

In Touch

The monthly newsletter founded in 1996

The Royal British Legion



Registered Charity No. 219279

LIVE ON

To the memory of the fallen and the future of the living

94

Years of Caring



Market Harborough Branch

Founded in 1923

Centenary Year of 1917



This memorial
is in a Legion
Club visited in
2008. Page 5
explains

Next Monthly Branch Meeting
7.30 pm Wednesday 9 August
No Committee in August

Function Room, Conservative Club,
Fairfield Rd. Market Harborough

Issue 226
July 2017

Branch News

June Branch Meeting

Only 17 people present with many members away (including a group attending the Retreat on Horse Guards Parade in London). Matters covered included an update on the Hospital Memorial Portico; the need for someone to be responsible for the Memorial Garden Crosses; reminders about Armed Forces Week Flag raising and AFD parade and Drumhead Service; archive material had been removed from the Cabin ready to go to the Records Office; TRBL Annual Conference report by Delegate, John Standish, and GP90, the 2018 recreation of the 1928 Legion Pilgrimage to the WWI battlefields; Festival of Remembrance at De Montfort Hall and Poppy Race day reminders; Committee Workshop activity; dementia project, Herbert Protocol; Branch financial year ended on 30th June; membership is now 129; the apparently lost Poppy Collection had been found in the security company's safe; present Appeal total now about £23,000; Branch Community Support (Welfare) contacts stated and visits by Branch Supporters mentioned; the Standard had been carried at Annual Conference and would be at AFD events; 27 people were at the June Lunch; In Touch ready for delivery.

After Meeting Talk

Glyn Iliffe entitled his talk '1917' and came dressed and equipped as a WWI soldier from that year. He contrasted that and the following years with the preceding two in several respects. Then, the army was of Regulars, some from pre-war overseas postings, and of Volunteers



including Territorials, (Kitchener's Army). These were keen and some were experienced but this was lacking after conscription was introduced in June 1916. Other changes included training with a need to make men physically fit and also of personal tactics.

New improved clothing with leather jerkins, a redesigned helmet and camouflage was introduced. Equipment changed, too and Glyn demonstrated that with what he was carrying.

Applause showed that this interesting presentation was much appreciated.

Cover Image

From a photo taken by Tom Ashmore when he and Joan found and visited the Kirkwall Branch when on a 'Round Britain' cruise

Remember This? (From July 2007)



*Around the
World with
the RBL*

The Bracknell Branch

The origins of the Bracknell and district Royal British Legion date back to 1919, when the men of the village who served in the Great War, organised themselves and formed a "Comrades of the Great War Club". Their premises, which were situated on the eastern side of the village, was a construction of part brick and part corrugated iron and was to serve them for the next eleven years. When the British Legion came into existence in 1921, the club immediately affiliated as a Branch.

During the late 1920s a prominent local man, Harold Footman OBE, decided that the men who served the country so well were deserving of



better premises and facilities which he offered to provide from his own funds. Opened in 1930, the building dominated the village and was

regarded as the finest Legion Club in the Southern England .

Around 1950 Bracknell village, with a population of 5000, was designated a "New Town" under the New Town Act of 1949 and was to be developed along with other new towns to take a share of London's rapidly expanding population. As the new houses were



occupied, correspondingly the level of the branch membership increased substantially.

Following the development of the town centre the Branch moved to our new, present, location in 1968 with the official opening in 1969 by the then National Chairman of the Royal British Legion, Dennis Cadman.

I have a personal connection with the Club because it was where in 1971 my daughter's wedding reception was held . Editor



By Tom Ashmore

Because of my personal interest and involvement in early attempts to achieve means of communication between RBL Branches, I eventually located and contacted those with websites. (MH was one of the first to produce one and soon after HQ did.) This showed that there were different ideas which could be shared and be of mutual benefit. Without the endorsement of the Branch Committee but with its knowledge, in February 2007 I produced an online newsletter with comments and links to things which I found of interest accessible by the click of the computer mouse button, so I named it 'Click 2B In Touch' and circulated it to the branches I had found and some individual, including, MH members.

Although it was stated by one recipient branch in May that what I was doing was in contravention of the Data Protection Act, subsequent enquiries showed that it was legal and after some changes to its distribution, it continued after a month's break.

Each month I tried to find a theme for 'my latest trawl of the Internet' and for August 2008 used 'the ports of call on a recent 'Round Britain cruise'.

In the following extracts, the clickable links are shown *in Italics>*.

After leaving The London Cruise

Terminal at Tilbury our first stop was in northern France at Honfleur where we found this memorial thanking the Allies for the town's liberation. Not far away is the Normandy Calvados and District RBL



branch website which says the branch is 'unique in that it is located right in the path of the D Day landings and counts many veterans who landed on the shores of northern France amongst its members'. The website also had a fascinating story of the daring 1942 Bruneval Raid (Operation BITING) commemorated now each year.

Day 2 should have seen us in Jersey but adverse sea conditions prevented the necessary landing by tender (St Helier harbour cannot accommodate even modest size cruise ships). Had

we gone ashore we would have stood in Liberation Square to admire the



fascinating memorial to the end of German occupation.

An unusual story from that time,

'Four Volunteers - The Jersey escape route'

is on the Paris Branch website.

Our next stop was Cobh (pronounced Cove), the port for Cork. If we had gone into the town we might have looked for the RBL branch, one of ten listed in the *Republic of Ireland District RBL website*. Cobh has connections to two of the worst maritime

tragedies of the last century - the sinking by U-Boat in 1915 of the

Lucitania commemorated by this memorial,

and as the last port of call of the *Titanic* on her fated maiden voyage.

Cobh was also the departure point for thousands of Irish families hoping to escape poverty and famine to start a new life in America or Australia.



Two more calls in the Republic were followed by a single stop in Northern Ireland, at Belfast where we had a guided tour of the city. There are several RBL branches in Northern Ireland, some having websites.

Then northwards to the Hebrides and *Stornaway* the main town on the island, half of which is called Lewis and half Harris, a tradition maintained from the time when it was owned by just two individuals. There is a branch and club of RBL Scotland but we did not have time to look for it.

A night's sailing brought us to Kirkwall, 'capital' of the Orkneys. On a previous visit we went to *Scapa Flow*, home of British Fleets in both world wars and where the surrendered WWI German Fleet was scuttled. This time we took a stroll through the town, visited St Magnus Cathedral and after making enquiries found the Kirkwall RBLs branch and club. There with a very warm welcome and a refreshingly cool glass of cider we were shown round the extensive, well appointed premises. It is clearly a very successful branch having won the Scottish equivalent of the Haig cup in each of the previous three years and it has an attractive well presented website.

Next day in Leith we took a bus tour of Edinburgh, walked down Princes Street and through the gardens below the castle but no time for RBLs branch hunting before having to return to the ship and back to Tilbury.

Branch News

Lord Lieutenant Lady Gretton was awarded the DCVO in the Birthday Honours List and the Branch has sent her a letter of congratulations

The Drumhead Service was planned to be held on The Square but due to threatened wet weather was in St Dionysius Church. The parade did go to The Square but then returned to the Church.



Photos from Harborough Mail



July Lunch

On 4th July, 28 people including new member Richard Burton attended.

Dementia

Leics. Police are now involved in a national scheme of using information recorded on a form by carers or family so that if a person with dementia is reported missing it can help in finding him. To get the form visit <https://leics.police.uk/advice-and-information/victims-witnesses/advice-carers-people-dementia>

Miscellany

July 1917 News Items

- 2nd Up to 70 blacks murdered in race riots in Illinois, USA
- 7th 37 die in German air raids on London
- 10th 'War Bread' to be tested for digestibility after complaints
- 14th Finland proclaims independence from Russia
- 16th Lenin forced to flee after a crushed Bolshevik uprising
- 17th Winston Churchill appointed Minister of Munitions
- 24th M Ps shocked that war is costing £7 million a day
- 25th Mata Hari, provocative Oriental dancer sentenced to death in France for spying



From across 'The Pond'

Americans use the date format mm/dd/yy, but write 4th of July. Benjamin Franklin in 1700s wrote: Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead. Hide not your talents. They for use were made. Any fool can criticise, condemn and complain and most fools do.

From the Archives

Transcribed from the Harborough Mail dated 16 June 1995.

A Day to Remember

Two Harborough 'babies' were presented with commemorative coins to mark their VE Day connections. The presentation was made by the town Royal British Legion - with the help of The Mail. A Mail story in April had publicised the Legion's search to find a local person born on VE Day 50 years ago.

The appeal was answered by Barbara Palmer who was born at Theddingworth's Crown pub on VE Day, May 8, 1945.

The Legion then decided to honour not only her, but also a baby born on the VE Day anniversary, 1995.

Legion member Tom Jeacock traced a latter-day VE baby through the births column in the Mail and found little R Blenkinsopp - now four and a half weeks old.

Both VE Day babies' were given presentation coins by the Legion Chairman, Major Arthur Mace. One set of coins was donated by George Fleming and the other by Sam Shutt - both Legion members.

Mr Jeacock said: "I thought it would be nice to trace the two VE Day babies and make a presentation. One was a big baby of 50 and the other was a small baby."

Margaret (Peggy) Cliff 1924 -2017

Who died on 4th June had not been very active in the Branch but she did write a piece for In Touch about memories of service in the WRNS. About eight members attended her funeral service on 8th June. The Branch offer their condolences to her husband, Frank, and their family.

Peaker Park

The manager hoped that the branch would support their 'Open Day' on 8th July and several members had said they would attend some of the events in the extensive programme.

LUNCH AT THE ANGEL



for good food and good company

1 AUGUST **MEET IN THE
BAR AT NOON**

MENU

Chicken supreme; Roast pork loin;
Smoked haddock; Prawns with
choice of salad; Mixed salad.
Fresh fruit salad & sorbet; Summer
pudding with ice cream; Vanilla
cheesecake & cream.
Tea or coffee & mints. £9.25

To book, contact Pat Middleton,
email patriciamiddleton@hotmail.com
or phone 01858 445827

To cancel, ring The Angel (01858
462702) before 10 am on the day or
you will be charged

What's Going On?

Forthcoming Events

- 9 Aug Branch Meeting & Talk
5 Sep RNA Trip to Arboretum
13 Sep Branch Meeting & Poetry reading
11 Oct Branch AGM, Buffet and Poppy Awards
28 Oct De Montfort Remb' Festival
28 Oct M H Poppy Appeal launch
11 Nov Armistice Day on the Square from 1045 hrs
12 Nov Remembrance parade & Service from 0915 hrs + wreath-laying on The Square at 1045 hrs
18 Nov Band Remembrance Concert
2 Dec RNA Coffee Morning
9 Dec Sea Cadets Coffee Morning

Welfare

If you are aware of any one who may benefit from the Legion welfare services ring Betty

RBL Helpline

is open to everyone, 8am - 8pm, 7 days a week on 0808 802 8080 for advice and support for serving & ex-service people and dependents.

In Touch Next Month

From the Archives, Miscellany, Remember This?, News, etc.

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Branch Website

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

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