

# In Touch

The monthly newsletter founded in 1996

Issue 229  
October 2017

## 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**



Come aboard on p4

**Next Monthly Branch Meeting**  
**7.30 pm Wednesday 8 November**  
**Committee 2 November**

**Function Room, Conservative Club,  
Fairfield Rd. Market Harborough**

## Branch News

### September Branch Meeting

Before the meeting started Ken Hook reported on the local East Midlands Bloom Awards and the town winning Gold again. The 30 members present heard that the Committee had agreed an increase in the **Branch Administration Fee** by £1 to £3 so the membership subscription was now £20; the District Council wanted the **Cottage Hospital Portico** to remain in place despite support for the application to move it to the Memorial Gardens; the locations of the **WW1 and WW2 crosses** in the Memorial Gardens were to be transposed and volunteers were needed in November to install them after refurbishment by the prison workshop; nominations for elections at the **AGM** were required and revised branch **Bye Laws** would be presented. A short Branch Meeting and a buffet would follow; several members did a **Poppy Walk** in Welland Park prior to one for the public in 2018 (see p7); Marshals required for Remembrance Sunday parade; events to mark the end of **WW1** to be proposed by a sub-committee; the Branch would be involved in **TRBL G90** pilgrimage; a report on the **Sea Cadets AGM**; collectors needed for **2018 Poppy Appeal**; **Team Reports** presented.

### After Meeting Poetry Reading

The programme arranged by Betty Ramsay and Tom Ashmore was a mix of humorous and serious pieces, some quite long, others short, read by 15 branch members some of whom had chosen a favourite poem. First 'on stage' were Myra Grewcock, Kathie and John Morley in Roald Dahl's *Cinderella*, a laughter making start to the session. In the same vein, Brian Lee made a good *Umpire* in Michael Flanders' *Tennis*, *Little Flo's Letter* read by Adrian Hewitt and Caren Wild with *The Poslewaites Privy* each showing the Poets' imagination. In contrast Betty had chosen and read John Galsworthy's *England to Free Men* and *Adlestrop* by Edward Thomas; Pat Middleton read one of her favourites, *Lochinvar* by Sir Walter Scott; John Standish read *Last Post at the Menin Gate* by Joan M Bingham and Jill Mann read *Joan Ashmore's Rainy Day and Time Capsule*.

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### Committee Members

Brian & Janet Lee (077709 59845)  
Colin & Pauline McIntyre (email  
cMcIntyre1945@yahoo.co.uk)  
Pat Middleton (MH 445827)  
Kathie Morley (MH 419714)  
Barbara Pickup (MH 433492)  
Brian Thomas (MH 431119)  
Pat Walker (MH 545560)

Cover Image

Cunard Countess cruise liner from Simplon Postcards found on the Internet

## Hurricanes Hardly Ever Happen!

by Ray Tyler

During the war I was a Jack Dusty (Storekeeper) in the Andrew (Navy). I normally slept in the afternoons and did my book-work about two in the morning. Early one morning, when I was preparing for the Bubbly (rum) issue, word came that the Galley (Kitchen) was not to be used. So no Ki (Cocoa) for those topside (on deck) or those doing the books.

Then the ship started to corkscrew (roll and pitch) badly, which we were told was caused by a Hurricane nearby. Suddenly, through the extra noise caused by the ship's movement there came a scream from the Galley. A cook, trying to make chips, was covered with boiling fat which had slopped from the large oil cooker. I was alone and nearby, and action was urgently needed, but what? And

very quickly! Outside the Galley were several large bags of white flour, used by the baker for making bread for the several hundred ship's crew. I ripped open one of these bags and rolled the lad in the flour. I yelled for someone to get a stretcher and one of our doctors. We had two.

Well, I was congratulated by the Doctor, who said that there would be very little scarring, but "how the hell do I get that flour off his body?" A few days later, still looking like a snowman, they flew him off to hospital shore-side and for all I know he is still there, covered with flour and oil.

Could I have done better? I often wondered. What would a good First-aider have done?

Ray was In Touch Editor from  
January to July 2000

### Another Town Crier

The Editor was impressed by his recent encounter with a Town Crier visiting Market Harborough, but how many of us know that for many years the town had a resident Crier and that he was one of our branch members? The (included) picture, taken from a photograph lent by Tom Jea-cock, will remind other Old Harbo-

rians of the time when Bernard Page was the Town Crier. Forty years on, Bernard is not the man he was and after 18 months of illness has had to relinquish the independence of his own home and accept the care and support of Beech House Residential Home. Still very alert, Bernard would welcome visitors and the chance of a chat.



## *Memories Triggered by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.*

By Tom Ashmore

With the recent news coverage of the devastating Caribbean hurricanes I have had 'Been there, Done That' memories of a very calm and enjoyable cruise calling at many of the islands mentioned. My photographs and experiences contrast with those shown on TV and may be of interest to you even if you have been to the Caribbean.

It was in January 1994 that my wife Joan, her sister Nora and I started a two week holiday arranged by Page and Moy. Flying from Gatwick, we arrived at San Juan in Puerto Rico where we were made very aware that we were on American soil, a bit of geographical knowledge I was previously missing.

In the harbour we boarded the Cunard Countess, quite a small ship by today's standards with cabins for about 800 passengers and with a crew of about 350 and ready for a figure of eight cruise round the islands. Sailing at night, the ship moored during the day at the next island on the itinerary giving time for the various excursions designed to give a taste of that small country. Some were very small like Tortola in the British Virgin Islands, only 12 miles long and 3 miles wide. All had an interesting history from the time when Columbus discovered the

first, claiming it for Spain and over the centuries the French, Dutch, British, Danish, Swedish and Germans added little bits to their empires. Inter-country rivalry often resulted in warfare and subsequent change of 'ownership', language and customs. The influence of the original Spanish



occupation is still evident in Puerto Rico as in this architecture in a San Juan street but it is most obvious in the language which is officially Spanish, not 'American'.

The French and Dutch each had settlements on one island but peacefully decided to split its 37 square miles into two parts; St Martin and St Martaanens. Today each has its own telephone system and it is an International call from one side to the other!! There is an airport on each side and they are only six miles apart.

A rather larger French 'acquisition' was Martinique later taken over by Britain but by the Treaty of Paris in 1763 returned to France in exchange for Canada!! Many of the islands have fortifications built during those

turbulent times but some have been restored primarily as tourist attractions. Nelsons Dockyard on Antigua is good example recalling the time when he kept his fleet there.



One of the original houses, now a hotel

Another reminder of the island's Naval days is *Pussers, The Official Drinking Manual of the British Virgin Islands* (a copy of which I have retained) with recipes of the many forms in which rum can be served.

Rum is very popular in the islands and on Guadeloupe we visited a small distillery seeing the sugar cane brought in by the farmers being hand fed into a crusher driven by an ancient water wheel to extract the juice which when fermented was distilled in quite modern equipment.

It was not the demand for rum which led to bitter warlike rivalry between the islands' 'owners', but sugar from which fortunes were made satisfying the great demand in Europe during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Eventually one of the world's largest sugar industries was in Barbados where sugar cane was introduced in the mid 1600s from Brazil by Sephardic Jews. A synagogue

still exists in the capital, Bridgetown where it is also surprising to find Trafalgar Square with a statue of Nelson

erected 27 years before that in London. In contrast, in the centre of



the island is a statue commemorating a the emancipation of the slaves who had been the labour force which created the sugar industry and the 'Sugar Barons'. The island parliament was established in 1639 and in the Commonwealth is the third oldest. There is quite small military force and law and order is maintained by the Royal Barbados Police force whose renowned band has performed at the Edinburgh Tattoo.

St Kitts, is another island with a strong British past secured by the British



Army in Brimstone Hill Fort which had quarters for Artillery and Infantry troops defending against

probable French attack.

Now the islands' invaders are tourists and much sugar is from beet grown in the English Fens.



## Legion News

### County Office

Lisa Michael, the Membership Support Officer, is at County Office in the VAL building at 9 Newarke St. Leicester Tue, Wed, Thu each week.

### Advice and Information

This service is available locally, when County A & I Officer, Susan Grogan visits M H Library from 10am to noon on the last Tuesday of each month. Call 0808 802 8080 for appointment.

### Poppy Calls

This free Handy Man service helps ex-Service people and their families with small household repairs and minor adaptations. To use, call 0808 802 8080

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*Seaside Golf* by Sir John Betjeman was an appropriate choice for Barbara Pickup to read as was *Flower Arranging for Myra Grewcock* and *Little Bo Peep* for Pat Walker. Pat's other poem, *If My Body Were a Car* rang bells with many listeners who also agreed with the Christmas message in Pam Ayres' *Goodwill to Men - Give us Your Money*, ably read by Colin McIntyre. There were three amusing poems by W S Gilbert; *Good King Good Heart*, read by Brian Thomas, *General John* which Paul Whitlock recited and John Standish with *To a Little Maid - By a Policeman*. Brian Lee with *Try it the other way Round* and Pauline McIntyre *Comparing My Husband to Robbie Burns* closed another very successful Poetry Reading.

## Miscellany

### October 1917 News Items

- 5th Peru breaks diplomatic relations with Germany
- 7th Uruguay does the same
- 5th Chequers becomes the country seat for the British P M
- 9th Creation of a Black Division in the US Army approved
- 15th Convicted spy Mata Hari executed in Paris
- 15th British people asked to reduce motoring for pleasure
- 18th German sailors in Ostend refuse to board submarines
- 20th 8 Zeppelins kill 27 in London and returning, 4 are shot down over France
- 27th US troops fire their first shots of the War on Western Front



Traffic Control on High Seas

If all is not lost, where is it? Anon  
I never think of the future. It comes soon enough. Albert Einstein

A man is incomplete until he has married. Then he's finished.

Zsa Zsa Gabor

## *From the Archives*

Extract from a letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1958 from Culross & Co., Solicitors, 65, Duke Street Grosvenor Square, London to Frank Hysworth, Secretary(?) of M H British Legion Branch.

Dear Sir,

British Legion - Market Harborough Branch

We act for Legion Headquarters and the General Secretary has asked us to deal with your letter of 16<sup>th</sup> instant. We are glad to be able to assure you that the Legion has a legal right of way through the yard leading from the High Street to the Branch premises. To explain this in detail, we enclose an extract describing the property and rights conveyed to the Legion by Deed dated 21<sup>st</sup> December 1946, when the property was bought from the International Tea Company Stores Ltd. We suggest you might produce this to the present owner of the former Hind Hotel when you inform him that he has no right to close the means of access.

Yours faithfully,  
(signature)

The property, was the Branch HQ which had been built just after the war. It was sold in 1991 and the funds held in a Legion HQ account. The building has now been demolished and the site awaits re-development.

## *More News*

### **Poppy Walk**

Following the trial in Welland Park in August there is to be a fund raising event open to the public in 2018. A volunteer is sought to organise it

### **Peaker Park**

Their Harvest Festival Lunch at 1pm on 11 October and Bonfire Night at 6pm on 3 November. If you wish to attend either of these please ring them on MH 414460..

## **LUNCH AT THE ANGEL**



for good food and good company

**7 NOVEMBER** **MEET IN THE  
BAR AT NOON**

### **MENU**

Roast leg of lamb; chicken thighs in tomato etc sauce; Smoked haddock on mash; vegetable casserole. Fresh fruit salad & sorbet; Fruity meringue roulade; bread & butter pudding.

Tea or coffee & mints. £9.25

To book, contact Kathie Morley on 01858 419714 or by email [kathiemorley@talktalk.net](mailto:kathiemorley@talktalk.net). To cancel, ring The Angel (01858 462702) before 10 am on the day or you will be charged

## What's Going On?

### Forthcoming Events

- 14 Oct Poppy Appeal Coffee Morning @ Theatre
- 28 Oct Festival of Remembrance @ Demontfort Hall. Contact John Morley for transport
- 28 Oct M H Poppy Appeal launch 10.45 on The Square
- 11 Nov Armistice Day 10.45 hrs on the Square. Wreath-laying at Portico 2pm
- 12 Nov Remembrance parade & Service from 0915 hrs + on The Square at 1045 hrs
- 26 Nov Band Concert 2.30pm Welland Park Assembly Rooms. Tickets held by Mr & Mrs McIntyre
- 2 Dec RNA Coffee Morning
- 9 Dec Sea Cadets Coffee Morning

#### Welfare

If you know any one who may benefit from Legion welfare ring Betty Ramsay on 01858 434923

#### 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.

*The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Editor or the Market Harborough Branch. The editor reserves the right to decide what is to be published. No part may be reproduced without prior permission.*

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#### Branch Website

[www.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/market-harborough](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/market-harborough)

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