



The Royal British Legion



Market Harborough Branch

Reg Charity 219279

In Touch

Issue 149

February 2011

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

**‘Shoulder to Shoulder
With All Who Serve’**

**Next Monthly Branch Meeting
Wednesday
9 March**

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

March Branch Meeting

The business part of next meeting will finish about 8pm to enable branch member Major General Sir Michael Carleton-Smith CBE DL to present his talk entitled 'The Afghan Dilemma'.

Sir Michael is well qualified to speak on this subject with his 34 years military service in 8 countries on 5 continents including command of the Gurkha Field Force in Hong Kong.

Sir Michael's eldest son Mark commanded British Troops Afghanistan and Task Force Helmand in 2008. The talk is very timely and will prove thought provoking to all given the ongoing, and often conflicting, views on a way forward in (and out of) Afghanistan.



ANGEL

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

An ideal opportunity to bring a friend not only to listen to the talk but meet other branch members.

An MOD web site gives the following facts for the period 2001 to 15 January 2011.

- 1,598 UK military and civilian personnel were admitted to UK Field Hospitals as Wounded in Action.
- 4,225 aero medical evacuations have taken place for UK military and civilian personnel injured or ill in Afghanistan.

The MOD reported the following soldiers killed in Afghanistan.

Private Martin Bell,
2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, aged 24 from Bradford killed 25 January.

Ranger David Dalzell
1st Battalion The Royal Irish regiment, aged 20 from Bangor, killed 4 February.

Company Sergeant Major Colin Beckett
3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, aged 36 from Peterborough, killed 5 February

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

Annual Dinner

A reminder for the annual dinner to be held on Friday 11 March at the Golf Club.

Tickets are priced at £18 each. I encourage all members to attend what should be a memorable evening. A welcome drink will be served followed by good food in good company and a touch of music as well.

If you require tickets please send your request to Pat Middleton 7 Howard Way Market Harborough LE16 9LD enclosing a cheque payable to Market Harborough Golf Club.

Dress for the evening is formal black tie, mess dress, lounge suit, blazers with equivalent for ladies.

New Standard Bearer

Branch Chairman hands over the Standard to the safekeeping of Hilary Brazil



Senior Moments

Three old guys are out walking. First one says, 'Windy, isn't it?' Second one says, 'No, it's Thursday!' Third one says, 'So am I. Let's go get a beer...'

More from Poppy Appeal



Several branch members and friends collected at Highcross and Leicester City FC raising over £1050.. Our youngest Poppy Collector was presented with the Poppy Match Ball after a successful bid in the auction



Lest We Forget Joan McMillin

Joan's funeral service was held on 3 Feb. She had been a member for 15 years having previously served in the WRAC and Royal Observer Corps.

Pills

It was late afternoon when the chap from HQ arrived. We were due to set off around dusk, reaching the DZ just before midnight. And most of the afternoon had been spent making final preparations, writing a letter home and resting. The arrival of the chap from HQ was not on the programme.

Our party numbered about 50 and the announcement that we were to meet him on the field in 10 minutes caused feelings of uncertainty bordering on panic to fill most chaps minds. We could not entertain any change of plan this late in the day. Perhaps it was "off" yet again. We were wound up and wanted just to get on with it.

When he joined us along with our Major, he seemed quite normal. Far more normal than one expected from HQ! "I wish you all well, and good fortune for tonight", he said, and that cleared our worst scenario. "I have brought something for you all, something unusual and I want you to pay particular attention to what I have to say. I am going to issue each of you with four small pills. These are to help you in the operation. Put them in an empty match box and use them as follows."

"I suggest you take one about 10 to 15 minutes before you land. It will greatly increase your alertness, as well as helping in your general well-being, and will be found to be very beneficial. If events drag on beyond tomorrow morning then I suggest a second pill about noon tomorrow

will help you keep awake, but this should be only in the unlikely event of things not going according to plan. The other two pills are for the extreme case of you finding yourself cut off and spending two or three days avoiding capture. Good luck to you all."

A salute and he was gone. We were dismissed and, clutching four aspirin looking pills retired back again to our kit. I found an empty match box and lined it with cotton wool and placed each pill gently inside. The matchbox then went into my breast pocket and we set off as dusk fell.

It was my first "op". It was a rough crossing. I was extremely nervous. By the time I saw the enemy coastline I had swallowed all four pills.

Two days later I was still charging around like a scalded cat. But when the effects finally wore off it took me a long time (nearly a week) to get my strength back.

They never came round with any pills again.

First printed in *In Touch* in 1998 submitted by Hotspur

A Soldier Died Today

By A Lawrence Vaincourt

He was getting old and paunchy
and his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the Legion,
telling stories of the past.
Of a war that he had fought in
and the deeds that he had done,
In his exploits with his buddies;
they were heroes, every one.

And though sometimes, to his
neighbours, his tales became a
joke,
All his Legion buddies listened, for
they knew whereof he spoke.
But we'll hear his tales no longer for
old Bill has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer, for a
soldier died today.

He will not be mourned by many,
just his children and his wife,
For he lived an ordinary and quite
uneventful life.
Held a job and raised a family, qui-
etly going his own way,
And the world won't note his pass-
ing, though a soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth,
their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing
and proclaim that they were great.
Papers tell their whole life stories,
from the time that they were young,
But the passing of a soldier goes
unnoticed and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the
welfare of our land
A guy who breaks his promises and
cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow who, in times
of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his Country and
offers up his life?

A politician's stipend and the style
in which he lives
Are sometimes disproportionate to
the service that he gives.
While the ordinary soldier, who of-
fered up his all,

Is paid off with a medal and per-
haps, a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them for it was
so long ago,
That the old Bills of our Country
went to battle, but we know
It was not the politicians, with their
compromise and ploys,
Who won for us the freedom that
our Country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger,
with your enemies at hand,
Would you want a politician with his
ever-shifting stand?
Or would you prefer a soldier, who
has sworn to defend
His home, his kin and Country and
would fight until the end?

He was just a common soldier and
his ranks are growing thin,
But his presence should remind us
we may need his like again.
For when countries are in conflict,
then we find the soldier's part
Is to clean up all the troubles that
the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honour while
he's here to hear the praise,
Then at least let's give him homage
at the ending of his days.
Perhaps just a simple headline in a
paper that would say,
Our Country is in mourning, for a
soldier died today.

New Medical Dictionary

Artery -The study of paintings

Puzzle Corner

Submitted this month by Brain Thomas and is one for those who remember £sd.

The answer to each question relates to the pre-decimal currency. Some of the answers are quite cryptic so think 'outside the box'. The total of your answers should come to £17 -5 - 61/2

	£	s	d
A man's name			
Girls for your thoughts			
King's hat divided into two pieces			
Poorly octopus type creature			
Sun, Moon and Mars are like 3 distant objects			
He works in leather			
A gorilla's joint			
An old fashioned bike			
A kind of pig			
A male singer			
An Australian jumper in the Xmas pudding			
Total	17	5	61/2

Poppy Party Weekend



The Royal British Legion is celebrating its 90th Anniversary and is encouraging branches to mark this unique event by organising an event over the weekend of 10 - 12 June.

This will provide a show case opportunity for the Legion (and the Branch) and to raise funds for welfare work.

The event(s) can take place anywhere -

- ◆ your house and garden
- ◆ Local pub or hotel
- ◆ Village green etc

They can be themed

- ◇ BBQ
- ◇ Murder Mystery
- ◇ Tea Party etc
- ◇ Games evening

Fancy dress is optional but a Poppy Party might be just up your street!

We are fortunate that the weekend is the same as Carnival weekend.

So what would you like to see the branch do over this weekend?

- have a stall at the Carnival with a party theme
- an evening event with our affiliated youth groups.
- an RNA/RAFA/RBL dance and/or dinner

- a quiz night
- all of these and more!
Please put your minds to work and let the Branch Committee have your ideas and /or offer to help organise the event(s)

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity, please let us not allow this to slip away un-noticed.

We owe it to all those who have served, serve now, and their families to show how much we appreciate their sacrifices and help the Royal British Legion to give them the lifelong care they deserve.
www.thegreatpoppypartyweekend.org.uk

Service not self'

Legion on Display

As part of the Legion's 90th Anniversary Margaret Bonney from Leicestershire Archives will be visiting Market Harborough library on 3 March between 3pm and 6pm.

Margaret would like to create audio records of anyone who would like to share their knowledge and experience of the Royal British Legion, this can be done on the spot.

Please don't be shy, at least one member has already recorded his memories and described it as "a painless experience and one that I found interesting and enjoyable. It brought back many happy memories and it didn't take long".

In conjunction with this event Tom Ashmore has prepared a display board which will be in the library reception from 28 Feb to 11 March.

Please pop in and take a friend along with you.



Tuesday 1 Mar

**Reservation before 22 Feb
to Les Moore
01858 463112**

Cancellations on the day to Les
before 9-30 am.

If Les is not available phone the
Angel 01858 462702 before 10am
or the meal will be charged for.

Menu

*Oven baked fillet of fish with a dill
& white wine sauce, new
potatoes,*

*Strips of chicken in a honey &
mustard sauce, mashed potatoes*

*Roast loin of pork, stuffing, roast
potatoes, gravy*

*Raspberry & chocolate tart with
cream*

*Fresh fruit salad with vanilla
ice cream*

*Spotted Dick and creamy custard
coffee & mints*

Only £8-25

Meet in the bar at noon

What's Going On?

- 23 Feb RNA film show (Old
Harborough) Gt Bow
den Village Hall 7-
30pm. £2-50 inc
refreshments
- 26 Feb Branch Coffee Morning
Harborough Theatre 9
to 12. Tombola and
raffle prizes appreci
ated as well as help on
the day
- 9 Mar Talk by branch
member Sir Michael
Carleton-Smith entitled
The Afghan Dilemma
- 11 Mar Branch Dinner - Golf
Club. Tickets £18.
Contact Pat Middleton
(01858 445827)
- 19 Mar ATC 70th Anniversary
Dinner - contact John
Standish for information
- 30 Apr RNA Coffee morning.
- 28 May Armed Forces Coffee
Morning - proceeds go
towards the support of
Armed Forces event on
July 3 in Welland Park

Puzzle Corner—Answer

Answer next month -
you will probably need the extra
time!

Branch Contacts

Secretary

Betty Ramsay
01858 434923

Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Myra Grewcock
7 Gapstile Close,
Desborough, NN14 2TZ
01536 762228

Poppy Appeal

Dave Pryor
01858 431999

Wreaths

John Liddell
01858 465003

Standard Bearer

Hilary Brazil
c/o 01858 434923

Monthly Lunches

Les Moore
01858 463112

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Next Committee Meeting 3 Mar

And Finally

Venetian blinds were invented in
Japan. In Venice they are known as
Persian blinds.

We all know how to make a Ve-
netian blind don't we!

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.