

Hon Secretary Report 2025

As the British Solider Society stepped into 2025, we knew it would be a busy year from the start.

Preparations were well underway for celebrating our 90th year.

February saw our first official AGM by zoom, (although in 'lock down' we did hold a zoom AGM). It had been decided on the previous AGM that the cost of holding a physical meeting in a hall for a handful of members now seemed to be an unnecessary expense, and we would properly have more attend on a zoom meeting that face to face. This did prove successful and would now be our way of holding it, thank you for all who made the effort to log in and attend the AGM.

March arrived and we continued to prepare for our 90th year with the Annual show to be held in April.

We also held an auction with the remaining set of our late member Brian Maggs collection and a few items from the National collection. The auction was very successful.

April. The Annual Show time back in the Salvation Army Hall in Reading. Although we had lost the main car parking facility opposite the hall parking did not appear to be too big an issue. We had prepared lots of additional events for the actual day celebrations. All who came through the door, received a 90th show carrier bag along with goodies inside. I would like to thank the traders who contributed to the carrier bags, I believe this was a success and popular by all. At the entrance of the hall, we had BMSS merchandise for sale, mugs, key rings. All the children that attended also received a carrier bag and we were fortunate enough to have been given models from Airfix to go in them. Throughout the day we had a rolling slide show of previous Presidents, members of the committee and general pictures from shows & clubs. This was good and people were able to look and reflect on times. Again, we called in our own children and their other halves to help us on the day, at the door taking in your money and in the kitchen keeping the coffee and tea flowing, while cooking bacon and sausage rolls and home-made cakes. Thank you everyone we would not have been able to do it without you.

We had a special guest for the day John Schley from the IMSS giving a talk, this went down well and so John will be returning for our show in April 2026.

Unfortunately, our President Mark Gilbert was unable to attend and so Paul Vickers a previous President stood in and took the reigns for the day. He did a splendid job, and I would like to thank Paul for all he did on the day. In fact, such a great day that 5 of our members were given Fellowships. I was honoured to be one of the 5 to receive this award.

June. We had two new arrivals in our family. A baby boy Joseph, grandson number three and Luna Gioia our first granddaughter. Thankful of their safe arrival into the world.

September, Interbranch time.

Our thanks go to Terry O'Neil and his team for putting on an excellent Interbranch show. The areas reps were also able to get together and have a meeting, joined this year by our new rep, Jon Page who has kindly taken over the Norfolk and Suffolk branch after we lost Michael Creese. Thank you, Jon.

November – we held an auction in the Pimlico Hall. This was mainly the Societies National collection. Again, another successful event.

As always, I must thank all our area representatives up and down the country, for their time and hard work they put into the Society and looking after their local members.

I trust that 2026 will be a brighter time for us and we keep in good health, and as our 90th anniversary year closed may our 91st anniversary year be just as successful.