

### For Your Diary

- 20th March onwards** Exhibition opens at the Harborough Museum. See p 2
- 25th March** 7.30pm Committee Meeting
- 8th April** 7.30pm Branch Meeting & social event. See p 2 & 17
- 23rd April** 12.30pm Lunch at *The Countryman*, Great Bowden. Contact Tony Johnson (MH 466097) for details & to book. Lifts can be arranged.
- 23rd April** 7.30pm St George's Day Concert by the band of the Royal Lancers, Church of St James the Greater, London Road, Leicester.
- 17th May** 3.45pm Lutterworth Branch Dedication of New Standard.
- 24th May** Our Service of Thanksgiving at Market Harborough Parish Church at 2.30pm. There will **not** be a Parade.
- 7th June** Concert by the Gurkha Band at the Deragate Theatre, Northampton.
- 13th June** Market Harborough Carnival. Volunteers needed to man the stall and items required for the Tombola.
- 18th July** Branch Coffee Morning at the Harborough Theatre - join us for a cuppa!
- 16-18th Aug.** Visit to the Edinburgh Tattoo - A few places may still be available. Ring MH 466829 for details.
- 29th August** Branch Coffee Morning at the Harborough Theatre - join us for a cuppa!
- 2nd October** Anniversary Dinner (postponed from 3rd April.)
- Watch this space and ***In Touch, Too*** as other events become known.

### Change of Plan!

Due to the poor response, the Anniversary Dinner scheduled for 3rd April has been **postponed** until 2nd October. The style, menu and ticket price will be as originally announced. The venue may be different but details will be given nearer the time.

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**APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE**

#### Meetings

Regular meetings are held on the **Second Wednesday** of each month at 7.30 pm in the downstairs Function Room, Conservative Club Building, Fairfield Road, Mkt. Harboro'.

At the next meeting, on **8th April**, bring two **old** photos, one with you in a group & the other alone. Prizes for identifying the very much younger versions of our present selves. Should be fun!!

Mr & Mrs F T Ashmore  
9 The Pastures  
Market Harborough  
Leics.  
LE16 9EA



Regd. Charity No 219279

## The Royal British Legion Market Harborough Branch

1923 - 1998



# In Touch

Issue 12

March, 1998.

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## Editorial

**In Touch** has now completed its second year of publication. Is it appreciated; is it being read or is it being "binned" with the junk mail we have to endure these days? Please let us know what you think of this 12th issue and we would really welcome items of interest for inclusion in our next edition.

This issue deals principally with anniversaries. We are making sure that Robert Cramp is not forgotten on his 99th birthday on 31st March. We reproduce the Greetings "Card" sent by our American Sister Unit for the Branch 75th Anniversary and we put our "birth" in the context of a calendar and items of news from March, 1923.

The Harborough Band provided a superb anniversary concert on 21st March and Chris Groom and his musicians are to be thanked and congratulated for enabling us to celebrate our birthday in such a harmonious way.

Rules of the Road applied in 1923 just as they did when Bill Cotton had his seamanship training at HMS Ganges in the 30's. We lesser mortals still think of port as the beverage enjoyed at Christmas time and not the left right variety which causes confusion with we landlubbers.

In his veiled(?) warning, has Andrew Marriott forgotten to remind us of Committee-man "Someone Else", whose obituary we reported in Issue No. 6 just a year ago?

And fancy Hotspur having been on the Pill !!  
Read his true story on page 10.



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## Rules of the Road (for Sailors)

from our Naval Correspondent, Bill Cotton

1. When both lights you see ahead  
Starboard wheel and show your red.
2. Green to Green or red to red  
Perfect safety, go ahead.
3. If to your starboard red appear  
it is your duty to stay clear;  
to act as judgement says is proper  
to starboard, port, back, or stop her.
4. Both in safety and in doubt  
always keep a good lookout.  
In danger with no room to turn  
ease her - stop her- go astern.



1. A "close hauled" ship you'll never see  
give way to one that's "running free".  
'Tis easier running free to steer  
and that's the reason she keeps clear.
2. With wind the same side, running free  
one's to windward, one to lee,  
the leeward ship goes straight ahead,  
the other alters course instead.
3. Both "close hauled" or both quite "free"  
on different tacks we all agree  
the ship that has the wind to port  
must keep well clear, is what we're taught.
4. At other times the altering craft  
is that which has the wind right aft.

Note when sailing always wear a life jacket.

Good sailing!

Now these four rules we all must note  
are no use in a sailing boat  
as we're dependent on the wind  
another set of rules we find

### 7 Steps down to.....

- |    |                                  |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 1. | It just won't work               |
| 2. | It costs too much                |
| 3. | We tried that once before        |
| 4. | We're not ready for that         |
| 5. | It's not our responsibility      |
| 6. | We've never done it that way     |
| 7. | We're doing all right without it |

**A Warning to any  
Committee**

**STAGNATION**

Adapted from a poster provided by Secretary, Andrew Marriott. Is he trying to tell us something?

## Branch News

**Questionnaire.** About half the forms sent out with the last issue of *In Touch Too* have been returned and will be considered at the Branch Committee meeting on 25th March.

**Membership Directory.** No adverse criticism + a few compliments = praise indeed?

**New Style Branch Meetings.** This month, the "social" part of the evening took the form of a Quiz prepared and conducted by Connie Halsall. Prizes were awarded for the highest (and lowest!) scores and Connie's decision was final! Everyone seemed to enjoy the fun.

The April event will again be a light-hearted competition - recognising members from old photos of themselves. Bring along a snap of you as a bonny baby, spotty school kid, or sylph-like newly-wed and also one of you in a group.

**75th Anniversary Exhibition** opened on Friday, 20th March (the branch birthday) in the Harborough Museum. The event was attended by several members, including Robert and Mrs Cramp. Press photographer Andrew Carpenter was there to record the occasion. Do go and see this well designed, interesting display.

**Anniversary Concert.** A great success which reflects great credit on Tom Jeacock for his foresight, determination and hard work in making it happen. The Harborough Band under their talented and witty Musical Director gave us a delightful programme of music which "struck the right chord" with the audience from whom one could sense an atmosphere of enjoyment and pleasure. A wonderful evening!

## From HQ

**Hearing Aids.** Until recently, the NHS could supply hearing aids only from a limited range. Following the implementation of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, it is now able to supply, free of charge, any hearing aid considered suitable to meet the clinical needs of the individual. As a result of this change, there should be no circumstances in which the NHS cannot provide a suitable hearing aid, particularly where the treatment is considered essential.



War Pensioners (with accepted war disablement deafness) are of course, entitled to priority NHS treatment under longstanding arrangements. Also, it is hoped that as a result of a new independent scientific and medical study, such pensioners will again be entitled to a review of their pensions if their hearing continues to deteriorate.

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## Pills

By Hotspur

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.

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## Survivors

*With acknowledgement to the Police Pensioners' Magazine.*

"CALL US THE SURVIVORS.....  
TO THOSE BORN BEFORE 1945"

We were born before television,  
before penicillin, polio shots, frozen food,  
Xerox, plastic, contact lenses, videos, Frisbees  
and the Pill.

We were before radar, credit cards,  
split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens;  
before dishwashers, tumble dryers, electric  
blankets, air conditioners, drip dry clothes..  
and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first and **then** lived together  
(how quaint can you be?).  
We thought fast food was what you ate in Lent,  
a Big Mac was an oversized raincoat  
and crumpet we had for tea.

We existed before households, computer dating  
and disposable nappies, we never heard of  
FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters,  
artificial hearts, word processors, yogurt  
or young men wearing earrings.  
For us, time-sharing meant togetherness,  
a chip was a piece of wood or a fried potato,  
hardware meant nuts and bolts  
and software wasn't even a word.

Before 1940, 'made in Japan' meant junk,  
the term making out referred to

how you did in your exams,

and a stud was something that  
fastened a collar or a shirt  
and 'going all the way' meant staying on a  
double-decker to the bus depot.  
Pizzas, MacDonalds and instant coffee were  
unheard of.

In our day, smoking was fashionable,  
grass was mown, coke was kept in the coal-  
house, a joint was a piece of meat you ate on  
Sundays and pot was something you cooked in.

Rock music was a fond mother's lullaby.  
Eldorado was an ice cream, a 'gay person' was  
the life and soul of the party, and nothing more,  
while 'aids' just meant beauty treatment  
or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1945 must be a  
hardy bunch, when you think of the ways  
in which the world has changed and the  
adjustments we have had to make. No  
wonder we are so confused and there is a  
generation gap today.

But - by the grace of God - we have  
survived! Hallelujah!!!

oo

### Another Survivor

Mr Doug Dibley, the last survivor of the  
New Zealand troops who were in the ill-  
fated 1915 Gallipoli campaign, died last

December aged 101.

March, 1923

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

3. French troops occupied the Rhine ports of Mannheim and Karlsruhe and a battle between the two nations occurred when the French claimed coal and other materials as war reparations.
9. At the age of 53, Lenin the Soviet Leader suffered a second stroke which deprived him of the power of speech and completely paralysed him.
16. Announcement in the "Midland Mail" of a meeting of Ex-Servicemen to be held on 20th March in the Small Assembly Room, Market Harborough.
20. **Market Harborough Branch of the British Legion formed** at that meeting.
21. In Paris, scientists claimed that smoking was beneficial, as nicotine forms anti-bacterial chemicals.
26. 15,000 Norfolk farm hands went on strike for higher wages. It ended a month later.
29. At the age of 78 Sarah Bernhardt died and the whole of Paris came to a halt when her funeral cortege passed by.

## Birthday Greetings

### Happy Birthday, Robert!

For the September, 1996 Issue of *In Touch* you, Robert Cramp, our senior member, related some of your experiences during the fighting in the Battle of Cambrai in 1918.

Our Editor, having planned another short stay in Picardy visited the Le Cateau area of France about which you have often spoken, to take a few photos of the Picardy Battlefield area as it is today. As it is your 90th Birthday on the 31st of this month, the Branch would then present them to you as a birthday gift.



Le Cateau was, and still is, an important railway centre and because of this the Germans captured it in 1914 and held it until October 1918.

Then your regiment, the Manchesters, together with the Leicestershires and many other attacking forces relieved the little town. Do you recognise the Railway Station, the subject of one of the pictures? Did you leave from this station after the Armistice to be demobbed?

5500 Germans now rest in Le Cateau War Cemetery, a section of which has been beautifully landscaped into the British and Commonwealth War cemetery, where 660 Allied soldiers are also interred, many from your Manchester Regiment, and many from the Leicesters. The photographs do

not show the full extent of the cemetery nor can they capture the emotion one feels in taking them.

One of the few things you acquired or had kept from your time in France was a silk and lace souvenir which you sent home to your mother in 1917. This bears the name "Caudry" - the town where it was made.

Caudry was easy to find: it lies south of Cambrai and is quite near Le Cateau. In fact it is a larger town and still famous for its lacemaking industry. The greetings card sent you and the few snaps taken of the town, were intended as a link to the place you had once known.

Robert, all Branch members, send their very best wishes for your special birthday and would like you to accept the album of photographs as a small token of our regard.

At the same time we do apologise for turning you into a museum exhibit. Your photograph as an 18 year old soldier, and your Mother's piece of Caudry lace, form part of our 75th Anniversary display at the Market Harborough Museum.

Happy Birthday and as our friends from Toledo would say, "Have a Good Day".

### Happy Birthday, Branch



On behalf of Conn-Weissenberger American Legion Post #587 in Toledo, Ohio, I would like to send congratulations, and Happy Anniversary greetings to the Market Harborough Branch of the Royal British Legion on the 75th Anniversary of the Branch.

From all of us at Conn-Weissenberger, Sister Post by Proclamation to Market Harborough Branch RBL, we wish you a

**Happy 75th Anniversary!**  
God Bless and many more.

Sincerely, John K. Marshall,  
Vice-Commander  
Conn-Weissenberger American Legion Post  
Toledo, Ohio, USA