



The Royal British Legion  
Market Harborough Branch

Entry for

The Royal British Legion  
Leicestershire and Rutland  
The Jack Quain Endeavour Trophy

for the year

1st October, 1997 to 30th September, 1998.

The Royal British Legion  
LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND  
The Jack Quain Endeavour Trophy

This Trophy is awarded annually to the Branch adjudged to have made the Greatest Endeavour throughout the year. Entries for the year ending 30th September 1998 are to be completed and returned by **December 22nd 1998**

MARKET

BRANCH NAME...HARBOROUGH.....NUMBER AB031.....

for county use

Details of any special effort to raise money  
for the Poppy Appeal during the year

Improved planning, organisation and control.

An extra day of Street Collections.

More static collecting points. More wreaths provided.

For more information, background and results, please  
refer to page 5 of the Submission Document.

Details of any special endeavour carried out by the Branch  
during the year e.g. recruiting, publicity, and PR.

The major endeavour has been to raise members' esteem for  
the Branch by mounting an extensive programme of activities,  
many in celebration of our 75th Anniversary.  
For the recruitment, publicity and public relations aspect of  
this initiative, please refer to pages 6, 7 & 8 of the  
Submission Document.

Details of any effort to raise money for Branch Funds during the year

Five events raised funds for the Branch.

Three generous donations were sought and received.

Traders paid for advertising in our newsletter, In Touch.

Members contributed regularly to fund some social activities.

There were occasional donations from members.

More information is given on page 9 of the Submission  
Document.

Chairman *E. C. Halsall* For *Market Harborough* Branch

Secretary *P. M. Job* Date *21st December 1998*



# The Royal British Legion

## Market Harborough Branch



### **About the Branch**

- Formed on 20th March, 1923, the Branch celebrated its 75th Anniversary during the Year under review.
- Centred on Market Harborough, it covers a 12 miles wide rural area, west and north of the Northamptonshire border.
- The nearest RBL Branches are in Northants.
- There are local branches of R N A and R A F A. Some of our Members belong to these associations.
- There are no nearby military units and so no source of likely younger members.
- After a period of decline it has been building up again over the past few years.
- It is still a fairly small branch, having reached 100 members only at the end of the Year.
- There is no associated RBL Club.
- The branch now has no premises, having sold a building acquired just after WW2, in 1991.
- The proceeds of the sale are held in a Trust a/c at RBL HQ.
- Meetings are held in a hired room in the Market Harborough Conservative Club building.



# The Royal British Legion Market Harborough Branch



## **General Objectives** as set in January 1997.

1. A greater sense of comradeship amongst all members.
2. More members participating in Branch activities.
3. Local Welfare responsibilities to be carried out fully.
4. Increase still further the Branch's contribution to Legion funds.
5. Improve the prospects for the Branch's long term survival.

## **Our Philosophy**

We believe that success with the first objective leads to success with the others, but that this in turn reinforces the sense of comradeship, interest and members' pride in their Branch. The more we do with and for our members, the more they benefit from their membership and the more the Branch prospers.

Thus all our activities interact and endeavour in one category in which qualification for the Trophy is assessed, usually has a beneficial effect in the other categories.

## **We are now a branch which is**

- Active
- Caring
- Friendly
- Innovative
- Outward Looking

and, we trust, worthy of consideration for the Trophy.

The following examples of our endeavour during 1997/98 support of this claim.



# The Royal British Legion Market Harborough Branch



## Activities with and for members

- A Survey conducted of members' opinions of Branch meetings led to
- Social events being introduced to follow shortened monthly branch meetings. They have included Talks, a quiz, a collectors' evening, a photo competition, buffets, etc., made possible by
- Dealing with most branch business in Committee meetings which are now held monthly.

Attendance at meetings has increased significantly and people now stay in the meeting room afterwards for a drink and a chat

- A Directory of members was produced for each member.
- A pub lunch is arranged every two months for those members who wish to attend.
- The original branch newsletter, ***In Touch***, and the news sheet, ***In Touch, Too***, have continued to be published in alternate months. Both are much appreciated especially by house bound and other members who cannot get to meetings.
- As a personal souvenir of the Branch 75th Anniversary, each member was presented with a specially produced glass tumbler.
- A 3-day visit to Scotland for the Edinburgh Tattoo was arranged for a group of members and friends.
- A day outing on a canal narrow-boat in June was great fun!

These initiatives have produced a noticeable increase in comradeship, willingness to help in other activities and a desire to see further developments in the Branch



# The Royal British Legion Market Harborough Branch



## Recruiting

- A new leaflet was designed aimed at attracting new members. It is on permanent display in the Library, the Information Centre and the Car Park Coffee Shop. It is displayed at any suitable branch event.
- The branch had a specially designed and made stall at the town Carnival. The Membership Secretary was on duty. The stall was also used for fund-raising.
- A Coffee Morning, though primarily for fund raising, had members on duty and literature on each table.
- An Exhibition designed to explain what the RBL in general and the branch in particular, is and does, was mounted as part of the Chamber of Commerce & Trade's "Open Harborough" event. As an attraction for younger people there was a computer display and demonstration of our Internet Web-site.
- Members are encouraged to "spread the word" in their everyday contacts with other people. As the branch becomes more active and attractive it becomes easier to explain the advantages of membership. The newsletters provide a constant reminder of what the branch is doing. "Blowing our own trumpet" is encouraged!!



# The Royal British Legion

## Market Harborough Branch



### Publicity and Public Awareness

- The branch has a nominated Press and public relations officer, a previous branch Secretary with good contacts and relations with the local papers and news photographer.
- All significant branch events are notified to the media and most are reported.
- The fact of the 75th Anniversary received good press coverage.
- An Exhibition of Branch history opened to the public, in the Harborough Museum on 20th March, the 75th Anniversary day.
- The Service of Thanksgiving to mark the Anniversary and held in the Parish Church was attended by representatives of 20 Legion Branches, including 3 from Northants. Legion Standards are always good publicity!
- The Remembrance Day Parade and Service organised by the Branch received good press coverage, including photographs.
- Posters advertising the 75th Anniversary Band Concert and two coffee mornings and the events themselves gave the branch good publicity.
- The Carnival and the “Open Harborough” exhibition put the Branch and Legion in front of the public.
- Details of the branch including names & telephone numbers of Officers are included in the Leicestershire Library Service information system, Infolink.
- An Internet Web Site (<http://members.xoom.com/MktHarbroRBL>) was launched in April to publicise the branch and the Legion. It has won an international award for Design and Content. It received over 400 “visitors” in its first 5 months. A number of other sites have links to ours, giving the branch even more publicity.

Public awareness is difficult to judge, but we have tried hard to “sell” the Legion and the Branch. We shall continue to do so.



# The Royal British Legion

## Market Harborough Branch



### **Public Relations - External Contacts and Communication**

- Invitations to various Anniversary and other events during the year include the Lord-Lieutenant, our local M P, past and present District Council Chairmen, District Council Chief Executive, the head of the local Police Unit, local Fire Station Commander, officers of local RNA and RAFA branches, ACF and ATC unit commanders (and cadets to some events), Scout and Guide leaders, heads of local Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance branches.
- Invitations to those within the RBL included Presidents and Chairmen of County and County Women's Section, County Field Officer and Regional Organiser.
- Officers of all County and County Women's Section branches and of neighbouring branches in Northamptonshire were invited to the Service of Thanksgiving.
- Officers of our branch have attended the Council Chairman's Civic Service and her inauguration Cheese and Wine Party.
- The branch is represented on the town's Millennium Committee.
- The branch is a member of South Leicestershire Council of Voluntary Service and is represented on two of its committees.
- There is close contact with neighbouring Husbands Bosworth Branch.
- We have good relations with RNA and RAFA through members who also belong to one of those organisations.
- We have good relations with the two Cadet forces, senior members of which belong to the branch.
- We have informal contacts with organisations in which individual members are involved.
- If requested, the branch Standard is carried at the funeral of any ex-Service person.





# The Royal British Legion Market Harborough Branch



## Fund Raising

- Public Concert performed by the Harborough Band on 21st March in celebration of the 75th Anniversary. Advertised in Press and by posters.
- Raffle held at the Reception following the Anniversary Service of Thanksgiving on 24th May.
- Tombola on the Branch stall at the Carnival on 13th June.
- Coffee Morning held at Harborough Theatre on 18th July - very successful.
- Exhibition on “Open Harborough” day (26th September) was held in the coffee shop run by Big Dial Radio who gave the whole day’s profit to the Branch.
- Local traders paid for advertising space in our newsletter, ***In Touch***.
- Donations were sought and obtained from
  - A local manufacturing company as Sponsor of the Band Concert,
  - A benefactor who wished to remain anonymous, for the purchase of Jewels of Office for Branch President and Chairman,
  - The Carnival Committee for support of ***In Touch***.
- Unsolicited small donations from members.
- 50p is sought from each member at a Branch meeting as a contribution to a “mess fund” to cover buffet and other social activity costs.

In addition members ran a very successful Coffee Morning on 29th August and raised £225 for the Sir Andrew Martin Trust for Young People.

The cost of the programme of activities in 1997/98 was high, but more than covered by the funds raised. It is our intention to maintain and if possible to increase this level of activities and fund raising in the coming year.



# The Royal British Legion

## Market Harborough Branch



### Poppy Appeal

- Improved planning and organisation e.g.
  - Previous House to House Collectors' pitches marked on street map showed areas needing cover.
  - Map and plans outlined at October Branch meeting and member helpers recruited.
  - Distribution centre for the town set up at home of Poppy Appeal Assistants (husband & wife team) who prepared the trays and collecting boxes.
  - Systematic recording and control of destination, despatch and return of each tray & box.
  - Prompt counting, recording and banking of cash.
  - Records showing comparison with previous years' collections for each house to house and street collector and for each static collection point, used to plan improved cover, location, etc., next year. It also creates the desire of an individual to beat last year's figure.
- Street Collections made on market day (Tuesday) as well as the Friday and Saturday as in previous years.
- A stall in the Market Hall is used as a display, collecting point and as a control centre and base for the street collectors. In 1997 the display attracted much favourable comment and a photograph in a local paper.
- The cost of hiring the stall is paid by the other stall holders.
- There was good prior coverage of the appeal in the local press.
- The logistics of distribution and collection in the outlying villages is dealt with separately and is the responsibility of our Vice President.
- The provision of wreaths, etc., the receipt of donations and the overall appeal arrangements are dealt with by the Poppy Organiser, our Branch President.

The total Collection for 1997/98 was a record at £10,241



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