

Veterans Day

Keeping you informed

Newsletter
Volume 1, Issue 1
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Special Interest Articles:

- Spotlight on Cardiff



- Who is a Veteran?



- HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge.

Veterans Day 2007 In the heart of the community

Welcome to the first edition of the Veterans Day newsletter, designed to keep you informed about Veterans Day events around the UK for 2007.

Plans for the first ever Veterans Day was announced by the Government at the end of January 2006. A small team from the Ministry of Defence were charged with organising a national event and helping communities to arrange regional events. We were delighted that the concept of Veterans Day proved so popular and resulted in over 200 events around the UK as well as a national event in London. Of the 200

regional events nearly 160 were organised by Ex-Service organisations, twenty by local councils, eight by MP's and seventy by community groups and schools. We are hoping in 2007 to build on this marvellous start and generate enthusiasm to support Veterans Day in other communities and in regions not so well represented in 2006.

Publicity

The Veterans Agency (VA) website www.veteransagency.mod.uk will include standard templates which you can use to advertise your local event. We also strongly encourage all organisers to place the details of their event

Veterans Day Event Criteria

A Basic Guide

As was the case in 2006 significant funding will be allocated to help support regional events, both large and small who meet the criteria. Full details of the funding criteria, together with the application form will be available on the Veterans Agency website

www.veteransagency.mod.uk from 15 December. In summary events must:

1. Promote Veterans and the contribution they have made, and

continue to make to our nation and your local community.

2. Promote the support available to Veterans through Government, charity and voluntary organisations.

3. Involve the whole veteran's community, which is diverse in both background and age. Events should not be restricted to one era, such as just the Second World War.

4. Engage youth of the community through schools and youth groups.



on the VA's Calendar of Events. This not only allows users of the website to note the details of your event but also provides a central resource from which we can monitor the number and geographical spread of events.

Falklands

2007 sees the 25th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict. In London there will be major events from the 14 - 17 June. Although these will be separate from Veterans Day events clearly there will be many veterans attending and it is intended that the occasion will be used to spread the key Veterans Day messages. There is no problem if local communities want to combine events for Veterans Day and the Falklands anniversary providing organisers try and balance their events to appeal to all Veterans, no matter what era they served.

Spotlight on Cardiff – The First Event



“Over 330,000 H.M. Armed Forces Veterans Badges have been distributed so far to Veterans who have served up to 31 December 1969”

Cardiff marked Wales’s official event on June 10 2006 as part of 160 (Wales) Brigade ‘Beating Retreat’ ceremony. Capt. (ret) Dave Morris, event coordinator, set about organising the first major event in the UK at the Roald Dahl Plas, Cardiff Bay. The event was a family friendly free admission programme with lots to see and do for all ages. Apart from 160 (Wales) Brigade and 104 Regiment RA (V), there were displays from other army units, the RAF and Royal Navy.



“The first badge was presented on the 1 April 2005. On average over 18,000 badges are applied for each month.”

Living History
Vehicles from the Military Vehicle Trust and the Pegasus Collection provided a living history lesson and there were displays from welfare organisations. Tri service cadet forces were on display and offered help and assistance to elderly veterans who attended the event. A full programme of ceremonial

and social events ensured a good turn out of veterans and the general public including the presentation of HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge to over 70 ex-service men and women.

Events for 2007

Plans are already under way for events in Wales to mark Veterans Day for 2007. Although Cardiff will again host a major event, planners are in discussion with Caernarfon to host an event in the town on 14 July 2007. The planned date for the Cardiff event is 16 June 2007 commencing at 12 noon with a Royal Salute from the Pier Head. Displays from various groups and the Veterans Agency will

be on show in the Roald Dahl Plas with a varied programme of entertainment from military and youth bands to re-enactors and male voice choirs. It is hoped a Royal Navy warship will be included in the events. Catering facilities for visitors will be readily available and an early evening garden party is being planned. Veterans, cadets and the public will be invited to attend a drumhead service, march past and salute. The event has the full backing of the Welsh Assembly and Cardiff City Council.

Details of the organisers will be available in later issues.



HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge.

Since it was introduced in May 2004, the free HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge has proved highly popular with over 330,000 badges issued to date. Eligibility was initially restricted for practical reasons to veterans of WWI and WWII. Since then eligibility has been gradually extended, most recently on 8 November 2006, to all veterans who saw service at any time prior to the end of 1969 and a further programme of extensions has been approved to ensure that all veterans are entitled to a badge within the shortest practical timescale. A separate badge, based on the HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge, was introduced in June 2006 for merchant seamen and fishermen who facilitated military operations. It is called the UK Merchant Seafarers Veteran's Badge.

Who is a Veteran?

The term 'veteran' is used to mean all those who have served in the HM Armed Forces (whether Regular or Reserve). This group has been commonly known as ex-Service personnel. The term veteran also includes their widows/widowers and their dependants as part of the veterans' community. As well as all members of the Armed Forces the term veteran also, exceptionally, includes those members of the Merchant Navy who played a vital role in legally defined military operations. The veterans' community is therefore a wide and disparate population, estimated to be over 10 million people in the UK

The HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge is restricted to those mentioned above who survived their service to the country or, where appropriate, those war widow/ers who are in receipt of a war widow/ers pension because their spouse met the eligibility criteria and died as a result of illness or injury attributable to their service. The badge is not awarded posthumously.

The Arctic Emblem

The Arctic Emblem has been specially commissioned to commemorate the service of Merchant Seamen and members of the Armed Forces who served north of the Arctic Circle and west of the Urals between 3 September 1939 and 8 May 1945.



"In the first month since its inception, over 5,000 Arctic Emblems have been presented."

For full details of the HM Armed Forces veteran's Badge and how to apply for it please visit the Veterans Agency website:

http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk/vets_badge/vets_badge.htm

For full details of the UK Merchant Seafarers Veteran's Badge and how to apply for it visit the Veterans Agency website:

http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk/vets_badge/merchant.html

Alternatively you can contact the Veterans Agency on freephone 0800 169 2277.



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Veterans Agency - Helpline

Did you know.....

The Veterans Agency Helpline can be contacted on the freephone number 0800 169 2277 or 0800 169 3458 for Minicom users or +44 1253 866043 for overseas callers.

Veterans Agency Helpline is open from 08:15 to 17:15 Monday to Thursday and 08:15 to 16:30 on Fridays and offers general help and

advice not only to veterans but to their relations, friends and professional advisers.

The Helpline deals with a wide variety of veteran's issues, including War Pensions, the Armed Forces Pension Scheme, service pensions, The HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge and UK Merchant Seafarers Veterans Badge etc.

Personnel have access to a large list of contacts and ex-service organisations that callers can be referred to for further help and advice.

The UK based Helpline takes approximately 1500 calls per day and we aim to answer the majority of calls within an average of 20 seconds.

Mixing it with Kids...

One of the key successes in 2006 was the intergenerational activities that took place. Many event organisers went out of their way to visit schools and youth establishments. Blackpool and Torbay organised a local schools art competition and over 1,000 school children (aged 9 - 11) were guests of the Fylde Ex-Services Liaison Committee who entertained them with a documentary style video 'Going to the Flicks'.

Hull invited youth groups to

perform some of their skills in the cities event at East Park Drive. The local boxing clubs were the most popular.

In 2007 one of the key criteria to successfully securing MOD funding is the opportunity, which the Veterans Day event offers to engage with young people. It is not only important that children have a better understanding of what a veteran is and their role in society but it will also encourage them to want to attend the event you have planned.

