

**PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL**

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021**

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

**The following notice of motion has been received, in accordance with Standing Order 19.**

**Motion from *Councillor John Fox***

**Seconded by *Councillor Mohammed Farooq***

“Council resolves:

That we, the Members of Peterborough City Council, assembled in accordance with Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 acknowledge the eminent service rendered to the City by Peterborough Branch of Royal British Legion.

In May 1921 The British Legion was formed, bringing together four national organisations of ex-Servicemen that had established themselves to support those who had suffered as a result of service during the First World War. The Peterborough Branch was formed a month later on 27<sup>th</sup> June, and for 100 consecutive years has been supporting the local Armed Forces community; remembering those who have served and sacrificed during two world wars and subsequent conflicts.

A key moment for the Branch was the opening ceremony of the club house at Thorpe Lawn in 1921. General Lord Horne cut barbed wire to enter the club with cutters that were used through the war by General Strong. Lord Horne praised the Northamptonshire fighting men for their spirit and encouraged the public to support the club and the British Legion.

One of the highlights of the Branch’s history was the opening of Haig Hall on 6th March 1931; and this building exists today and is home to Peterborough City College; with a memorial stone placed in the foyer referencing the building’s origins.

Over the years, the Branch has contributed towards four War Memorials. The first was the Peterborough & District War Memorial Hospital that opened in 1928.

The second Memorial was on Bridge Street and was in use from 1986 until 1995 when it was replaced by the third Memorial located on the north side of the Cathedral Grounds.

In 2012 the Branch raised funds for the construction of the current War Memorial on Bridge Street. This memorial, in a prominent position, is the one used today by the Branch and the local community to commemorate anniversaries and remember all those who served and sacrificed to defend our freedom. It has become the centrepiece for civic occasions.

The Royal British Legion is the Custodian of Remembrance and is best known for it’s annual Poppy Appeal. In recent years Branch Members have managed to increase the amount of funds raised to support the Poppy Appeal and in 2018-2019 they raised an incredible £141,883.29. Over the years, the Branch has been extremely fortunate to have had lots of dedicated volunteers, a tribute should be paid to all of them. The logistical challenges are huge but they are ultimately raising funds for the welfare of our servicemen and women, and veterans.

The Branch is always represented at Civic occasions, for Remembrance Day, VE Day and VJ Day. But, as you would expect, Peterborough has a couple of unique events that attract attention from outside the City. Indeed, one of them from the other side of the World. Among those remembered is the 'lonely Anzac' Sergeant Hunter, an Australian soldier who was neither born, nor lived in Peterborough but after being injured during WW1 he sadly died in the area in 1916 and is buried in the Broadway Cemetery. The Branch also remembers the role that animals played during the Great War, with Jimmy the Donkey, buried in Central Park. Jimmy, a decorated donkey, was born on The Somme. He was retired to Peterborough after the war and was loved by soldiers as well as civilians.

In recognition of the above, WE DO HEREBY CONFER the honorary Freedom of the City upon Royal British Legion (Peterborough), of Peterborough."