



# "SANDBAG"

## WINCANTON AND DISTRICT ROYAL BRITISH LEGION NEWSLETTER

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### NEWS FROM THE BRANCH

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Branch secretary Arthur Pickup 01963-32952

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**Next branch meeting 15th July 7 p.m.**

#### Lt. Col. Lucy Giles

Well, we all know what an astounding lady Lucy Giles is and I have just heard of an amazing challenge Lucy has taken upon herself. She is attempting to cycle 340 miles between 13th & 17th July 2013 around this year's five Ashes Test Match grounds finishing at Lords the day of the 2nd Test match. Lucy is trying to raise money for the Army Benevolent Fund and Lords Taverners and is looking for people to sponsor her. If you want to help please go to the following internet link :- [www.virginmoneygiving.com/LucyGiles](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/LucyGiles)  
If you do not have internet access contact me as I have sponsored Lucy and can do the same for anyone else.

#### Festival of Remembrance 2013

As promised I did solicit support for an afternoon visit to the Festival of Remembrance this year and did say that to pay for a coach we would need a minimum of 50 people attending. Our friends at Ilminster RBL branch did come forward with about 20 people but our numbers were nowhere near enough to be able to run the coach. Consequently I must announce that we have decided to **CANCEL** this potential trip.

I also announced that names for the evening performance must be submitted by 1st July as each branch only gets offered four tickets. I do have a list started and although we have reached that number I would consider asking if we can get more. Please let me know urgently if you would like me to try to get more tickets. As the event finishes around 9.30 p.m. it may mean people would have to stay overnight in London.

#### Coffee Morning 25th May

Our Coffee Morning on 25th May was very well attended and receipts from the raffle and tea/coffee donations raised £134 for branch funds.

#### Ray "Ticky" Judd who passed away on 26th May



One of our longstanding and regular supporters Ray "Ticky" Judd suddenly passed away on 26th May. What was a great shock to us all was that he helped with the raffle on the previous day when we had our Coffee Morning.

Ticky served his National Service with the Dorset Regiment and saw active service during the Korean War. Whenever we needed help or support Ticky was always there, as emphasised by the above photo taken on Old Faithful Day last year. He always filled two collecting boxes during Poppy Appeal which proved his popularity in the town. Ticky had a wonderful personality and was greatly loved by all, he will be sadly missed. Our sincere condolences go to Esther and the family.

## Waterloo trees

In October 2006 David Mills, Rodney Legg and myself visited the battlefields of Mons and Waterloo. A very iconic site at the battlefield of Waterloo is Hougoumont Farm which was defended in part by the Coldstream Guards. The farm is surrounded by mature sweet chestnut trees and being October these were shedding their nuts. I picked up a large quantity of nuts and brought them home with me, planting them in pots. After a year or two, out of all those planted I had three strong shoots, which now have developed into small tree saplings. 2015 is the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo and I thought it would be appropriate to find a good home for the two remaining trees in my possession. I asked our member Colonel Michael Goldschmidt for advice as to where he thought would be an appropriate place and what unfolded was quite remarkable. Michael told me how he started his army career after passing through the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and that he was in Waterloo Company. In 2015 those who passed out in Waterloo Company intend to commemorate the anniversary of the battle on 18th June 2015 and Michael promised to speak to the organising committee to see if they were interested in acquiring a tree and planting it at Sandhurst on the anniversary of the battle. Michael asked if he could have the second tree to plant on his property. To my great pleasure we have heard that the committee would like the tree and they will ensure it is planted in the grounds of the Royal Military Academy.



## Hougoumont Farm



*Hougoumont remained an active farm until the end of the 20th century. In 2003 a settlement was found between Count Guibert d'Oultremont, owner of the farm, and the Regional Authority after which it became the property of the Intercommunale (1815). By June 2006, the farm appeared to be in a degraded state. The walls, which were once near pristine white, have become a dirty yellow. Several walls are cracked and parts are clearly damaged, most notably the right-hand door post of the north side gate. Project Hougoumont, supported by, amongst others, the current Duke of Wellington, writer Bernard Cornwell and historian the late Richard Holmes, has been set up to oversee funding to restore and preserve Hougoumont for the long-term future.*

## 15<sup>th</sup> June 1805 Hougoumont

*Napoleon planned to draw Wellington's reserve to Wellington's right flank in defence of Hougoumont Farm and then attack through the centre left of the British and allies' front near La Haye Sainte.*

*Before the battle started, Hougoumont and its gardens, located on the allies' right flank, were garrisoned and fortified by the 1st Battalion, 2nd Nassau Regiment, with additional detachments of 1st (Hanoverian) Brigade. The light company of the 2nd Battalion, Coldstream Guards under the command of Lt-Colonel Henry Wyndham, was also stationed in the farm and chateaux, and the light company of the 2nd Battalion, Third Guards, under Lt-Colonel Charles Dashwood in the garden and grounds. The two light companies of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, First Guards were initially positioned in the orchard, under the command of Lt-Colonel Lord Saltoun. Lieutenant-Colonel James Macdonnell, Coldstream Guards, had overall command of Hougoumont. (The Guards units were all drawn from General John Byng's 2nd (British) Brigade.)*

*Wellington recorded in his despatches that about ten o'clock Napoleon commenced a furious attack upon our post at Hougoumont. Other sources state that this attack was at about 11:30. Historians note that, It is a curious fact about the battle of Waterloo that no one is absolutely certain when it actually began."*

*The initial attack by Maréchal de Camp Bauduin's 1st Brigade of the 6th Division emptied the wood and park, but was driven back by heavy British artillery fire and cost Bauduin his life. The British guns were distracted into an artillery duel with French guns and this allowed a second attack by Maréchal de Camp Baron Soye's 2nd Brigade of the 6th Division. They managed a small breach on the south side but could not exploit it. An attack on the north side by elements of the 1st Brigade of the 6th Division was more successful. This attack led to one of the most famous skirmishes in the Battle of Waterloo — Sous-Lieutenant Legros, wielding an axe, managed to break through the north gate of the farm at Hougoumont. A desperate fight ensued between the invading French soldiers and the defending Guards. In a near-miraculous attack, Macdonell, a small party of officers and Corporal James Graham fought through the melee to shut the gate, trapping Legros and about 30 other soldiers of the 1st Legere inside. All of the French who entered, apart from a young drummer boy, were killed in a desperate hand-to-hand fight. The French attack in the immediate vicinity of the farm was repulsed by the arrival of the 2nd Coldstream Guards and 2/3rd Foot Guards. Fighting continued around Hougoumont all afternoon with its surroundings heavily invested with French light infantry and coordinated cavalry attacks sent against the troops behind Hougoumont.*

*Wellington's army defended the house and the hollow way running north from it. In the afternoon Napoleon personally ordered the shelling of the house to cause it to burn, resulting in the destruction of all but the chapel. Du Plat's brigade of the King's German Legion was brought forward to defend the hollow way, which they had to do without any senior officers, who were then relieved by the 71st Foot, a Scottish light infantry regiment. Adam's brigade, further reinforced by Hugh Halkett's 3rd (Hanoverian) Brigade, successfully repulsed further infantry and cavalry attacks sent by Reille and maintained the occupation of Hougoumont until the end of the battle.*

*The Hougoumont battle has often been characterised as a diversionary attack to cause Wellington to move reserves to his threatened right flank to protect his communications, but this then escalated into an all-day battle which drew in more and more French troops but just a handful of Wellington's, having the exact opposite effect to that intended! In fact there is a good case that both Napoleon and Wellington thought Hougoumont was a vital part of the battle. Certainly, Wellington declared afterwards that the success of the battle turned upon the closing of the gates at Hougoumont*



### **Old Faithful Day 25th June**

As usual we all will be at the Old Faithful Memorial on Bayford Hill to commemorate the crash of the Flying Fortress “Old Faithful” on the anniversary, 25th June.

Assembly will be at the memorial at 10.45 a.m. This year prayers will be led by Rev. Canon Alan Watson. The Last Post will be played at 11 a.m. by Mr. Chris Beech, head teacher of King Arthur’s School and a group of students from King Arthur’s will be in attendance. Please do all possible to attend. Medals and berets will be worn. This year is the 69th anniversary of the crash. It is intended that next year a very significant ceremony will take place to mark the 70th anniversary.

### **Armed Forces Day at the Miller’s 29th June**

The Armed Forces Day event at the Miller’s Arms is really taking shape now.

There is going to be fun for all the family from 11 a.m. until late evening lots, is happening with a marquee of many different type stalls, including used books, children’s clothing, exclusive new handbags and other novelty items. Wincanton Silver Band playing in the afternoon and there is a barbecue in the beer garden all day. There is fun for the children, with a bouncy castle and face painting amongst the many attractions and mums and dads can have a go at skittles and other traditional summer attractions.

At 9 p.m. guitarist John Raymond will entertain with country classics with an emphasis on the Eagles music.

The event is free and visitors can make donations to Wincanton Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal if they wish.

### **Hurry—last chance for the trip to Dunster & Minehead**

There are a few places left for the trip to Dunster and Minehead on Saturday 22nd June. Departure is 9 a.m. from the Memorial Hall and we will stop at Dunster first. Those who wish can either stay at Dunster or get the steam train to Minehead or travel on with the coach to Minehead. Price £12.

### **Excellent trip to Bucklars Hard**

We all had an excellent visit to Bucklars Hard on 15th May. The weather was good and many of us also enjoyed a trip on the river too. We made a stop for coffee at Lyndhurst in the New Forest and were able to see the wild ponies. At Bucklars Hard we visited the museum dedicated to the ships of Nelson’s fleet that were constructed there and follow shipbuilding over the ages as ships had been built there for many centuries. The many “old sailors” with us were able to demonstrate their skills as shown below by John Pennington showing us how to tie a bowline !



### **July trip to Gloucester 20th July**

On 20th July we can sample all the delights of Gloucester. We will depart from the Memorial Hall at 8.30 a.m. as the journey is longer and we will need as much time as possible in Gloucester. There will be a comfort stop on the way and we should get to Gloucester around 11.30 a.m. If enough people wish to get off there, we can stop at the Gloucester Quays shopping area, we will then go on the main square where the National Waterways Museums, river trips and restaurants are situated. It is a very short walk from there to old Gloucester and the cathedral. Price £12.

### **Marchwood Open Day 6th July**

There will not be enough people going to be able to run a coach to Marchwood Military Port but several of us will take our own cars and are willing to share seats. Both myself and Arthur are taking our cars and we would be glad to hear from anyone who is taking their car too so that we can maximize attendance.