

# The Royal British Legion



Registered Charity No. 219279

## LIVE ON

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

Our monthly newsletter launched in 1996



## Market Harborough Branch

Formed in 1923

### Centenary Year of 1917

Why a  
memorial  
of a bird?

pp 4 & 5  
explains



**Next Monthly Branch Meeting**  
**7.30 pm Wednesday 10 January**  
**Committee 4 January**

Function Room, Conservative Club,  
Fairfield Rd. Market Harborough

**Issue 231**  
**December 2017**

# In Chrysalis

## Branch News

### November General Meeting

The 28 members present heard that Sara Whitley-Kinzett was unwell and unable to carry out secretarial duties at present. Betty Ramsay would continue as Secretary; the ATC had sent apologies for not helping at the Coffee Morning and had sent a cheque for £100; the Chairman thanked everyone involved in delivering and setting up the crosses in the **Memorial Gardens**; helpers and raffle prizes were required at the **Band Concert**; three events as part of the **Commemoration of end of WWI** had been proposed and the Museum would arrange a display; plans had been submitted by the purchaser for developing the Cottage Hospital site, one included leaving the **Memorial Portico** in situ; arrangements for **Remembrance Weekend** and thanks for media publicity; **Lighting up the old Grammar School** was disappointing; **Anniversary Dinner** would be on 14 March instead of the Branch Meeting; the current President, Standard Bearer and Branch Community Support Representative had been **re-appointed**; our first Youth Member, Christopher Brazil, was one of four new **Members**; the Coffee Morning and the sale of Poppy items contributed to the **Poppy Appeal**; **Welfare ((Community Support)** matters were reported; **Team Reports** included that the Standard Bearer was at the Poppy launch and would be at Remembrance events, the last lunch was very good, a new Armed Forces Committee would be appointed and In Touch was ready.

### After Meeting Talk

Stewart Harrison gave a well illustrated talk on 'Aden's Dirty War' based on an article in *Soldier* magazine of the British Army, about the defence of this small British Colony against Egyptian backed Arab insurgents, Stewart had served in the Royal Engineers at that time and so was able to confirm much of what the article described.



After the assassination of the Governor General in September 1965 Aden was ruled by a High Commissioner supported by increased security forces but they were dealing with an unpredictable and unscrupulous well equipped enemy showing no regard for military or civilian life or of sex or age.

By September 1967 it was decided to negotiate for a withdrawal and the last British troops left Aden in November 1967. Continued on p 7

Cover Image

Photo taken by Tom Ashmore at the National Memorial Arboretum on 19th July 2011

## *Remember these?* (From December 2007)

John, a student stood at the roadside hitchhiking on a dark night in the midst of a storm. The night was rolling on and no car went by. The storm was so strong he could hardly see a few feet ahead of him. Suddenly, he saw a car slowly coming towards him and it stopped.

John, desperate for shelter and without thinking about it, got into the car and closed the door only to realise there was nobody behind the wheel and the engine wasn't running. The car began moving slowly. John looked at the road ahead and saw a curve approaching. Scared, he started to pray, begging for his life. Then, just before the car hit the curve, a hand appeared out of nowhere through the window and turned the wheel.

A young ventriloquist was touring the clubs in the

north and one night, with his dummy on his knee, he began his act with the usual quota of dumb blonde jokes. (*Apologies to fair-haired Lady Members.*) Suddenly, a blonde woman stood on her seat and started shouting. "I've heard enough of your stupid blonde jokes. What makes you think you can stereotype women that way? What does the colour of a person's hair have to do with her worth as a human being?"

John, paralysed with terror, watched as the hand came through the window, but it never touched or harmed him.

Shortly thereafter John saw the lights of a pub appear down the road, so, gathering strength, he jumped out of the car and ran to it. Wet and breathless, he rushed in and started telling everybody about his horrible experience. A silence enveloped the pub as it was realised he was crying and not drunk.

Suddenly, the door opened, and two other men walked in from the stormy night. Looking around, and seeing John sobbing at the bar, one said, "Look Paddy, there's that idiot who got in the car while we were pushing it!"



Just a Bit of  
Festive Fun

It's people like you who keep women like me from being re-

spected at work and in the community, and from reaching our full potential as persons. You and your kind continue to perpetuate discrimination against not only blondes, but women in general - and all in the name of humour!"

The embarrassed ventriloquist began to apologize, and the blonde stopped him saying, "You stay out of this, Mister, I'm talking to that little runt on your knee!"

## *100 Years of Military Women*

**Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS)** the women's branch of the British Army, had its roots in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), which was formed in 1917 as a voluntary service. During the First World War its members served in a number of jobs including clerks, cooks, drivers, telephonists and waitresses.

The WAAC was disbanded in 1921. In September 1938 it was reformed as the ATS initially as a women's voluntary service, attached to the Territorial Army, and like it, organised on a regional basis but members would receive two thirds the pay of male soldiers. It incorporated members of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY), the earliest women's voluntary corps.

All women in the army joined the ATS except for nurses, who joined Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS), and medical and dental officers, who were commissioned directly into the Army and held army ranks.

The ATS existed until 1 February 1949, when it was merged into the Women's Royal Army Corps which itself was disbanded in 1992. Women now serve alongside men in the same Regiments & Corps.

**Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS)** was formed in 1917. By the end of WWI the WRNS had 5,500 members, 500 of them officers. In addition, about 2,000 women had served supporting the Royal Naval Air Service and were transferred as WRAF when the Royal Air Force was created. It was disbanded in 1919.

The WRNS was revived in 1939 with an expanded list of allowable activities, including flying transport planes. At its peak in 1944 it had 75,000 active servicewomen. In 1977 the WRNS and the Royal Navy became one organisation and women became subject to the same discipline as men.

The WRNS remained in existence after the war and was finally integrated into the regular Royal Navy in 1993 when women were allowed to serve on board navy vessels as full members of the crew.

Before 1993, all women in the Royal Navy were members of the WRNS except nurses, who joined (and still join) Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service, and medical and dental officers, who were commissioned directly into the Royal Navy, held RN ranks, and wore WRNS uniform with gold RN insignia.

**Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF)** came into being with the formation of the Royal Air Force in April 1918. In 1920 it was disbanded, but reformed as the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) in June 1939. when it came under the administration of the RAF.

Women joined the WAAF from, and served in, the UK and overseas. They did not serve in all female units, but as individual members of RAF Commands. They were involved in nursing, telephony, telegraphy, aircraft repair, aerial photography interpretation, weather reporting, Radar Control, on Balloon sites but not flying. Some with particular skills transferred into the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and were trained as agents to be sent into occupied Europe. Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa all had women's sections in their air forces

The WAAF was re-formed into the WRAF in 1949 and fully integrated into the RAF in 1994 and women can now fly.

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Women did fly in WW2, but as civilian members of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) delivering new planes from factories to RAF units and shuttling planes back for repair.

### **Celebration of 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the Woman's Royal Naval Service**

At the beginning of November 2017 I attended a Wrens Association long weekend reunion in Portsmouth. It was a memorable occasion for several reasons. One of those being that we attended a service in Portsmouth Cathedral to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the formation of the Woman's Royal Naval Service. The security was very much in evidence and when Princess Anne appeared we realised why. The first Sea Lord, The Mayor and many high ranking officers were in evidence and it was an impressive event paying tribute to the women who served or gave their lives in two world wars and those still working alongside their colleagues in the Royal Navy. The event was widely covered on local television. Princess Anne unveiled a stone memorial which was beautiful. There were 800 serving and ex service women attending the Service in the Cathedral, this was the full capacity of the seating in the Cathedral. After the Service we all adjourned to the Guildhall for afternoon tea where many of us met old friends we had not seen for years.

Pat Middleton  
*(Princess Anne is the Patron of the WRNS Benevolent Trust, the Association of Wrens)* Editor

## From the Archives

### Photos from Meetings



People's War Talk May 2005



Dick, Bill, & Tom March 2006

Buffet  
August  
2010



A Game  
with  
George,  
Con &  
Peter  
May 2011

## Miscellany

### December 1917 News Items

- 3<sup>rd</sup> U K refuses to recognise the Bolshevik regime in Russia
- 7<sup>th</sup> USA declares war on Austria
- 9<sup>th</sup> Jerusalem surrenders to Gen. Allenby after being surrounded by Empire Forces
- 12<sup>th</sup> Pro-German coup in Portugal, a British ally
- 18<sup>th</sup> US senate votes in favour of prohibition
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Australian referendum opposes conscription

### Christmas Fun



It's hard to be jolly when you have to work at Christmas

Who's the bane of Santa's life?

The elf and safety officer. *Catherine Tate*

Why did the turkey cross the road?  
Are you kidding? It's Christmas - he should run a mile. *Stephen K Amos*

What's the slogan for the Eskimo lottery?

"You've got to be Inuit to win it!"  
*Alistair McGowan*

## More Branch News

The November Lunch was attended by 26 people.

Armistice Day events started with laying a wreath on the Memorial in Welland Park and then a well attended wreath-laying and the 11 o'clock two minutes silence by the Gates of the Memorial Gardens. At 2.30 pm at the old Cottage Hospital a ceremony was held in front of the War Memorial Portico where a wreath was fixed, possibly for the last time in this location. Finally, there was a Sunset ceremony in the Memorial Gardens in which a Piper



led Standard Bearers to face the model Cenotaph as the Last Post was sounded and Union Flag lowered.

Thanks are due to the Volunteer Marshals for road closure duties for Remembrance Sunday parades. The Service, wreath-laying and Silence on the Square attracted a large number of members of the public.. This year the Branch Standard was carried by ACF cadet Jack Arnold, and the RAFA Standard by our Branch member Jane Timms.

The 18th Annual Remembrance Concert by the Harborough Band was held on Sunday afternoon, 26 November, in the Assembly Room at Welland Park Academy. The District Council Chairman and nearly 100 people were present but a disappointing number of Branch members.

### Committee Members

Jill Mann (MH 461572)  
Colin & Pauline McIntyre (email  
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Pat Middleton (MH 445827)  
Kathie Morley (MH 419714)  
Barbara Pickup (MH 433492)  
Pat Walker (MH 545560)

## JOINT LUNCH

AT THE  
**ANGEL**



for good food and good company

**9 JANUARY** MEET IN THE  
BAR AT NOON

### MENU

Chicken Supreme on mash; Loin of  
Cod on mash; Veg in Baked Auber-  
gine on Fried Potatoes.  
Fresh fruit salad & sorbet; Vanilla  
Cheesecake, cherries & cream ;  
Bread & Butter Pudding.  
Tea or coffee & mints. £9.25

To book, contact Kathie Morley on  
01858 419714 or by email  
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

- 9 Jan Joint lunch with RNA & RAFA  
10 Jan Branch meeting  
13 Jan County Conference @ Melt-on Mowbray  
6 Feb Branch lunch  
14 Feb Branch Meeting
- 23 Mar Anniversary Dinner @ Con. Club

#### 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.

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Committee - see Page 7