



# **The Royal British Legion**



## **Market Harborough Branch**

Reg Charity 219279

# ***In Touch***

*Issue 143*

*August 2010*

The monthly newsletter (founded 1996) of the Market Harborough Branch (BR0106) of the Royal British Legion.

**Next  
Monthly Branch  
Meeting  
Wednesday  
8 Sep**

Function Room,  
Conservative Club,  
Fairfield Rd,  
Market Harborough  
7-30pm

## Royal International Air Tattoo.

This was sent in by ATC Cdt Callum Dilley

The weekend was fantastic and one I won't forget in a hurry.

From marching through the crowds playing my drum to seeing the latest planes soar amongst the clouds.

Day one was brilliant. It started a bit cloudy and drizzled but it didn't matter once we started playing. The weather was forgotten, we were in 'band mode'.

I loved marching through the crowds playing tune after tune as well as seeing the sights and aircraft performing at their best.

At the end of the day we went to bed with the roar of the engines still in our ears, eagerly awaiting day two, would it live up to the first day.

Day two dawned and it turned out even better than Day one.

It was an early start but all sleepiness was shaken off as we marched to play under the Vulcan. It was an



amazing experience, one of the best times of my life. But then it got knocked off the top

spot when we played in the arena for Britain's Got Talent's dance group Flawless. It was great and at the end we got to meet them.

The day just seemed to get better, we got the opportunity to blast out a drum solo so we went for it, heads turned in our direction and cameras clicked, it was a fantastic moment. But it wasn't all music. We toured the display stands collecting as many freebees as we could carry. We took loads of photos and gazed at the aerobatic displays. I can't believe the weekend was so good RIAT 2010 - absolutely magnificent!

  
**ANGEL** the

HOTEL & RESTAURANT

37 High St, Market Harborough  
LE16 7AF. Tel 01858 462702

\* A family owned hotel with 28 en-suite rooms.

\*Function room for private parties

\*Family restaurant serving evening meals and traditional Sunday lunch

\* afternoon teas (Apr to Sept)

\* Lounge bar - a great place to enjoy a drink with friends

**Waiting to Welcome You**

## Welfare

If you are aware of any one who qualifies for, and who may benefit from, the Royal British Legion welfare services please contact

Betty Ramsey  
01858 434923

## **This Month in 1945**

On 9 Aug 1945 American forces dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki one of Japan's most important ports. This was the second attack on Japan in three days when a similar device was dropped on the city of Hiroshima .

The bomb was dropped by parachute from an American B29 Bomber and exploded 1,625ft above ground. American airmen



flying many miles from Nagasaki reported smoke from fires in the city was rising 50,000ft. Japanese broadcasts indicated

that "enormous devastation" has been done.

Three million leaflets were dropped from American aeroplanes warning the Japanese people that more atomic weapons would be used "again and again" to destroy the country unless they ended the war forthwith. This they duly did and 15 August was declared Victory in Japan day. The end of war was marked by two-day holidays in the UK, the USA and Australia.

In an address to a crowd outside the White House President Truman said: "This is the day we have been waiting for since Pearl Harbor. This is the day when Fascism finally dies, as we always knew it would."

The day coincided with the State Opening of Parliament which took on an air of a victory parade. Thousands braved the rain to watch King George VI and the Queen driven down the Mall in an open carriage. The King addressed the nation "Our hearts are full to overflowing, as are your own. Yet there is not one of us who has experienced this terrible war who does not realise that we shall feel its inevitable consequences long after we have all forgotten our rejoicings today." The Royal Family greeted cheering crowds from the Palace balcony. Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret later mingled with the crowds outside the Palace. Buildings in London were floodlit and people crowded onto the streets of every town shout-



ing, singing, dancing, lighting bonfires and letting off fireworks.

There were no celebrations in Japan - in his first ever radio broadcast, Emperor Hirohito blamed the use of "a new and most cruel bomb" used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki for Japan's surrender. "Should we continue to fight, it would not only result in the ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation but would lead also to the total extinction of human civilisation."

## **The SR71 - Pilots Tales**

Provided by Mark Hudson it tells the experiences of an SR71 pilot After the Soviets shot down Gary Powers U-2 in 1960, Lockheed began to develop an aircraft, to fly 3 miles higher and five times faster than the spy plane, and still photograph extreme details.

However, flying at 2,000 mph would create intense heat on the aircraft's skin. Lockheed engineers used a titanium alloy, to construct more than 90 percent of the SR-71, creating special tools, and manufacturing procedures to hand-build each of the 40 planes. Special heat resistant fuel, oil, and hydraulic fluids, also had to be developed.

In 1962, the first Blackbird successfully flew and in 1966, the same year I graduated from high school, the Air Force began flying operational SR-71 missions.

I came to the program in 1983, completing the week long interview, and meeting Walt, my partner for the next four years. He would ride four feet behind me, working all the cameras, radios, and electronic jamming equipment.

I joked, that if we were ever captured he was the spy and I was just the driver. He told me to keep the pointy end forward.

We trained for a year, flying out of Beale AFB in California, Kadena Airbase in Okinawa, and RAF Mildenhall in England.

A typical training mission time would be two Hours and forty minutes.

One day, high above Arizona, we were monitoring the

radio traffic, of all the mortal air planes below us. First, a Cessna pilot asked the air traffic controllers to check his ground speed. 'Ninety knots,' ATC replied. A Bonanza soon made the same request. 'One-twenty on the ground,' was the reply. To our surprise, an F-18 came over the radio, with a ground speed check. I knew exactly what he was doing. He had a ground speed indicator but he wanted to let all the 'bug-smashers' in the valley, know what real speed was. ATC responded. 'Dusty 52, we show you at 620 on the ground.'

The situation was too ripe. I heard the click of Walt's mike button in the rear seat. In his most innocent voice, Walt asked for a ground speed check. In a cool voice, the controller replied, 'Aspen 20, I show you at 1,982 knots on the ground.' One moonless night, while flying a routine training mission over the Pacific, I wondered what the sky would look like from 84,000 feet, if the cockpit lighting was off.

While heading home on a straight course, I slowly turned down all of the lighting, reducing the glare and revealing the night sky.

Within seconds, I turned the lights back up, but my desire to see the sky, overruled my caution, I dimmed the lighting again. To my amazement, I saw a bright light outside my window. As my eyes adjusted to the view, I realized that the brilliance was the broad expanse of the Milky Way, now a gleaming stripe across the sky. Where dark spaces in the sky, had usually existed, there were

now dense clusters, of sparkling stars. Shooting Stars, flashed across the canvas every few seconds. It was like a fireworks display with no sound.. I knew I had to get my eyes back on the instruments, and reluctantly, I brought my attention back inside. To my surprise, with the cockpit lighting still off, I could see every gauge, lit by starlight. In the plane's mirrors, I could see the eerie shine of my gold spacesuit, incandescently illuminated, in a celestial glow. The sharp sound of Walt's voice on the radio, brought me back to the tasks at



hand, as I prepared for our descent. In April 1986, following an attack on American soldiers in a Berlin disco, President Reagan ordered the bombing of Muammar Qaddafi's terrorist camps in Libya. My duty was to fly over Libya and take photographs recording the damage our F-111's had inflicted. Qaddafi had established a 'line of death,' a territorial marking across the Gulf of Sidra, swearing to shoot down any intruder, that crossed the boundary. On the morning of April 15, I rocketed past the line at 2,125 mph. We had crossed into Libya and were approaching our final turn

over the bleak desert landscape when Walt informed me that he was receiving missile launch signals. I quickly increased our speed, calculating the time it would take for the weapons, most likely SA-2 and SA-4 surface-to-air missiles, capable of Mach 5 - to reach our altitude. I estimated that we could beat the rocket-powered missiles to the turn and stayed our course betting our lives on the plane's performance. After several agonizingly long seconds we made the turn and blasted toward the Mediterranean. 'You might want to pull it back,' Walt suggested. I noticed I still had the throttles full forward. The plane was flying a mile every 1.6 seconds, well above our Mach 3.2 limit. It was the fastest we would ever fly. I pulled the throttles to idle, just south of Sicily, but still overran the refuelling tanker, waiting over Gibraltar. In 1990, confronted with budget cutbacks, the Air Force retired the SR-71. Unknown to most of the country, the plane flew over North Vietnam, Red China, North Korea, the Middle East, Iran, and the Falkland Islands. Each week, the SR-71, kept watch over every Soviet Nuclear Submarine, and Mobile Missile Site, and all of their troop movements. In its lifetime the Blackbird had outrun nearly 4,000 missiles, not once taking a scratch from enemy fire. On her final flight, the Blackbird, destined for the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, sped from Los Angeles to Washington in 64 minutes, averaging 2,145 mph, and setting four speed records.

## In Memoriam

John (Jack) Ballard

Passed peacefully away at home

6 August 2010 aged 93 years

### Out to Impress

Having just moved into his office, a newly promoted officer was sat at his desk savouring his new found authority when he heard a knock on the door.

Conscious of his new position, and wanting to appear busy the officer picked up the phone and shouted to "come in". As a soldier entered the room the officer said into the phone, "Yes, Sir, I'll be seeing him this afternoon and I'll pass along your message. In the meantime, thank you for your good wishes, sir." Feeling he had sufficiently impressed the young soldier, he asked, "What do you want?" "Nothing important, sir," the soldier said, "I'm here to connect your phone."

### Puzzle Corner

Which number comes next in the following sequence

20,  
1,  
18,  
4,  
13,  
6,  
10,  
15  
?

### This space is for you

I think all previous editors have found it a time consuming and difficult task to produce an interesting newsletter. I am no different.

This is your newsletter but unless you provide the editor with news, information and articles it becomes the editors newsletter.

I am sure you all have something to contribute but here are a few ideas.

#### Branch Meetings

Are you happy with the current format? Would you like a few more topical evenings eg guest speakers, quiz nights.

Let me know your views and they can be 'floated' in the Newsletter

#### Other Branch events

Would you like more visits either social or otherwise? Horse racing, museums, National Arboretum, there are lots to choose from.

#### The Newsletter

Is it covering things you want? Are there too many serious stories, do you want more light-hearted items, would you like to know a bit more about members through a member profile feature? Items can be published anonymously as long as the originals have the contributors name.

To finish I am very grateful to those few, those gallant few, who have sent me contributions. They will all be published and I am sure you find them of interest.

**Over to you**

## Universal Laws

We have all come across these at some time.

### Law of Gravity

Any nut, bolt or screw will roll into an inaccessible corner when dropped.

### Law of Probability

The chances of being seen by a friend is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.

### Law of Numbers

If you dial a wrong number you never get an engaged tone.

### Law of Alibis

Tell the boss you're late due to a flat tyre, next day you will get a flat tyre.

### Law of Variation

Change lanes on a motorway and the one you have left will move quickest.

### Law of Immersion

When a body is fully immersed in water the phone will ring.

### Law of Errors

When you go to show someone that your computer/car doesn't work, it will.

### Law of Logical Argument

Anything is possible if you don't know what you are talking about.

### Law of Marketing

When you find a product you really want the manufacturer will stop making it and the shop will have just sold the last one.



**Tuesday Sep 7**

**Reservation before 31 Aug  
to Glenys Hocking-Davies  
01858 467835**

Cancellations on the day to Glenys before 11 am. If Glenys is not available phone the Angel 01858 462702 before 11am or the meal will be charged for.

### **Menu**

*Baked white fish, mashed potatoes, tomato sauce (glutton free)*

*Roast British leg of lamb, roast potatoes, mint gravy,  
Both above with selection of vegetables*

*Caramelised Onion, sun blushed tomatoes, goats cheese tart, pea shoot dressed leaves, crunchy potato bites.*

*Vanilla cheesecake, mandarin and passion fruit coulis*

*Fresh fruit salad with cream*

*Chocolate and hazelnut meringue roulade, chocolate ice cream*

*coffee & mints*

*Only £8*

*Meet in the bar at noon*

## What's Going On?

- 4 Sep** RNA Coffee morning  
Harborough Theatre  
9am to noon.
- 7 Sep** Lunch at the Angel.
- 10 Sep** ATC Charity Ball for  
cancer charities.  
Tickets £17-50 from  
the editor.
- 18 Sep** Concert by Massed  
Bands of Household  
Division at the Albert  
Hall, Tickets £11 - £40  
Meet at noon in the  
bar.
- 30 Oct** Poppy Appeal Launch.  
**Collectors and  
other helpers  
needed for the  
Poppy Appeal.  
Please contact  
Dave Pryor ASAP**
- 6 Nov** Festival of Remem  
brance - De Montfort  
Hall. Band of the  
Blues & Royals  
(contact Les Moore)

### **Puzzle Corner—Answer**

**2**

The sequence is the numbers  
on a dartboard moving clock-  
wise from 20

### **Branch Contacts**

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**Treasurer & Membership**

**Secretary**

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**Poppy Appeal**

Dave Pryor

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John Liddell

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George Fleming

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**Social & Fund Raising**

Glenys Hocking-Davies

01858 467835

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Next Committee Meeting 2 Sep

### **And Finally**

A chicken is one of the few  
things that can be eaten before  
it is born and after it's dead.

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