

In Touch

The monthly newsletter founded in 1996



The Royal British Legion

Registered Charity No. 219279

Shoulder to Shoulder with all who Serve

Market Harborough Branch

Founded in 1923



years of caring in the
local community



With thanks to Prime Life Ltd, parent company of Peaker Park Care Village Market Harborough, for printing this issue.

Issue 177

June 2013

Next Monthly Branch Meeting

7.30 pm Wednesday 10 July

Committee 4 July

Function Room, Conservative Club,
Fairfield Rd. Market Harborough

2013 National Conference

John Standish reports that he attended the Membership Forum at 0830 when Martin Tighe, Chairman of the Membership Council introduced the members of the Council, outlined the areas they will 'champion', and roles available to members. Membership matters he mentioned were that serving members of the Forces could join TRBL but without governance rights; new merchandising was being introduced; that TRBL doesn't allow any sort of Legion shop (but 'shop front' displays during Poppy Appeal to collect 'donations' are acceptable) or allow Branches to 'trade'.

The meeting ended shortly after 10am allowing a quick breath of fresh air before Conference itself at 1100.

The result of discussion and voting on one of the more significant motions, was that the proposal to change the Royal Charter was lost because it would have given Trustees power to fund uncontrolled external research and also would have allowed the amendment of the Charter by Special resolutions. Other motions lost included the request that the Legion Mission Statement be reviewed and the one to raise subscriptions to £16. Motions approved included allowing youth membership in the women's section; allowing Conference to submit motions on administration matters; that all donations collected by Legion members under a Legion 'banner' must go to the Legion, and a year's free RBL membership on discharge from the Forces.

Obituary

Mike Middleton died on 19th May aged 77. He was Chairman of the Market Harborough Branch of the RNA and a keen supporter of TRBL. He will be sadly missed by his many friends.

Mike was born in Leicester but later lived in Naseby where he attended the village school. When he was 11 he won a Choral scholarship to a Choir School in London and then finished his education at Market Harborough Collegiate School.

In 1951 Mike started his 10 years

naval career at HMS Ganges, training in Signals. Afloat he served in destroyers HMSs Tenacious & Carysfort and frigates, HMSs Wrangler and Undaunted. Ashore, he was in the Comcen in Malta and at HQ CinC EASTLANT, Northwood. During this time he met Pat who was serving in the WRNS. They celebrated their Golden Wedding this year.

Much of Mike's civilian life was in running superstores at home and abroad.

Cover Photo

'Peace and Quiet' to contrast with the horrors of the main stories.
Taken in the Editor's garden in June 2008

More information and transcripts of the main speeches are on <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/membership/resources/annual-conference>.

A very good concert by the Welsh Guards was held on the Saturday evening, but John had not enjoyed the frustration of getting into the Conference centre after the Forum. 'After queuing for 5 minutes I was asked if I had had my 'card stamped', "No, Oh you have to have that done first". So off to another queue, get card stamped and then back to the first queue. Stood in line as the queue snaked its way round the foyer until about 1110 (conference was to start at 1100!) when I arrived at the registration desk. Presenting my card my details were checked via a computer. "You're not registered - where did you get this card" said the staff. Anyway to cut a long story short after 10 minutes of producing membership cards and explaining how I had a delegate's card in my possession they finally agreed that I could go into Conference while they sorted it out. I managed to get in seconds before the Welsh Guards Band marched in the Standards. Later I was given my delegates badge and told why I hadn't been 'registered'. At some stage in my Legion membership they had picked up my MBE and added it after my name to my membership record. The computer recognised that as my surname so all the searching under 'Standish' was to no avail as according to them my name was Mr MBE!

Letter to the Editor

I note with interest in the most recent edition an article on HMS Ark Royal, which brought back a distant memory, ironical as it very much links the events of yesteryear to today.

Although I now live in Market Harborough, and I am responsible for the operation at Peaker Park, I was born in Nottingham. My mother was seconded from what was then the Boots Marketing Department to work in an Admiralty Department, responsible for the repair of damaged ships, and I recall a distant conversation when in her new capacity as a Naval Administrator, she was aware of the incident, but due to the Official Secrets Act and the constraints placed on everyone during the war, she was unable to return home and tell her parents that she knew that the ship on which her brother, Lieutenant Harry Clower served, had suffered such material damage.

An insignificant issue you might think, but a further example as to how my generation can gain a better understanding as to what those who served during World War II really went through.

Good Luck in your cause.
Best wishes.
Peter Van Herrewege
Chairman

For Branch and other news go to page 7

D Day 6 June 1944 Remembered

A flotilla of almost 7000 ships, 4000 landing craft and scores of gliders set off on the morning of the 6th June 1944 carrying Allied forces on the biggest and most complex military invasion in history.

One of the first ashore at Sword Beach was Sgt Stan Snow of the SAS Special Forces. The story of his return sixty years later was published in the In Touch issue of July 2004 which featured other D Day 60th anniversary events. These include Bernard Halsall's account of the memorial service honouring members of the Glider Pilot Regiment who flew from Tarrant Rushton. He wrote, 'Six gliders from here landed at, capturing what is now known as Pegasus Bridge.'

Bernard had made his Normandy flight a few days after D Day. Ken West, well known for his contributions to our newsletter, who had gone ashore on D Day+12,

described the Normandy Veterans Association six-day Pilgrimage to celebrate the anniversary. (Ken has recently written to say that the 70th anniversary visit next year is already planned and our branch members are invited to join them. Details later.)

Most of us have memories of around the time of D- Day. I am sure that a collection of very varied experiences would make fascinating reading, so please drop me, the Editor, a note or a phone call (contact details on page 8). I was on a REME course in Stoke-on-Trent and probably wrote to Wren fiancé, Joan.

She, in Portsmouth, who had been showing films to those who would be going 'over there'. Tony Johnson was behind the wire in Stammlager-Luft I. Naval types, Bill Cotton and Charlie Catling who we featured last month with one of his many photographs, were 'somewhere at sea'. Where were you, Land Army girl, Joyce

Snow, you Wren Margaret Cliff and you WAAF Margaret Adcock? Civil Servant, Mary Symon was no doubt helping to keep 'the ship of state' afloat but what about you others?



Like other D Day veterans, Stan received a French commemorative medal during his visit

Operation Overlord

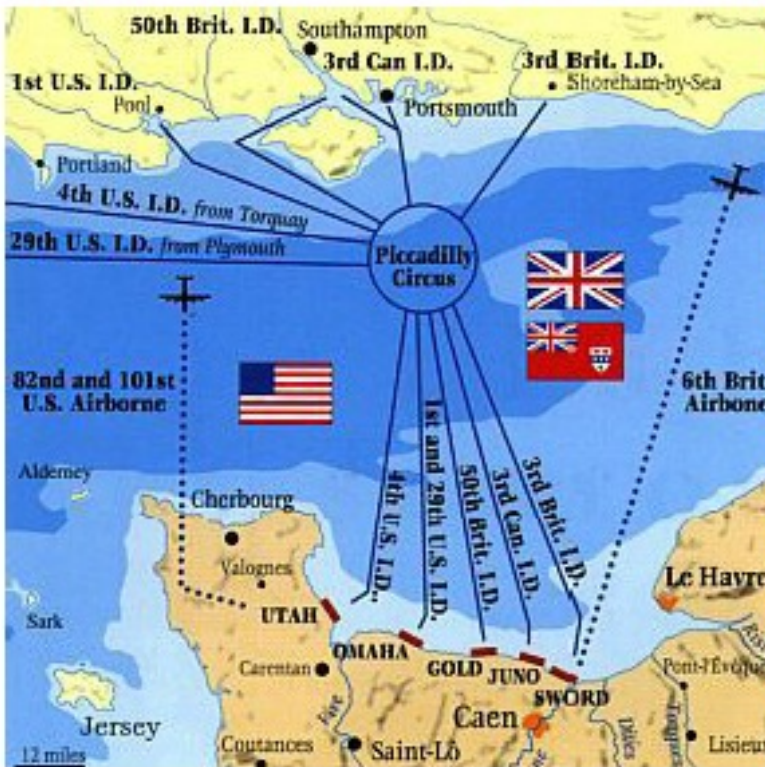
This was the code name for the Battle of Normandy which started on 6th June 1945 with Operation Neptune was the 'inva-

Canadian 3rd Infantry Division reached their first day objective with 'minimal' casualties.

Gold Beach was assigned to the British 50th (Northumberland) Division who suffered heavy casualties.

They, with Commando units secured a base for a terminal for an underwater pipe from tankers moored off shore.

O m a h a Beach was the most heavily defended landing area and the American 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions suffered heavy casualties and did not reach



sion' phase of airborne landings just after midnight and the simultaneous sea-borne landings on the Normandy coast at 6.30am, at:

Sword Beach where the British 3rd Infantry Division advanced about 5 miles inland the first day. Casualties had been fairly light.

Juno Beach was one of the most heavily defended landing area but the

their first day objective until D+3.

Utah Beach where the American 4th Infantry Division landed was the most lightly held and they had few casualties.

American Airborne Landing by the US 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions was inland of Utah Beach. They were to support the US VII

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Continued from p 5

Divisions was inland of Utah Beach. They were to support the US VII Corps in its objective to secure the port of Cherbourg.

British Airborne Landings were behind Sword Beach to counter any enemy attack from the east by destroying or capturing strategic bridges including what became known as Pegasus bridge which was taken by a small force of glider troops. Casualties were high but the first day objectives were achieved.

Mulberry Harbours were built, one Arromanches in the Gold Beach area and the other at Omaha to provide ship to shore off-loading facilities until proper ports was captured. They were assembled from very large pre-fabricated structures towed across the Channel. The British harbour supplied 9000 tons of supplies daily.

PLUTO (Pipe-line under the ocean) was the codename for what became a network of pipe-lines from Britain to the Continent supplying the vast amount of fuel required for vehicles, tanks and aircraft. The first, from the Isle of Wight to Cherbourg, had a length of 70 miles.

Hobart's Funnies were tanks modified to 'swim' ashore or to assist the landings by mine clearing, laying a 'carpet' over soft ground, clearing obstacles, flame throwing and vehicle recovery on the beach.

Miscellany

Did you know?

Normandy Branch RBL is located in Ranville, a village well known for the famous Pegasus Bridge, where the first gliders landed at 00:15hrs in the morning of 6th June 1944. Major Jack Watson, one of the men who liberated Ranville at 02:30hrs on that day, is one of the vice-presidents of the Branch.



Pegasus Bridge June 2004

A Bit of Fun

Dyslexic man walks into a bra...

Police arrested two kids yesterday, one was drinking battery acid, the other was eating fireworks. They charged one and let the other one off.

Old age is when the candles cost more than the cake.

From the Minutes

October 1988

Welland Valley Branch: owing to "smallness of the branch", their members decided to put to their AGM a proposal to wind up and join the Market Harborough Branch.

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Printing In Touch

The branch has had a very generous offer from Prime Life, the parent company of Peaker Park Care Village to print the newsletter for 12 months free of charge. This will be acknowledged each month on the front cover.

Carnival

Lack of support from members and the Army Cadets meant that Paul Whitlock's planned Branch Float had to be abandoned. Shame on them!

A prominent presence at the show-ground was provided by Dave Pryor's large marquee housing Poppy Appeal and Branch displays, a large Teddy Bear and RBL Fundraiser, Giles Colman's Scalextric racetrack.

Cadet News

The band of 1084 Squadron ATC celebrated its most successful competition ever when, competing against bands from Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire at the South & East Midlands Wing Marching Band Competition at RAF Wittering on April 21st, it won every class it entered and also had considerable success in the individual competitions. To round off the day the band won smartest band award and the overall certificate for the most successful band of the day. **Congratulations!**

The Editor Apologises for the lack of photographs (but see them on the branch website) and for not including the promised 'Weeping Cross' story. They will appear in a later issue.

LUNCH AT THE ANGEL



for good food and good company

2 JULY **MEET IN THE BAR
AT NOON**

MENU

Oven baked white fish on a bed of paella with a jug of tomato sauce

Escalope of pork on a bed of mashed potatoes with a rich apple and black pudding laced sauce (can be gf)

Supreme of Norfolk chicken on a bed of sautéed potatoes with a chunky chasseur sauce (gf)

All Served with a Selection of vegetables

Warm Summerset brie & beetroot tart with mixed salad and potato salad (v)



Cherry Bakewell cheesecake with clotted cream ice-cream (v)

Warm French Apple flan with vanilla ice-cream

Fresh fruit Salad with fruity Sorbet (v gf)



Coffee and mints

(gf=gluten-free v=vegetarian)

£8.50 Pay on the day

To book, ring Les Moore (01858 463112) before **25 June**. To cancel a booking you must phone The Angel (01858 462702) before 10 am on the day or you will be charged.

What's Going On?

Forthcoming Events

- 22 Jun AFD Coffee Morning - Harb' Theatre
22 Jun AFD Service and Parade
Leicester Cathedral
29 Jun RNA Summer Cheese and Wine - Great Bowden Village Hall 7 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.
£5 includes 2 glasses of wine.
29 Jun National Armed Forces Day - Nottingham
30 Jun M H Armed Forces Day Event Welland Park 10 am-2.30pm
!0 Jul Branch meeting & fun games
14 Jul Ramsay Walkers seek sponsor-ship for their Poppy Walk
20 Aug Visit to Poppy Factory- For a place please contact Betty Ramsay ASAP
26 Oct Poppy Appeal launch
2 Nov Festival of Remembrance de

Welfare

If you are aware of any one who qualifies for, and may benefit from The Royal British Legion welfare services please contact
Betty Ramsay
01858 434923

In Touch Next Month

'The Tom Boyd Story', 'Sealed Orders', News & Miscellany

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Branch Website

www.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/market-harborough

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