



The Royal British Legion



Market Harborough Branch

Reg Charity 219279

In Touch

Issue 151

April 2011

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

**‘Shoulder to Shoulder
With All Who Serve’**

**Next Monthly Branch Meeting
Wednesday
11 May**

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

Branch News

Remembrance Garden - Mark Hudson reported that the prison had agreed to repair and maintain the crosses and also store them for future use.

Annual Conference - the Chairman advised that the draft agenda had been received and tabled it for any member who wished to look at it.

Next Meeting - Tom Ashmore has devised a light-hearted team game called Philosophers and Detectives in which two team members will score points by solving clues in items laid out on tables and the others by finding the missing words in each of a list of sayings.

A small prize will be awarded to the winning team. Come along and bring a friend. Two ATC cadets pre-

cheques totalling £722 to the Poppy Appeal. The money was raised by a raffle at the Squadrons recent 70th Anniversary Dinner and cadets



fundraising efforts during the year. Sgt Becky Tomlinson said the cadets were proud to support the RBL and the work that it does.

The Future?



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


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

Armed Forces Day

Plans are taking shape for a great celebration of our armed forces, past, present and future on Sunday 3rd July in Welland Park.

With the official opening at 1030hrs by Lady Gretton, HM Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, static displays already confirmed include RBL, RNA, RAFA, SSAFA, St Dunstan's, Forces Recruiting, vintage military vehicles and others.

In the arena during the day will be displays by our local ACF with a field gun race and marching display, GBRT Carnival Drums, Army Dogs display, and hopefully our affiliated ATC Squadron - if they can get back in time from a Wing Competition. (late news - they can get back) Harborough FM will also be supporting us and will conduct interviews with veterans, cadets and young people and the general public. The committee is still waiting for further participants to confirm.

Our hope is to have as many ex-service veterans and cadets as possible formed up and "On Parade" for the Lady Gretton's inspection when she arrives with an AFD Flag-raising ceremony. The hope is that the Chair of HDC will be present to take part in the closing ceremony at around 1430pm.

If you have any ideas about other things we might do or people we might invite, please contact Betty Ramsey or John Morley as soon as possible. Most importantly make sure this date is in your diary and come and take part and bring your friends and neighbours.

As a fund-raiser for the event, don't forget the AFD Coffee Morning in Harborough Theatre lounge on Saturday 28 May. We need prizes for Tombola and Raffle, and cakes and other saleable items

Tree Planting Commemorates Air Crash

A tree was planted in the grounds of Bosworth Hall to commemorate the deaths of a Polish Air Force pilot (Fg Off Ramert) and an ATC Cadet (Cdt R Shaw aged 14) in a flying accident on 28 Aug 1942.



The Master aircraft was carrying out low level passes for the anti aircraft guns to practice when it struck a tree. The ceremony was attended by Polish representatives, RBL members, RAFA and the local Air Cadets.

Puzzle Corner

The ages of Ann and Bill add up to 91. Ann is three times as old as Bill was at the time when Ann was twice as old as Bill is now. How old are Ann and Bill now?

Survival

In December 1956 a Bristol Freighter of the Royal New Zealand Air Force was on a supply dropping mission over virgin jungle east of the Cameron Highlands. On board were three RNZAF crew, four RASC air dispatchers, one of whom was Driver Lee of 55 Company and two cameramen from the Malayan Film Unit making a documentary. Radio contact with the plane was lost about midday and wreckage was spotted by a search plane later that afternoon. I was on a steep ridge some 4,000 ft up. The SAS tried to parachute onto the site but poor weather conditions and approaching darkness made a successful attempt impossible. The SAS eventually landed in a clearing 2000 yds away. It was the monsoon season and flying was impossible for the next two days so it wasn't until the third day that an Auster aircraft was able to direct the SAS to the crash site. The patrol was within 20 yards of the site but the jungle was so thick it was impossible to see the wreckage from the ground.

The patrol found that the plane had exploded on impact and burned, there was no sign of survivors and it was presumed all on board had been killed. With the SAS patrol was a patrol of the 4th Malay regiment and after clearing the site the SAS patrol withdrew. The Malay Regiment had trackers with them and just as they were about to withdraw one of the trackers spotted what appeared to be a crude one

man shelter in the debris. They searched the ground and found faint evidence of a trail leading away from the site. They followed the trail through the jungle and came upon another small newly built shelter. Because no attempt had been made to camouflage it they assumed it wasn't a terrorist. Continuing to follow the trail the patrol found a further two shelters. These shelters followed a stream downhill, a standard army survival procedure so the patrol became convinced they were following a survivor of the crash. To speed the search a second patrol was sent out from the jungle edge of the stream.

The patrol moving downstream found a further four shelters and on 21 December met up with the other patrol coming up stream. This patrol had not seen any shelters so it was assumed they were close to their quarry. An aircraft was flown over the area with a loudspeaker instructing the survivor to return to the stream where the patrol was waiting.

On 22 Dec a soldier walked into the camp, he had burns to his hands and arms and a broken left ankle but otherwise was in good shape. Driver Lee had no clear recollection of the crash, he regained consciousness some 100yards from the crash and although he could hear the plane burning he couldn't see it. He eventually found the wreck but found no survivors. He waited at the site for two days and then decided to strike out on his own. He made a knapsack of parachute material and

collected what rations had been thrown clear.

During his trek he made seven shelters, covered six miles in a straight line, in reality much more on the ground. When found he had supplies for a further 10 days and the patrol estimated that at his rate of progress he would have made the Cameron Highlands road in seven more days.

The reason for the delay in finding him was because Lee had seen the footprints of the patrol and thought they might be terrorists so hid in the jungle only coming out after hearing the aircraft announcement.

Plugging the Hole

I was a very young sapper in the Royal Engineers at Ripon and volunteered as a plumber.

In the early days of 1940 the Quartermaster Sergeant needed a sapper to fit plugs to chains in the ablutions. I was given a sandbag full of these rubber things and told to make sure they were fitted tightly. This I did but was making little progress into the sack when a fellow sapper came along and said I was wasting my time as all the sapper had purchased their own for 3d so they would never be caught without one. His advice was to sell the sandbag full of plugs and make a bit of a profit. Being fairly new I feared the consequences and the wrath of the QMS if I sold property of the Government so I returned them to stores.

Perhaps if I had been a bit bolder this may have set me on the road to

starting B&Q.

This was submitted by Ken Harrison who also reminded me of the shortage of cigarettes when he was in Burma and how the men used South East Asia Command newsprint and dried tea leaves to roll their own 'smokes'. A tin of cigarettes from home was always greeted with a sigh of relief and shared carefully amongst the men.

ATC 70th Anniversary Dinner

150 cadets, ex cadets, staff and friends gathered at the Assembly Room, Welland Park School on Saturday 19 March to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the formation of the squadron in March 1941.

Guest of Honour was Chairman of the Harborough District Council, Cllr Rosita Page and she presented the Commanding Officer, Flight Lieutenant (Flt Lt) Valerie Smith with a framed certificate in recognition of the support and commitment the squadron has given to the community of Market Harborough and surrounding areas.



A raffle was held which raised £300 to be donated to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

ATC Visit Belgium

30 staff and cadets visited the WW1 battlefields of Flanders for the 14th time this month.

The band marched to the Menin Gate on Friday 1 April to take part in the Last Post ceremony. Cadets laid a wreath and the band played incidental music during the wreath laying. They marched back to the Cloth Hall saluting the Last Post Buglers as they marched through the Gate. This is the highlight of the visit for most people, the large crowds and the atmosphere marching into the Gate and the ceremony, is charged with emotion.

The band plays in a carnival in the nearby town of Poperinge and also plays a Last Post tribute at Tynecot Cemetery, the largest CWGC ceme-



Last Post at Tynecot

tery in the world.

The rest of the weekend is taken up with visits to a variety of WW1 battlefield sites and cemeteries. This years visits included reconstructed German trenches near where Adolph Hitler won his Iron Cross and a German command bunker. A visit to the German cemetery at Langemark drew a sharp contrast with the coun-

try cottage style English cemeteries with its dark oak trees and concrete bunkers. Visits to Ploegstreet Wood, better known as Plugstreet to the Tommies took in the site of one of the 1914 Christmas Truce football games and the walk through the peaceful and sunny wood belied the events that took place in 1914 18. Cadets took the opportunity to place

Pte Wiggington A local soldier



crosses on graves of their choice and also all local soldiers buried or commemorated in the cemeteries we visited.

The visit to Noel Crevasse's grave with the two VCs engraved on the

headstone highlighted the efforts of the medical services and this was highlighted further at Lijssenthoek when we saw a grave with the inscription 'Only a Stretcher Bearer' It wasn't all serious as well as the fun of the carnival and the fair after-



wards there was a disco organised by the staff on Saturday

night at the hostel which was enjoyed by old and young alike. On Monday free time was taken in

Ypres, a chance for a closer inspection of the Menin Gate and some of the 50,000 names engraved on the walls and then a visit to Leonadis chocolate shop. The owner is character well known to the cadets, who offers a free gift of 'anything off the top shelf except the TV and speakers' Thence back to Calais and the Tunnel with one last stop at Lijssenthoek Cemetery, the 2nd largest in the world. We arrived back about 8pm on Monday evening all very tired but wishing we could have spent longer on what was a trip of very mixed emotions.



Left - a cadet looks at the grave of a 15 yr old soldier

The MOD reported the following soldiers killed in Afghanistan.

Private Daniel Prior, The Parachute Regiment, died in the UK on 18 March 2011 of wounds sustained on 16 March. Aged 27 from Peacehaven.

Major Matthew Collins, Irish Guards, aged 38 from Blackwell.

Lance Sergeant Mark Burgan Irish Guards, aged 28 from Liverpool. Both killed 23 March 2011

Colour Sgt Alan Cameron Scots Guards aged 42 died 31 Mar 2011 from wounds received 13 Apr 2010



Tuesday 3 May 7

**Reservation before 26 April
to Les Moore
01858 463112**

Cancellations on the day to **Les**
before 9-30 am.

If Les is not available phone the
Angel 01858 462702 before 10am
or the meal will be charged for.

Menu

Home cooked ham, mashed potato, rich parsley sauce

Steak pie with roast potatoes

Fillet of white fish, mashed potatoes and a rich tomato sauce

Accompanied by vegetables.

Cheery Bakewell cheesecake, clotted ice cream

Fresh fruit salad with cream

Warm sticky apple caramel pie cake, with chocolate with toffee ice cream

coffee & mints

Only £8-25

Meet in the bar at noon

What's Going On?

- 30 Apr** RNA Coffee morning.
Harborough Theatre
- 8 May** HMS Stevenstone Re
union Service Foxton
Church
- 28 May** Armed Forces Coffee
Morning - proceeds go
towards the support of
Armed Forces event on
July 3 in Welland Park
- 11 June** Carnival. Float and dis
play. Please volunteer
to help on both.
- 12 June** Poppy Party - help us
celebrate the RBL 90th
Anniversary with a
party.
- 29 June** Desborough Armed
Forces Lunch £11-50
- 3 July** Armed Forces event -
Welland Park
- 20 July** RNA visit to National
Arboretum Memorial.

Puzzle Corner—Answer

Ann is 63 and Bill is 28

Branch Contacts

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Treasurer & Membership

Secretary

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Monthly Lunches

Les Moore
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Next Committee Meeting 7 April

And Finally

Plants that are not looked after will cry for help. Plants that are lacking in water make a high pitched sound too high for the human ear. Plants can also suffer from jet lag

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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The newsletter is online at www.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/market-harborough.