



The Editor Writes

The wreaths have been reverently laid, the crosses in the Field of Remembrance returned to store and we await to learn if the Poppy Appeal target has been achieved. And all those who have contributed so much effort can enjoy a well-earned rest.

This pictorial edition of In Touch features aspects of this year's Remembrancetide and Poppy Appeal activities. It is dedicated to the army of willing volunteers to whom, surely, we all owe our grateful thanks.

Looking ahead to the next edition, I am relying upon you to let me have your Christmassy anecdotes - funny or serious, peacetime or war - and anonymous if you wish. Phone calls, letters, emails, all will be welcome (my details are on the cover). Don't let me down, please!

The Annual General Meeting 2004 The Chairman's Report

I am not going to thank each individual this year as most of us here tonight are aware of those Members who have devoted so much of their time to making a success of our Branch. For a number of reasons, we are the envy of many other Branches in the County and, indeed, much further afield.

It goes without saying that the success of any Branch depends upon the enthusiasm and effort put in by its Members. Good teamwork is essential to the successful operation of any organisation and, in this respect, we are extremely fortunate, as the following list will show.

The Poppy Appeal Team

Distributors, door-to-door and street collectors, cash tellers, and many others.

The Welfare Team

Caseworkers and other helpers providing an essential service in the Community.



Poppy Appeal Activities

A Familiar Figure

Gary Farnsworth on duty at the Appeal stand in the Market Hall.



Branch Members and friends enjoying the Poppy Appeal Gala Night in the Harborough Theatre on 8th November.



The Harborough Band in full flow at the Remembrance Concert in the Methodist Church on 13th November.



Poppy Patrol personnel prepare to penetrate purses and pockets.



Army Cadets on parade to help distribute Town Centre retailer supplies.



A prime Town Centre site for the Poppy Appeal window display.



Smiles all round as the Poppy Patrollers receive a final briefing from Tom Ashmore.



Welcome Christmas - Navy-style. A grand dance and buffet will be held in the Conservative Club on Saturday, 4th December from 8pm. A great evening is in prospect - and all for a fiver! Call Pat Middleton as soon as possible on 01858 445827 to reserve tickets.

Branch Christmas Lunch. Although we have recently been restricted in the number of diners who can be accommodated at the Angel Hotel, happily no such limitation will apply on Tuesday, 14th December, when our Christmas lunch will take place. So, for this festive occasion, it is a case of the more the merrier! Those Members who would like to join the party, or any other event, but have difficulty travelling into town should let Vida Edwards or Betty Ramsay know (see front cover) and every effort will be made to arrange transport for you. Further details from Joan McMillin on MH 462143.

Cover Photograph. George Fleming dips the standard in salute after Jim Osborne laid a wreath on the memorial in Welland Park on 11th November.

Membership Directory

Please note the following amendments:

We are delighted to welcome these new members:

01858 431014 French Mr W D (William) 2 Sutton Road, Great Bowden, Market Harborough LE16 7EY.

01858 545560 Walker Mrs P (Patricia) Langton Hall Farm, West Langton, Market Harborough LE16 7TZ.

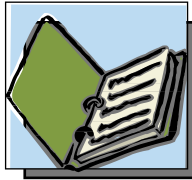
Munn Mrs M Z (Muriel) 4 Hall Close, Weston-by-Welland, Market Harborough LE16 8HT.

01476 860994 Bishop Mr R (Roger) 2 Brooklyn Place, Gunby, Grantham NG33 5LF.

07929 016714 Muller Mrs N J (Noreen) 32 Knights Close, Billesdon LE7 9AS.

It is with regret that we record the death of

Michael Turner, 8 Hogan Road, Tarzali, Queensland, Australia.



The Diary

Details of all Social Events are available from Joan McMillin on MH 462143. Joan welcomes your ideas for events, outings, etc.

SOME DATES TO KEEP FREE

- 4 Dec RNA Christmas Dance (for details see Notices)
- 14 Dec Branch Christmas Lunch, Angel Hotel.
- 12 Feb RNA outing to Festival of Music.
- 18 Mar Branch Anniversary Dinner at MH Golf Club.
- 2 Apr Branch Coffee Morning
- 10 Jul Music for a Summer Evening, Beaumanor.
- 5 Nov Branch Coffee Morning

The date of the next meeting is December 8th

Branch meetings are held on the Second Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm in the downstairs Function Room, Conservative Club, Fairfield Road, Market Harborough.

The Branch Committee meets on the Thursday preceding the Branch Meeting at 7.30 pm in the upstairs Committee Room at the Conservative Club.



In Touch

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The Royal British Legion

Market Harborough Branch

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Restoration of Poppy Pride

Some thoughts at Remembrancetide

"Rather like Christmas, Poppy Day casts a longer shadow before it with each passing year. British politicians now don the poppy in October, as if this effortless deed required courage and conferred a particular virtue upon the wearer. Even the BBC now goes in for an orgy of promiscuous poppydom, apparently staple-gunning poppies to everyone who enters Broadcasting House after September.

"Thus debased by party leaders and the national broadcaster, the poppy has become a yobbish declaration of Britishness, festooning T-shirt and anorak."

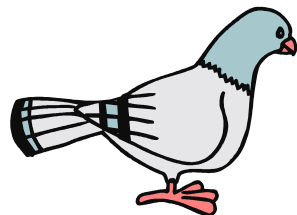
So writes Kevin Myers in the Sunday Telegraph, in an article headlined "Wear it with pride - but for one week only".

He advocates the wearing of the poppy in the week which includes Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday only, as happened in years gone by. These were the times of generations whose menfolk did not weep, or embrace one another, but bore their emotions stoically.

"Thus", Myers continues, "as actual memory of the two world wars vanishes from living minds, so the nature of remembrance has changed. In its stead, a sentimentalised and extended commemoration has emerged. People no longer mourn but enact mourning: rituals are followed, but largely without the burning, repressed emotion that they must once have caused to veterans in the 1920s and the 1950s."

Myers considers it is time to restore dignity and discipline to wearing the poppy. "Such restraint would enhance and not diminish the sense of debt that the free peoples of the world owe to those we remember. Give the dead their week of poppies in November, with decorum and restraint. It is the least they deserve."

Your comments on this topic would be most welcome.



A Bird's Eye View of the Poppy Walk Sunday September 26th 2004

The intrepid Ramsay Ramblers took part in the Walk again this year and their valiant efforts raised a magnificent total in excess of £500. Our Secretary, Betty Ramsay, and her daughters, Helen and Hilary, thank all of their generous sponsors, and especially the Lions Club, who contributed £100.

The following report, which was dropped all over the Ramblers by a passing pigeon, has been translated for us from the original pidgin English by the ever-resourceful Betty.

My Sunday morning in Victoria Embankment Gardens was rudely disturbed by groups of walkers, all proudly wearing their Poppy T shirts and armed with maps. I have my eye especially on a team of three who seem to be taking this all rather seriously - I believe there's some £500 for the Local Poppy Appeal at stake here!. They're marching along and now and again one of them rushes off the track to read plaques and study notice boards.

I do believe the younger one even approached a couple of Policemen for help and enquired of some local business people. The are really keen to get these questions all answered. There's some dispute about Bishopsgate and Billingsgate and what theatre you can see from Hungerford Bridge. (I could have told them!)

Now they've been asked directions by a blind lady - well I must give them credit for stopping and helping, but in the end these minutes will

count. I've noticed they're very crafty when they see something of interest they don't point or shout with glee - that would give clues to others taking part!

What's this - the old one should never have had that extra cup of tea at breakfast time they'll lose a few minutes for that stop.

I've only lost them once when they went into a building on Pall Mall (can't think what's of interest there!)

Well I'm really tired out; I've been following these three for some 10 miles as the pigeon flies - but 13.6 on their pedometer - from 10am to 2.30pm and we're back where we started!

Anyway, they've had their photo taken and been signed out and in so it's to be hoped they manage to get the money that's been promised.

I'm beginning to wish I'd stayed in Trafalgar Square with Rolf Harris!



Betty, Hilary and Helen, the Ramsay Ramblers, photographed (with full military escort) at a secret location somewhere in London.

We Will Remember Them



Images of Remembrance

Young and old gather in Market Harborough on November 11th and Remembrance Sunday.



The Social Team

Arranging outings, dinners, coffee mornings and other activities.

The Communication Team

Producing and distributing *In Touch*, enabling Members who are disabled, isolated or confined to their homes, to be kept in touch with the Branch activities and to contribute articles. In addition, publicity through press releases, events poster, etc., encouraging potential membership.

The Procurement Team

New this year for the purchase of a Portakabin, needed for storage and distribution of Poppy Appeal material.

A notable milestone was the Legion affiliation with local units of the Air Training Corps and Army Cadet Force.

Although we are not all members of a particular Team, we can be justly proud, however, to be part of the largest team of all, the Market Harborough Branch.

Sadly, we have lost some Members of our Team during the past twelve months and our thoughts go out to Members who are missing those near and dear to them.

On a happier note, new Members have joined and we very much welcome them to our Meetings, and hope they may consider joining one of the specialist Teams to help carry out the aims of the Royal British Legion.

We do not intend to hide our light under a bushel, and so are pleased and proud that our President was justly awarded a Gold Badge for his services to the Branch and the Royal British Legion as a whole.

Members have retained a dialogue with the Primary Care Trust, regarding the Memorial Portico at the hospital. Finally, we have attended the Annual and County Conferences and meetings of South East Leicestershire Group.

In closing, I send my best wishes to Members and their families for an enjoyable, restful Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.