

**The following are notes taken at the County Chairman's Seminar held on Saturday
15 May 2010**

Dressed casually, the Chairman pointed out that the blazer and tie image of the Legion is not necessarily the right one. In other words, we must think carefully about how we are perceived by the public, particularly younger people.

The County Manager gave a presentation which covered the Legion's aims and achievements, how the money is spent, what the Legion in Devon is doing and projects to improve the image as well as plans for the 90th anniversary year of 2011.

We must take every opportunity to educate the public. He stressed the RBL helps those who **are serving** as well as those who **have served**, pointing out that H4H only provides assistance to service personnel post 9/11. Where possible, Branches and Clubs should fly the Union Flag at half mast whenever an operational fatality is announced and he urged use of the Cty website. Huge sums of money are raised from legacies, Legion raffles, fund raising and mail shots annually.

Devon Poppy Appeal total currently stands at £903,000 (£1M by September?).
2010 Launch a joint venture with Cornwall RBL at the Eden Project on 28 October.

There are now in Devon three Benefits and Money Advisors and a full-time Homeless and Vulnerable Officer. Help is given for Pension Tribunal Clinics, Legal Services and financial grants have been made for the Personnel Recovery Centres (matching H4H).

Finally, he paid special tribute to the Standard Bearers for their support. He also mentioned the Armed Forces Day events in Exeter and Plymouth on 27 June and hoped for full support from the County membership.

The seminar ended with closing remarks from the Cty Chairman who reminded everyone of the continuing fall in membership numbers (Nationally approx 4%, Devon about 3%, annually).

There is a serious need to raise the annual subscription to £17 or £18 in order to stabilize the General Fund.

New members must feel welcome and a greater effort made to recruit members amongst serving Armed Forces personnel. It is intended to establish RBL presence in barracks around the country and to include 'Comradeship' as part of the Charter's remit.

He urged members to make every effort to attend the 2011 National Conference in Telford when it will be recommended by Devon that the annual conference be abandoned and replaced by a more effective management structure.

Before outlining the plans for the 90th anniversary year, the Chairman emphasized the need for Club and Branch to be more interdependent and for members to under-pin what he would suggest is the 'Help Our Heroes' theme of the Legion.

Dates for 2011: Poppy Party 11-12 June; Poppy Concert at the O2 Arena London 10 September; Exeter Cathedral Concert 17 September.

Finally, he would like every Branch (94 in Devon) to try and organize an event in 2011 to raise £90,000 (collectively) and **keep the Legion very much in the public eye during the 90th anniversary year.**