

War Widow's Association of Great Britain



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WWA Objectives

The objectives of the Association are to improve the conditions of War Widows and their dependants in Great Britain and elsewhere. To meet these aims the Association publishes a newsletter "Courage", holds regular meetings with ministers and pension authorities. It maintains close links with other ex-Service organisations and works closely with the newly formed Service widows associations. It ensures that War Widows are represented at national events of remembrance and petitions for improvements in both pensions and administration of benefits.

WWA Members

The Association has 2 types of membership.

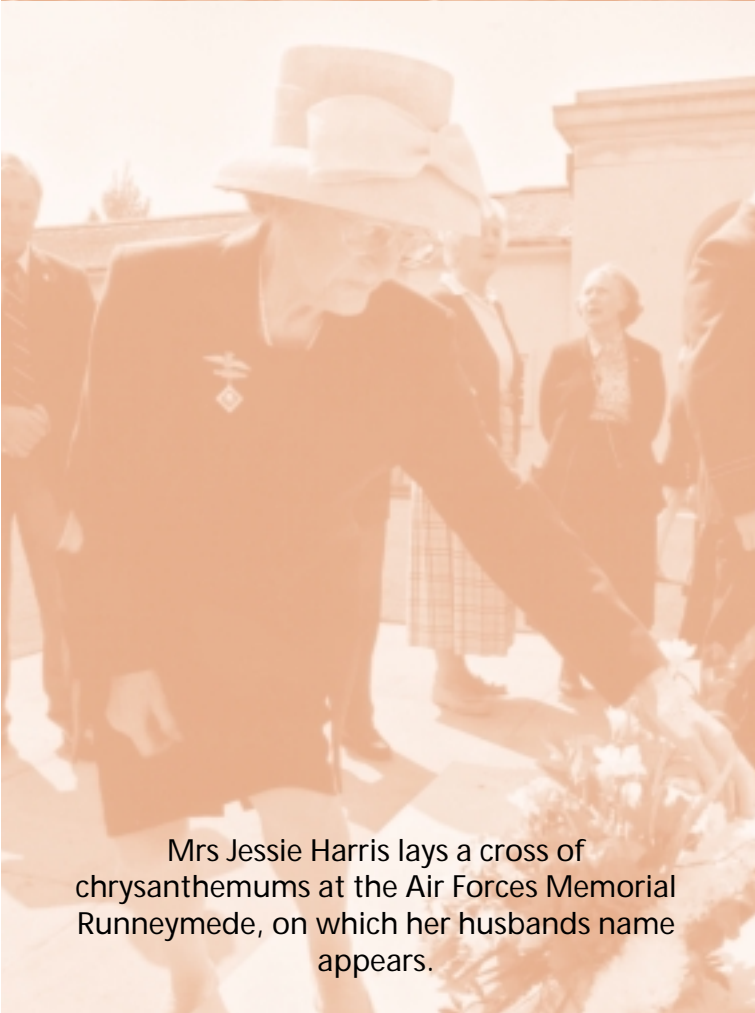
Full members are ladies who are, or have been, in receipt of a War Widows or War Widowers Pension. Associate members are anyone supporting the aims and objectives of the Association. Within this category, widows of Service personnel who are not in receipt of a War Widows Pension are especially welcome.

WWA Information

For more information about War Widow's Association or how to join the Association please ring our national telephone number or write to the address shown on the front of this leaflet.



Members of the Association assemble at "Horseguards" on Remembrance Sunday.



Mrs Jessie Harris lays a cross of chrysanthemums at the Air Forces Memorial Runnymede, on which her husband's name appears.

WWA History

In 1971 an article in a Sunday newspaper highlighted the plight of Britain's forgotten women. Mrs Laura Connelly had returned to Britain from Australia to find herself facing bankruptcy proceedings by the inland Revenue. Her crime had been that in Australia a war widows pension was paid tax free, but it was not in this Country, and on her return she refused to pay. Fourteen ladies wrote in support of her plight, and at their first meeting in the Lyons Café near the Houses of Parliament undertook to form an Association to fight for the removal of the burden of tax from the pension. The Association was constituted in 1972 with Mrs Jill Gee as the first Chairman. They worked long and hard and achieved partial success with 50% of the tax being removed in 1976, and the remainder going in 1979. From these small beginnings much has been achieved, and today membership stands at over 5000.

Membership of the Association costs £10 for life membership and so the Association relies upon the financial support of the ex Service community and organisations to carry out its work.

It became a registered Charity in 1991.

WWA Achievements

Since that early success the Association has had many other notable achievements:

- Removal of income tax liability from the War Widows Pension.
- Extra Age Allowance for War Widows.
- An improved pension for pre-1973 War Widows.
- The disregard of this addition to the pension for benefit purposes.
- The reinstatement of pension to War Widows on cessation of second or subsequent marriage.
- The renewal of opportunity for War Widows to visit the grave of their husband at 1/8th cost through sponsored pilgrimages.
- The retention of the attributable MOD Occupational pension on remarriage.

WWA Events

The Association holds 2 major events each year. The Annual General Meeting is held in April, at a different location each year. For example:

1997 Bournemouth

1998 London

1999 Perth

2000 Liverpool

2001 Folkestone

A special package is negotiated with a hotel to enable members to stay in the area for a few days and enjoy a number of other events and excursions.

In November the Association plays a key role in the events of Remembrance Weekend. War widows attend the Garden of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on the Thursday, and hold their own service of dedication at the Cenotaph on the Saturday. This is followed by a formal lunch in central London. Representatives of the Association appear in the Albert Hall later that evening and the Association participates in the march past at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday.

Details of these events are listed in our newsletter "Courage", which is published 3 times a year.