



**THE ROYAL AIR FORCES
ASSOCIATION**
Rutland Branch
THE FLYING HORSESHOE



Branch Newsletter

October 2012

October Meeting Speaker

Air Chief Marshall Sir Clive Loader KCB OBE ADC FRAeS RAF (Retd)

At our October Branch meeting we honoured to welcome Air Chief Marshall Sir Clive Loader as our speaker, who was accompanied by his wife Lady Alison. Phil Marston and I had heard him speak recently at a meeting in Leicester and as he only lived in Wing invited him to come along to speak to us. Sir Clive gave us a quick résumé of his Royal Air Force Career before the prime purpose of his visit, to explain what the Police and Crime Commissioner in Leicestershire and Rutland was and why he was standing for the election to the post. He rather played down his academic interests at school and university to become a pilot in the RAF, but never the less he achieved his ambition. Joining the RAF in 1973 as a junior officer, he was posted to No 1 (F) Squadron at RAF Wittering and then IV (Army Cooperation) Squadron at RAF Gutersloh in Germany flying Harriers he was promoted to Squadron Leader in 1984. This was the year I retired from the service I don't think there is any connection. Sir Clive became a Flight Commander in Germany and promoted to Wing Commander in 1989, he went briefly to Rheindahlen, before being made Personal Staff Officer to the Air Officer Commanding – in-Chief RAF Strike Command.



He was given command of No 3 (F) Squadron at RAF Laarbruch in 1993 in which he took part in operations over Northern Iraq and Bosnia. Promoted to Group Captain in 1995, he attended the Higher Command and Staff College and then became Station Commander at RAF Laarbruch in 1996.



Promoted to Air Commodore in 1999 he became Air Commodore for the Harriers in 2000. Promoted again, this time to Air Vice Marshal he was appointed as Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Operations) in 2002 and Deputy Commander-in-Chief RAF Strike Command, in the rank of Air Marshal. In 2004 he was promoted to Air Chief Marshal in 2007 and became the first Commander-in-Chief of Air Command on 1 April 2007. He retired from the RAF in 2009 and like so many Senior Officers lives in Rutland. The second part of Sir Clive's presentation covered his selection as a candidate for the new position of

Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire & Rutland. The Conservative party had approached him to be their candidate, although previously he has never held a card for any Political Party. Sir Clive pointed out his experience in the Royal Air Force was highly relevant experience of running a major budget: As Commander-in-Chief, he had direct experience of running (and being personally and legally accountable for) a very high-level budget of a little over £2.62 Billion. In so doing he argued strongly for the funds needed to be able to carry out his allocated tasks whilst looking after his personnel. However, in the face of ever-decreasing public finances, he was faced with making some extremely difficult decisions in order to stay within budget.

Given the known future pressures on the policing budget, he will do all that he can to achieve the appropriate funding for the tasks. But, when the budget allocation is settled, he will take whatever actions are necessary to live within allocated funds. He stated that the Leicestershire Constabulary should operate to those same high standards of effectiveness, efficiency, and professionalism that he embraced during his RAF career. Sir Clive explained that it was important to deliver "value for money" and ensure "victims of crime are treated properly and where appropriate the criminal should be made to meet face to face the person that he had committed the crime against. He believes that he will be extremely influential. The population will have for the first time an individual who has been elected solely to represent their views and act on their behalf in policing matters. Sir Clive expressed the importance that everyone should vote as this was



an extremely important change in our democracy.

Elected police commissioners will replace police authorities Thirty-seven commissioners will be elected in England along with four in Wales Their jobs will include setting priorities for their police force, overseeing its budget and hiring the chief constable.

No prior police force experience is needed.

Those in the biggest forces can receive salaries of more than £100,000 but in Leicestershire & Rutland it will be £75,000.

In order of fair play we should mention that there are other candidates: -

Sarah Russell - Labour
Suleman Nagdi - Independent
David Bowley - Independent

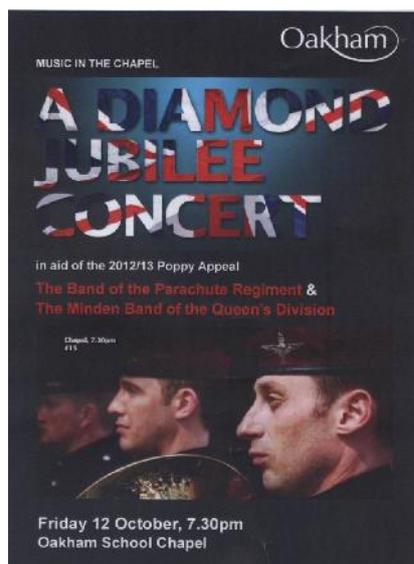
Elections take place on 15 November 2012

Our speaker next month will be Derek Bury; his topic will be " *A Walk on The Wild Side*"

Peter Hart

Speaker Secretary

The Royal British Legion band concert in Aid of the 2012/13 Poppy Appeal



A musical extravaganza and a trio of conductors kick started this year's Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. The music provided by The Band of the Parachute Regiment & The Minden Band of the Queens Division was conducted on separate occasions by Maj B. Miller, Capt E Frost and WO1 (BM) Jeans. Prior to the interval the audience were treated to music from shows and film scores. My favourite being "Waltz" (Masquerade) by a Khachaturia. After the break and refreshments a rousing performance of well know military pieces moved the audience." The British Legion March made one reflect on the annual "Festival of Remembrance "ceremony at the Albert Hall in London "Where Never Lark or Eagle Flew" made you aware of the sensation of flying in a spitfire. A most memorable evening.

Derek Bury

Why the Poppy was Chosen

In WW1 the fighting zones in France devastated the landscape and created a wasteland of churned up soil, smashed up woods, fields and streams. Few elements of the natural world survived except for the soldiers who had little choice but to live in an underground network of holes, tunnels and trenches. In most cases the only living things they would see during tours of duty in the front line were scavenging rats, mice and lice. However, sometimes the sights and sounds of nature could be seen and heard through the fog of battle. Soldiers spoke of how birds, and particularly the lark, could be heard twittering high in the sky even during the fury of an artillery bombardment.

Against the odds, new life did also occasionally come into being in the battle zones. A story about the birth of new human life happened during the surprise gas attack on the French lines by the German Army on 22nd April 1915. At exactly 5 o'clock, as the gas cloud was released, a Belgian woman gave birth to a baby boy in the cellar of a cottage on the Zonnebeekseweg, just 3 kilometers from the poisonous gas cloud and the battle that was going on as a result of it.

The spring of 1915 was the first time that warm weather began to warm up the countryside after the cold winter at war in 1914-1915. In the region around Ypres in Belgian Flanders the months of April and May 1915 were unusually warm. Farmers ploughed their fields close up to the front lines and new life started to grow. One of the plants that began to grow in clusters on and around the battle zones were the red field or corn poppy (its species name is: *papaver rhoeas*). It is often to be found in or on the edges of fields today.

The field poppy is an annual plant which flowers each year between about May and August. Its seeds are disseminated on the wind and can lie dormant in the ground for many years. If the ground is disturbed in the early spring, the seeds will germinate and the poppy flowers will grow. This is what happened in parts of the front lines in Belgium and France. Once the ground was disturbed by the fighting, the poppy seeds lying in the ground began to germinate and grow during the warm weather in the spring and summer months of 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918. The field poppy was also blooming in parts of the Turkish battlefields on the Gallipoli peninsular when the ANZAC and British Forces arrived at the start of the campaign in April 1915.

The sight of these delicate, vibrant red flowers growing on the shattered ground caught the attention of a Canadian soldier by the name of John McCrae. He noticed how they had sprung up in the disturbed ground all around the artillery position he was in. It was during the warm days of early May 1915 when he found himself with his artillery brigade near to the Ypres-Yser canal. He is believed to have composed a poem following the death of a friend at that time. The first lines of the poem *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae have become some of the most famous lines written in relation to the First World War.

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

However the origin of the red Flanders poppy as a modern-day symbol of remembrance was the inspiration of an American woman, Miss Moina Michael. Known as Moina Michael: "The Poppy Lady"

It was on a Saturday morning, 9th November 1918, two days before the Armistice was declared at 11 am on the 11th November; Moina Belle Michael was on duty at the YMCA Overseas War secretaries' headquarters in New York. She was working in the "Gemot" in Hamilton Hall. This was a reading room and a place where U.S. servicemen would often gather with friends and family to

say their goodbyes before they went on overseas service. On that day Hamilton Hall and the "Gemot" was busy with people coming and going. The Twenty-fifth Conference of the Overseas YMCA War Secretaries was in progress at the headquarters. During the first part of the morning as a young soldier passed by Moina's desk he left a copy of the latest November edition of the "Ladies Home Journal" on the desk. At about 10.30am Moina found a few moments to herself and browsed through the magazine. In it she came across a page which carried a vivid coloured illustration with the poem entitled "We Shall Not Sleep". This was an alternative name sometimes used for John McCrae's poem, which was also called "In Flanders Fields". Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae had died of pneumonia several months earlier on 28th January 1918.

Moina had come across the poem before, but reading it on this occasion she found herself transfixed by the last verse:

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

In her autobiography, entitled "The Miracle Flower", Moina describes this experience as deeply spiritual. It was at that moment Moina made a personal pledge to "keep the faith". She vowed always to wear a red poppy of Flanders Fields as a sign of remembrance and to campaign to have the Poppy adopted as the emblem of remembrance. It took until 1920 before a number of organizations did adopt the red poppy as a result of Moina's dedicated campaign. It is due to her commitment that the poppy is the international emblem for "keeping the faith with all who died" through war

taken from www.greatwar.co.uk 2012

FLOWER of the ETERNAL SLEEP

*Flower of the eternal sleep
Watching with the ones who weep
You, whose lives, so short in bloom
Saw such blood shed, death and gloom*

*You trembled to the sound of guns
Which tore to death beloved sons
You fluttered, died. Before your time-
Dropped, blood red petals, in their prime*

*Crimson poppies 'neath the clouds'-
Short lived yet colorful and proud;
Now worn by humans with such pride
Remembering those who bravely died*

*You represent young lives cut short-
Those who for freedom bravely fought.
Flower of the eternal sleep –
Silently your vigil keep.*

By Josie Whitehead 2007
Oct 2012

taken from the www

- WHATS ON -

Forthcoming Events:

Sunday 11th November – Remembrance Day Parade .We will be meeting in the market place to march off at 14.15.The service is at 14.30 in All Saints Church Oakham

2. Thursday 13th December – ATC Presentation Evening at the Drill Hall, Penn Street Oakham

For further details on forth coming events Tel: 01572 755969 or email rafarutland923@yahoo.co.uk
Derek Bury

DATES for Your DIARY

Wednesday 7 th November	A 'Walk on the Wild Side'	Derek Bury
Wednesday 5 th December	<i>Christmas Dinner</i> <i>Please remember return Christmas Dinner form with cheque for the appropriate amount to Roger Hyde 25 The Pastures Cottesmore Oakham LE15 7DZ or 01572 755969 no later than 24th November .</i>	Greetham Valley Golf Club

Thursday 13th December ATC Presentation Evening The Drill Hall Penn Street Oakham

Branch Meetings are 1st Wed every month – Next Meeting September 5th

Venue: Cottesmore Sports & Social Club – 7.00 for 7.30pm

Branch Contact Numbers

Duncan Manderson, Chairman, Pickwell Grange, Whissendine, LE15 7ER, 01664 474274

Phil Marston, Branch Secretary, 12 Seaton Road, Uppingham, LE15 9QX, 01572 822731

Kathryn Manderson, Editor Flying Horseshoe, email: kathryn.manderson@hotmail.com

Peter Hart, Speaker coordinator, Tel 01572 756750 email: peterivy42@btinternet.com

Dave Craven, Wings Appeal Organiser , Tel 01572 759134 email: davecraven@hotmail.com

Honorary Welfare Officer – Christine Ward , email christine.e.ward@hotmail.co.uk

The Branch web site is at www.rafarutland.org.uk