



The Bulldog Bulletin

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

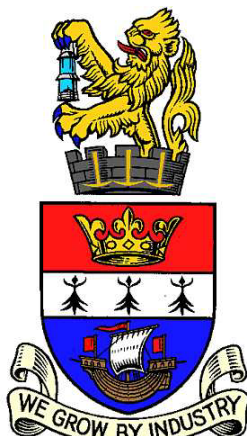
President: Priya Guha British Consul General



BEDDINGTON



BRIGHTON



BLYTH

**The Newsletter of The Royal British Legion
California Branch No 1**

October, 2012



The Royal British Legion

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BEXLEY



BRIGHTON AND HOVE



BRENT

RBL Chairman's October report,



On Wednesday Sept 26th. we had a meeting with Grace Cathedral to finalize the Remembrance Service, this was a very productive meeting and all went very well.

Tuesday we held our monthly meeting at the Wellington Wine Bar in Sausalito, however the only thing that we really accomplished was folding and stuffing 400 hundred Invitations to the Remembrance Service which will be held November 11th

If you are planning on attending the Service, please be seated on the left hand side, we will have four rows reserved for the Legion members and their families.
The right hand side is strictly for V.I.P.'s

We were unable to get our usual Room 207 for the reception, it will be held **in ROOM 212,** this is a smaller room.

I have received the membership cards from London, so please send in your Dues now, they are \$30.00



The Royal British Legion

Will Present
The Thirty Fourth Annual San Francisco

Festival of Remembrance

Sunday, November 11th 2012 at 3:00 p.m.
Grace Cathedral, 1100 California Street,
San Francisco, California, U.S.A.



Preceding the Service, The Salvation Army Band will Present a short
concert, starting at 2:30 p.m.

Revealed after 70 years: Dambusters legend was shot down by **BRITISH** airman who mistook him for German



Mistake: Bernard McCormack was a gunner in a Lancaster bomber and mistook Gibson's twin-engined Mosquito, like this pictured, for an enemy plane

Killed by friendly fire: Guy Gibson (left) and his navigator were killed instantly when Bernard McCormack (right) mistook Gibson's aircraft for an enemy plane and opened fire in Germany in 1944

One of the greatest heroes of the Second World War was killed by friendly fire, according to a posthumous confession 67 years later by the man who pulled the trigger.

Guy Gibson, who won a VC for leading the Dam Busters' 'bouncing bomb' raids, died when his plane crashed mysteriously while returning from a mission 16 months later.

It was thought that Wing Commander Gibson – immortalised by Richard Todd in the 1955 film *The Dam Busters* – crashed after running out of fuel or flying too low.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2047476/Dambusters-legend-Guy-Gibson-shot-BRITISH-airman.html#ixzz25uB3yK00>

Heart-warming lawyer story.

One afternoon a lawyer was riding in his limousine when he saw two men along the road-side eating grass. Disturbed, he ordered his driver to stop and got out to investigate. He asked one man, "Why are you eating grass?"

"We don't have any money for food," the poor man replied. "We have to eat grass."

"Well, then, you can come with me to my house and I'll feed you," the lawyer said.

"But sir, I have a wife and two children with me. They are over there, under that tree."

"Bring them along," the lawyer replied.

Turning to the other poor man he stated, "You may come with us, also."

The second man, in a pitiful voice, then said, "But sir, I also have a wife and SIX children with me!"

"Bring them all as well," the lawyer answered.

They all entered the car, which was no easy task, even for a car as large as the limousine was.

Once under way, one of the poor fellows turned to the lawyer and said, "Sir, you are too kind." "Thank you for taking all of us with you."

The lawyer replied, "Glad to do it."

"You'll really love my place."

"The grass is almost a foot high."

Come on now...you really didn't think there was such a thing as a

Rudolf Hess,

The No. 2 leader for a number of years. Like many German leaders, Hess was wounded in World War I. After the war, he studied for a time at the University of Munich where he was heavily influenced by the geopolitical teachings of Professor Karl Haushofer. Hess was at Hitler's side in the 1923 Beer-Hall Putsch and was sentenced to prison. In prison with Hitler, Hess got Hitler interested in geopolitics. He also served as Hitler's secretary and took dictation as Hitler wrote Mein Kampf. After prison, he continued to follow Hitler and also continued to rise in the Nazi party.



All of Hess's efforts in the Nazi party came to naught in 1941 when he apparently became mentally unbalanced and flew solo to England for the apparent purpose of talking England into a peace treaty. After the war, Hess was tried at Nuremberg and sentenced to life imprisonment. Although, some wanted him released early because of his obvious mental problems, the Russians refused to consider his release.

After 41 years imprisonment, the last 21 of which were without the presence of fellow inmates, Hess hung himself. In my opinion, Hess deserved some punishment but not the amount he received. He did not appear to have committed the obvious crimes against humanity that Hitler, Goebbels, and other German leaders had committed. The Russians had suffered greatly in World War 2, however, and were not interested in providing mercy.

Posthumous PDSA Dickin Medal for Theo

Military Working Dog Theo, who died just hours after his handler Lance Corporal Liam Tasker was killed in Afghanistan in 2011, will be posthumously honoured with the PDSA Dickin Medal – the animals' Victoria Cross – next month.

Theo was deployed with LCpl Tasker as part of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps' 1st Military Working Dog Regiment to Afghanistan in 2010. Their role was to provide search and clearance support, uncovering hidden weapons, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and bomb-making equipment.

"We are very proud to posthumously award Theo the PDSA Dickin Medal, the highest award any animal can receive for life-saving bravery in conflict," said PDSA Director General Jan McLoughlin. "Theo's exceptional devotion to duty as a Military Working Dog in Afghanistan saved countless human lives.

"The award of this medal, recognised worldwide as the Animals' Victoria Cross, honours his service in life and his sacrifice in death. It serves as a very poignant reminder of the loyal companionship and dedication of man's best friend." During his time in Afghanistan Theo made 14 confirmed operational finds, the most any Arms and Explosives Search dog in Afghanistan has found to date. Theo helped uncover not only hidden explosive devices, but the materials that could be used to make them. During one operation Theo identified two bags of fertiliser and a large quantity of parts intended to make IEDs.

On 1 March 2011, Theo and Lance Corporal Tasker were on a mission in support of the Irish Guards in the Nahr-e Saraj district in Helmand, when a fire-fight broke out, killing Lance Corporal Tasker. Theo was being taken back to Bastion when he started having seizures. Despite immediate first aid and veterinary treatment he unfortunately died. The partnership of Lance Corporal Tasker and Theo, said by colleagues to be 'inseparable', had been hugely successful: they uncovered 14 home-made bombs and hoards of weapons in just five months, which certainly helped prevent hundreds of deaths. On one occasion, Theo found an underground tunnel leading to a room in which insurgents were suspected of making bombs and hiding from Coalition forces. Theo's actions saved many other soldiers and innocent civilians from death and serious injury. Theo's is the first PDSA Dickin Medal to be presented since 2010.



The Dickin Medal

During the Second World War (1939-45), PDSA's founder Maria Dickin CBE was aware of incredible bravery displayed by animals on active service and the Home Front. Inspired by the animals' devotion to man and duty, she introduced a special medal specifically for animals in war.

The PDSA Dickin Medal was first instituted by the UK's leading veterinary charity, PDSA, in 1943, is the highest award any animal can receive in recognition of conspicuous gallantry or devotion to duty in saving human life while serving in military conflict.



The Dickin Medal is a large, bronze medallion bearing the words "For Gallantry" and "We Also Serve" all within a laurel wreath. The ribbon is striped green, dark brown and pale blue representing water, earth and air to symbolise the naval, land and air forces.

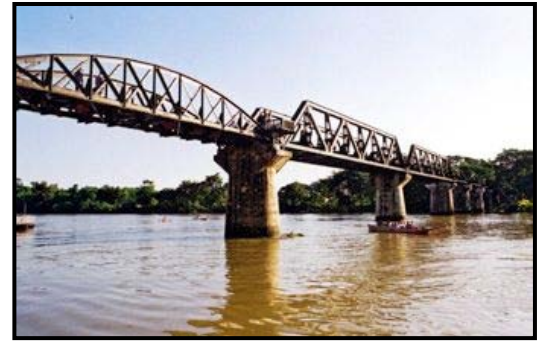
Theo's posthumous presentation will bring the total number of PDSA Dickin Medals awarded to animals in war to 64. Since the introduction of the Medal by PDSA founder Maria Dickin CBE in 1943 it has been awarded to 28 dogs (including Theo), 32 World War II messenger pigeons,

Brave Irishmen among River Kwai bridge slaves

By JEROME REILLY

Sunday February 26 2012

SIX Irishmen were among the hundreds of starving prisoners who worked under constant threat of execution to build the bridge over the River Kwai.



According to author Robert Widders, they were among the many Irishmen and women who suffered at the hands of the Japanese.

In his latest work, *The Emperor's Irish Slaves: Prisoners of the Japanese in the Second World War*, to be officially launched this week, he reveals that they included Trinity graduate Ransome Macnamara Allardyce, who was bayoneted to death when the Japanese overran the Alexandra Military Hospital in Singapore in February 1942.

Another Trinity graduate, Arthur Charles Prigge, died covered in ulcers while a prisoner of the Japanese, while Sister Mary Cooper died in a Japanese prison camp on June 26, 1943, from the combined effects of starvation, brutality and tropical diseases.

In the book he also tells the heartbreaking tale of Fusilier Timothy Kenneally, from Bishopstown, Co Cork, and Pte [Patrick Fitzgerald](#), from Kilmeaden, Co Waterford, who along with two others tried to escape from a slave labour camp on the [Burma](#) Railway. The two Irishmen and their fellow escapees were caught, tortured, crucified and executed on March 27, 1943.

And Patrick Carberry spent the summer of 1943 cremating the emaciated corpses of his comrades who had died from [cholera](#).

Wing Commander Harold Maguire, from Kilkesishen, Co Clare, was captured on Java. His wife Mary Elisabeth took out a newspaper advertisement pleading to other soldiers for information about his whereabouts.

Eventually she received a letter from her husband in which he wrote that he was in excellent health. In fact nothing could have been further from the truth. After the war he was awarded a DSO for the example he had set his fellow captives and later went on to be knighted and become an Air Marshal.

In 1959, Maguire, when an air vice-marshal, was forced to land a Spitfire on a cricket pitch only 10 minutes after flying over Whitehall in a display commemorating the Battle of Britain.

As his engine failed, he spotted a sports ground and managed to put the aircraft down, breaking the stumps at one end while the teams were off having tea. When he entered the pavilion, nursing an injured back, he was welcomed by the players with a strong cup of Darjeeling.

"These people had two things in common: they were Irish citizens serving with the British armed forces; and they were amongst more than 650 Irishmen and women who became prisoners of the Imperial Japanese Army in 1942," Widders writes.

"Nearly a quarter of them died while in Japanese captivity," he adds.

The book will be launched in the Neill Hoey theatre at Trinity College.

THE GREATEST SEA TRAGEDY OF ALL TIME.

The 25,484 ton German luxury cruise liner, launched in 1937, was built to carry 1,465 passengers and a crew of 400. The Gustloff and her sister ship Robert Ley, were the world's first purpose-built cruise ships. The ship, now converted to a 500 bed hospital ship, set sail from Gotenhafen (former Gdynia) in the Bay of Danzig en-route to the port of Stettin as part of the largest naval rescue operation in history (Operation Hannibal.) Overcrowded with 4,658 persons including 918 naval officers and men, 373 German Women Naval Auxiliaries, 162 wounded soldiers of whom 73 were stretcher cases, and 173 crew, all fleeing from the advancing Red Army, the ship ploughed her way through the icy waters of the Baltic Sea. Just after 9pm the ship was hit by three torpedoes from the Russian submarine S-13 (a German designed boat) commanded by Alexander Marinesko. The first torpedo hit the bow of the ship, the second, below the empty swimming pool on E-deck where the Women Auxiliaries were accommodated (most were killed) and the third hit amidships. Indescribable panic reigned as the ship listed and sank in about ninety minutes near the Danish island of Bornholm. Many families committed suicide rather than drown in the freezing waters. Rescue boats picked from the stormy minus 18 degree celsius seas, 964 survivors, many of whom were landed at Sassnitz on the island of Ruegen and taken on board the Danish hospital ship Prince Olaf which was anchored in the harbour. The exact number of drowned will never be known, as many more refugees were picked up from small boats as the **Wilhelm Gustloff** headed for the open sea and were never counted. Around 4,000 of those who died were children. (Latest research puts the number of people on board at 10,582) Many of the 964 persons rescued from the sea, died later, and it is likely that well over 8,500 souls perished. Alexander Ivanovitch Marinesko, ex-commander of the S-13, died from cancer in 1963. Although he proudly wore six medals, including the Order of Lenin, he was never decorated with Russia's highest honour 'Hero Of The Soviet Union'.

The ship was named after the leader of the German Nazis in Switzerland, Gauleiter Wilhelm Gustloff. In February 1936, Gustloff fell to an assassins bullet fired by a Yugoslav Jew, David Frankfurter. He became a Nazi martyr as the first Nazi assassinated by a Jew.

Frankfurter was later arrested and sentenced to eighteen years in prison.



The German luxury liner Wilhelm Gustloff as a KdF ship, pre-1939.

FAMOUS 'DAMBUSTERS' RAID on the RUHR (May 16, 1943)

On this day in 1943, nineteen Lancaster's of RAF Squadron 617, bombed the Mohne, Eder, and Sorpe dams in the Ruhr.

The main attack on Mohne was led by Wing Commander Guy Gibson, his aircraft carrying the new 'bouncing bomb' invented by Dr Barnes Wallis. The Lancasters had to skim the water at the near impossible height of 60 feet to release their bombs.

The breach in the walls caused flooding which drowned around 1,294 people, including 749 Russian (Ukrainian) prisoners of war whose camp was washed away in the flood at the Eder Dam.

Eight aircraft crashed or were shot down. Fifty-three crew members died, three became prisoners of war. Thirty-three decorations were awarded including the Victoria Cross to Guy Gibson.



THE BBC

The British Broadcasting Corporation, located in Bush House on the Strand, London, was the most respected and listened-to radio station in the world.

Its reputation was built wholly on being truthful about world events.

Millions of listeners throughout Nazi occupied Europe, at great peril to themselves, secretly listened to the news broadcasts every night at 7.30 and 9pm. The programs were introduced by the first measure of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, three dots and a dash, V-for- Victory. Then followed what was known as 'messages personnels' coded instructions to all resistance groups to prepare them for the Allied landings in Normandy. These messages were meaningless to the majority of listeners but to the informed few they could mean, prepare to blow up a section of railway line at such and such a point, or prepare to receive an incoming SOE agent at a certain landing strip. With the approach of D-day the most awaited message was the first two lines from the Paul Verlaine couplet.

The first, sent on June 1, was an alert message "The long sobs of the violins of Autumn". The second, an action message "Soothes my heart with a monotonous languor". This summoned all resistance groups to arise immediately throughout France.