there were 24 names on it, unfortunately there are more names to be added, they have run out of room. The Memorial is going to be enlarged because it is the Mercian Regiment's promise to the families that every name of those soldiers of the regiment killed on operations will be added to the Memorial.

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007 the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn Worcestershire & Sherwood Foresters became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn the Mercian Regiment. The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn the Cheshire Regiment became the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn and the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn the Staffordshire Regiment became the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. The Mercian Regimental Charity adopted the Crich Memorial site so funds can still be raised for maintenance. So the names of the fallen of all three battalions will be added to the extended Memorial.

On the first Sunday in July every year a special service is held at the Tower when ex-Foresters, members of the Mercian Regiment, friends and relatives, Civic and Military representatives from all the counties connected with the regiment join to re-dedicate themselves a new for the times ahead.



Crich Memorial Tower Editor's picture August 2009



Long Eaton Branch Members Tony Bryan, Fred Pepper (Served in the Corps of Military Police during WWII) with two 1940's re-enactors in the uniform of the Black Watch (Piper and Sergeant Major) at the foot of the Memorial Tower Editors picture April 2009



Cap Badges of the Sherwood Foresters, Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment and the Mercian Regiment

## 1940's Event Crich Tramway Village

Every year since August 2004 a large group of members, relatives and friends of the Long Eaton Branch have hired a coach and attended this event at the Crich Tramway Village. Tony Bryan who organises the 1940's Re-enactors Group came to a Branch meeting early in 2004 to tell us of their activities. The 1940's Re-enactors Group has one mission – to remind people of the sacrifices of the generation, Service and Civilian who were caught up in the Second World War. They travel all over to different events with this message – they also remind people of those service personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Great War 1914-1918 and all the small wars since 1945.



**Tony Bryan in the uniform of a Warrant Officer of the Corps of Military Police - 53rd (Welsh) Division 1940's**  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010

Tony has never served in the armed forces and has learned his drill from those in the group who have. Tony is now a member of the Branch and is a keen collector at Poppy Appeal time with his wife. His jeep is displayed at Tesco and on Poppy Day at the Long Eaton War Memorial while he is collecting.

The re-enactors always have a parade down the main avenue from the Bowes-Lyon Bridge (the bridge in the background of the picture above) to Town End and Tony wondered if we would join the other Veterans and march on the parade. Those who were unable to march could ride in Jeeps. Every year we take part in this parade with our Branch Standard and other Veterans.

During the day there is all sorts of things to do such as take a tram ride, visit the tram exhibition halls which have just been revamped so now you start at the 1870's and work your way round to the 1960's when trams were withdrawn from our towns and cities and view the workshop from a balcony.

A look around the tents and stalls selling mostly 1940's ladies and gents civilian clothes and uniforms British and American, military badges etc. is worth doing, visit the re-enactors putting on an ENSA concert in the tramshed and there are always plenty of vintage cars, motorbikes and military vehicles to take a look at. Have a drink or a meal in the Red Lion or a cup of tea and a snack in the "British Restaurant".



**Branch Member Terry Lewis as a Colonel in the US 82nd Airborne Division**  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010



**Branch President Colin Harrison in front of Sheffield horse drawn tramcar no.15 (1874)**  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010



**The terminus at Townend**  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010



Looking up the main street towards Bowes-Lyon Bridge from Townend  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010



The Red Lion  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010



Tony Bryan's jeep, Bristol single decker bus and Berlin Tramcar No. 3006 (1969) at the crossroads by the public entrance to the Tramway Village looking towards Crich Stand.  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010

The Berlin Tramcar No. 3006 has a lift and was purchased so people in a wheelchair or those with mobility difficulties could experience a tram ride as all the other trams were built in less enlighten times.

About 4.30 pm a short service is held in the Tram Yard near the sheds. Each year it is dedicated to whatever anniversary is being commemorated. This year it was VJ Day 15<sup>th</sup> August and the formal ending of the Second World War on the 2nd September with the signing of the Japanese surrender on board the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.



Ready to march off parade at the end of the service  
Editor's picture 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010

To the left of the picture above is a small contingent of French reserve soldiers who in their spare time are re-enactors in France. The re-enactors come from all over France and do it to the memory of the regiments in the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division. They were in Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Black Watch and Gordon Highlanders uniforms. Our Branch Standard Bearer who is also Deputy County Standard Bearer Kevin Townend can be seen with the Standard Bearer of the 1940's Re-enactors Group in Home Guard uniform carrying the Union Jack (Flag).

**John P. Irwin, Secretary and Treasurer  
Long Eaton Branch RBL**

**The Derbyshire Legion**