

In Touch

The monthly newsletter founded in 1996

Issue 175

April 2013



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



Next Monthly Branch Meeting
6pm to 8pm Wednesday 8 May
Social event at Peaker Park (see p8)
off Rockingham Road, MH

Committee 2 May at Conservative Club

90th Anniversary Dinner

68 members and guests had a very enjoyable evening thanks to the efforts of Pat Middleton, Betty Ramsay, DJ Dave Hawke, Raffle organiser, John Cox, who raised £181 and the staff at Market Harborough Golf Club. We were honoured to have as our special guests, Lady Gretton, Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Cllr. Everett, Chairman Harborough District Council and Mrs Everett, David Atterbury, RBL County Chairman and Mrs Atterbury. She could not be with us but Her Majesty, the Queen sent her good wishes.

Cadets, St John's, Peaker Park and Desborough Branch were all represented.

A special 'Birthday' atmosphere was created with the Legion '90' symbol on streamers, balloons, beautifully decorated cake and place name cards. Dave Hawke played appropriate party music and encouraged a sing-along. The selection of photographs here is supplemented with others on the Branch website.



Photo Call for VIPs



Cllr. Everett



Lady Gretton & Cake



Dave Harrold & Hilary



D J Dave Hawke



Caren Wild

RAF, RNA, RAFA, ATC, ACF, Sea

More branch and other news on Page 7

Cover Photo taken on 7 August 1988 at the entrance to the Australian War Museum in Canberra. The statue is of Simpson and his Donkey, the legendary heroes of Gallipoli

Sworn to Secrecy

By Tom Jeacock

I joined the Dorset Regiment in Yorkshire where the 1st Battalion was stationed after they had returned from the European Campaign where they had been knocked up a bit and we were to make them up to strength.

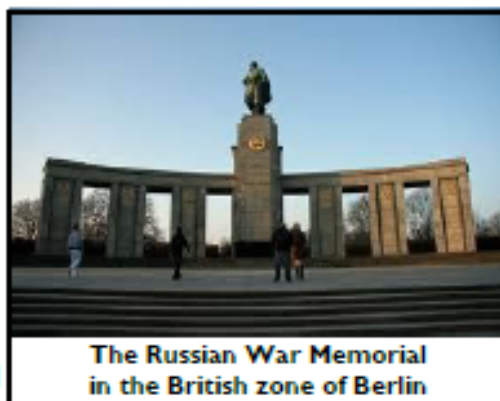
From there we went to Germany in November 1945 to relieve 4th Battalion at an airfield in the middle of a forest near the little village of Oerell.

There were what I called Junkers 88s, but now know were 86s, the three engined ones, lined up with their backs broken. Hidden from the air by the tops of the forest trees were dumps of mustard and other gas bombs

and between the trees were rows and rows of machine gun and canon ammunition. When we went into the village we had to carry our arms and were shouted at by the children. It was the only time I had been sworn at! After settling down and sorting ourselves out, we were told we were going to Berlin.

There we used to do the guard mounting just outside the Barracks and there was always a big squad of

Germans watching. On one occasion, as guard commander, I was detailed to take over from the 'Red Caps' at the HQ of General Sir Brian Robertson. When I got there, just a little late, which I presume was my fault, we settled in to the guard room. All of a sudden a Red Cap came in and asked for the guard commander. And when I said I was, he said "The general wants to see you." I wondered why he would want to see me but went in to where he was. He told me what was going on and that there



The Russian War Memorial in the British zone of Berlin

was to be a farewell party for General Montgomery given by the British Army in Germany and attended by the high-ranking officers of the Allied armies in Berlin. (The Russians were

not invited). When he asked what I would do, I said that I would put one man at the gate and one as a prowler round the perimeter. He said, "That's good. Nobody must know about this. Nobody. Now go and talk to the Provost Marshall." He agreed with how I would deploy my guard and said, "Tell them they are to shoot on sight at any one attempting to get into the grounds."

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The First Anzac Day

by Tom Ashmore



This is a cutting of the heading of a report of the first Anzac Day as observed in Cairo and published in the Egyptian Gazette on 26 th April 1916. Extracts from the two whole columns on page three are reproduced here.



The memorial service held yesterday at the ANZAC Hostel, Cairo, will be engraved for all time on the memories of those who were present. The auditorium of the Cairo Bourse (now the ANZAC Hostel) witnessed a scene that could not have been conjured up by the wildest imagination of those who planned and built it. The narrow balcony which runs around the circular hall was crowded with soldiers who looked down upon a solemn congregation of officers, soldiers, nurses and many well known civilians who filled every inch of the ground floor. . . .As the mournful chords of Chopin's "Funeral March" died away

. . . It was evident that every heart felt the strain of sorrow, many on account of personal losses, and all felt a bond of sympathy and tragedy that united the children of the Motherland with those of the Colonies.'

'At the conclusion of the ceremony . . . The scene outside was a most impressive one, as each hospital ambulance rolled up ready for its unusual burden of beautiful flowers. On either side of the road . . . were lined up members of the Imperial Force, silently watching the floral tokens of respect being carried out of the door at a slow march, and strung on long poles, which were hung inside each ambulance car.

About twenty vehicles in all had been requisitioned,

and after the last one had been filled, the long procession started for the Cairo cemetery at a slow pace followed by the whole congregation. . . . At the cemetery, to the accompaniment of specially selected music, the men carried each wreath to its resting place on one of the five hundred Gallipoli heroes whose spirit and sacrifice laid the foundations of an everlasting reputation. . . . It is safe to say that in the whole of the British Empire there could not be a more whole-hearted exhibition of sympathy than that which was manifested by the whole of the British community in Cairo.'

The newspaper report continued with

CABLED MESSAGES.

The Right Honourable W. Hughes PC Australian prime Minister cabled from London:-

" the world has marvelled at the men of ANZAC and hailed them as heroes, their comrades in the Motherland have welcomed them as brothers in arms. The citizens of the Empire have been proud to call them kinsmen, but

to us who know and love them who can claim them as sons and brothers, their glorious valour has opened the gates of a new world. These glorious dead to whom

we today pay tribute have raised by their intrepid deeds for themselves a monument more enduring than brass, though their poor bodies lie in unnamed graves in Gallipoli, yet their dauntless spirits still live inspiring us to emulate their great example, their deathless will yet be sung in songs to generations of Australians to the end of time. Let us give answer to their mute appeal to do nothing unworthy of the memory of each man, and in the

great struggle which yet calls for our utmost efforts to devote ourselves to the cause of our country and our liberties with the same lofty faith and courage that spurred them on."

From the Right Hon. James Allan, minister of Defence, Dominion of New Zealand.

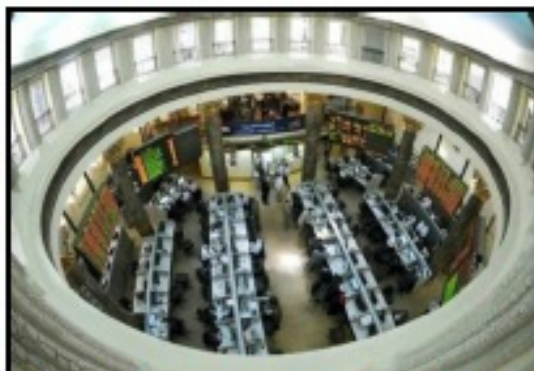
"Anzac Day will be appropriately celebrated through New Zealand. Will you please convey to all attend-

ing the memorial service at Anzac hostel and elsewhere in Egypt our faith in the soldiers of the Allied Armies, our determination to support to the full the New Zealanders who had gone to the front, our sympathy with the relatives of those who are lost, and our hope that the sick and wounded may soon

be completely restored to health. Anzac Day will never be forgotten, but we look forward with full confidence to the dawn of another and brighter day which shall crown with success the work begun upon that day twelve months ago."

Cables from London reported other Anzac Day events there.

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A modern picture of the Cairo Bourse (Stock Exchange). Just imagine the soldiers crowded on the circular Gallery and every inch filled on the ground floor

Continued from p 3

I had not seen Montgomery but my chaps said he had appeared on a balcony. He had left at about 3.30am. After I had returned to the Guard Room the Battalion Orderly Officer came in and asked what had been happening and told me off for not ringing back for extra men. After duty, a much longer shift than normal, back at the barracks, I heard "C O. Orders 9 o'clock, Jeacock." When the C O asked why they had not been told about the night's events, I said it was because the General had stressed that nobody was to be told. "Very Good. I'm pleased you did the right thing and you upheld the name of the regiment." And that was that. But there were other guard duties which I will tell you about at another time.'

Thank you Tom, we look forward to the next instalment. Editor

Post Script

The C O who complimented Tom on his 'silence' was Lt Col Radclyffe who later, with Major Hirst, restarted the Volkswagan factory as described in 'The Beetle' in the January Issue.

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The whole newspaper is amongst the my father's souvenirs, kept folded for over 90 years. Each page has been photographed and can be found at www.greawaranddad.net which also covers Dad's involvement in the Gallipoli campaign.

Miscellany

Did you know?

April starts on the same day of the week as July in all years, and January in leap years. April ends on the same day of the week as December every year. The birthstone of April is the diamond, and the birth flower is typically listed as either the Daisy or the Sweet Pea.



Photo taken on 29 April 2004 on the occasion of the Affiliation of the M H ACF Detachment at their HQ in Coventry Road

From Old Minutes

March 1981: Mr. Brown proposed that a Women's Section be formed. Mr. Wilson said that he thought that the ladies are a great help to any organisation. Proposal seconded.

December 1985: Mrs. Lee of Little Bowden will celebrate her 100th birthday. A basket of flowers will be presented to her.

December 1987 : Mrs. Lee celebrated her 102nd birthday!

Just a thought

The older we get, fewer things seem worth queuing up for.

Branch and other News

Our RAFA friends have been celebrating, too, with a Civic Reception at County Hall on 12th March. It was 70 years since their organisation was founded. Chairman, Geoff Moth's article on the History of RAFA will appear in a later issue.

The RNA can also celebrate. Secretary, Pat Middleton has just received the 'Shipmate of the Year' Award for their Area. Congratulations, Pat.

Publicity. An article in the free news magazine, *Squash* gives a very positive view of the purpose and activities of RBL and our branch, thanks to a contact made by Rev. John Morley.

Branch Meeting Highlights.

The warm welcome to two new members from the ex- Ashley branch; refreshments to be included at the social event at Peaker Park; appreciation of Pat Middleton's contribution to a successful Anniversary Dinner; proposals to re-vamp the RBL Rules will be a major matter at the Annual Conference; attendance by our PAO at the Poppy Conference at which changes were mentioned. After this business part of the meeting, Rev. John Morley gave a very interesting talk about his experiences as a RAF Chaplain during the 'Cold War' era in Britain, Germany and for a time in Belize.



MEET IN THE BAR AT NOON

7 MAY

Menu

Roasted shoulder of Welsh lamb with Yorkshire pudding, Roast Potatoes and Gravy (can be gf)

Grasmere Farm 100% pork sausages on a bed of mash & onion gravy (gf)

All with a Selection of vegetables

Goujons of breaded salmon with mixed salad and new potatoes



Spotted dick with creamy custard (v)

Vanilla cheesecake topped with strawberries and strawberry ice cream (v)

Fresh fruit Salad With fruity Sorbet (v) (gf)



Coffee and mints

(v)= Vegetarian ... (gf)= Gluten free ... (can be GF)= can be changed to make it Gluten free

£8.50 Pay on the day

To book, ring Les Moore (01858 463112) before 30 April. 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

- 25 Apr ANZAC Day
8 May Social event at Peaker Park
in lieu of normal meeting.
All members welcome
18/19 May National Annual
Conference, Llandudno
22 May RNA outing to Peterborough
Greyhound racing. Ring John
Marlow on 01858 465502.
8 Jun MH Carnival - Float and stall
12 Jun Branch Meeting and a Quiz
by Janet & Brian Lee
15 Jun County half-year Conference
MH Conservative Club. Any
member may attend.
22 Jun AFD Service and Parade
Leicester Cathedral
29 Jun National Armed Forces Day -
Nottingham
30 Jun MH Armed Forces Day Event
20 Aug Visit to Poppy Factory

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

In Touch Next Month

VE Day, its 50th Anniversary, news
& other items

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Branch Website

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