



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



1968 is the only year since 1945 when no British Serviceman was killed. Quite a startling fact seeing that we have been at 'peace' for 64 years.

Some of you reading this have never known anything else other than peacetime. Many will remember the war years, the disasters, heartaches, triumphs and final victory.

But let's go back a few years further. 1918 saw the end of The War to End All Wars. In 1919 a memorial made from wood and plaster was erected in London to all those who had died and the first Remembrance Service was held. King George V laid the first wreath. The Cenotaph as we know it today was unveiled a year later on November 11 1920 when the cortege carrying the coffin of the Unknown Warrior passed by on its way for burial at Westminster Abbey.

Nearly 90 years later in November 2008, Henry Allingham (112), Harry Patch (110) and Bill Stone (108), the last three remaining WW1 veterans attended the service in Whitehall. Every year since 1921, except for the years of WW2, on the Sunday nearest to 11 November country-wide Remembrance Services have been held at 11.00 am and The Royal British Legion always plays a major part.

The Legion was created in 1921 to help those servicemen from the First World War and their families who were in difficulty and the red poppy became its symbol. Today The Royal British Legion has over 380,000 members and still carries on with the work begun in 1921, caring for British families and servicemen killed or wounded physically or mentally in conflicts around the world. Successive Governments have not been as helpful as they might have been in this regard and hardship amongst ex-servicemen still exists. The Legion is instrumental in helping to plug the gap with practical help and financial support.

The Kelsall and District Branch of The Royal British Legion is a small branch and, because of its aging membership, almost each year becomes smaller. Its 34 dedicated members plus the Poppy appeal collectors are concerned that over the next few years the Branch will close down. Not all its members are ex-service nor is it a requirement of membership to have been in the armed services. But all of us who have enjoyed living in a reasonably peaceful and prosperous country owe a great debt of gratitude to those who fought and died to keep us free.



LEGION VALUES.

- Reflection - Through Remembrance of past sacrifice in the cause of freedom.
- Hope - By remembering the past, a younger generation has the chance of a better future.
- Comradeship - Through shared experience and mutual support.
- Selflessness - By putting others first.
- Service - To those in need and in support of the whole community.

If you believe in these values and the work of The Legion, if you have just a little time to spare please join your local Kelsall and District Branch and help make a difference. You can find out more by logging on to The Royal British Legion web site or better still by calling Branch Secretary Don Barden on 01829 751055.