

Editorial

FOR THE SECOND year running, the De Montfort Hall Festival of Remembrance has been hit by controversy. The main stumbling block seems to have been the parading (or not) of the standards onto the De Montfort Hall stage and the associated risks to the bearers. In fact, it really all boils down to a question of insurance.

Though I have never carried a standard, I can well imagine that it is a task that requires some degree of strength, sometimes over a lengthy period of time. This begs the question: Should there be an age limit for members who carry their branch banners; or perhaps a fitness test be imposed on standard bearers? Sometimes a stubborn pride can overcome common sense.

Another press report stated that one RBL member complained that the entertainment aspect of the festival was over-shadowing the act of remembrance, which he considered to be the true purpose of the event. Is this a popularist view?

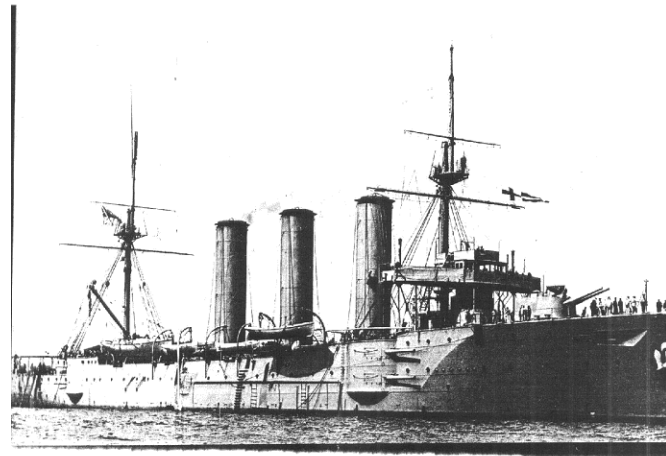
My dictionary gives the word "festival" as meaning "a joyful celebration" and "a performance of music, feasting, gaiety, and the like". This obviously separates a FESTIVAL of Remembrance and a SERVICE of Remembrance, although the two would seem to be successfully combined each year at the annual gathering at the Royal Albert Hall.

I do believe though that the future events will have a greater emphasis on the Festival aspect, as a celebration of our deliverance from two world wars. As I wrote at this time last year, the numbers of people with a first-hand mem-



LAST MONTH Tom Ashmore asked if anyone knew about the ship on which Market Harborough WW1 casualty, Charles Bertie Simpkins served. Three members responded with information and pictures, two about the pre-WW1 ship and one about the current HMS Kent. Thank you Dick, Tom & Bill.

Kent was one 10 of the County class of armoured



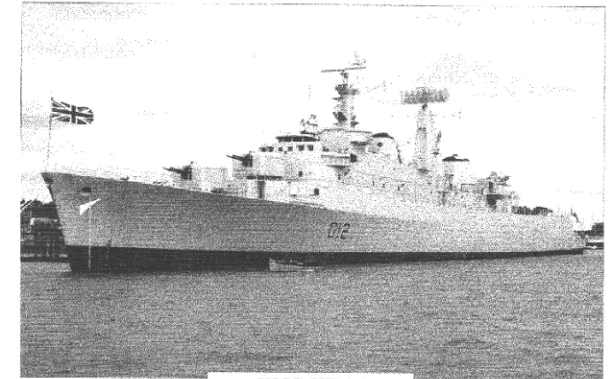
cruisers, with a displacement of 9800 tons and a complement of 690. She was launched on 6th March, 1901. From 1906 to 1913 she was on the China station, was sent to the Falklands in 1914 and was involved in the sinking of two German warships. She survived the war and was scrapped in 1920.

It still leaves the question why was Simpkins buried at Plymouth ?

The name Kent has been preserved in much more recent times in the class of very large guided-missile destroyers built in the 1960's. No doubt Simpkins would have been amazed at the contrast between this

HMS Kent—Past & Present

Kent and his. What awesome developments there were in those 60 years.



HMS KENT

This class of warship has a displacement of 6200 tons, was the first equipped to carry a helicopter and had surface to air missiles. Ω



Lone Paddler Lands

After 73 days Peter Bray paddled into a tiny Irish fishing village on 5th September to become the first person to cross the Atlantic unaided in a kayak. This achievement was made even more remarkable by the appalling sea and weather conditions he encountered. Let us hope that his attempt to raise £100,000 for two children's hospices is successful and so reward his personal effort and dedication.

Ω

The frequent progress reports posted on a website, www.outdoorchallenge.co.uk/nakc2000 have made fascinating reading.



Poppy Appeal 2000

was sent to all branch chairmen.

Dear Chairman,

A few years ago it was decided that the first Poppy Appeal of the new millennium should be marked by pulling out all the stops and aiming to raise £20 million in that special year.

It now, therefore gives me tremendous pride to be able to congratulate everyone involved in the achievement of that target. I know that many branches made very special efforts and these are reflected in the splendid final total of £20,100,758.

As the Legion celebrates its 80th year on active service, it is an undeniable fact that we still need a buoyant Poppy Appeal if we are to continue to help our colleagues who are no longer able to help themselves. May I use this opportunity, therefore, to ask for your special support again for the 2001 Poppy Appeal. We took up the torch 80 years ago, let us show that we can continue this momentum.

Yours sincerely

(signed) Noel Rogers,
Chairman of Fundraising

With this letter was attached some statistics which may be of interest.

A County League Table was produced which shows the average donation per head of population by counties. The national average was 35.70p. Leicestershire just missed this figure with a return of 33.57p, and were in 47th place nationally. In first place was the Isle of Man with 88.28p per head. Rutland, our neighbour, did very well and finished in fifth place (the same position they had held the previous year) with 61.8p per head.

In an added list, it shows that the Channel Islands did even better. Sark returned 174.57p per head; Jersey 115.94; Alderney 87.44; and Guernsey 60.63. Obviously the appeal meant a lot to the islanders, after all they do know the true meaning of suffering under enemy occupation.

A second league table shows returns of individual District and County Borough Councils. Top of the league was North Dorset District Council with 115.66p per head; and last of the top 50 was Antrim Borough Council with 64.87p. Can we get Market Harborough into the top fifty this year? Ω

11 September 2001

By Bob England

WARNING

A company calling themselves Royal Consulting is selling first aid kits and emergency car kits, and advising that a portion of their profits is going to charity. THIS IS NOT TRUE. Members are advised not to get involved.

Poppy Appeal 2001

NOTES FOR COLLECTORS

As guidance, the following notes were issued from Pall Mall.

House-to-house and static point collections should commence no earlier than October 27th, 2001. House-to-house collections may take place throughout the period October 27th to November 10th inclusive.

Collections in the street and public places should only take place during the days for which the local authorities have granted a licence, usually November 4th to 11th.

If you can offer any kind of help, either as a collector in the street, or door-to-door in your area; or even the use of transport to aid Tom Jeacock, please get in touch with Tom, tel. 466829. Ω

ory of those who lost their lives in the wars is growing fewer with each passing year. And the veterans of the Second World War are now in the great-grandparent generation.

In order to fill the venues a good entertainment will have to be on offer, and they don't come much bigger than the Syd Lawrence Orchestra. It seems certain this year that the De Montfort Hall will be filled -- but whether for the right reasons is still a matter for debate.

I emphasise that this is my personal opinion. Please let me know how you see the situation; my address and telephone number is on the cover!! Ω **THE FOLLOWING** letter dated 1st September

Subscriptions Due

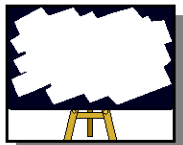
If you pay by Direct Debit you should have already received your new Membership Card. If you pay by cash or cheque to the branch, Treasurer, George Fleming holds your new card awaiting your payment of £8.50. See him at the October meeting or send it him at 11 Watson Avenue, MH, LE16 9NA. Do not send cash by post.

AGM

The most important meeting of the year, the AGM will be on 14th November when Branch Officers and committee members must be elected for the coming year. Please read the enclosed Notes and Nomination form and do try to attend.

Oops!!

In last month's piece "What was F & H?" (p4), the names should have read, Foster & Hill. And one sharp eyed member noticed that pages that should have been numbered 10 & 11 were labeled 16 & 17. Ω



Notices

ANNUAL DINNER. The booking list is now closed but to be put on the reserve list, call Tom Ashmore, MH 433108. If you have not given your menu choice or have not paid, a reminder is enclosed. Please respond before 8th October. **Items for the Raffle would be welcome.** Please bring them on the night.

REMEMBRANCE 2001. A Group Booking has been made for those who said they wished to attend and transport is being arranged. Anyone else wishing to go should contact Betty Ramsay MH 434923 to see if seats are still available.

M H REMEMBRANCE BAND CONCERT
Tickets will be available at the October Branch meeting price £4. Sell 10 tickets to your friends and neighbours and get your own free! Posters will also be available. Tickets will be on general sale from 11th October at R. D Jeacock & Sons, Coventry Road and the Council Offices, Adam & Eve Street.

M H REMEMBRANCE SERVICE
This year the church service will start at 10 am and will be followed by the parade to The Square for the observance of the Two Minutes Silence and wreath laying.

CHRISTMAS DINNER
It is hoped to have details of menu and cost at the next meeting. Please put your name on the clipboard then or at the AGM at the latest.



Diary

Reminders for October with some other dates to keep free. (see also page 10)

- 10 Oct Branch meeting & talk about the ATC.
- 12 Oct Annual Dinner - M H Golf Club
- 27 Oct Poppy Appeal Collections start
- 27 Oct Northants. Festival Concert—Derrogate
- 31 Oct Branch Committee Meeting
- 3 Nov Remembrance 2001— de Montfort Hall
- 10 Nov **Our** Remembrance Band Concert
- 10 Nov Royal Albert Hall Festival of Rem'ce
- 11 Nov Remembrance Sunday
- 14 Nov **Branch AGM** (see enclosures)
- 14/15 Nov Coldstream Guards Band - Loughboro'
- 7 Dec Xmas Dinner—The Countryman Inn
- 12 Dec Branch Meeting + Punch & mince pies.

Meetings

Branch meetings are held on the **Second Wednesday** of each month at **7.30 pm** in the downstairs Function Room, Conservative Club Building, Fairfield Road, M H. The next meeting which the new CFO, Mrs Moi Watson has accepted an invitation to attend, is on 10th October. There will be a talk by John Standish about the ATC. There will also be a buffet.

The Branch Committee meets on the **Last Wednesday** of each month (except December).



The Royal British Legion

Reg. Charity 219279

Market Harborough Branch



Founded in 1923

In Touch

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September, 2001

Apologies for the late appearance of this issue

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