



Remembrance at Branch Summer Gathering 2023

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**Eric Steps down and Bill
Steps up. New Branch
President is welcomed.**

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It is with great sadness that
we report the death of
Branch Member
Dave Street (Strasse)
May he rest in peace

Summer Gathering 2023

The start of the Branch Summer Gathering (SG23) on Friday 21 July 2023 coincided with low pressure over most of the UK resulting in showers, heavy showers and several downpours. However, your Branch committee braved the inclement conditions and held a committee meeting outdoors (during a break in the weather) near the main centre of attraction for the weekend, The Shoulder of Mutton pub located at Hamstell Ridware; a tiny hamlet, best described as being in the middle of nowhere but is a short journey, by road and narrow lanes, to the National Memorial Arboretum. Branch business complete, the committee, along with spouses, friends and several dogs retired to the pub. An evening barbeque was enjoyed by all and the usual telling of long and exaggerated tales continued until lights out.

On Saturday 22 July 2023, plans for a wet weather programme in the National Memorial Arboretum Chapel were ditched when heavy rain decreased to a fine drizzle and, at 1100 hrs, Branch de facto Padre John Bird, welcomed a gathering of 32 veterans and friends of the Y Services. The names of Y Service personnel killed in recent conflicts were read out and those present remembered also those who have died since retiring from the armed forces. The Branch Standard was on parade and, following the playing of the Last Post and Reveille, Branch President Eric Sambell recited the Exhortation. We were pleased to welcome Peter Cousins and Bob Sim the now adult children/relatives of former World War Two wireless operators who had worked at Beaumanor. Wreaths were laid on behalf of the Branch and JSSU (R) along with a floral tribute with photographs of Joan Thornton (nee Bradshaw) and Sybil Sim (nee Hardie) the former Beaumanor operators. Branch Chairman, Jim McDermott, in his address reflected on remembrance and spoke about the several improvements and developments to the Y Services plot which, having been laid out with a ring of sticks on a muddy field, is now a quiet and peaceful place in which to sit in quiet contemplation. After prayers, the service ended with Bill Nelson reciting the Kohima Epitaph

Caroline Nelson
laid a wreath on
behalf of the
Branch



WO1 Bernie
Topham laid a
wreath on behalf of
the JSSU
Reserves Unit



A floral tribute
was laid in
remembrance of
Joan Thornton
and Sybil Sim,
WW2 wireless
operators

Summer Gathering 2023 - continued

After the remembrance service, members and friends dodged the rain showers and toured the NMA, ending up in the restaurant for lunch. The afternoon was spent reminiscing and 'resting' followed by a later dinner in the Shoulder of Mutton pub. The pub landlady had taken the evening off to attend a local music festival and it seems the list of ordered meals had been 'lost'. Confusion reigned - in the ensuing hiatus, the Branch chairman stood up to make a speech and within seconds the food arrived. Eventually all were fed and watered. An 'everyone gets a prize raffle' raised funds for the Branch Poppy appeal. Jim McDermott eventually gave his speech, thanking everyone for attending. A good time was had by all. .

Many thanks to vice chairman Dennis Weir for organising the raffle, the dinner and accommodation.

Thanks also to Dennis again and to Linda Swann who submitted photos of SG23 for this issue.



March on the Standard



The Chairman's address



A good turnout

Snippets

JSSU(V) is now named **JSSU(R)** with the R standing for Reserves instead of V for Volunteers

Dates for your diary:

Sat 11 Nov 23 - Branch AGM, Loughborough
Sun 12 Nov 23 Old Woodhouse –
Remembrance Day Service
Full details in due course.

Summer Gathering 2023 - continued

Farewell to Colonel (retd) Eric Sambell

After 9 years as Branch President, Colonel (Retd) Eric Sambell stood down on Saturday 22 July 2023.

At the Summer Gathering 2023 evening dinner, on behalf of the committee and all Branch members, Branch chairman Jim McDermott thanked Eric for his many years of service and for his wisdom and advice in many aspects of the committee's activities.

The committee had organised a whip round and, as a thank you, presented Eric with a 'Sorrowful Soldier Coin' a sterling silver piece in a presentation case. The reverse of the coin bears the inscription "At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will Remember them."

Eric's ever supportive wife, Kay was presented with a bouquet of flowers. Although he is stepping down as Branch President, Eric remarked that he and Kay will still be around and look forward to meeting up again at future Branch



Welcome to Lt Colonel (retd) Bill Nelson

Taking over from Eric as Branch President is Bill Nelson, formerly of the Intelligence Corps.

Bill received the President's chain of office (more formerly known as the President's Jewel) from Eric in the Y Services Memorial Garden at the National Memorial Arboretum following the commemoration service on Saturday 22 July 2023.

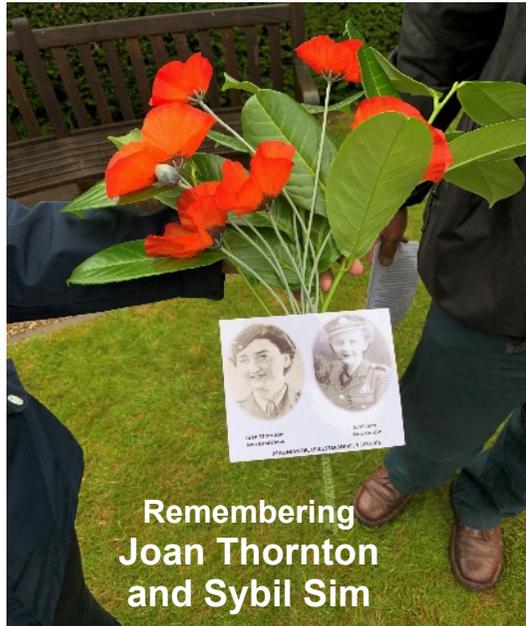
Dave Street (RIP) – Funeral Arrangements

At the time of going to press the following details are known: 24th August 2023 at 13:30 at Tewkesbury Abbey (followed by a private family-only cremation at Cheltenham crematorium)

Dennis and Jenny Weir, dodging the rain at SG23.



Summer Gathering 2023 - continued



SG 24

The same location, The NMA and The Shoulder of Mutton Pub in Hamstell Ridware, have been determined as the location for the Branch Summer Gathering 2024

A Link With the Y Services of Old

A new website, set up by Peter Cousins and Bob Sim, aims to trace, contact, and bring together family members of the intercept operators who were stationed at Beaumanor between 1940 and 1946. Peter and Bob have begun to list the names of those who served there, with a list of B Watch ladies currently on the website, with others to follow shortly. See: www.morsecodebeaumanor.com

Editor's comment: An interesting website, well worth a visit.

www.morsecodebeaumanor.com

CLICK ARROW TO HEAR SITE TITLE IN MORSE CODE

Home Page Exhibition 2017 Quorn Museum GC&S BADGE Roll Of Honour Commemoration Beaumanor Names

THE "CHILDREN OF BEAUMANOR"
Some Of The Descendants We Have Found

DID YOUR RELATIVE RECEIVE THE GC&S BADGE? CLICK ON THE PICTURE BELOW

Quorn Village Museum

THE GIRLS WHO LISTENED

The aim of this website is to trace, contact, and bring together descendants of the intercept operators based at Beaumanor between 1940 and 1946.

Did your Mother or Grandmother or other relative serve in the Army-ATS during WW2, but never disclose or talk about what she actually did?

The key question- "Was she good at morse code?"
Then maybe she served at Beaumanor as 'a secret Y listener'.
We are able to check!

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE INVOLVED WITH BEAUMANOR OR THEIR DESCENDANTS/RELATIVES PLEASE CONTACT US:

admin@morsecodebeaumanor.com

CHECK OUT SOME OF THE NAMES WE KNOW - [HERE](#)

DO YOU KNOW THESE PEOPLE - [CLICK HERE](#)

The Branch Standard

Dave Lawrence our Branch Standard Bearer (SB) has been busy keeping the Branch name in the public eye. Here's a list of Dave's more recent activities and details of where our Standard will be on parade in the future.

20-21 May 2023 - RBL National Conference, Torquay - including the opening and closing ceremonies as well as the parade along the seafront to the War Memorial.

25 May 2023 - Funeral of Andrew Hodson (former President of the NMA Branch), Woodlands Crematorium, Coleshill.

14 Jul 2023 - assistance provided to secure a local RBL standard bearer and a bugler to attend the funeral, in Warrington of non-branch member Sue Smith,

21 Jul 2023 - Branch Summer Gathering (SG23) commemoration service at the "Y" Services Memorial, at the NMA, Staffs.



Planned events

20 Aug 2023 - Commemoration service for A/S Colin Grazier GC*, Two Gates Tamworth, Staffs.

24 August 2023 Funeral of Branch member Dave Street at Tewkesbury Abbey

15 Sep 2023 - Battle of Britain commemoration, Edgewick School, Coventry.

14 Oct 2023 - SB requested to perform marshalling duties for the Warwickshire & Birmingham County SB competition, Hatton, Warwicks.

28 Oct 2023 - Leicestershire & Rutland County Poppy Appeal launch, Leicester (TBC)

28 Oct 2023 - Leicestershire & Rutland County Festival of Remembrance, De Montfort Hall, Leicester.

11 Nov 2023 - Branch Annual General Meeting, Loughborough

12 Nov 2023 - Remembrance Sunday Service, Woodhouse, Leics.

Our Standard Bearer, Dave Lawrence, works closely with our Branch Community Support representative (BCS) Karen Brutnell; they swing into action when notification is received that a Branch member has died. Karen sends a Branch condolence card and in the fullness of time makes contact with the deceased member's family to offer comfort and support. If the family requests it, arrangements can be made for the Branch Standard to be paraded at the funeral and, again if requested, for the coffin to be covered with an appropriate corps drape. Also, if appropriate, for a military band bugler to be in attendance.

**Colin Grazier, GC (7 May 1920 – 30 October 1942) was a sailor in the Royal Navy who was posthumously awarded the George Cross for the "outstanding bravery and steadfast devotion to duty in the face of danger" which he displayed on 30 October 1942 in action in the eastern Mediterranean when capturing codebooks vital for the breaking of the German naval "Shark" Enigma cipher from the sinking German submarine U-559.*

Chairman's Message

Dear Members,

July was a busy month with a most successful Summer Gathering 23. Despite the weather a good time was had by all. We said farewell to Eric Sambell who has stepped down as Branch President after 9 years in the role. Eric has made a considerable contribution to the running and development of the Branch for which he was warmly thanked on behalf of all our members during SG23. As reported on page 4, we welcome in Eric's place Bill Nelson who many members will know.

The sad news that long serving Branch member Dave Street (Strasse) has died is reported on the front page. I spoke to Dave just recently and despite his illness he insisted on talking Legion business. A veritable fount of Legion knowledge; he will be sorely missed.

Regards to one and all.

Jim McDermott
Branch Chairman

MEMBERSHIP

Branch membership
currently stands at
427 members

MEMBERSHIP

A warm welcome to

Len Witts

and to

JJ Smith

who joins us from the
St James' Branch

easyfundraising.org.uk

We gained one new contributor to the easyfundraising scheme during July 2023, taking our supporters total to **109**. Purchases large and small all attract a donation from the vendor. This month we raised **£32.93** taking our overall total since we joined the scheme to: **£2694.24** which has been donated to the Poppy Appeal.



You can view our cause page and sign up at:
<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rblyservices/>

Thank you one and all for your kind contributions

Editor's Note:

Contributions to the monthly Branch Newsletter are always welcome on any topics members think will be of general interest. We aim to provide uplifting stories as well as Branch news and attempt not to duplicate messages already sent from RBL HQ. Copy should be sent by email. to the editor Jim McDermott at jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com Preferred format for text is unformatted MS Word and any photos, cartoons or pictures should be submitted separately, please, as JPEGs.