



Issue 7  
Summer  
2011

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

In this year, our 90th anniversary since the creation of our fantastic charity many branches have been holding Poppy Parties in celebration. See our Poppy Party Special on pages 4 and 5.

Many spectacular events have taken place around the County and we were fortunate enough to have the honour of holding the first of the Concerts in the Cathedral.

In this issue we have the war time exploits of Mr *G.G. Foster BEM JP*

### **WE COME UNSEEN**

From January 1940 to May 1942 I served in the Home Guard (9 platoon Sherwood Foresters)- full uniform: Lee Enfield rifle complete with bayonet and 4 bullets. (.303)

May 8<sup>th</sup> 1942 I started my service in the RN at *HMS Collingwood* training for wireless telegraphy but failed the test. On Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> 1942 I volunteered for submarine service so was drafted to *HMS Dolphin* (Training) 30<sup>th</sup> December to February 18<sup>th</sup> then the next day to *Cyclops* a Submarine depot ship then served on various training ships *SUISS H33*-old and small; (P555) which was an American Lease Lend boat (S24); *HMS Forth* (submarine depot ship); *HMS Trusty* (N45).

On the first mission we patrolled off the coast of Norway with a dozen commandos who were released on two canoes which we carried in the submarine casing. We came to a rendezvous point two days later where we were due to pick them up in the middle of the night with a pre-arranged signal. We stayed until daybreak with no sighting. We repeated the manoeuvre the following night with the same result. Another mission a few weeks later, we towed on a chain a miniature sub with one officer on board. At a pre-arranged spot on the Norwegian coast, the other two officer crew who were on board with us left to join him so were unshackled from the chain and departed. They were supposed to return to be picked up by us, but never returned.



*Taciturn on trials*



My next submarine was *HMS Taciturn* which we joined at Barrow in Furness. We were learning what a brand new submarine was like. We had for the first time a radar mast and a snorkel and asdic (sonar). I was on board *Taciturn* as torpedo rating. We joined her on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1944 and left to sail through the Mediterranean stopping in Malta for a few days to take on supplies before going through the Suez Canal. We made for Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Trincomalee (on the east coast) but only stayed for a week or two. Then the sub captains were

called to the depot ship *HMS Adamant* where Ben Bryant the Commander informed them that intelligence had informed him that the Japanese had discovered where the submarines had been coming from and we would be moving the flotilla down to Fremantle.

When we got settled in we were not long before we left for our first patrol. Then we realised that six weeks of doing two on duty and four days off is bad enough for four weeks never mind six. It also meant carrying more stores which the boat **didn't have storage for. We had four crates of 144 eggs per crate: these were in** the control room directly under the conning tower where the rush of air to the diesel engines came. Result – eggs for breakfast lunch and dinner for the first seven days! There were 25 bags of potatoes stored in torpedo space; the gangway between the diesel engines (usually 2 steps down) became level as all boxes of tinned stuff were stored there so for the first 7 days out we fed like fighting cocks.

On our first patrol we passed through the Lombok Straits and we lookouts were told to be diligent as both sides were occupied by the Japanese. One part is just **under 11miles wide so it wouldn't take long for a plane to reach us if we were** spotted. On this patrol our Captain announced that because we had sunk only a small number of coastal vessels that he contacted our Flotilla Commander and asked for 7 days extra patrol and was granted it (moans throughout the boat).

A few days later I was almost thrown out of my bunk when we all woke up going full astern and then we guessed that ahead we were charging a submarine net. We accelerated after one charge and action stations were called. I stayed in the torpedo space ready for action but we were not used, instead we could hear our gun firing and could hear shells hitting the water close to us. It was not till I read it in the Australian newspapers that I knew the details. That we had cut through a minefield net to enter Surabaya Harbour (Indonesia) in broad daylight and firing at oil tanks and other installations, we soon began to receive fire back once the initial surprise was over.

Our next patrol we surfaced and the gun crews were soon firing at a 4,000 ton cargo ship. I was below on the order to stand by the tubes. We were surprised when we heard shells just missing us, but we found out later that as the cargo **ship began to sink, a submarine chaser with a 3" gun was firing at us. Our**

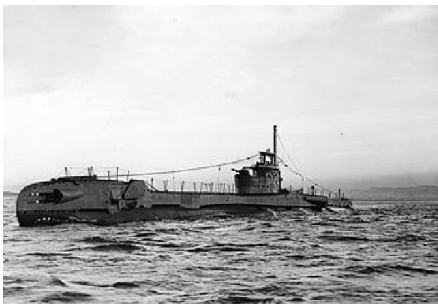
gunlayer was given a free hand and his first shot hit the gun and subsequent firing sank it. Then a submarine came in sight also firing a 4" gun; the gunlayer hit the gun and continued firing till he sank it. The captain was informed that on August 15<sup>th</sup> a treaty had been signed and that all forces had been ordered to surrender or stand down. We met with our partner submarine and the captains agreed we would lead a victory parade through the Lombok Straits in daylight with huge flags flying from the aft periscope. I was a lookout on the Lombok side when I heard a fellow lookout from the Bali side shout '2 planes approaching'. We both crash-dived and later when we surfaced found no damage except lights blown out

### **Newspaper Extract - Perth, November 1945**

*Messages were sent to boats of the 4<sup>th</sup> Submarine Flotilla when Commanding Officer Captain Ben Bryant DSO 2 bars DSC received news of the Japanese surrender*

*Messages sent to cease offensive action and return to base.*

*The 4<sup>th</sup> Flotilla operating between April and August with 10 submarines sank 61 vessels including a Cruiser and Destroyer.*



*Honour of being the last submarine to return to Fremantle base was won by 'Thorough' which arrived on August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1945 but only half an hour after 'Taciturn' (Lieut.-Commander E.T. Stanley DSO DSC). They had both sunk schooners and bombarded the Port of Beulong off Bali demolishing warehouses.*

*Their patrol still had 10 days to run when the 'Cease Fire' order came, but on August 16<sup>th</sup> the day after VJ day they were on the surface flying the White Ensign when two Japanese planes appeared and dropped bombs.*

*Both submarines dived and the only mishap was to a few lights on 'Thorough', ½.hr.later both surfaced and proceeded safely back to Fremantle.*

*Lieut.-Commander Stanley brought 'Taciturn' from England. On one patrol from Fremantle he was 35 days at sea and should have returned to base but asked for and was granted an extension. He decided to go close off Sourabaya Harbour where he cut through Minefields and sank a 4,000-ton ship*

*He then surfaced and sank a Submarine Chaser and a submarine in broad daylight.*

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### **Book Reviews by Nigel Caldicott**

#### **HAROLD LARWOOD**

The authorised biography of the world's fastest bowler by Duncan Hamilton.

This book was the winner of the William Hill Sports Book of the year 2009.

Whilst as a cricket fan I had heard bits and pieces about Harold, this book really is a very well researched and detailed account of the life and times of this Nottinghamshire Miner turned Cricketer who became notorious during what was described as the 'Bodyline' Tour of Australia by the England team in the 1930s. The reasons for his emigration to and settlement in Australia with his wife and family after the Second World War are explained in detail.

A great read for anyone interested in finding out about this son of Nottinghamshire.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# POPPY PARTY



## Ruddington & District

On Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June at the Toller-ton Village Event, Ruddington & District Branch and the newly affiliated 2425 (Nottingham Airport) Squadron joined together to promote the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Royal British Legion and the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Air Training Corps. The Cadets spent the day selling merchandise to raise funds and learning more about the RBL.

Branch Chairman Mr Ken Hicks said that it had been a pleasure to have

worked with the young cadets and that he was very pleased with the enthusiasm they had all shown in promoting both organisations.

## Colston Bassett, Owthorpe & Cotgrave

The Great Poppy Party started with the roar of the Lancaster Bomber from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight as it passed close by the Cotgrave Welfare. This was followed by the Corps of Drums of the Nottinghamshire Army Cadet Force whose talents have been more recently seen on BBC 1. At 6 pm the Party began with over 300 people arriving and starting to enjoy everything on offer.



Charles Hanson from BBC 1's Bargain Hunt was kept busy all through the evening. He said *"I was delighted to attend this fun, action packed evening supporting the Royal British Legion. We unearthed some real treasures with both sentimental and monetary value. Interesting items included a Boer War Helmet and a large silver basket made in Chester and valued up to £1000."*

# SPECIAL

## Warsop, Meden Vale & District

The garden of members Val and Craig Moore was the perfect venue which saw friends of the branch help celebrate our Poppy Party.



Vocalist Patrick Moore provided entertainment for the afternoon, and cream scones were enjoyed by all.



## Mansfield Bellamy & Mansfield

South Mansfield Community Centre was the venue for the Mansfield & Mansfield Bellamy Poppy Party. The County marquee was a major attraction as were members of the Riders' Branch. The

local school choir performed and there was a display of kick-boxing to complete the entertainment. Cakes, tombola and other stalls contributed to the £500 for the Poppy Appeal.



## Bulwell Branch



The new Bulwell Branch is up and running well. Membership continues to increase at a steady rate.

The membership are pleased to welcome the amalgamation of the Branch and two branches of the Army Cadet Corps - The Rifles Corps of Drums and C Company of South Notts Hussars at Bulwell, thereby bringing in a newer arm to our Branch and hopefully encouraging a younger membership in the future.

The Branch has already been involved in the local community visiting schools giving out information packs and teaching resources about the British Legion and Historic Events, also offering assistance to them with regards to our members going into the schools to put forward our thoughts and their experiences in past conflicts etc.

*(Continued from page 3)*

### **OPERATION BARRAS**

The SAS Rescue Mission Sierra Leone 2000 by William Fowler. Despite the by line this book is not a gung-ho all guts and glory account of the hostage crisis and its resolution. The book gives a detailed insight into the background of the political developments that led up to the civil unrest and tribal gangster warfare that characterised the country and its immediate neighbours during the late 1990s. The UK Armed Forces military involvement in the peace building efforts before the hostage episode and the deployment of Special Forces, including the Parachute Regiment, once the crisis began are covered in good detail and there is a detailed and very humorous account of how the Para's CO dealt with an RAF Police team bent on carrying out a contraband search prior to post-operational flight home. A book that puts some meat on the bones of the information that news coverage provided at the time.

### **RED ONE**

A Bomb Disposal Expert on the Front Line by Captain Kevin Ivison GM A very well written, no holds barred, account of the development, training, deployment and subsequent psychological effects suffered as a result of carrying out the most demanding and dangerous work involved in making safe IEDs on the battlefield. Honest and revealing, the author describes how he got into this special profession, his pride at the professionalism, skills and abilities of the soldiers he was in charge of and how he eventually got to the stage where his store of courage got close to being completely wiped out.

(As I have worked in close proximity to the ATO teams in Northern Ireland and whilst employed with the Police Service I have always had a deep respect for the men and women who commit themselves to such a hazardous occupation.)

The new county website can be found at

[www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/nottinghamshire](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/nottinghamshire)

**KNOTTY WORD**

**O  
RUE  
HNGTP**

How many words can you make from these 9 letters? Each word must have 4 or more letters and contain the first letter (O);

All 9 letters make a word too! The Romans sailed up the River Trent to this village followed by the Danes a few hundred years later

20 good; 24 very good; 28 top knot

*Answer to Knotty Word*

Euro goer gone goner goth gout grot  
groun gunthorpe hero heron hone hope horn  
hornet hour north note ogre other outer  
phone pore port pour prong prong thong  
thorn tone toner tong tongue tope toper tore  
tour trog troupe



Representatives from the Nottinghamshire Branches Women’s Section presenting their Purses to the Patron Lady Buchanan on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2011. The Branches presented Lady Buchanan with nearly £8000 which had been raised over the last 12 months by organising coffee mornings, raffles and local village sales.

**Women’s Section**

Margaret Earley, County Treasurer and Thelma Easom, Vice Chairman of the Nottinghamshire County Committee at the recent Armed Forces weekend in June selling merchandise on behalf of the Women’s Section and the Poppy Appeal. Thelma Easom made over 200 jars of jam and chutney which was sold by members of the County Committee over the two days at the Castle.



Richard Dodge (Right), County Secretary being honoured at Nottinghamshire County Council’s Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) award ceremony for his efforts in getting War memorials restored around the county. Richard said, “I’m delighted to accept this award on behalf of my colleagues at **The Royal British Legion.**” Richard spent several years researching the names of soldiers missing from the Eastwood War Memorial which led to the re-dedication last August to install 62 new names.



County Chairman, Mr John Jackson accepts a cheque for £6000 from Dominic Heale, TV presenter. The donation was half the proceeds of the Sounds Sensational Concert at the Royal Concert Hall last year, organised by Eastwood Collieries Male Voice Choir. Led by The Band of The Blues and Royals and the massed voices of around 230 singers from other local choirs.

## Future Events 2011

### September

30<sup>th</sup> - Meet the Legion in Worksop (07720 855424 )

### October

15<sup>th</sup> - Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham. Concert with Faryl Smith, South Notts Hussars, Eastwood Collieries' Male Voice Choir and Trent Connection. (See below)

21<sup>st</sup> - Nottinghamshire Poppy Launch, Britannia Hotel, Nottingham, Black Tie Poppy Ball and Dinner. (See below)

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

30<sup>th</sup> - 2.30pm Mansfield Festival of Remembrance, Palace Theatre. Tickets £5 (01623 633133)

**90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
*Concert*

Headlining  
*Faryl Smith*

**THE ROYAL  
BRITISH LEGION**

**The Royal Concert Hall  
Nottingham**

**15th October 2011**  
Commencing at 7pm

*South  
Notts Hussars*

*Eastwood  
Collieries' Male  
Voice Choir*

*Trent  
Connection*

**The Royal British Legion Nottinghamshire**

For tickets contact the Royal Concert Hall, Box Office on  
**0115 989 5555** or visit [www.trch.co.uk](http://www.trch.co.uk)  
Ticket prices range from £12.50, £16.00 and £19.50

**90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**THE ROYAL  
BRITISH LEGION**

*Charity  
Ball*

To launch the  
Annual Poppy Appeal  
in Nottinghamshire  
celebrating its  
90th Anniversary  
Year

Dancing to  
the sounds of  
Trent Connection

*tickets: £30 each*  
Dress: dinner jacket/medals

Rooms at the hotel will be  
available on the night  
• £49.50 single  
• £59.50 double  
(bed and breakfast).  
Contact Janet Baker

*contact:*  
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[janet.baker@ntlworld.com](mailto:janet.baker@ntlworld.com)

Carol Devaney  
0115 977 3244  
[carol.devaney@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:carol.devaney@nottscc.gov.uk)

**Friday 21 October 2011**  
The Britannia Hotel, St. James Street, Nottingham  
6.30pm drinks reception 7.30pm dinner

**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**