

What's Going On?

The Social & Fund-Raising Team Reports

DIARY OF EVENTS

The date of the next Branch meeting is

November 12th

- 1 Nov Festival of Remembrance, de Montfort Hall, Leic.
- 12 Nov Branch AGM with buffet after meeting.
- 14 Nov ATC Remembrance Charity Ball, MH Rugby Club
- 15 Nov Remembrance Concert, Baptist Church MH
- 25 Nov Lunch at the Angel, noon for 12.30
- 6 Jan 09 Christmas Lunch with RAFA & RNA
- 3 Feb Angel Lunches now 1st Tuesday in month
- 13 Mar Formal Branch Anniversary Dinner

The Angel Lunch Tuesday, October 28

Meet at noon for 12.30 in the Bar

Menu Choice

Roasted Supreme of Chicken wrapped in Bacon with an Apricot Stuffing, Roast Potatoes and Gravy
Salmon Tail sat on Crushed New Potatoes with a Prawn and Dill Cream Sauce
Pork and Leek Sausages on a Bed of Mash with Onion Gravy

All Served with a Selection of Vegetables

Profiteroles drizzled with Chocolate Sauce
Homemade Bread and Butter Pudding with Creamy Custard
Vanilla Cheesecake topped with Pineapple and Mandarins with Vanilla Ice Cream

Only £7

Don't miss this Enjoyable Night Out and give your support to Cancer Charities. Our local Air Training Corps Squadron raised a magnificent £2400 last year.

Please help them beat that at this year's

Remembrance Ball

On Friday, 14 November, at the Rugby Club.

Tickets £17.50 (to include first class buffet)

From 0116 240 4170

Order yours without delay.

The Royal British Legion Market Harborough Branch

Reg. Charity 219279

Hon. Secretary:

Sara Whitley-Kinzett 01858 434476

Welfare:

Vida Edwards 0116 279 3729

Betty Ramsay 01858 434923

Poppy Appeal Organiser:

Dave Pryor 01858 545612

Standard Bearer

George Fleming 01858 462711

Social & Fund Raising Team:

Glenys Hocking-Davies 01858 467835

Wendy Osborne 01858 467636

Les Moore 01858 463112

Freda Carnell 077 422 987 68

Meetings are held on the Second Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm in the 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.

In Touch

www.in-touch.ukvet.net

THE MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER OF THE
MARKET
HARBOROUGH
BRANCH OF THE
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
Founded 1996

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The Royal British Legion

Market Harborough Branch

In Touch

Issue 121

October 2008

Treat yourself to a feast of sheer musical delight at our Remembrance Concert with the award-winning
Harborough Band

and support the
Poppy Appeal
At 7.30 on Saturday
15 November in the
Baptist Church

£5

Tickets on sale now at
ABC Music, 7 St Mary's Road
and R D Jeacock, 20 Coventry Road,
or at the door on the night.

Go Irene and Jack Ballard
Many congratulations
on your 70th Wedding
Anniversary

Branch
News
Round-up

RBL Speaker Kay Callaghan, head of Internal Communications at RBL HQ, gave an interesting talk at the September meeting and answered many questions from her audience. It is hoped a report will appear in the next *In Touch*.

Annual General Meeting Yes, it's that time again and a form for nominations is enclosed herewith. Please let Secretary Sara have your completed form by November 1st.

Subscriptions Tony Johnson is after your money and your £12.50 subscription is urgently required, please. Your prompt payment makes life much easier for Tony who, of course, gives his time voluntarily.

Lunch at The Angel Those who enjoy these occasions are reminded that, following the Christmas event on January 6th, the lunch date will be on the first Thursday of each month. Nothing else changes, including the excellent value!

Getting there Do you have difficulty travelling to Branch events, such as meetings and the monthly lunches? It is the wish of your Committee that, wherever possible, nobody be left out of Branch activities should they wish to participate. Please contact a member of the Social Team to discuss your problem in this regard.

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY
We welcome a new member:
Mr A Rose, 4 Paget Road, Lubbenham,
Market Harborough LE16 9TL
01858 433825

My Time with 271 Squadron

By
ALAN
HARTLEY

Alan gave a most interesting talk to the Branch last month. This is his story as recorded on the BBC WW2 People's War web site.

“You're more than a number in my little red book.” So started a song, which we used to sing during the war, but most numbers are lost to us. On my way to holiday I saw on a cleaning trolley the number 271 and my memory flashed back to another railway journey as a freshly trained flight mechanic, sitting on my kit bag in a crowded train corridor to join 271 Squadron in Doncaster. We were travelling from Locking in Weston-Super-Mare where for four months a group of trainees had specialised on the new Napier Sabre engine being fitted to the latest fighter, the Hawker Typhoon, so we were looking forward to joining a Typhoon Squadron to service these monster fighters.

Imagine our chagrin when reporting for duty at Doncaster to be told that the aircraft we would be servicing would be the new transport aircraft, the Douglas DC3 or Dakota as the RAF named it. So we spent the next few days familiarising ourselves with the large Pratt & Whitney radial engines and the 95' wingspan of these fat green elephants of aircraft.

But on 29th February 1944 our 271 Squadron moved to an airfield in the Cotswolds near Cirencester and a little village called Down Ampney. Although we had never heard of it, apparently it was the birthplace of the well-known composer Ralph Vaughan Williams.

On arrival we were briefed on our future role which was to train to fly all aspects of airborne Operations, Glider towing, paratrooper dropping, air despatch, the dropping of supplies to ground troops and air ambulance, for at Down Ampney we had a large Casualty Air Evacuation Centre fitted with a fully

surgical hospital and we were told that between airborne operations we would be bringing back casualties from the European war fronts. Shortly after settling into our corrugated iron Nissen huts we were joined by another Dakota Squadron, No 48. Both Squadrons comprised three flights, A, B & C, with ten Dakotas to a flight, so we totalled sixty Dakotas in all. Later on, when we were advanced in our training we had both Squadrons taking off towing the wooden Horsa gliders and circling the village - the noise was horrendous and I often felt sorry for those 280 or so villagers torn out of their rural serenity by all of these aircraft and over 3,500 airmen and WAAFS who had taken over their village, particularly when the village bakery opened at 8 am and was sold out of every crumb by 8.15 am, the long queues at the tiny Post Office and the sole telephone box, the never-ending hunt for beer in the local pub which soon became carefully husbanded by the publican for the locals, whilst we could only buy a liquid paint stripper which they called scrumpy or rough cider.

In March we soon learned a lesson about the dangers of war and flying hazards when whilst practicing close formation flying, the wing tip of one Dakota contacted the elevators of another, which plunged to the ground killing all of the aircrew and some of our mechanics who had gone up for a joy ride. By coincidence the pilot whose wing tip caused the accident was killed himself a month later when the glider he was towing got out of control and brought his Dakota down.

Alan's story continues in our next edition.

Is It
True
?

♥ In the 1400's a law was set forth in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence we have 'rule of thumb'.

♥ Many years ago in Scotland a new game was invented. It was ruled 'Gentlemen

Only - Ladies Forbidden' and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.

OLD AIRFIELD

by W Scott

Ex - 630 Squadron



No. 630 Squadron was formed on 15th November 1943, at East Kirkby (codename Silksheen), near Spilsby, Lincolnshire, and remained based there throughout its existence. Equipped with Lancasters, it formed part of No. 5 Group and between 18/19th November 1943 and 25th April 1945, took part in

many major raids, including each of the 16 big raids made by Bomber Command on the German capital during what became known as the "Battle of Berlin".



I lie here, still, beside the hill
Abandoned long to Nature's will.
My buildings down. My people gone.
My only bounds, the wild bird's song.

But my mighty birds will rise no more.
No more I hear the Merlins roar.
And never now my bosom feels
The pounding of their giant wheels.

From the ageless hill their voices cast
Thunderous echoes of the past.
And still in lonely reverie
Their great dark wings sweep down on me.

Laughter, sorrow, hope and pain,
I shall never know these things again.
Emotions that I came to know
Of strange young men so long ago.

Who knows as evening shadows meet
Are they with me still, a phantom fleet?
And do my ghosts still stride unseen
Across my face so wide and green?

And in the future should structures tall
Bury me beyond recall
I shall still remember them,
My metal birds, and long-dead men.

Now weeds grow high, obscure the sky.
O remember me when you pass by.
For beneath this tangled, leafy screen
I was your home, your friend "Silksheen".

The poem contributed by Freda Carnell.

2008 POPPY APPEAL UPDATE



Organiser Dave Pryor warns us to be prepared for a musical - and rather noisy - launch!

Dave would like as many members as possible to attend the 2008 Poppy Appeal Launch at 10 am on Saturday, October 25 by the Memorial Gates in The Square.

With his Pipe Band connections, Dave has arranged for Pipers to herald in this year's Appeal. The town will be full of shoppers, so it should make quite an impact and create awareness!

Dave is still anxious to recruit more volunteer street collectors and Members or friends willing to help should complete the enclosed form. Alternatively, you can contact him on 01858 468662 or by email on pao.rbl@btinternet.com



My plea for contributions to *In Touch* brought no surprises. In fact, it brought nothing whatsoever! Always the optimist, however, I shall make another attempt and request some Christmassy items for the December issue.

During and after the war, many of you spent the festive period away from home and I would like to receive your memories of these times.

But your anecdotes don't even have to be about service life, and there must be some good yarns about Christmas in Civvy Street at a time when goodies were in short supply and we had to 'make do and mend'. If there is a funny angle, so much the better, though it is not essential.

If you are not happy about writing, give me a call on 01858 433873 and I'll take some notes.

The Programme of Events

Compiled by George Fleming

Saturday 1st November

The Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance Concert at the De Montfort Hall, Leicester. This year's performers will be the very talented youth orchestra, The Glebe Symphonic Orchestra, whose members are drawn from other orchestras across the UK, including BBC Philharmonic and Liverpool Philharmonic. Please support a wonderful occasion from 7 pm.

Monday 3rd November.

Set up the Garden of Remembrance, Mkt. Harborough. Your help is needed and volunteers are requested to meet in the Garden at 8-30 am (60p parking fee if you do not have a blue badge).

Monday - Saturday 3rd - 8th and

Monday 10th November.

A short Sunset Ceremony led by the Branch Standard Bearers at 4 pm in the Garden of Remembrance. Your support at this moving ceremony will be most appreciated. It is hoped that we will have two young trumpeters to play the last post and possibly a piper. This will be the ninth year that we have carried out this ceremony and we must try to keep it going for a few more years.



Remembrance 2007



"We will remember them"

Sunday 9th November 2008.

The Remembrance Service and Parade. You are invited to join the parade to the Parish Church, assembling at 10 am on the Tesco car park (no parking fee today). The service will commence at 10.45 but those not parading are requested to be seated in the church by 10.30. Following the service there will be the laying of wreaths at the Memorial on The Square.

Tuesday 11th November.

10.15 am sharp – The Act of Remembrance at the Memorial in Welland Park. (The entrance is to the left of the school on Welland Park Road.

10.55 – The Act of Remembrance in The Square by the Memorial Garden Gates. The firing of a Maroon will signal the beginning and end of the Two Minutes Silence The Wreath laying ceremony will follow.

Wednesday 12th November.

At 8.30am the volunteer working party will commence removal of the display in the Remembrance Gardens. It is hoped the work will be completed by 10.30 am. (60p parking fee should be sufficient.)

Saturday 15th November

The annual Remembrance Concert with the award-winning Harborough Band will take place in the Baptist Church on Coventry Road. The programme of popular light music will commence at 7.30 pm and tickets cost £5. Join us for an enjoyable evening and support the Poppy Appeal.