



Annual General Meeting The present committee was retained unopposed and will be joined by Glenys Hocking-Davies. The President and Chairman reported on another successful year and thanked Members, particularly those working behind the scenes, for contributing so much to Branch activities.

Forthcoming Branch Nuptials We are delighted to announce that the marriage of Norinne Muller to Roy Townsend will take place on 10 December..

Late Night Shopping If you are in Town on 2nd December for the Festive Evening, pop into the fascinating Harborough Museum - open until 8.

Lost and Found Have you mislaid an item of jewellery? If so, please contact Mark Hudson (01858 434436) who is holding an item which was handed in after the September branch meeting in the Conservative Club.

In Touch If you should require a back copy of *In Touch*, the Editor will be pleased to oblige.

Goodies Don't bother with tea on December 14th, you can stoke up at the buffet following the branch meeting.

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

We welcome a new member:

01858 410116 Powell Mr C S (Sandy) 17 Dunslade Grove, Market Harborough LE16 8AG.

Please note the following amendments:

Andrew Marriott has made an adventurous move from 1 to 2 Aldwinckles Yard, Market Harborough.

Do you find it easier to read this?

If so, the BIG PRINT version of *In Touch* may suit you.

For a sample copy, please contact the Editor on 01858 433873

OR

g.seward@btinternet.com



The Diary

SOME DATES TO KEEP FREE

- 15 Dec M H Branch Christmas Lunch
- 18 Dec M H Cadets' Carol Service, St Hugh's Church M H 2006
- 18 Mar M H Branch Coffee Morning
- 24 Mar M H Branch Anniversary Dinner
- 21 Oct M H Branch Coffee Morning

The date of the next meeting is December 14th

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

The Committee meets in the same room on the Thursday preceding the Branch Meeting at 7.00 pm .



The Royal British Legion

Market Harborough Branch

Reg. Charity 219279

www.mktharbrorbl.ukvet.net



PROUD TO HOLD THE LISTER CUP

In Touch

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***In Touch* on-line**

www.in-touch.ukvet.net

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Thank You, Cadets

Both Pat Middleton and I would like to thank all who, in any way, helped towards the recent Coffee Morning at the Harborough Theatre. We would also like to thank those who donated money and the various items for the stalls.

I must give a special thanks to the Army and Air Cadets without whom we could not have held the event. It was great to hear the comments from the public who referred to the cadets as "thorough young ladies and gentlemen." We were proud to have you there and look forward to working with you all in the future.

We are pleased to announce that we made £360 and handed a cheque for £460 over to the Poppy Appeal at the last Branch meeting. This was made up of £360 from the coffee morning, together with £100 from the Raffle at the Autumn Dinner.

A BIG THANK YOU to you all!

Glenys Hocking-Davies



Those "thorough young ladies and gentlemen" were on parade with Branch members when the poppies were distributed to Harborough town centre shops.

It was a real pleasure to have the willing company of members of the Army Cadet Force and the Air Training Corps.

Those who were fortunate to attend the excellent Festival of Remembrance at the de Montfort Hall saw our local ATC Squadron on show and duties included escorting the chief guests to their places. Their immaculate appearance and impressive marching made us all feel proud to be associated with them.

Tedder presented a leather-bound register of services, engraved in gold with his initials, and the late Air Marshal Graham Dawson gave two antique bronze alms dishes. These gifts from individuals and especially from the other services, together with the work and craftsmanship of our own airmen, considerably helped in the building and furnishing of our church.

Before the church was opened Lady Rosalinde Tedder met with the accident which resulted in her death, and in gratitude and to her memory a stone cross was erected in front of the church, close to the entrance.

The opening service, which was recorded by the B.B.C., was held on the afternoon of Sunday June 6th, 1943, and was conducted by the Rev. Canon P. H. Saunders-Davies, Assistant Chaplain-in-Chief, R.A.F., Middle East, Assisted by the Rev. T. Madoc-Jones, Assistant Principal Chaplain, P.M. and U.B., R.A.F. Middle East and Padre Ensor. The same evening Padre Ensor preached what proved to be his first and last sermon in the church, for the day following he proceeded on posting to another unit. It was a memorable sermon and a fitting conclusion to a nobly-inspired task.

A few Sundays later the B.B.C. broadcast at home their recorded version of the opening service and the story of the church's building. As a result of this broadcast a very remarkable thing happened. People in all parts of the British Isles began to send gifts of all kinds for the church, in this way becoming real "Friends of St. Michael's, Tura." Such a happening had never been anticipated, and it was, therefore, all the more gratifying to those who had built the church. An organ was sent out by an organ manufacturer, one lady sent a set of altar linen, and an elderly nurse a packet of flower seeds to plant in the garden. A silver communion chalice was presented by an Anny Major and his wife living in Devon in memory of their son killed in action, and a similar gift was re-

ceived from another lady in memory of a Coldstream Guardsman. A cross and candlesticks were also promised.

In addition, many money gifts were received. As the greater part of what was thus so kindly donated was not needed it was used to endow a child's cot in the Church Missionary Society Hospital, Old Cairo. This cot bears the name, "St. Michael's, Tura." This financial help we have been able to give to the C.M.S. cannot but please



*St Michael's Church,
RAF Station Tura-el-Asmant, Egypt*

those at home who have made it possible. It has brought St. Michael's some good friends amongst the staff of the C.M.S. Hospital, and their interest in our church has from the beginning of our association been a real and deep one.

A stranger, seeing our church for the first time, might be intrigued by two things: the Cornish cross at the Western exterior end of the building, and inside, the

names engraved on the pillars. The Cornish cross was put there as a compliment to the Commanding Officer of the station at the time when building actually commenced, a Cornishman by birth. The names were inscribed for tee who contributed a fixed sum to the building fund; many are of a memorial nature.

Recently much has been done to beautify still further the interior of the church. A tone altar has now replaced the one put there when the church was built, and a small chapel on the right of the main altar has been added. An iron-wrought grill, surmounted by a bronze cross, both of them made in the station workshops, has been placed at the entrance to the chapel.

What will become of our Church after the War? We cannot really tell It has been suggested that it should be taken down, stone by stone, and re-built in some English village, or on a permanent R.A.F. Station at home. Such a proposition is realised to be an almost impracticable task. But whatever the future brings, St. Michael's, Tura, will certainly live on for a very long time in the memory of those who have worshipped and prayed in it.

The Church Built on Sand **ex-Air Gunner Peter Wilson**

On the evening of Sunday, November 19th, 1944, the Bishop of Maidstone, as representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury, preached in the big Cathedral of All Saints', Cairo. The Friday following he came to the little church of St. Michael's, Tura, our R.A.F. Station church. As he himself expressed it, the Bishop did not come to preach, but to worship with and talk to us. He was unorthodox in that he did not have a text, and did not go into the pulpit; instead, he stood at the foot of the altar steps between the communion rails, a kindly-faced, grey-haired figure, impressive in the scarlet gown of a prelate of the Church of England. He talked quietly and movingly. You could tell he was listened to, there was hardly a cough or movement while he spoke amongst those who were there. The Bishop talked about our church, what it stood for and what he had heard of it at home. And he told us, too, that the story of the building of St. Michael's, Tura, would not easily be forgotten.

The idea of building a church owed its birth to one man, the first Church of England chaplain on this station, the Rev. K. V. Ensor. Without his efforts, his determination and, above all, his vision the idea would probably never have crystallised. As with all men of driving force and vigour, he had round him a small band of keen, enthusiastic airmen to whom church-going really meant something.

On this station they had been used to church services held in the quiet room of the Y.M.C.A. and many could remember other R.A.F. stations where the N.A.A.F.I had been utilised for such purposes. Padre Ensor's idea of building a stone church on a desert station, where everyone lived in tents, was one that could not be resisted.

Once the site was fixed, plans were drawn up and approved and building fund started. Nearly all the money which was required was collected on the station. The actual building was begun in April, 1942, and while some of the work was done by airmen, native labour had, of necessity, to be employed. The stone used in the building was easily accessible and quarried not so far away from the actual site. It is curious to reflect that this Mokattam

Hill stone was the same as that used centuries ago for the building of the Pyramids.

Whilst the building was in progress the war situation in North Africa became more serious and the advance to El Alamein was a threat that could not be disregarded. Preparations were made everywhere for withdrawal and amidst the intense activity of those days the builders of our church were faced with a very difficult decision to make. Should they abandon the project or carry on with the building? We all know now the greatness of the decision these men made. It is to their credit, and to the glory of God that they came to this decision. In that lies the significant achievement of St. Michael's, Tura: one that may well in the future accord it acute cornerstone in the history of human endeavour.

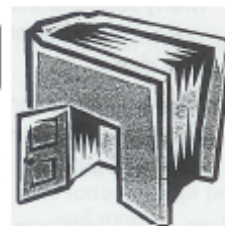
The foundation-stone was laid by Lady Rosalinde Tedder, on November 29th, 1942. Men from a neighbouring Army camp helped by making the stone font, pulpit and lectern, and the Royal Navy presented a ship's bell which is rung for all services. The

Royal Hellenic Air Force gave a St. George's flag, and the turf used for the garden surrounding the church was given by the Maadi Sporting Club. The cross and candlesticks for the altar were made in the station workshops, as were the entrance doors. Some of the brick-laying, much of the carpentry and all the electric wiring and fitting were done by airmen. The embroidery on the original altar was done in a convent in Cairo. The painting of an English village scene on the window above the altar was carried out by a serviceman. Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur



A handsome young Peter Wilson photographed during his RAF service in the Middle East.

Home-Delivery Library Service



Do you find it physically difficult to get into the library on a regular basis? Do you enjoy reading and listening to talking books, but find getting into town a struggle? Do you know of someone who is isolated due to age, mobility problems or failing health, who previously used the library regularly? If so, Market Harborough Library may have the answer.

A well-established home-delivery library service is provided for those living within the town. Books, in both ordinary and large print, talking books on CD and cassette, and now videos and DVD's (for a one-off annual payment), can be delivered, direct to your home, on a fortnightly basis. There is no complicated joining procedure. For more information, please contact the Library Development Worker on 01858 821272, via email at marketharboroughlibrary@leics.gov.uk or pop into the library whenever it is open.

Do you need a little help?

The Local Pension Service Office, based in Leicester, is able to offer an improved form filling service. They are able to send one of their workers to your home to help fill in:

- Attendance Allowance Forms
- Disability Living Allowance Forms
- Carer's Allowance Forms
- Pension Credit Forms

They will also carry out a benefits check to make sure you are receiving everything that is available to you. If you would like help please telephone 0116 252 9215.

They promise to send someone within one week.

Just for Fun

Three old chaps were out walking.

The first one says, "Windy, isn't it?"

The second one says, "No, it's Thursday"

The third one says, "So am I. Let's go to the pub."



Remembrancetide 2005



ROUND AND ABOUT IN HARBOROUGH

❶ and ❷ The Branch on parade, proudly marching to St Dionysius Church on Remembrance Sunday. ❸ We believe Branch Members Wendy (ex-RAF) and Jim (ex-Paras) Osborne were the only married couple marching. ❹ The Dignitaries - after the ceremony on Sunday . . . (from left) RSM D Harrald, Mark Hudson, Mr Richard Everard Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Edward Garnier QC MP, and Peter Wilson ❺ . . . and the Workers - relaxing after laying out the crosses in the Remembrance Garden (from left) John Cook, Don Johnson, George Fleming, John Swannack, Bert Thorold, Francis Swannack and John Cox. ❻ Chatting up the ladies is a legitimate aspect of the poppy seller's craft, as demonstrated here by Sid Amos.

Why not a Poppy wristband?

The following letter was published recently in
The Independent newspaper.

Members opinions on this topic will be appreciated.
What do you think?

Could the explanation for low poppy sales to young people be associated with the obvious fact that the British Legion poppy is not designed to be attached to modern clothing, but to a suit buttonhole?

During four decades of office life, I always wore a poppy during the season of remembrance. During the past three years which I have spent less formally attired, I have tended to avoid the poppy tray for want of a bright idea as to how to attach it without accidentally drawing blood. For this reason I think the wristband, as an alternative, perhaps carrying some sort of poppy symbol, would be a good idea. It would also bring the important tradition of remembrance into line with current fashion and serve as a connection between the generations.

Emergency Calls!

Caller: My wife is pregnant and her contractions are only two minutes apart.

999 Operator: Is this her first child?

Caller: No, you idiot! This is her husband!

Caller: I heard what sounded like gunshots coming from the house on the corner.

999 Operator: Do you have an address?

Caller: No, I have on a blouse and slacks, why?