

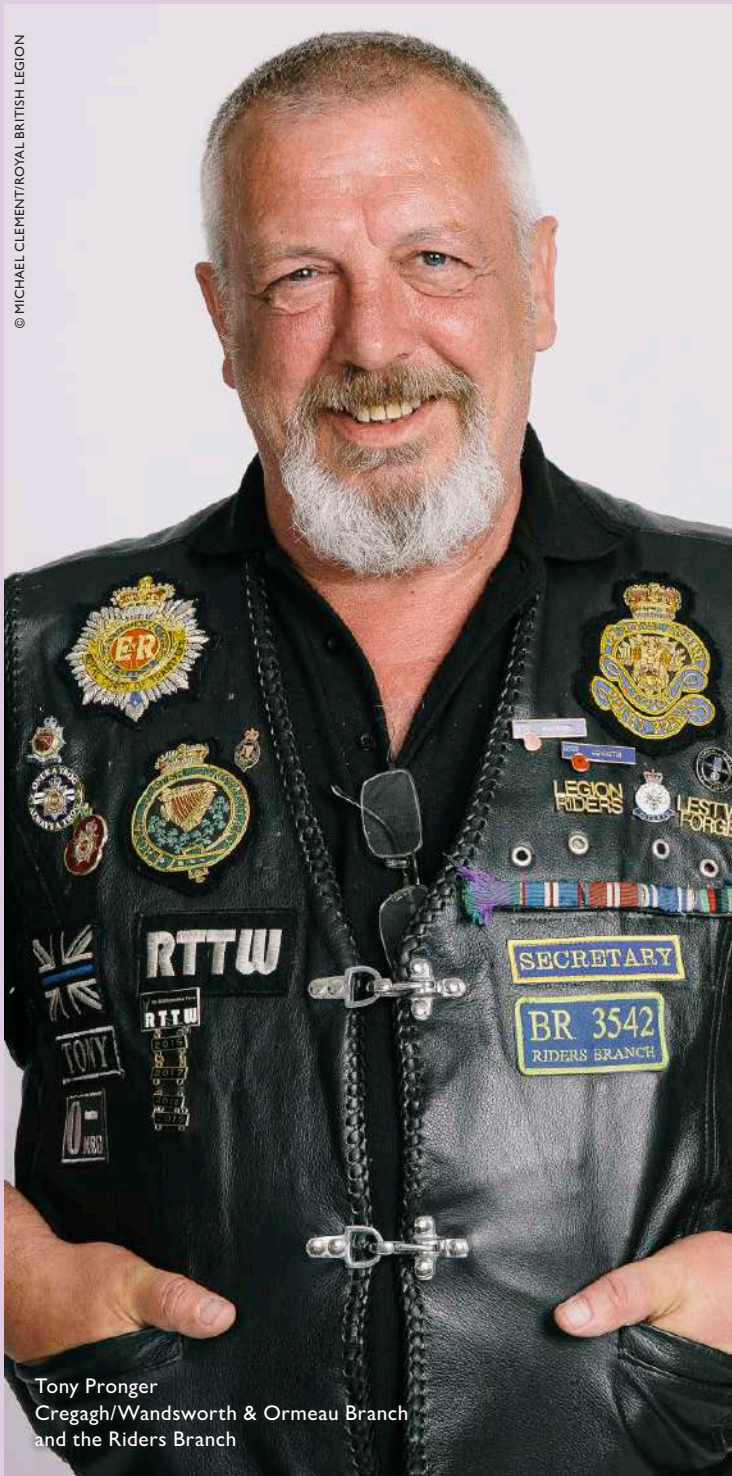


Making Remembrance Happen

Organising Remembrance activities
for your community



Susan and Amy Parke (mother and daughter)
Women's Section



Tony Pronger
Cregagh/Wandsworth & Ormeau Branch
and the Riders Branch



Sam Carruthers
Old Catton Branch, Youth Member



Steve Lewis
Membership Council Representative

Your part in Remembrance

As a valued Member, you are our messengers of Remembrance, with your local branch acting as an important focal point for social activity and support.

Every year, you do amazing things to advance our meaningful work to provide lifelong support to serving and ex-serving personnel and their families. You have knowledge and understanding of how to honour all those who serve to defend our freedoms and way of life. Together, in every Act of Remembrance, we pay tribute to the special contribution of individuals, honour the memory of the fallen and pledge to care for the living.

As part of our vital support network, your dedication and commitment are acknowledged and appreciated. Without you, our national Remembrance messaging wouldn't reach as far and as wide as it does today.

However, we want to do more. And we need your help to make a wider impact.

This guide contains many ideas for engaging your community with Remembrance to commemorate lives lost and service given. We hope you find this guide helpful – whether you are an experienced RBL Member or entirely new to organising Remembrance events.

We have another helpful guide called '**Connecting with Remembrance**', which explains the meaning of Remembrance, how we remember today and why it's important to continue to do so. It contains valuable information and stories of service that will help you communicate messages of Remembrance to a wide variety of community groups.

[Click here to access Connecting with Remembrance](#)

Engaging your community in Remembrance


Remembrance allows people to remember those who fought and lost their lives. It is a time to honour the Armed Forces community who have served and sacrificed to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life.

However, the number of recruits for the Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy is in decline. Consequently, fewer people have a direct connection and understanding of military service.

When you talk to others about Remembrance, you may find their reasons for taking part are not solely focused on military service. Therefore, it's necessary to acknowledge that the thoughts, feelings and attitudes of people in your community may differ from your interpretation of Remembrance. People's ideas of service could be associated with the Emergency Services, volunteer groups or civilian tragedies due to natural disasters or acts of terrorism.

Therefore, if people remember for different reasons, you can create a programme of events incorporating Acts of Remembrance that honours people in all forms of service. In all contexts, Remembrance presents people with an opportunity to pause, reflect, honour and give thanks to friends, family members and peers who gave their lives in any kind of service that seeks to defend our democratic freedoms.

You should aim to unite people across faiths, cultures and backgrounds as Members and non-Members collectively commemorate lives lost and celebrate the lives of people in active service.



RBL Member Isobel Harling, 95, who has been tending the graves of service men and women since the Second World War is greeted during Scotland's first multi-faith Remembrance service for British Indian Army soldiers at Kingussie Cemetery in Badenoch, the Highlands.



Muslim pupils from Eden Girls' School in Waltham Forest attend the two minute silence on Remembrance Day

Extending open invitations

You can open your events up to new audiences by reminding people why it's important to participate in Remembrance. Encouraging people to remember all who serve to defend the freedom and democracy of the United Kingdom will help you create inclusive events and activity programmes.

As England hosted the Commonwealth Games this year, it is inspiring to see how people from across Commonwealth nations engage with Remembrance. Many people from Commonwealth countries, including in Africa, the Caribbean, Fiji and non-Commonwealth nations such as Nepal, and Muslim and Sikh communities have served alongside the British Armed forces throughout many conflicts.

Your local community could include people of Commonwealth descent. Consequently, we should acknowledge their presence and appropriately represent their ancestors who fought for Britain while recognising the people who serve today.

Looking outward and talking to individuals and groups you've not spoken to creates a space for new conversations about Remembrance. There are a few different talking points you could discuss. For example, is the same symbolism used to honour the fallen? By making connections and building new relationships, it's possible to develop new perspectives of service and sacrifice that represent every type of service we see today.

When thinking of all the different ways people serve, our hope is for all community groups to come together to honour the men and women who serve, sacrifice and stand ready to face today's challenges.



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Embracing the future of Remembrance

Engaging young people with Remembrance is an integral part of our work. Creating affiliations with Schools, Cadets, Scouts and Girl Guiding, we actively encourage the teaching of Remembrance across the UK. Our teaching resources focus on connecting children with how we have remembered in the past, how we honour those in active service today, and what we can do to ensure that service and sacrifice continues to be recognised into the future.

As we pass the mantle of Remembrance from this generation to the next, we should embrace the enthusiasm and interest shown by children. One way to do this is to reach out to schools, associations and youth groups to see if you can offer guidance around the concept of Remembrance and support them in organising Acts of Remembrance.

Remember, we have a vast library of free teaching resources. They are packed with lesson plans, activities and information for different ages that you can download from the link below.

[Click here to see all our learning resources](#)

If your branch is not already connecting and developing relationships with schools and community youth groups, starting a conversation with them can be an excellent way to encourage youth participation in Remembrance.

Poppy Railton is a local collector in the Cambridgeshire area. Every year, Poppy helps raise money for the Appeal by distributing poppies at her school and around her neighbourhood. She is named 'Poppy' in honour of two serving relatives who died in the First World War.



Organising events

You've been involved with organising and delivering Remembrance events for many years. Some branches have excelled at bringing their local community together to support Remembrance and our work. We are proud of your support and want to thank you for your continuing commitment, hard work and effort.

As we look ahead, we can see how changing perceptions of Remembrance can impact planning. With this in mind, we want to equip you with ideas that help people find ways to remember in their own unique way. Your aim should be to make all community and branch Members feel welcome and represented in any Act of Remembrance you organise or contribute to.



Sir Michael Morpurgo reading his book 'Poppy Fields' to local school children, after a tour of the Poppy Factory in Richmond, 2018.



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Creating new ways to Remember

We have created a new Remembrance Glade in partnership with the National Memorial Arboretum. Nestled in woodlands within the grounds of the Arboretum, the Glade is a tranquil space for families, individuals, schools, community groups and others to think about what Remembrance means to them.

Using symbolic forms, plants and trees, we purposefully created a safe space for quiet contemplation of service and sacrifice. People can sit quietly in the Glade with their thoughts as they reflect and remember a person, event or a certain period of time.



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Amersham Garden of Remembrance in Buckinghamshire. A depiction of Albert Ball's SE5A fighter aircraft from World War One.

Garden craft ideas

Using garden crafts can be a great way of making a Remembrance garden when people have little access to garden materials or a large amount of space. The design can be very personal, allowing people to embrace the idea of Remembrance in a meaningful way. We've suggested these particular activities as they don't require a lot of time or resources.

- **Paper plate poppies**
- **Make a nature mobile**
- **Hope butterflies**
- **Shoebbox garden**
- **Flowerpots and containers**

These small acts and simple ideas are also an excellent way to teach Remembrance to children using sensory activities.

Wildflower gardens are also a great way to grow flowers, encourage wildlife into the garden and create a space for Remembrance. You don't need big spaces, just a patch where flowers will have room to grow. Plus, wildflower gardens don't need much looking after and can brighten up an unused patch of ground in communal areas. You can ask people to sow wildflowers in large earth patches or containers if space is an issue. Using flowers that represent themes of Remembrance (such as poppies, for example) will allow you to add appropriate symbolism.



Another idea is to create artwork for a garden by making a garden feature that will help others think about Remembrance. The only caveat is that any materials used must be waterproof and durable, so it lasts some time. You may also wish to encourage the use of wildlife-friendly and sustainable materials.

You'll find detailed step-by-step instructions for all these activities in our guide: 'Tips for growing your Remembrance'.

[Click here to access
Tips for growing your Remembrance](#)



Teaching Remembrance Day held at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.



Teaching Remembrance Day held at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

Other Remembrance activity ideas

Not everyone is a keen gardener, but there are other Acts of Remembrance that people can get involved with. We've included some ideas to help you brainstorm new or additional Acts of Remembrance.

Encouraging youth participation

When developing our teaching resources, we've seen how keen young people are to be involved with Remembrance. You and others can use and share our 'Teaching Remembrance' resources with schools, association and youth groups.

Over the years, teachers have encouraged creative writing and poetry competitions based on the theme of Remembrance. Youth and association group leaders use the resources to develop a positive narrative around the idea of Remembrance with children of different ages. Consequently, we see many Cadets, Scout Clubs and Girl Guides wanting to parade, help with Poppy Appeal collections and create special Remembrance areas.



To mark the 50th anniversary of Galanos House RBL Care Home, Southam College worked in partnership with RBL to break the Guinness World Record for the largest human flower.



Wider community activities

Your activities and events should enable Members and non-Members to engage with various Acts of Remembrance. You can do this in many ways, from developing activities with care homes, dementia groups and hospitals to holding regular coffee and cake mornings in popular gathering places.

In addition, some Members have created poppy trails that take people to significant places of interest. To take this one step further, avid researchers amongst you could discover and tell the stories of fallen service personnel in a commemorative guide or as an exhibition.

In contrast, people might like to compose a letter to active personnel in the Armed Forces, Emergency Services or civilian volunteer groups to thank them for their service or to find out what it's like to serve in a particular way. Other writing activities include writing a 'thinking of you' journal, which could take the form of a deeply-personal or a collective wider-community endeavour.

Members are increasingly embracing their craft skills to create symbolism that honours Remembrance, from weaving huge poppy displays that drape over bridges and buildings to painting and hiding memorial rocks. Crafting is often a social activity that brings people from different communities together.

For people who don't mind travelling, you can organise a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum, the Nation's year-round place to remember. Individuals, families and groups from your community can discover an array of memorials, walk along the river, view the grounds from a land train, listen to a memorial talk or attend exhibitions. You may want to coincide your visit with any one of the many events the Arboretum holds throughout the year.



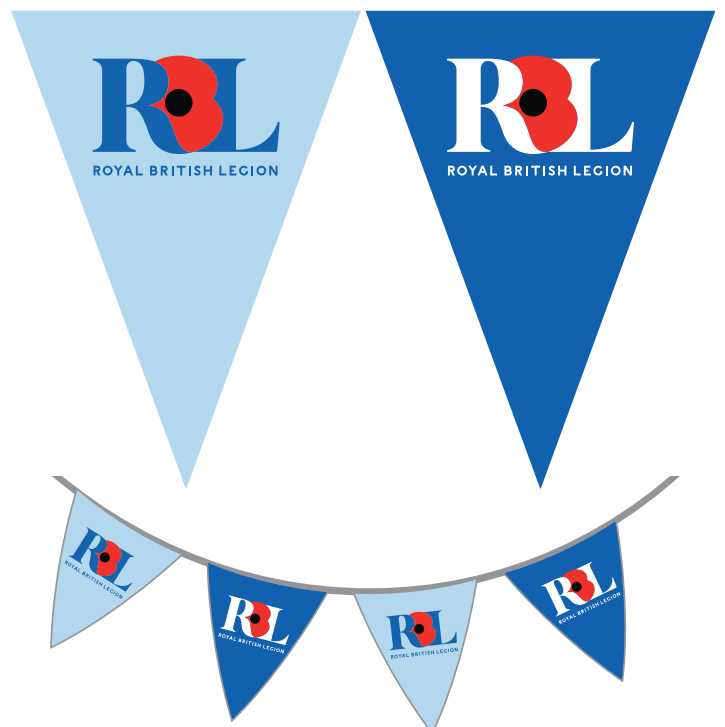
Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire Young People's Poppy Award

RBL Resources

You can download several resources from our website, including teaching resources and service case studies. You can also access guidelines that show you how to incorporate our new RBL branding within any resources that you wish to develop to support your Remembrance event from the Members Brand Page. To save time, we also have created print-ready files and templates for you to download from the Brand page.

[Click here for Members' Brand Page](#)

We hope you find our resource packs helpful. If you have any further questions, please contact us Remembrance@britishlegion.org.uk





Share your Remembrance stories with us

Please share your Remembrance experiences with us. Send your stories and photographs to:

Remembrance@britishlegion.org.uk

Thank you for your continued support. Whether you are a keen Member, a fundraiser, a volunteer or a proud Poppy Appeal collector – however you choose to support us, we couldn't do what we do without you.



