Remembrance Service Held at Richmond US

A unique Civic Remembrance Service was held at Richmond Synagogue on 8 November, with a congregation approaching 200; bringing together leaders of a number of Service Charities; many different faiths as well as those of no faith, to commemorate those who lost their lives in the two World Wars.

The service was conducted by Rabbi, Major Reuben Livingstone; Jewish Chaplain to HM Forces, and was arranged by Robert Bieber vice president of Combat Stress.

The service was attended by, amongst others, The Rt. Hon. Dr Vince Cable MP, Zac Goldsmith MP, Cllr, Peter Bucknell, Deputy Mayor of Richmond; Lord True, Leader of the Council; Michael Barter and Melanie Waters, the CEOs of the Royal Star & Garter Homes and the RBL Poppy Factory; Chelsea Pensioners; Maj. Gen. Peter Currie, Mr. Rashid Laher and Mr. and Mrs. Ajit Singh, representing the Islamic Faith and Sikh Community, Monsignor Bill Saunders and Rev. Peter Hart as well as others from a number of Christian denominations.

A number of Jewish and non Jewish service and ex service men and women also attended including Brig. Simon Bell, Lt. Col. Simon Soskin, Maj. Danny Sharp; and Jeffrey Fox, Co National Chairman of AJEX.

Rabbi Livingstone's sermon drew together the threads of the week's Torah portion; highlighting the concept of Remembrance and Sacrifice, and in doing so he commented on the particular poignancy of the day, not only for those who had lost their lives in the World Wars to those who had been maimed in body and mind by their experiences in the many conflicts in which British Forces have been engaged.

Major, Rabbi Reuben Livingstone

Paul Lawrence conducted the Mussaf Service beautifully and War Poems were recited by three children of the community.

After the Service a presentation was made to the Mayor by Robert Bieber of ‘Lest we Forget; Remembrance and Commemoration’ which considers not only the role of the Cenotaph and the National Memorial Arboretum but considers such topics as Holocaust Memorial Day and the Hillsborough Disaster.

A strong theme throughout the service was the great debt of gratitude which the Jewish Community has for the British Armed Forces and how the Jewish Community has and still does form an important part of the Armed Forces.

In bringing together so many strands of British life an objective of the Service is to understand and communicate with each other so that man shall not again go to war.

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