



## Editorial

**THIS** month has been quite a good one for publicity for the branch.

During April your Press Officer circulated the local press with a statement produced by the War Memorial Committee concerning the memorial at the Cottage Hospital on Coventry Road.

We received a good coverage in the Herald and Post free paper, the Harborough Mail did a good article and the Leicester Mercury gave a full page over to the story. The article in the Leicester Mercury included a few random interviews with local people and it appears that local opinion backs the Royal British Legion one hundred per cent in the view that the memorial must be preserved for the town.

The owners of the Cottage Hospital, the Melton, Rutland and Harborough Primary Care Trust, were also interviewed and stated: "The memorial will be re-located if that is the wish of the local people", but also said that it would be some time before anything happened on the hospital site. Even so, at the very least, your committee have ensured that we have taken the lead if any future dispute occurs in this matter.

It was also announced earlier this month that the branch has been successful in gaining an award in a prestigious national Royal British Legion competition. See article "Oh no we didn't; Oh yes we did."

And just to round off a good month, Mr Ken West has submitted another of his war time experiences to delight us.

Ω

tank and the hatch closed. Fortunately, there was a tarpaulin on the hull and I was able to pull a corner of it over me to give some shelter from the worst of the shower. For 20 minutes I listened-in to the ensuing battle at the waterworks and felt sorry for the lads of the Lincolns. In war the sharp end isn't the most pleasant place to be but when it rains it's 'orrible.

The rain stopped as quickly as it had started. The message came to "prepare to advance towards the waterworks", so I tapped the hatch twice with my bayonet. As it opened gingerly, I saw a pair of eyes staring at me in disbelief. "Christ -I'd forgotten all about you Jock", said the Canadian. "Prepare to move sir....it's stopped now" I replied, referring to the rain. Down went the head and shoulders. Another head popped up, then a third. "You're a bloody cool customer Jock, sitting there with all that stonking going on", said the latter. I looked around where the tank stood and saw a number of black holes in the ground which were still smoking. Holding the head set hard to my ears, I'd been so engrossed in the Lincolns battle, huddled under the tarpaulin I hadn't realised that



A Sherman tank with tarpaulin—it's not Ken underneath!

the Germans had been shelling us.

A week later, after we'd taken Arnhem, we were again leading company and mounted on the Shermans of the Calgary Regt. "Awa' dean yon road tae Amsterrrdam". We'd gone but a few kilometers when the first tank was knocked out, so in the gathering dusk we harboured in nearby woods. As we sat, quietly chatting over

a mug o' char, one of the Calgary lads said, "We're so glad that we knew we'd be carrying you Jocks today. A guy from the Ontarios told us that when they cleared the island, a Jock signaller had sat on the back of the command tank, ignoring all the mortars and shells, he'd carried on as cool as you like, passing messages to and from his Battalion H.Q."

I hid a wry smile. The truth was that even as a lad, I'd never liked

getting wet. I suppose that from such half truths are most legends born. Ω

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*There is another Ken West story in the pipeline— watch this space!* Editor



## Smile Awhile

### ALWAYS FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS!!!

We are indebted to John Liddell for the following:

On a box of Cannelloni, the instructions for cooking were given side-by-side in both Italian and English(?). The latter reads:

IMPORTANT: Albadoro Cannelloni do not ought to boil.

1. Bring in Cannelloni, as they are, a stuffing marked with: beef, eggs, cheese parmigiano, papper or spices, as you like, all well amalga-mated ad juicy.

2. Besmear a backing-pan, previously buttered, with a good tomato-sauce and after, dispose the Cannelloni, lightly distanced between them, in a only couch.

At last, for a safe success in cooking, shed the remnant sauce, possibly diluted with broth, as far as to cover the surface of Cannalloni.

3. Add puffs of butter and grated cheese, cover the backing-pan and put her into the oven, previ-ously warmed at 180/200 centigrad degrees above zero.

4. Cook for about half of hour at the same tem-perature without to uncover the back-in pan and after, to help at table.

Net Weight oz 8 (gr. 226,79)

### SMALL ADS.

Four-poster bed, 101 years old. Perfect for antique lover.

Tired of cleaning yourself? Let me do it. Ω



## Another April Shower

by Kenneth J. West (Fus. Retd.)

After a most enjoyable lunch with friends, I was on my way home on the Arriva bus when we suddenly ran into one of those torrential April showers. Perhaps it was the earlier conversation over the coffee which then triggered the memory of another April shower 56 years previously on a very different vehicle.

We left the start line at dawn on 'Operation De-stroyed' to clear the Germans from the 'Island' be-tween Nijmegen and the Rhine in preparation for the attack on Arnhem. Progress was slow, partly due to the intensive mine-fields, but also due to the poor wireless communications which always dogged us in Holland, contact between the infantry and their sup-port tanks was nil. In desperation, our C.O. ordered a company signaller to sit on the back of the tank com-mander's Sherman and relay messages & orders to him direct. Eager hands 'assisted' me on to the hull where I was instructed to tap the tank man's head twice whenever a message needed to be exchanged. Fortified by this improved technology the tanks of the Ontario Regt. of Canada rolled slowly forward.

We made steady progress until late morning when the order "stop advance" came. I tapped the Lieutenant's shoulder twice (a tank commander with a sore head doesn't auger well for good relations) and passed the message to him. Our 4th Lincolns friends were en-counter strong resistance at a waterworks 500m to our left front. That's when it started.....rain spots as big as two bob bits. Down went the head inside the



## Welfare Matters

### OUR WELFARE OFFICER,

Mr John Liddell, at the last

branch meeting, requested names to be placed on two lists he put before the members. He asked for volunteers to act as drivers or visitors, when nec-essary, to aid people who are under the umbrella of our Welfare Committee.

John stressed that there would not be any roster or timetable for volunteers but would just like to know of any members who he could call on to occasionally help out in these matters when nec-essary.

So come on everyone, let us fill those lists. The more people who volunteer, the lighter becomes the task of our Welfare Committee members, and, it should follow, a better, more caring ser-vice to those requiring Royal British Legion aid. If you can help & have not yet given your name, please ring john on MH 465003. Ω



## Social Committee

THE WELCOME NEWS on the Social Committee front is that they now have a group leader. Mr Tom Ashmore has volunteered to fill the gap until such time as a new Social Secretary is appointed.

This was followed by the good news that the coach outing arranged for July 7th to Newmarket for the RBL Poppy Race Day, was a sell out! It

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really is good news that all seats for an outing have been sold so early before an event. Does this augur success for the future for the Social Committee that works so hard to arrange events for members? We can hope so.

Mr Cox requested that all payments due for this trip should be paid at the June Branch Meeting. This includes our two Posh Members who requested the more expensive tickets to admit to the Enclosure. And you all thought we were a common bunch!!! Ω



## Beaumanor Hall Concert

**TOO FEW MEMBERS** have indicated they will be attending this evening concert on July 7th, for the hiring of transport to be a viable proposition. Therefore if you intend going using your own transport, would you be willing to take anyone else wishing to go? Please let Tom Ashmore know if you need or can offer a lift. (MH 433108). Ω

**TOP SECRET**

## Harrington Air Museum.

**SEVERAL MEMBERS** have expressed interest in visiting this fascinating reminder of the secret work of dropping supplies and agents to the Continent during WW2. Harrington's role as one of the RAF's Thor missile sites in the early 1960's is also recorded. If a few more people wish to go, a special group guided tour will be arranged on Monday afternoon, **16th July**. Please let Tom Ashmore (MH 433108) know if you need or can offer a lift. Ω



## Oh No We Didn't Oh Yes We Did

**THE FAMOUS** Whitehall Farces of Brian Rix Fame are now being overtaken by the Pall Mall Farces it seems. They go something like this;

Act 1, Scene 1. *A few weeks prior to the events played out here, our Deputy Chairman, Tom Ashmore entered the branch in a national competition for the Haig Cup. Laughs start here.*

The RBL County Chairman telephones Tom to ask if he has a further copy of our entry because HQ cannot find the original! Of course, our Tom, wily old dog, still has it on his computer. *So off goes a second copy.* Then County telephone to say HQ have found the first one!

Act 1, Scene 2. *A committee meeting*. Enter our secretary, played by Mrs Betty West, excitedly: "I have received a letter. It does say that we have won a Certificate of Merit in the Haig Cup."

Excitement ripples through the committee. The letter goes on to explain that the said award will be presented at the Annual Conference to be held in Bournemouth. Accordingly, our Chairman, ably played by Mrs Con Halsall, and the aforementioned secretary, are instructed by the committee that they should attend such conference and convey the award back to Market Harborough.

Act 2 Scene 1. *A branch meeting, May 9th.* Our secretary tells the meeting: "I have received a letter. It says we have **not** won a Certificate of Merit in the prestigious Haig Cup, in spite of my having told our committee to the contrary. (*Groans of dismay*). However it goes on to say in a later paragraph that we have won a Certificate of Merit in the compe-

tion. I think it means we have won something, somewhere, some-time--maybe."

Act 2 Scene 2 - *the revelation of the farcical plot.* It appears that the Haig Cup is in fact TWO CUPS!! The Haig Cup and the Lister Cup.

Now this is where the farce deepens (*How do the writers think them up?*)

The competition is in two sections: One for branches within communities exceeding a population of 10,000 and the other for branches within communities of less than 10,000. Now in one year the Haig Cup will be presented to the winner from the larger community and the Lister Cup to the other group winner. Then the following year the Lister Cup goes to the winner from the larger population and the Haig Cup to the smaller. And so it continues in alternate years.

But this year someone had failed to make the change over of the cups. So it would appear that the original letter had awarded our branch the right award in the wrong cup, or the wrong award in the right cup—or something like that Anyway we didn't get the girl in the final scene but we can add a star on the bottom panel of the branch standard. (I think)

Only people who write farces could think up such a complicated plot.

Just for an encore, our treasurer tried to book a special flag for our branch to fly during Remembrance Week, having been informed that County Office had the only one of its kind in the County. He was informed that they did not know where it was. They believed it may have been loaned to a shop or something for a display, but no one quite knew when or where!!!

The Whitehall Farces are now old hat!! Ω



## Coffee Morning 9TH JUNE

Contributions for the Tombola and Raffle should be delivered, if possible, to Irene Blissett, 12 North Bank, Coventry Road, MH on or before Friday, 8th. Ring 431789 to arrange a time.

Cakes, pastries and preserves; bric-a-brac and books can be delivered to Tom Ashmore, 9 The Pastures, Brookfield Road late Friday afternoon or at the Theatre by 8.30am Saturday.

Helpers please arrive by 8.30am.

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## Pub Lunch 12.30 pm 12th JUNE Red Lion , Welham

We need to confirm numbers by 8th June. If you wish to attend and did not put your name on the list at the branch meeting, please ring John Cox on MH 434983. It may be possible

### July In Touch

Don't miss next month's exciting issue when it will be revealed how, in spite of brave fighting in the desert at El Alamein by the Eighth Army, it was in fact a dastardly bug that defeated Rommel.

Read the facts in In Touch!!!



## Diary

Reminders for June with some other dates to keep free. (see also page 10)

- 9 Jun Coffee Morning—Harborough Theatre
  - 12 Jun Pub Lunch—12.30 Red Lion, Welham
  - 13 Jun Branch Meeting + George Gamble
  - 27 Jun Branch Committee Meeting
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- 7 Jul Concert/ picnic—Beaumanor Hall
  - 11 Jul Branch Meeting + social event TBA.
  - 16 Jul Covert Warfare Museum, Harrington.
  - 4 Aug **Newmarket—fully booked**
  - 8 Sep Cosford & Blists Hill Museums
  - 12 Oct Annual Dinner - M H Golf Club

### Meetings

Branch meetings are held on the **Second Wednesday** of each month at 7.30 pm in the downstairs Function Room, Conservative Club, Fairfield Road, Market Harborough.

Following the next meeting on **9th May**, medal expert, **George Gamble** returns with another fascinating talk and display from his wonderful collection. **Don't miss it!!**

The Branch Committee meets on the **Last Wednesday** of each month (except December).



## The Royal British Legion

Reg. Charity 219279

## Market Harborough Branch



Founded in 1923

# In Touch

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