

PENZANCE BRITISH LEGION MEETING

ONE OF PREMIER CORNISH UNITS

"We are living in difficult days, more difficult, perhaps, than the days of war," said Mr. W. J. Hichens (president), at the annual meeting of Penzance branch of the British Legion at the Club on Thursday night.

Penzance branch had a membership of well over 600; only two or three branches in Cornwall exceeded that number. There were many men in the district who could come into the branch and so make it the premier branch in the county.

In the county there were now 106 branches of the Legion, with a total membership of over 13,000. There were still thousands of Ex-Servicemen who were not members of the Legion; he thought the chief reason for that was that at the moment they were fed up with parades.

But he felt sure that once they had settled down in civilian life they would become members and contribute to the work of the Legion, which existed to remember those who died in the two great wars.

The Legion, too, had to look after those in need or who had been bereaved. They had also to help the country through the difficult days through which it was now passing.

Mr. Hichens paid tribute to the women's section of the branch which, although it had only been in existence for a year, was already very active.

Referring to certain criticisms, which had been levelled at the Legion for holding their Remembrance Day service in the Ritz cinema, Penzance. Mr. Hichens said: "We realise that people cannot appreciate a remembrance service unless they are Ex-Service personnel, or have been bereaved." If the cinema was going to be a rendezvous for future Remembrance services, they must be treated reverently and respectfully.

Mr. J. K. Hill (vice-chairman), presenting the financial statement in the absence of the hon. treasurer (Mr. F. G. Turner), said receipts amounted to £208 19s 6d. and expenditure to £214 0s. 1d., but they still had a credit balance at the bank of £153 5s. 10d.

Mr. Harry Bennett (secretary of the Services Benevolent Committee), said that during the year 156 needy cases had been dealt with, and £193 14s. had been paid out. They had received a cash grant from the Legion headquarters of £119.

The hon. secretary (Mr. A. C. Goddard), said it was now 26 years since the British Legion came into existence and it was more vital today than it ever was. At the present time the Legion was spending £1,000,000 in benevolent work, most of which came from Poppy Day collections, but it was now found that expenditure was outstripping income.

Poppy Day collections in Penzance this year amounted to £403 2s. 3d., an increase of 5s. 11d. over last year.

Mr. George Ford (chairman), praised the work of the president and said that the Legion was the greatest memorial to all those who gave their lives in the two world wars. He did not think the work of the Legion was sufficiently advertised, or that the public realised what a great job it was doing. He congratulated Mr. Goddard on what he had done for Ex-Servicemen, and thanked the committee on the way they had assisted him during his term of office.

Officers elected were: President, Mr. W. J. Hichens; chairman, Mr. F. G. Ford; vice-chairman, Mr. G. C. Gould-Porter; hon. secretary, Mr. C. Goddard; subscription secretary, Mr. C. Delabertouche; hon. treasurer, Mr. F. G. Turner.

Mr. W. Goldsworthy was elected standard-bearer for the twenty-first year.

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