

In Touch

The monthly newsletter founded in 1996



The Royal British Legion

Registered Charity No. 219279

Shoulder to Shoulder with all who Serve

Market Harborough Branch

Founded in 1923

years of caring in the
local community



Proud of our Past.
Confident of our Future

Who remembers the occasion and date when this
photo was taken?

Next Monthly Branch Meeting

7.30 pm Wednesday 13 February

Committee 7 February

Function Room, Conservative Club,
Fairfield Rd. Market Harborough

Issue 172

January 2013

*New Year Greetings and
welcome to a new style*
In Touch
The Editors

Branch News

Several Members enjoyed joining Peaker Park residents at their Christmas Party on 15th December, when vocalist Kyle Keal provided some first-class entertainment with all joining in the seasonal songs.

The traditional Late Christmas Lunch, shared with RAFA and RNA friends, on 8th January was again a success but only 30 people attended. 'Candid Camera' pictures next month! The social event the following day, was the showing of three old films of local events, thanks to help from Phil Baidon of the Railway Society. This was after the Branch meeting, attended by 30 members. In the Act of Homage the one fatality in Afghanistan was remembered. New Year greetings from the Chairman were followed by reports about the County Conference, discussion about donating to other charities, news that branch membership was 161 but with some still outstanding subs, that there was now a Poppy Appeal Admin. Office in a room in the Conservative Club, that Welfare expenditure in the new RBL East Midlands Area was £1.25M last year, & that the Cabin needed repair. The proceeds of the Lunch raffle were handed to the PAO.

County Conference

This event, every January is really the County AGM and is more formal than the 'half-year' June meeting. Each is hosted by a branch, that on 5th January being held at Loughborough. 21 of the 36 Leicestershire and Rutland branches were represented by voting delegates, and the 28 'visitors' included Standard Bearers, and those holding County responsibilities. In our case the latter were County Chaplain, Rev John Morley, County Youth Officer and conference committee member, Betty Ramsay, Executive member, John Standish, Deputy Parade Marshall, George Fleming. Hilary Brazil carried



our standard and George was a Marshall in the opening and closing ceremonies. Tom Ashmore was your delegate and John Cox was appointed as a Scrutineer. The M H Branch contingent, which also included our

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January the month of the Doorway

January, which is named after [Janus](#), the Roman god of the doorway, through which he looked back at the old and forward to the new year. In 2013 January is also the doorway to a new style of *In Touch*. Through that door we hope to welcome your stories, pictures, ideas and comments. We will also open doors in a virtual storehouse of items of potential interest from which we can produce other contributions to these pages for your information, interest and amusement.

For example, through a door labelled 'Events', on a 'shelf' labelled 'January', we discovered that on the ninth, one hundred years ago. Richard Nixon, US President from 1968 to 1974, was born. Forty years later, on the thirteenth, in a world at war, the British government decreed that school uniforms must be either grey or blue in colour in order to save dye. Of more significance to the outcome of the conflict, German forces surrendered to the Russians at Stalingrad on the last day of the month. In another war, in 1973 the Paris Peace Accord was signed on 27th to bring about the end of the Vietnam War and what the Communist forces saw as the defeat of America and its allies. It was following the defeat of Russia at Crimea, that the Victoria Cross was

introduced as the highest British Military award, for outstanding valour "in the face of the enemy". The medals were made from the metal of captured Russian guns. The hostile environment of Antarctica was the enemy which demanded the outstanding valour of Captain Scott and



his team to reach the South Pole on the seventeenth in 1912 and another kind of courage to cope with the disappointment of finding that the Norwegian, Amundsen has got there first. Their achievement, followed by their tragic deaths, was commemorated at a huge memorial service, led by the King, in St Paul's Cathedral.

No medals or service, but there was recognition of effort of a different less epic kind we found in the 'cup-board' labelled ***In Touch***: awards

presented ten years ago at the RBL County Conference to George Fleming who received the Cup as Runner-



up in the Standard Bearers' competition and the branch the Jack Quain Trophy for Endeavour. The picture is of their display in a special cabinet in the reception area of the Council Offices.

Still on the January 'shelf', in the first issue of 1997, we discover the origin of the gavel used at branch meetings, in the obituary of Sandy Vials, recently deceased Branch member. It stated 'Sandy was a Paratrooper who survived the Arn hem action. His father before him was an Old Contemptible and, as an active Chairman of this famous Organisation, left their Chairman's Gavel (with Block) to Sandy who generously gave it to John Sutton (*then Branch Secretary*) who makes it available for our meetings. It is an honour that now it should be used by our Chairman.'

In the January 2004 issue, there appeared this photo taken at the Late Christmas lunch that month.



OBITUARY

John MacDonald BEM,
1921 - 2012.

John was born in Scotland and joined the Army before the outbreak of war. He was at the D Day Landings. The MBE was awarded for his work in the Prison Service having served at Pentonville, Wandsworth and Market Harborough.

The Gardeners' Hymn

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small;
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

But what we never mention,
Though gardeners know it is true,
When He made the goodies,
He made the baddies too.

Refrain:

All things spray and swatable, Dis-
asters great and small,
All things paraquatable,
The Lord God made them all.

Refrain:

The greenfly on the roses,
The maggots in the peas,
Manure that fills our noses,
He gave us all of these.

Refrain

The fungus on the goose-gogs, The
club root on the greens,
The slugs that eat the lettuce,
And chew the aubergines.

Refrain.

The drought that kills the fuschias,
The frost that nips the buds,
The rain that drowns the seedlings,
The blight that hits the spuds.

Refrain.

The midges and mosquitoes,
the nettles and the weeds,
The pigeons in the greenstuff,
The sparrows in the seeds.

Refrain.

The fly that gets the carrots,
The wasp that eats the plums,
How black the gardener's outlook,
Though green may be his thumbs.

Refrain.

But still we gardeners labour
Midst vegetables and flowers,
And pray what hits our neighbours
Will somehow bypass ours.

*With acknowledgements to the St John's
Fellowship and thanks to Tom Jeacock
for obtaining permission to reproduce
the above.*

This appeared in the January 2003 issue of ***In Touch***

Editorial (January 1999)

For the first time in the history of the Branch, we have a "Lady Chair" and the final stronghold of male domination has fallen! So "Welcome, Madam Chair, and may we all give you the support necessary to make your term of office a Happy and Successful one".

The Beetle

A recent article in The Times headed 'How two British Officers' Blueprints saved 'the people's car', has a 1947 photograph of a Colonel Radclyffe. Seeing that name, Tom Jeacock was taken back in time to 1945 to occupied Germany when, as Sgt Jeacock he was ordered to appear before the Colonel, but that is another story for Tom to tell later.

Meanwhile, the article makes interesting reading as does background information from the Internet in Wikipedia.

In 1933 Hitler ordered Ferdinand Porsche to produce a Volkswagen (people's car) capable of transporting two adults and three children at 100 Km per hour to be sold through a government savings scheme, for 99 Reichmarks, about the cost of a small motorcycle. It took several years of development before production started and then it was for military versions one of which was amphibious, the 'Schwimmwagen'. A few civilian models were made mainly for the Nazi elite.

The Americans captured the severely bomb-damaged factory in 1945 and

handed it to the British, under the control of a Major Ivan Hirst. It was he and Colonel Radclyffe who saw the potential source of 'an economical, easy to produce' vehicle for the British military. The original blueprints had been destroyed but there were parts in a basement and some of the production machinery had not been destroyed (thanks to an Allied bomb that had not exploded!). It was then possible to create new drawings and Hirst 'persuaded the military to order 20,000 vehicles. By March 1946, the factory was producing 1000 a month.



In 1949 the factory was signed over to Germany under a former Opel manager Heinz Nordhoff. By 1955 the one-millionth car came off the production line.

So, the present day very successful VW car manufacturer owes its existence to Major Hirst and the colonel who wanted to see Tom.!

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'mascot', Christopher, accounted for some 12% of those present.

Reports were given by the out-going President, Peter Roffey, Chairman, David Atterbury and Women's Section Chairman, Mrs M. Gibbard. All mentioned the need for change in the Legion, but little was said about what the changes will be. Agenda papers included the County Plan, reports by Youth & Training Officers, Community Fundraiser and Standard Bearers Association and the Annual



Accounts about which the Treasurer spoke. There were all accepted with little comment.

The Guest Speaker was Staff Sgt Paul Swain who spoke movingly of all the wonderful treatment and support he had received at Selly Oak Hospital, the Battle Back Centre and the Legion following his very serious injuries in Afghanistan.

The last agenda items included the awards ceremony, which did not involve us, and the date of the next conference - 4/1/2014 at Wigston.



for good food and good company

Menu

- Roast Rib of British Beef with Yorkshire pudding.
- Roast Potatoes and Gravy
- Supreme of Chicken on a Bed of Mash with Chunky Mushroom Sauce
- All Served with a Selection of vegetables
- Vegetable Curry with Rice and Naan Bread
- <><><><><><>
- Warm Apple Streusel Sponge Cake, Creamy Custard and Stewed Apple
- Trio of Chocolate Mousses with Mini Jug of Cream
- Fresh fruit Salad with fruity Sorbet
- <><><><><><>
- Coffee and mints

£8.50 Pay on the day

To book, ring Les Moore (01858 463112) before 31 January. To cancel a booking you must phone The Angel (01858 462702) before 10 am on the day or you will be charged.

What's Going On?

Forthcoming Events

- 5 Feb Lunch at The Angel 12 noon for 12.30
- 13 Feb General meeting 7.30 pm followed by a talk by George Seward
- 23 Feb Coffee Morning for Poppy Appeal at Harb' theatre . Helpers and items for raffle and stalls, please!
- 9 Mar 90th Anniversary Dinner 7 for 7.30 pm. MH Golf Club. **Book ASAP** through Pat Middleton, 01858 445827
- 13 Mar General meeting 7.30 pm followed by an Anniversary event.
- 30 Jun Armed Forces Day Event

Welfare

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

Betty Ramsay
01858 434923

Branch Contacts

Chairman

John Standish 0116 2404170
mhrblchair@hotmail.co.uk

Vice Chairman & Publicity

Rev. John Morley 01858 419714
revjmorley@talktalk.net

Secretary, Welfare & Youth

Betty Ramsay 01858 434923
betty.ramsay@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer & Membership

Secretary

Myra Grewcock 01858 419517
myragrewcock@supanet.com
8 Holdenby Close, MH. LE16 8JE

Poppy Appeal

Dave Prior 01858 540431
or 07702 304430
pao.rbl@btinternet.com

Standard Bearer

Hilary Brazil c/o 01858 434923

Monthly Lunches

Les Moore 01858 463112

Editors - In Touch

George Seward 01858 434727
in-toucheditor@hotmail.co.uk
8 Symington Way, MH LE16 7XA

Tom Ashmore 01858 433108
tashmore@ukvet.net

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