



# **The Royal British Legion**



## **Market Harborough Branch**

Reg Charity 219279

# ***In Touch***

*Issue 144*

*September 2010*

The monthly newsletter (founded 1996) of the Market Harborough Branch (BR0106) of the Royal British Legion.

**Next  
Monthly Branch  
Meeting  
Wednesday  
13 Oct**

Function Room,  
Conservative Club,  
Fairfield Rd,  
Market Harborough  
7-30pm

## Looking Forward

Three men of more mature age were talking about what they would like their grandchildren to say about them in 50 years.

The first man said 'I would like them to say "He was fun to be with"'

The second man said 'I want mine to say "He was a loyal and loving family man"'

Turning to the third man they asked him what he would like his grandchildren to say.

He replied 'I want them to say "He looks really good for his age"'

## No Change

Officer: Soldier, do you have change for a dollar? Soldier: Sure, pal. Officer: That's no way to address an officer! Now let's try it again. Do you have change for a dollar? Soldier: No, SIR!



**ANGEL**  
the  
HOTEL & RESTAURANT

37 High St, Market Harborough  
LE16 7AF. Tel 01858 462702

\* A family owned hotel with 28 en-suite rooms.  
\*Function room for private parties  
\*Family restaurant serving evening meals and traditional Sunday lunch  
\* afternoon teas (Apr to Sept)  
\* Lounge bar - a great place to enjoy a drink with friends

**Waiting to Welcome You**

## Private Ainsworth

Contributed by Ron Ford

As I said in a previous contribution to In Touch, in 1948 I was serving in the Special Investigations Branch of the Royal Military Police at Chester. On Thursdays it was one on my extra duties to collect the pay and allowances for the section from the office of the Garrison Adjutant at the Castle which in those days was mainly occupied by the Army (it is now the Chester Crown Court). It was there that I met Private Ainsworth of the Cheshire Regiment; he made a lasting impression on me. So what was special about Private Ainsworth? He was a man about 52 years of age having served in the Army since World War 1. He was a small dark man who wore the old style service dress with closed neck, brass buttons and highly polished brown leather belt. A peaked cap with the brasses of his cap badge, collar dogs and shoulder titles worn thin through years of polishing. You could cut your fingers on his trouser creases and his boots – well who needs a mirror? He sported two rows of medal ribbons beginning

## Welfare

If you are aware of any one who qualifies for, and who may benefit from, the Royal British Legion welfare services please contact

Betty Ramsey  
01858 434923

with the 1914 Star. He was a sort of general assistant to the CQMS who in turn was clerk to the Garrison Adjutant. On pay parade he stood at the back of the room, bolt upright with cap on. I never knew his Christian name; I doubt if anyone knew it, he was always known simply as Private Ainsworth. He was a very dignified man for his lowly rank but he rarely spoke. He seemed a solitary soul if one could be like that in the army. He had a room at the Castle, enjoyed a cigarette and a quiet glass of beer and I never saw him in civilian clothes. One day the powers that be in Western Command decided that Private Ainsworth should retire from the army. Naturally he resisted this very strongly and someone came up with the idea of making him an Officers Mess Steward. This entitled him to be an NCO which people thought he would reject anyway having been a private for so long. However under some protest to everyone's surprise he accepted the rank of Lance Corporal and took up a post in the Mess. I still saw him from time to time in a snow white jacket with a single red chevron.

Some years later, after I had left the army I was walking along one of the main streets in Chester on a visit with my wife when I spotted Private Ainsworth on the other side of a bust street peddling a bicycle. He was wearing civilian clothes with a blue beret. He was gone in a flash and I didn't get chance to speak to him as he cycled on his way.

I presumed he had finally retired from the army, and was leading a thoroughly deserved quiet life. I felt that he had probably handed in his Lance Corporal stripe before he left so that he could retire as a private, as he had always been. I expect he has long gone to the great parade ground in the sky but I always remember him with great affection and for the standards he set for one and all. I hope he didn't really die but like all old soldiers he just faded away.

## **Whisky Medication**

Contributed by Kenneth Harrison  
The only time a doctor has given me a bottle of whisky was when I was in hospital in Southern India recovering from malaria. He woke me up and to my surprise said "would you like this before your medication"? I looked at the bottle of whisky thinking I was dreaming and he said "well, yes or no"? I needed no second bidding and took the bottle which I shared with the other soldiers in the ward.

That evening the nurse came along and saw that I hadn't taken the M&B tablets and forced me to take the 8 large tablets. Around midnight I felt quite ill. I couldn't find a nurse or get to the toilet so I went outside where I was violently sick.

The morning came and the results of the previous night were visible to all and I was accused of the 'dirty deed'. I denied all knowledge of it and never wanted to take tablets again, it was surely them that had made me sick! The reason for the celebration - it was VJ Day.



## Battle of Britain

Celebrating the 70th Anniversary Below - The Battle of Britain Memorial on the Embankment Unveiled in September 2005 by Prince Charles. The two friezes are accompanied by a plaque inscribed with the names of the 2,936 pilots and ground crew from Britain and 14 other countries.



Starting on 10 July 1940, the Luftwaffe attacked shipping convoys in the Channel and Channel Ports. They also suspected the importance of the British radar masts and attacked the stations on the South coast, damaging some of them very badly.

Believing that the British early warning system had been destroyed and the coastal towns sufficiently 'softened up' for an invasion, the Luftwaffe began the next stage of their plan. On 13 August (called Adlertag or Eagle Day by the German High Command), massive raids began on the airfields of 11 Group. The aim was to destroy the RAF in South East England. This pattern continued into September and the situation in 11 Group became desperate.

To keep up the pressure, the Germans began night raids, to stop the defenders repairing damage overnight. On one night raid, some aircraft bombed civilian areas of London by mistake; a mistake which was to become a crucial turning point in the Battle. Attacks on civilian areas had been specifically banned by Hitler, who was still hoping that the British to sue for a negotiated peace. The German High Command knew that widespread civilian casualties would only harden the resolve of the nation to fight on. In reply to this accidental attack, the British bombed Berlin.

Hitler was enraged by this attack and as it seemed that the attacks on airfields were not effective, he ordered a change of targets. By attacking cities and industry, the Germans hoped to break British morale and to destroy the factories that built fighter aircraft. They also hoped that RAF fighters would gather in force round the cities to protect them, which would make it easier for the Luftwaffe to shoot them down in the numbers required to establish air superiority. The change of plan was a mistake. It gave 11 Group a chance to repair their airfields and radar sites, so the defences became fully operational again. The German Me 109 fighter could only carry enough fuel for 20 minutes flight over Britain, so London was on the edge of its range. Finally, the German raids now came within the range of 12 Group, and their large formations. Knowing the target to be London, the British controllers now

had time to assemble a large number of fighters to attack the German formations and break them up before they could bomb.

The 15 Sept was later considered to be the major turning point in the battle when the Allies claimed to have destroyed 179 enemy aircraft with another 42 probables and 72 damaged with a loss of 13 Allied aircraft with 13 pilots being killed. Actual German losses were later thought to have been about 1/3 of those claimed by the Allies.

As the long, hot summer ran into October, the German daylight bomber losses became too heavy. Their bomber force started to operate only at night. The weather also began to worsen and the raids stopped in late October. Operation Sea-Lion was cancelled indefinitely and eventually abandoned altogether.

The Battle of Britain was over. It was Churchill who said on 20 August 1940: "The gratitude of every home in our Island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of the World War by their prowess and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few"

It was decided that these men should receive the "immediate" award of the 1939-45 Star, with a Battle of Britain clasp.

The qualification for this award was to have made one authorised, operational flight, with one of 71

squadrons and other units under the control of Fighter Command, between July 10 and October 31 1940. About 2940 men met the qualification, of whom 544 died from all causes during the Battle.



Above the Battle of Britain memorial opened by Her Majesty the Queen on 9th July 1993.

The contemplative lone figure of a pilot sits in the centre of the three bladed propeller. The National Memorial is situated at Capel le Ferne, on the cliffs between Folkestone and Dover in Kent.





## County News Letter

From the September Edition  
By now every member should have received from the National Chairman a letter informing them of a series of meetings around the Country prior to the launch of a new mission statement on the 30th September. We have two venues in the Midlands (Birmingham & Nottingham) where you can take part. This is an opportunity to hear the changes being discussed about the future of The Legion.

We know that changes have to be made if we are to survive as an active organisation -we are failing to recruit new younger members. The aims and objectives of our organisation must go on. The question of the Membership affiliation fee is due to come up, this is an ideal time for you to get involved in this debate before Conference next year. In the meantime let's have a big push to help "ourselves". Give people the chance to organise and raise cash for you, let them know we do this all year not just at Poppy time. I believe a lot of the general public just associate the RBL with that period.

### Puzzle Corner

Mr Jones drove his van up a hill for half a mile at 30 mph. He decided to drive his van back down the hill at a speed that would enable him to average 60 mph for the whole journey.

How fast did Mr Jones have to travel on the return journey to average 60 mph?

## London Poppy Walk

I was excited to be in London for "Poppy Walk 2010". We arrived a little early and Gran and I waited for HQ to open while mummy and Auntie Helen had a coffee (Seems early to me!).

They got T-Shirts but none small enough for me, never mind off we set with map and questions in hand. I was left to spot the statues, blue plaques and answers to the questions - running up and down the roads. (I am sure I walked further than the others!). After many "Are we there yet?" I was eventually allowed to stop for an ice-cream and shortly after lunch by the Thames I thought I might have time for 40 winks but the others had better ideas!!!

Nearly back at Poppy HQ and wasn't I glad... I wish I hadn't had so much to drink at lunch... The question on my lips was not "How long did it take us?" but more of "Where's the toilet?!!!"  
Gran and mummy now tell me I've got to get all my sponsorship money in. Not sure what that means but I'm sure they will do that whilst I have my well earned nap!

Christopher Brazil (aged 5 years)  
Editors Note - I understand that the Ramsay Walkers expect to raise over £250 for the Branch Poppy Appeal - Well done to all especially Christopher..



## **Door to Door Sales**

A Message from Harborough  
Police

In recent weeks we have again received reports of young males going door to door, claiming to be ex-offenders and trying to sell dusters and other items.

They will often say or give the impression that this work is part of a rehabilitation scheme for young offenders to help them "go straight" or to "make an honest living".

There is no evidence of a genuine rehabilitation scheme for ex-offenders of this kind.

On the contrary on several occasions these door to door sales people have committed crimes at the homes of elderly and vulnerable people that they have visited.

It would appear that by telling householders that they are ex-offenders, they hope to be seen as honest folk who are simply trying to better themselves.

Harborough Police would remind all our residents to be suspicious of anyone arriving unexpectedly at their doors. Always remember that no matter how urgent they make it seem - you do not have to let anyone into your home.

Finally, we would remind all householders that if anyone says they are from the "Waterboard", they are lying as the Water Board no longer exists.

Please call the police immediately on 999 if any one calls who arouses your suspicion. This will give us a real chance of catching these thieves.



**Tuesday Oct 5**

**Reservation before 28 Sep  
to Glenys Hocking-Davies  
01858 467835**

Cancellations on the day to Glenys **before 11 am**. If Glenys is not available phone the Angel 01858 462702 before 11am or the meal will be charged for.

### **Menu**

*Strips of chicken, tomato & tarragon sauce, mashed potato, vegetables*

*Roast Loin of British pork, stuffing, roast potatoes, gravy, vegetables*

*Tart laced with tomato sauce vegetables, mozzarella glaze, savoury wedges*

*Raspberry & white chocolate cheesecake, with cream*

*Fresh fruit salad with cream*

*Dark chocolate & Macadamia Cheesecake, vanilla ice cream*

*Sticky toffee pudding, custard coffee & mints*

**Only £8**



## What's Going On?

- 30 Oct Poppy Appeal Launch. Collectors and helpers needed for the Poppy Appeal. Please contact Dave Pryor ASAP
- 6 Nov Festival of Remembrance - De Montfort Hall. Band of the Blues & Royals (contact Les Moore)
- Oct 1 £13.00 subscriptions due. Please pay promptly.

### **Tigers Support the RBL**

Tigers will donate £5 for each ticket sold for the match on 6 November against Harlequins.

Tickets cost £22 for concessions (£25 for adult).

For more information or ticket sales contact -

John McDonagh 07515 083150 or e-mail [john.mcdonagh@tigers.co.uk](mailto:john.mcdonagh@tigers.co.uk)

### **Puzzle Corner—Answer**

It is not possible to average 60 mph for the whole journey. To average 60 mph for the whole journey of 1 mile would take one minute. He has already taken this long in driving 1/2 mile at 30mph.

## **Branch Contacts**

### **Secretary**

Betty Ramsay  
01858 434023

### **Treasurer & Membership Secretary**

Myra Grewcock  
01538 762228

### **Poppy Appeal**

Dave Pryor  
01858 431999

### **Wreaths**

John Liddell  
01858 465003

### **Standard Bearer**

George Fleming  
01858 462711

### **Social & Fund Raising**

Glenys Hocking-Davies  
01858 467835

### **Editor - *In Touch***

John Standish  
5 Manor Rd  
Fleckney  
LE8 8TN

Tel - 0116 2404170

[in-toucheditor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:in-toucheditor@hotmail.co.uk)

Next Committee Meeting 7 Oct

## **And Finally Cold Facts**

The winter of 1932 was so cold the Niagara Falls froze solid.

The Eiffel Tower shrinks 6 inches in winter.

*The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the Market Harborough Branch.*

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