



The Royal British Legion



Market Harborough Branch

Reg Charity 219279

In Touch

Issue 145

October 2010

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

**Next
Monthly Branch
Meeting
Wednesday
10 Nov**

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

Trainee Pilot's Day

This article was submitted by Pilot Officer Adam 'Griff' Griffin RAF. Adam is currently undergoing flying training at RAF Cranwell and is an ex-cadet of 1084 Squadron ATC.

I was recently approached by the new editor of this newsletter to provide a short paragraph as life as a trainee pilot in the Royal Air Force. However, there is no 'routine day'. Normally work starts at 0730, a strong coffee and a read of the paper an essential routine. 0815 sees the start of our morning brief. In this we receive a detailed weather and operations brief. Thereafter, the Duty Instructor, known as the DI, tests us with the 'Emergency of the Day'. All likely emergencies are covered in our flight reference cards. There must be no diver-

gence, no room for improvisation, as what is written is what must be carried out. Each emergency has a bold face drill, and it is this that we must recite on demand from memory.

From here, we make our way to the crew room. The crew room is where all the students "chew the fat".

It is here also where the banter is rife, often close to the bone and yet essential to any pilot's way of life.

For us it releases the stresses caused by the environment in which we work.

We then look at the days flying programme and for this purposes of this article, let's assume we have perfect weather (just try to imagine!).

Before each sortie, the instructor meets with the student for a pre flight brief. Here the contents of the approximately hour long sortie are gone through in detail with the student expected to know all the objectives of the sortie intimately. Thereafter, the aircraft is signed out and the 2 man crew walks to the aircraft.



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

Pilot Officer Griffin is pictured below alongside the Grob Tutor training aircraft



Each flight is scored and assessed from the moment the student walks to the aircraft and to when the student shuts down the aircraft. The student is required to know over 370 individual checks to operate the aircraft safely. So you can see, there is a lot of study done in the students own time.

During the sortie, the student does not have any time to sit back and enjoy the view (contrary to most people's belief!). The sortie is conducted at a brisk yet efficient pace as all points from the pre flight brief as well as the previous flight are practiced.

Once the crew has landed, the student is normally much sweeter than he started the sortie. The aircraft is signed back in, the coffees are made and an immediate debrief is carried out. During the debrief, the students performance is reviewed by the instructor. Post debrief, the instructor completes a sortie report on the students performance which enables a record of the students performance to be kept.

It is not uncommon for 3 hours to pass from the initial sortie brief to the students debrief. The student is expected to know 2 sorties in advance as the average student will fly 2 sorties per day. However, it is not unknown for 3 sorties to be flown. Yes, it is hard work and yes we can be seen as being stressed at times. However, it is our vocation. If you want it enough, you'll put the hours in. The Royal Air Force only trains the best. Fall by the wayside and you will be left there.

Poppy Appeal News

Donations received

From Betty Ramsey and family of £250 from the Poppy Walk .

Mr David Hawke, who operates "Trips & Charity Tours" £270 from an autumn coach trip.

Branch AGM

Will be held on November 10th.

Nominations papers for the Officers and Committee are enclosed with this edition of *In Touch*

In Memoriam

Bertie Thorold

Passed away peacefully
19 September aged 87

Gordon Lunn

A staunch Poppy Appeal Collector passed away recently.

Bill Millin; D-Day piper

Bill Millin, who has died aged 88, was the "mad piper" whose D-Day bravery in dodging bombs and bullets as he led Lord Lovat and his commandos ashore in Normandy. Millin, whose Edinburgh-born wife, Margaret, predeceased him a decade ago, suffered a major stroke seven years ago. He died in hospital in Torbay on 18 August 2010. William Millin was Born July 14, 1922 and raised in Sandyhills before his family moved to Fort William. Always interested in piping and the army, his outstanding piping ability was spotted by Lord Lovat, himself a piping aficionado. Lovat appointed Millin his personal piper, and the pair proved inseparable on all occasions when piping was required.

Millin was among commandos of 1st Special Service Brigade. Under the command of the charismatic Brigadier Lord Lovat, their objective was to link up with the 6th Airborne Division at Pegasus Bridge, with the initial duty of establishing a beachhead for the main invasion force. When Lovat's detachment hit Sword Beach at 0840 hours on D-Day, Piper Millin was immediately seen and heard marching up and down the bloody sands.

His sang-froid was matched by that of the 15th Lord Lovat. Armed with only a walking stick, the Invernesshire aristocrat and chief of the Lovat Frasers directed operations. To encourage the troops, he ordered Millin to play.

Millin, just 21 and wearing the kilt his father had worn in Flanders in the First World War, not only obeyed, but decided on a generous interpretation of his orders. Hence the memorable marching up and down the beach under fire. In doing so, both Millin and Lovat disregarded an direct order from high command, fearful that pipers (there were also several regimental pipers on duty) would attract sniper fire.

One account read: "These men were under heavy fire from German heavy artillery, machine-guns and mortars [and] the sheer bravery to stand up and play the bagpipes while all this was going on was just amazing."



He relished the nickname bestowed on him by the enemy. His contempt for German fire as he piped ashore on to the French beachhead impressed everyone – not least his German foes.

German soldiers captured by the Allies spoke of their astonishment as Private Millin marched up and down Sword Beach in Normandy

playing his bagpipes. Four days later, Millin, still unscathed, had his pipes put out of action by German shrapnel.

German prisoners confessed that they had not shot him because they genuinely thought he was mad.

Years later, in 1962, Millin played himself in *The Longest Day*, the film based on the Normandy landings.

He then recalled: "I was the only one with a kilt, and I wasn't armed.

My most traumatic experience was jumping into the cold water."

His opening tune was the subject of controversy for years afterwards,

the favourite being upheld as *The Road to the Isles* (known to pipers as *The Burning Sands of Egypt*).

But it was Millin in 1962 who quashed the arguments with his clear recollection: "As I hit the water, I began playing *Highland Laddie*".

His outstanding courage was portrayed in a set of stamps issued by the Isle of Man on the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings, while, in 2006, Devon folk singer Shelagh Allen composed the song *The Highland Piper* in his honour.

There was latterly controversy over which pipes of the several sets owned by Millin were the original *Sword pipes*. One set forming a centrepiece of a Second World War display in Edinburgh were later removed on the orders of curator Alan Carswell when he was presented with "convincing evidence" that the *Sword pipes* were on display in the Pegasus Memorial Museum at Ranville, Normandy. Millin's failing memory provided little help in identification.

Thank the Lord for Church Humour

From Parish magazines or notices.

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Jim Benson and Jane Carter were married on June 24. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 pm. Please use the back door.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir

Whose the Idiot

As a group of soldiers stood in formation at an Army Base, the Drill Sergeant shouted, "All right! All you idiots fall out."

All the squad duly fell out except one soldier who stayed at attention. The Drill Sergeant walked over and 'eye balled' the soldier. Before he had chance to pass on his words of wisdom to the soldier, the soldier smiled and said, "Sure was a lot of 'em, huh, sergeant?"

In Memory of a Dear Friend

Today we mourn the passing of an old friend, Common Sense. No one knows for sure how old he was, his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: Knowing when to come in out of the rain; - Why the early bird gets the worm; - Life isn't always fair; - and, Maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate when overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when

schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion to a student but could not tell parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense took a turn for the worse as churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility, and his son, Reason.

He is survived by 4 stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else Is To Blame and I'm the Victim Here

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

Puzzle Corner

Using 10 coins with face values of 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p and 50p what is the largest amount of money you could have and not be able to make up £1 (=100p) exactly with any combination of coins

Advice for ladies

How to prevent the man in your life from reading your e-mails.

Rename your mail folder 'Instruction Manual'.

Veterans Raise Cash for Memorial

Veteran aircrew from WW2 gathered to raise money towards the new £3m memorial to Bomber Command in London's Green Park. Branch member Tony Johnson is pictured below (2nd on left) with other members of the Bomber



Picture courtesy of Peterborough Evening Telegraph

Command Association at Crowland Garden Centre. Tony was a wireless op/air gunner flying Wellingtons. He was shot down and captured and describes his exploits in his book "Escape to Freedom". The Editor highly recommends reading this riveting account of his being shot down, capture and eventual escape.

Main Remembrance Events

8 Nov - Set up Garden of Remembrance 8-30 am

11 Nov - Acts of Remembrance at Welland Park (1015) then in the Square (1055)

14 Nov - Remembrance Parade assemblies 0915, church service 1000 and wreath laying in the Square at 1100.

15 Nov - Remove Remembrance Garden Display 8-30 am



Tuesday Nov 2

**Reservation before 26 Oct
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

*Lamb hotpot served with
vegetables*

*Pork and Granny Smith apple
sausages, mash potatoes,
sage gravy, vegetables*

*Beer battered cod goujons, chips,
marrowfat peas*

*Coffee and walnut cake, with
clotted ice cream*

Fresh fruit salad with cream

*Spotted Dick and custard
coffee & mints*

Only £8

Meet in the bar at noon

What's Going On?

- 18 Oct Coffee Morning
Harborough Theatre
- 30 Oct Poppy Appeal Launch.
Collectors and helpers needed for the Poppy Appeal. Please contact Dave Pryor ASAP
- 6 Nov Festival of Remembrance - De Montfort Hall. Band of the Blues & Royals (contact Les Moore)
- 10 Nov Branch AGM.
- 20 Nov Branch Remembrance Concert with Harborough Band. Baptist Church Coventry Rd 7-30pm.

Membership Renewal

Please renew as soon as possible
Myra's address is 7 Gapstile Close, Desborough, NN14 2TZ

Puzzle Corner—Answer

£1-43 made up as follows

- 1 x 50p
- 4 x 20p
- 4 x 2p
- 1 x 5p

Branch Contacts

Secretary

Betty Ramsay
01858 434923

Treasurer & Membership

Secretary

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Poppy Appeal

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Wreaths

John Liddell
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Standard Bearer

George Fleming
01858 462711

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Glenys Hocking-Davies
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Next Committee Meeting 4 Nov

And Finally

The Ancient Greeks named our galaxy the Milky Way because they believed it was made up of drops of milk from the breasts of the Greek Goddess Hera.

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the Market Harborough Branch.

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The newsletter is online at www.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/market-harborough.