

Mayor's Report to Council (Budget)
17/2/16

Since my last report, our Mayoral invitations have been less, this is usual for the period around Christmas and New Year. We start getting much busier from the second week in February for the last three months of my Mayoral year. The calendar is already getting full with the usual variety of invitations.

The Ball at Lakeside was a great success, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Although as we had to hold it on a Tuesday, the numbers were not what we would have expected had there been the option to hold it at a weekend. By the time you read this we will have held our Valentine's Quiz, these are great fun and a good way to raise funds for our Community Chest. We meet with the Havant and Hayling Lions Clubs regularly, as monies are raised they are then distributed to good causes with The Borough.

On Monday 1st February, the list of names to be added to the St Faith's War Memorial were given to our Estates Dept. The engraving of the two plaques will take 2-3 weeks, but Estates have asked for the extra time to ensure all is in place for the Service of Dedication. This will be at 11.15 am on Sunday 13th March at St Faith's Church. I met with Canon Rev Tom Kennar on Wednesday 3rd February to discuss the content of the service. He really is so supportive and understands exactly the service we would like.

I am so very grateful for the help that we have had since the list of names were published and planning consent was granted. The abbreviation of ranks has been especially confusing, thank goodness I have had the expertise of Naval Officers to call on. I must mention Cllr Rivka Cresswell and her husband Barney. With Barney's link to SSAFA, they have worked tirelessly to help with the search for relatives. I must also thank the members of The Havant History Group who have also been helping to trace relatives and looking at the ranks for us. It has been a source of frustration that the National Agencies do sometimes have conflicting information. We have checked and rechecked, in the case of one poor young man even his gravestone has a wrong name. Only one letter wrong but this made a totally different name.

This is of course will be a Civic Service which I envisage to be one concentrating on the Havant Borough and the families of Our Fallen. We are writing to the service organisations of each Serviceman inviting a representative to attend and of course to members of the RBL and SSAFA. We are hoping to have some of the families present on the day.

The Mayor's Blog has now been looked at by 69 countries across the world. I would love to know why the interest by a resident of Swaziland? The Mayoress of Gosport has been saving me our press cuttings, bless her. I do seem to have had a great deal of publicity this year. All good so far I hasten to add.

We have now had our third Royal Visit to the Borough in my Mayoral year. I did ask the Lord Lieutenant last week whether we might have another, he replied, "perhaps" Intriguing.

Andy and I very much look forward to the next three months, then after that a holiday!