

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

95

Years of Caring



Market Harborough Branch

Founded in 1923

Centenary Year of 1918



See pages 4 & 5 for the city where this is

Next Monthly Branch Meeting
7.30 pm Wednesday 12 September
Committee 6 September

Function Room, Conservative Club,
Fairfield Rd. Market Harborough

Issue 239
August 2018

Branch News

July Branch Meeting

Due to the broadcast of the World Cup Football match that evening the Chairman proposed that the meeting only dealt with key items of the Agenda but if anyone of the 11 members present wished to raise any other matter they could do so.

Betty Ramsay requested that thanks should go to all who sponsored Christopher Brazil for his trophy winning Poppy Walk collection, part of a total of £1200.

Volunteers were needed to man the Branch stall at the Community and Volunteer Fair on 25 August.

The nomination of Stuart Harrison as County Vice Chairman was approved. A volunteer was urgently required to lead arrangements for refurbishing and laying out the Remembrance Garden crosses.

Sponsored Poppy Walk Awards

At a ceremony at The Angel Hotel on 9th July the winners of various classes were presented with their awards, all donated by local businesses, by the HDC Chairman, Cllr Lesley Bowles. There were two Trophies and Certificates, that to the individual with the largest amount sponsored went to Youth Member Christopher Brazil and the other to



the a cadet representing his Emergency Services Group for the best group amount. There were also several lesser awards.

HELP!!

Someone is needed to liaise with the Prison Officers for the refurbishment of the **Remembrance Garden Crosses** and later to arrange setting them out. Details from the Branch Chairman



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Cover Image

A night time photo of the illuminated Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, copied from a Wikipedia entry.

Remember these Wrens whose stories appeared in August 2008 and 2013

This group of young Wrens under training in October 1956 includes, third from the left, Pat Middleton. The girls are standing in front of a Hunting Percival Sea Prince of 750 Naval Air Squadron at the Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose in Cornwall.



Pat writes, "We were at the

end of several months of a Communications Course and the object here was for us to experience the voice communications from the pilot's



viewpoint in an aircraft during flight. We are all kitted up with parachutes, life jackets and sick bags - you can see mine tucked into the front of my life jacket. I don't remember receiving any instructions on the use of the parachute except that the pilot said 'Well girls - if I shout JUMP you must jump straight away, if you hear it a second time it is only an echo!'. We all thought that was hilarious - not realising then it is the oldest flying joke in the book. We were all just eighteen and raring to go!"

D Day Remembered

By ex Wren Margaret Cliff

I served in the WRNS as a writer (Fleet Air Arm) for 3 years during WWII based at The Royal Naval Air station in the Commodore's Office at Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire.

In the weeks leading up to D Day the village was packed tightly with armoured vehicles and personnel, all waiting for the signal to go. The soldiers lived in their vehicles with rations provided to each man. Needless to say rations were basic, so the call went out to every Wren to help. We had no

food on the premises - only plenty of 'Ship's Cocoa' - thick and nourishing - so every night we brewed gallons of cocoa as night-caps for the hundreds who came to our quarters. The men brought ground sheets and spread them out where there was space in the garden and orchard and we held impromptu concerts to try to lift their spirits. One night they all melted away and we awoke to find vehicles and men gone. The Mulberry Harbours and thousands of ships in the bay had also disappeared as if by magic.

I will never forget them.

The Day the Wall Came Down

by Colin Budden with images added by the Editor

I was based in Minden Germany and was platoon sergeant of 10 platoon, C Company, 2nd Battalion the Queens Regiment. Our task was to patrol the inner border between East



and West Germany. Our platoon was 30 strong and we had observers who were on hand should any incidents happen along the border.

We loaded up enough rations for our 10 days and travelled towards the Checkpoint Charlie. At our destination we found that our accommodation was a hut big enough for a cookhouse, eating house and rooms for accommodation. It would be sleeping bags for the next 9 nights. Troops were told to crack on with preparing the food for dinner and to settle in ready for border patrols.

A Lieutenant was assigned to our platoon and we were immediately driven off to conduct a Recce of the border, with the observers. The



border had fences 30 feet high with tracks and tall trees in places. We got to a small village of which I cannot remember it's name but this was now the inner border line. It was divided by a small stream partially dried up.

Looking across to the East there were 2 Russian soldiers in uniform with rifles etc. They just stood there and observed us. They were about 20 feet from where we were. No communication was made by either side. I took a few photos of them. Then all of a sudden we heard some



The night the border was opened at Checkpoint Charlie on 9th November 1989

locals coming out into the street. They were clearing the road that ran East to West on a minor road. They were clearing the footpath too. We wondered what the heck was going on??

The observers radioed back to HQ and low and behold it was the day that the Berlin Wall came down. All we

could do was to get back in the Landrover and drive back to the base. It was correct. We looked at the motorway and there were literally hundreds of the same coloured brown vehicles driving from East Germany



over to the West. The cars were Trabants I think that was the name of the cars. All were packed up and ready to get into West Germany ,to I assume to meet up with their relatives in the West.

So what were we going to do now? Decision was made to pack up and get back to our barracks in Clifton Barracks Minden. Food etc was returned to the cookhouse and that was the end of our mission to patrol the border.

I can say that I was the last Platoon Sergeant to have been on patrol on the inner border in Germany when the Berlin Wall came down and the border opened.
The rest is history.

The above story is an extract of Colin's proposed book of memories of his Army Service but he has been beaten to it by another ex- Queens Regiment soldier,

Major (retired) John Bennett whose limited edition book, 'The Memories of a rusty Cold War Warrior - The life and times of a Territorial Army soldier who lived through the end of the Cold War' has recently been published.

*Published in a more modest form are two stories from the start of the Cold War written by Tom Jeacock about his Berlin service in 1945/6. They were in the April & July 2013 issues of **In Touch**.*

The present day and very different experiences of an Army Reserve (ex-Territorial) soldier are those Andrew Marriott is describing in his updates of

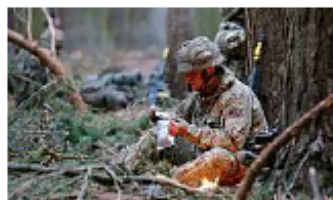
Operation Trenton 5, the British element of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. In the May and June issues of In Touch he dealt with the intensive training in the four weeks from when he volunteered to serve for 12 months in South Sudan. Here he tells us something of the final two weeks of training leading to arriving in Kenya.

The Mobilisation Rehearsal Exercise was at the Thetford training area where something of South Sudan was simulated. He says, 'Wednesday started with a beret changing parade to become UN troops and the formal formation of the task force. Samples were taken from the many Blood

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donor volunteers in case the need arose overseas. Training relevant to life with the Mission included dealing with prisoners, base security and incident management as well as water supply and setting up a water point 'Thirty years on and it is the same equipment I trained on. But it is often said 'If it isn't broken don't fix it.'



Other troops in the forest

After
two
more
days of
rumors,
including

that 'the civvies went home yesterday', it was time for ENDEX, the final part of being in the Thetford Forest version of South Sudan. LCpl's and above had a debrief 'good drills and areas of improvement on various incidents through the Mobilisation Rehearsal Exercise' and the task force was 'deemed ready for Deployment. This is not a given, so lots of happy troops.'

On return to Maidstone, weapons and all documents were handed in, a week of reorganising, the three and a half weeks leave and then pre-deployment ready to go overseas. Delay in receiving visas meant time to visit London and Canterbury.

'I'm now in Kenya', waiting to move across to South Sudan.

Miscellany

August 1918 News Items

- 8th 20 Divisions of Allied troops recover much ground lost to the Germans near Amiens
- 13th Britain recognises the state of Czechoslovakia
- 17th Japanese government requisitions all stocks of rice
- 20th New York barbers raise the price of a haircut to 50 cents
- 24th London Underground workers strike for equal women's wage
- 25th In Berlin rioters destroy pictures of the Kaiser
- 25th Hungarian government expels Jews and confiscate their assets



It has come to my attention that you have been doing the work of two men

Heat wave quotes

'What dreadful hot weather we are having. It keeps me in a continual state of inelegance' Jane Austen

'I'm glad it's finally hot enough to complain about how hot it is.'

'Happiness is a glass of cold water after a walk home in hot weather.'

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Peaker Park

Four Branch members attended their Garden Party on 14th July, two as visitors, one as a resident and the other, the e-x Hotel Manager, Phil Wright standing in for his successor. The buffet was good and plentiful and had the vocal accompaniment of a lady singer. Tombola, cake and other stalls and a raffle with generously donated prizes all added to the Party atmosphere.

Missing Name

A ceremony is being held at 10 am on Saturday, 1st September to add Ballard W Coleman to the WW2 names on the gates of the Memorial Gardens. The event will be hosted by HDC Chairman Cllr Lesley Bowles followed by light refreshments in the Council Chamber. Please contact j.robinson@harborough.gov.uk or b.burt@harborough.gov.uk if you wish to attend.

Obituary

We regret to announce that Kwan, wife of George Fleming died in hospital on Monday, 23 July, age 82. She was born in Hong Kong where George met her and married her when he was in the Army there. Kwan had had very poor health for several years requiring continuous care from George. We send him and her family in Hong Kong and the UK our sincere condolences.

Branch members are always welcome at **Peaker Park** at their social events such as BBQ Lunch 12.30 pm 12th August, Harvest Festival Lunch 17th October, 5th November Bonfire Night 6pm. Ring MH 414460 if you will attend

Committee Members

Jill Mann (MH 461572)
Colin & Pauline McIntyre (email cMcIntyre1945@yahoo.co.uk)
Pat Middleton (MH 445827)
Kathie Morley (MH 419714)
Barbara Pickup (MH 433492)
Pat Walker (MH 545560)

LUNCH
AT THE
ANGEL



for good food and good company

4 SEPTEMBER MEET IN THE
BAR AT NOON

MENU

Roast bacon wrapped Chicken breast, stuffing, etc.; smoked haddock on mash; Aubergine, courgette, peppers, quorn sausages; Salads Ham & Egg or Chicken and asparagus. Fresh fruit Salad w sorbet; Meringue w fruits; Cherry & Almond tart w custard.

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

- 25 Aug Community & Volunteers Fair on The Square supported by our MP. **Please help to man the Branch Stall**
- 12 Sep Meeting & Poetry Reading
- 16 Sep Battle of Britain Service
- 10 Oct Branch AGM & Buffet
- 13 Oct Poppy Appeal coffee morning at the theatre
- 13 Oct Thank You Afternoon Tea
- 27 Oct Poppy Appeal Launch
- 11 Nov Remembrance Sunday Parade, Services & Lunch
- 24 Nov Band Concert- Baptist Church

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. Locally, visit the **Pop In Centre** at the Library 10 am-noon on the second Thursday each month

In Touch Next Month

Centre pages story, Miscellany, Remember This?, News, etc.

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Branch Website

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

Committee - see Page 7