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Welcome to the sixth issue of *Legion Knots* - the magazine about the branches and for the branches of Nottinghamshire.

I hope those of you that helped with this year's Poppy Appeal have taken a well earned rest. In this issue we look back at some of our achievements and remember what our great charity is all about.

We are at last truly moving into the 21st century as the **leading service charity with our welfare work at the core**. How many times have I heard people complain that the Board of Trustees have not done enough to 'sell' our charity in the eyes of the public. These are interesting times with the new developments further supporting our aims.

This issue also contains the harrowing tale of Private William Henry Randle.

### 'Shot at Dawn'

On Wednesday 11 November 2009, Jean Lewis and her husband Dave were honoured to be chosen to attend the service to mark the passing of the World War One generation, at Westminster Abbey. Attendees from Nottinghamshire were chosen by Lord Lieutenant Sir Andrew Buchanan after they had written a letter of application.



Why were they chosen? They gathered at Westminster Abbey among hundreds of others all there to honour the First World War generation following the death of the last surviving veteran, Mr Harry Patch. Few others would have a more harrowing tale to tell than Jean and Dave, as they remembered Jean's uncle, Private 13167, William Henry Randle who had been 'Shot at Dawn' on the 25th November 1916, aged just 23.

Jean had been told by her family that her uncle had been shot for falling asleep at his post.

Born at Hucknall, William Henry Jnr. had been a miner at Shirebrook Colliery, and he was the son of William Henry and Harriett Randle, 26 Vale Drive, Shirebrook. William volunteered when war broke out aged 19, joining the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby full Regiment).

He was sent to Gallipoli, and one of his first tasks was to bury mounds of British

Corpses, rotting under the Turkish sun. He took part in the disastrous landings at Suvla Bay where the Sherwood Foresters lost 18 Officers and around 700 men. William was wounded and shipped back to England.

**He recovered sufficiently to be ready to go 'over the top' on the first day of the Somme, July 1<sup>st</sup> 1916,** where more than 140 battalion comrades were lost for the capture of a few yards of German held ground.

A month later, whilst guarding the Reserve trenches after hearing that his brother John was serving nearby, he went to find him. When he returned, the battalion had moved. William was

**posted 'absent without leave.'** Distressed and confused William wandered around as the battle raged, until he was spotted by an officer and arrested.

It took 3 months to bring him to trial and with no one to defend him, he spoke for himself.

At his Court Martial he said he had left his post to find his brother John who was serving nearby with the South Staffordshires.

He told them what had happened but no one even checked to see if he had a brother in the area. With no supporting evidence, his Officer Commanding, Major **Leonard Gilbert told the Court, 'I know nothing of his previous service but when in action in Fricourt he did not comport himself as a soldier would.'**

With no one to challenge the officer, William was sentenced to death.

**Whilst reviewing the evidence, Brigadier General G.F. Trotter said, 'I believe it would be in the interests of the Battalion....that an example should be made. I therefore recommend that the extreme penalty should be carried out.'** This view was endorsed all the way up the chain of command including the British Commander Field Marshall Douglas Haig.

It is thought William was made an example of, to the others in the Battalion who had fought on the Somme.

William was executed at 6.46am on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 1916. He is buried near the North west corner of Cavillon Communal Cemetery, France, and he is commemorated locally at Holy Trinity Church, Shirebrook after being granted a pardon in 2006.

He was one of 306 soldiers executed on the Western Front who are all commemorated at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas.



Jean Lewis and Husband Dave signed up to the **'Shot at Dawn Campaign'** fighting to win pardons for William and the others like him.

The amendment to the Armed Forces Act was intended to remove the dishonour of execution but did not quash the convictions or sentences. It also did not apply to those convicted of murder.



## County Conference 2010

*Standards from around the County opened this years Annual meeting of County Conference which was held at Bilsthorpe.*

*Calverton Branch will attend National Conference to propose a motion about Veterans Badges for Commonwealth servicemen that was passed by the delegates.*

*Guest speakers were Mr. Hugh Phillips from Haig House, and Mr. Bill Parkin our Board of Trustees representative. They talked on the Vision to put welfare at the heart of everything that we do.*

Efficiency Cup (Lge Branch)	Winner	BINGHAM
	Runners Up	WOLLATON & RADCLIFFE ON TRENT
Efficiency Cup (Small Branch)	Winner	CLIPSTONE & FOREST TOWN
	Runner Up	COLSTON BASSETT, OWTORPE & COTGRAVE
Poppy Shield (Lge Branch)	Winner	BINGHAM
	Runner Up	WOLLATON
Poppy Shield (Small Branch)	Winner	LAMBLEY
	Runner Up	BALDERTON
Membership Cup (Lge Branch)	Winner	FARNSFIELD (+58% in 3 years)
	Runner Up	MANSFIELD (+4.24% in 3 years)
Membership Cup (Small Branch)	Winner	LAMBLEY(+50% in 3 years)
	Runner Up	CARLTON (+32.5% in 3 years) County
Standard Bearers Cup	Winner	Mr Mervyn Witts (Retford)
	Runner Up	Mr Kevin Hunter (Mansfield)



**County President, Robin Turner presents awards to Colston Bassett, Owthorpe & Cotgrave Branch (Col. T.J. Ludlam OBE BSc) and to Bingham Branch (Mr T. Chamberlin)**

# POPPY



## County Poppy Launch

*The Riders Branch* and other motorcyclists supported this year's launch which left the Trent Embankment, and after a quick tour of the city arrived at County Hall. Janet Baker, County Poppy Appeal Organiser, said that the Lord Lieutenant nearly took one of the bikes home. Andy Smart also launched his new book at the event, *'Their Names Will Live On'*; £2 from every sale goes to the Royal British Legion.



## Top TT Rider buys first Poppy.

Warsop, Meden Vale & District Branch went all out for this year's launch, inviting top TT rider, Guy Martin to buy the first Poppy. Tickets were sold all around the country. The ticket included a photo opportunity, autograph signing and entry into a raffle of motorcycling prizes, including a good quality helmet and motorcycling lessons. It also included food and drink for the rider together with a chance to join in a 'ride-out' led by the man himself. Again, the event was well supported by our *Riders*

# SPECIAL



## City Launch

Due to poor weather, Nottingham City Branch launch was held inside the Council House. PAO for the City, Ken Wilkins is retiring after many, many years of Service to the Appeal. He will be sorely missed and a very hard act to follow. Supporters of the Appeal were awarded their certificates and medals at the special ceremony.



**Branch**, and over a hundred other bikes joined the ride which ended at Newark Air Museum. One lucky rider carried Guy on pillion. Safety was covered by the Nottingham Advanced Motorcyclists Group who risk assessed and marshalled the ride. Guy, a lovely, humble man attended with a broken jaw after an accident at work a few days before. The event was held at The John Fretwell Centre, a great venue, and 'kick-started' our appeal making over £900 profit.



## Focus on 'The Women's Section'

### Community Hero

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010, Mrs Thelma Easom, accompanied by her daughter Michele, was presented as a 'Community Hero' to Gordon Brown and his wife Sarah at 10 Downing Street.



Thelma has just retired as Standard Bearer for the Wollaton Branch of the **Women's Section** after 30 years at Branch, County and Region level.

This picture shows Doreen Smith with Committee Members of the Wollaton, Nottingham Branch, celebrating her 20 years as Branch Secretary.



This picture shows June Morley, Secretary of the Gotham Branch, being presented with

the Rose Bowl at the Annual Conference. This is awarded for outstanding **service to the Women's Section**. This was awarded by the Lord Mayor of Nottingham Councillor Jeannie Packer, and the **Chairman of the County Women's Section**, Christine Godfrey JP.



After a gap of 10 years we have successfully appointed a new County Standard Bearer for Nottinghamshire at the competition held on 16<sup>th</sup> October. The successful applicant is Janet Williamson Standard Bearer for Clifton Branch **Women's Section in Nottingham**.

Photographed above are;  
Margaret Earley, County Treasurer;  
Janet Williamson, County Standard Bearer;  
Thelma Easom, Marshall;  
Marilyn Cams, Judge;  
Mary Harris, Marshall.

What is your Branch up to?  
What have you got planned?  
Future events can appear both in our Diary section (page 8) and on the new County website, but only if **YOU** tell us!

The new county website can be found at  
**[www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/nottinghamshire](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/nottinghamshire)**

or from the National site at  
[www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)  
and navigating to Counties on the left, then Nottinghamshire.

## The Royal British Legion moves into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in this it's 90<sup>th</sup> Year

The Royal British Legion will celebrate its 90<sup>th</sup> year in 2011; this momentous occasion coincides with two big changes that will take place at the same time as this anniversary.

Firstly, the Legion is to undergo a radical change in the way it does its core business of Welfare, to bring it up to date and to deal with the challenges of supporting the servicemen and women of today while continuing to support the veterans and their dependants of past conflicts.

Secondly it has taken the decision to commit £50m to the Personnel Recovery Centres. **The £50m grant is the charity's largest ever single funding commitment and will provide** for the care of wounded, injured and long-term sick Armed Forces personnel. Over the next ten years the grant will fund the operating costs for the Personnel Recovery Centres in the UK at Edinburgh, Catterick, Colchester and Tidworth/Bulford, capital financing for a centre in Germany and the creation and operation of the Royal British Legion **Battle Back Challenge and Assessment Centre** which will be based in the Midlands. Nottinghamshire as a county has the largest number of welfare cases in the country.

To mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Legion there is to be a series of '**Concerts in Cathedrals**' as part of the fund-raising for this objective. We are privileged in Nottinghamshire to be hosting the first of these in Southwell Minster on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at which the band of the Royal Air Force College will be performing.

Tickets will be on sale from the beginning of March and we are hoping to fill the Nave of the Minster, which can seat up to 500 people. If your organisation wish to take advertising space in the programme or receive publicity as a sponsor or both, this can be easily arranged through Bob Privett, the Nottinghamshire Community Fundraiser, at [RPrivett@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:RPrivett@britishlegion.org.uk) or Andy Gregory, the Chairman of the Southwell Branch of the Legion, c/o Sacrista Prebend, 4 Westgate, Southwell, NG25 0JH or e-mail [greg558mufc@btinternet.com](mailto:greg558mufc@btinternet.com).

I hope you will agree that this promises to be a memorable and entertaining evening which I very much hope you will feel able to support.

*The Venerable (Air Vice-Marshal) Robin Turner CB DL RAF Retd*



### Easy Christmas Cake Recipe - Can be used all year round.

#### Ingredients:

2 cups flour  
1 stick butter  
1 cup of water  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 cup of sugar  
1 tsp salt  
1 cup of brown sugar  
Lemon juice  
4 large eggs  
Nuts  
2 bottle wine  
2 cups of dried fruit

Sample the wine to check quality. Take a large bowl, check the wine again. To be sure it is of the highest quality, pour one level cup and drink. Repeat.

Turn on the electric mixer. Beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of sugar. Beat again.

At this point it's best to make sure the wine is still OK. Try another cup... Just in case. Turn off the mixer thingy. Break 2 eggs and add to the bowl and chuck in the cup of dried fruit.

Pick the fruit up off floor. Mix on the turner. If the fried druit gets stuck in the beaterers just pry it loose with a drowscriver.

Sample the wine to check for tonsisticity. Next, sift two cups of salt. Or something. Check the wine. Now shift the lemon juice and strain your nuts. Add one table. Add a spoon of sugar, or sumfink. Whatever you can find. Greash the oven. Turn the cake tin 360 degrees and try not to fall over. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Finally, throw the bowl through the window. Finish the wine and wipe counter with the cat. Take a taxi to Tesco and buy cake - Bingle Jells

## County Membership Teams

Four teams are now in place to support Branches in their efforts to gain more members. Armed with display boards and promotional materials the County Recruiting Officers and Recruiting Advisors will attend your event to assist you in publicising the work of the RBL and in an effort to attract new members. Contact can be made through the County Office on 0203 207 2474

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/nottinghamshire/county-membership-teams>

The membership teams would be grateful for any donations of tombola prizes to use on the stand. Please contact either Peter on 01623 843944 or Richard in the County Office on 0203 207 2474

## Future Events 2011

### March

11<sup>th</sup> - Simon Weston OBE, Minster School, Southwell. 7.30pm tickets £10.

01636 825625 Proceeds to Notts Police Aid Convoys

24<sup>th</sup> - St. Barnabus Cathedral Concert - see below for more details

31<sup>st</sup> - 90th Anniversary Concert. RAF Regiment Band, Warsop. Tickets £10. 01623 843944

### April

30<sup>th</sup> -Southwell Minster, Concert in the Cathedral

### June

10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> - Youth Tea Party hosted by Nottingham County Council, County Hall. Forest Inflatable goal in attendance.

11<sup>th</sup> - 2.30pm Poppy Party, South Mansfield Community Centre. 01623 450800

### October

15<sup>th</sup> - Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham. Concert with Magdala Trust & Faryl Smith

21<sup>st</sup> - Nottinghamshire Poppy Launch, Britannia Hotel, Nottingham, Black Tie Poppy Ball and Dinner. Tickets £30

29<sup>th</sup> - 7.30pm Police Band Concert, Warsop, in aid of Poppy Appeal. 01623 843944



## Sounds to Celebrate the 90th Anniversary of The Royal British Legion

A musical Evening to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion is being held at St. Barnabas Cathedral, Derby Road, Nottingham. It promises to be an excellent night of music, featuring International Soprano Michelle Todd accompanied by Mr Martin T. Yates, The acclaimed Nottinghamshire Police Band and The Radcliffe on Trent Male Voice Choir.

Tickets £10. (Janet Baker, 0115 9746347 )



## An Evening With Simon Weston OBE

Southwell Minster School is the venue for an evening with Simon Weston OBE on the 11th March at 7.30pm.

Simon is an internationally renowned motivational speaker, Survivor of the *Sir Galahad* and a Falklands War veteran.

Tickets are £12 each or £100 for 10.

Proceeds to the Nottinghamshire Police Aid Convoys.