



The Bulldog Bulletin



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

President: Priya Guha British Consul General

The Newsletter of The Royal British Legion
California Branch No 1

August 2013



Burma Star



Africa Star



Pacific Star



1939-1945 Star



The Royal British Legion

California Branch No 1

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Italy Star



Atlantic Star

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RBL Chairman's August report,



For those members who are finding it difficult receiving the Legion Magazine, I thought it may be a useful link.



<http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/f0cdd0f9#/f0cdd0f9/1>



The next meeting will be Tuesday August 13th. at the San Rafael Yacht Club, 200 Yacht Club Drive San Rafael CA. at 6.00 p.m.

We would like to welcome our new members **Michael Byrne**, Springfield M.I. **Bryan Bell** Obetz, OH **Michael Wadham**, Gulfport, FL and **Gillian Beck**, Lady Lake, FL.

It is very important to the running of the Branch to keep increasing our membership, so I am asking you all to make a serious effort to pass the word onto your friends to become members of the Royal British Legion.

We would like to thank **Jeremy John of the Wellington Wine Bar, Sausalito, CA**, for all his help in using his credit card machine, so that we could receive the money owed to us from Princess Cruise line, this money was for poppies that we had sent to them last year for the Poppy Appeal.

148th
**Scottish Highland
Gathering & Games**
PLEASANTON
Alameda County Fairgrounds • Labor Day Weekend
Saturday & Sunday
AUGUST 31 & SEPTEMBER 1



IMPORTANT MESSAGE

From Chief George McComb Concerning the U.S. Marine Corps Band San Diego

[Click Here](#)

One has to wonder if all the landmines have been cleared from the beach if these have been undiscovered for that long!

Three Nazi bunkers on a beach have been uncovered by violent storms off the Danish coast, providing a store of material for history buffs and military archaeologists. The bunkers were found in practically the same condition as they were on the day the last Nazi soldiers left them, down to the tobacco in one trooper's pipe and a half-finished bottle of schnapps. This bunker was entombed under the sand dunes until a violent storm swept away the sands three months ago.



The bunkers had not been touched since the war. The bunkers were three of 7,000 built by the Germans as part of Hitler's 'Atlantic Wall' from Norway to the south of France .

But while the vast majority were almost immediately looted or destroyed, these three were entombed under the sand dunes of a remote beach near the town of Houvig since 1945.

They were uncovered only because recent storms sent giant waves cascading over them, sweeping away the sand and exposing glimpses of the cement and iron structures.

Kim Clausen, curator of the Ringkoebing-Skjern museum views a heater retrieved from the bunker.



Stamps of the German Eagle of Adolf Hitler and the Swastika were also retrieved. They were located by two nine-year-old boys on holiday with their parents, who then informed the authorities. Archaeologists were able to carefully force a way in, and were astounded at what they found.

"What's so fantastic is that we found them completely furnished with beds, chairs, tables, communication systems and the personal effects of the soldiers who lived inside," says Jens Andersen, the curator of the Hanstholm museum.



The discovery of the fully-furnished bunkers was 'unique in Europe ,' said Bent Anthonisen, a Danish expert on European bunkers.

And a third expert, Tommy Cassoe, enthused: "It was like entering the heart of a pyramid with mummies all around. What I saw blew me away: it was as if the German soldiers had left only yesterday."

The team working with Cassoe emptied the structures within a few days of boots, undergarments, socks, military stripes, mustard and aquavit bottles, books, inkpots, stamps featuring Hitler, medicines, soda bottles, keys, hammers and other objects. All of the objects from the shelters have been taken to the conservation centre at Oelgod museum, some 20 miles from the beach to be examined.



The centre's German curator, Gert Nebrich, judged the find "very interesting because it is so rare. We don't expect contemporary objects like these to be so well preserved.

Maybe it's because they were kept for 60 years in the cold and dark like in a big vacuum," he said, carefully showing four stamps featuring Hitler's image and the German eagle, found in one bunker. The Germans left the bunkers in May 1945 after the Nazi surrender.

Historical records show that Gerhard Saalfed was a 17-year-old soldier with the German army when he arrived at the bunker in January 1945.

Germany surrendered on May 8, 1945, but it wasn't until two days later that he and his fellow soldiers left their remote station.

They shut the steel doors of the bunker behind them on their remote beach and went to the nearest town ten miles away to surrender. "The remote location of the bunkers and the drifting sands that covered them saved them from being ransacked," said Cassoe.



Italian Auction - only 44 seconds!

You don't have to understand Italian to follow the auctioneer:

A Chinese Ming Vase is up for auction. The bidding opens at a half-million Euros.

Bidding is brisk and each bidder is clearly identified as each raises the bid by 100,000 Euros. (The exchange rate at auction time was 1 Euro = \$1.43.) Within seconds, the bid stalls at one million Euros, and the gasp from the crowd identifies the excitement that prevails in the room.

The successful bidder is the last one who bid one million, and the auctioneer counts down the bid, "Going once, going twice, and sold to the gentleman sitting in front of me for one million Euros."

Now, you are going to have to see the video for yourself. The auctioneer is exuberant. The pace is fast. This is how an auction should be run. Please note the excitement on the auctioneer's face after the final bid.

Click below

[Aspirin Cardio: Auction - YouTube](#)

[Pictures of Normandy 69 years ago](#)

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/captured/2009/06/05/the-65th-anniversary-of-d-day-on-the-normandy-beaches/>

Churchill's heroines: How Britain's female secret agents changed the course of WWII
THERE were 60 of them. Some were not long out of their teens. Others were middle-aged. Several were mothers. All of them were extraordinarily brave and went willingly into danger.



LEADER: Churchill knew that the intelligence services depended on the bravery of their female agents

They were the women agents of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and their task in the words of wartime leader Winston Churchill was "to set Europe ablaze".

Dropped behind enemy lines by parachute or fishing boat they helped to forge the "secret army" of resistance fighters that would prepare the way for the Allied invasion.

Women agents could do what men could not: blend in. They were not combatants. Nor were the Nazis rounding up women for forced labour.

Women could travel on trains or trams or ride bicycles with explosives hidden under their groceries without arousing as much suspicion as men.

From 1941 SOE began recruiting women with language skills into the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF), the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY) or the Auxiliary Transport Service (ATS) before sending them for specialist training.

Details mattered as the women had to pass as locals. One agent was uncovered because she looked right instead of left when crossing the road.

For 39 agents their destination was occupied France to work with the Maquis or Resistance. At least 15 were executed, two were liberated from camps, one escaped and two died of natural causes. The rest made it home.

Some of them such as Odette Sansom or Violette Szabo were celebrated in books and films. For most, however, their heroic bravery remains recorded only in dusty files or specialist tomes. But a new book has gathered all their stories together. Here we introduce three of the lesser-known secret heroines.

ANDRÉE BORREL, code name Denise

The tomboy daughter of workingclass parents from the Paris suburbs, Andrée had fought in the Spanish Civil War. After France capitulated she trained as a nurse's aide and joined a Resistance network helping Jews, SOE agents and Allied airmen escape over the Spanish border until in 1941 her group was uncovered and she had to escape herself, reaching England via Portugal.

There she volunteered for SOE and nine months later on September 24, 1942 she became one of the first female agents to be parachuted into occupied France.

Her mission was to travel to northern France delivering messages, organising and training Resistance members in the use of weapons and explosives.

Tough and intensely committed she always volunteered for the most dangerous tasks. It was said that she enjoyed nothing better than a good sabotage operation. Her fellow trainees recalled her telling them that stabbing through the ear with a pencil was a good way of killing a German while he slept.

She was so effective that in March 1943 her network leader Francis Suttill made her second-in-command. The following month their group carried out 63 acts of sabotage, derailing trains, killing 43 Germans, wounding 110 and set up 33 drop zones where supplies could be safely delivered.

She was probably betrayed as on June 23, 1943 Andrée was arrested by the Gestapo, interrogated and imprisoned first in Karlsruhe,

Germany and then in the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp in the Vosges mountains. Andrée managed to smuggle messages written on cigarette papers out of prison to her relatives.

The end came about a month after D-Day. Along with three other female SOE agents she was injected with carbolic acid and after being pronounced dead her body was stripped ready for throwing into the crematorium. But she regained consciousness and fought back, scratching the face of the guard before she was thrown alive into the furnace. She was 25.



ELIANE PLEWMAN, code name Gaby

Born in 1917 to a British father and Spanish-French mother she spoke four languages and was recruited in 1942 soon after she married Tom Plewman, a British Army officer. She was parachuted into France on August 14, 1943 only to find that the contacts she had been given had all been arrested.

She joined a Resistance network operating in the Marseilles area and set about crippling rail transport. In one operation she derailed the Toulon train in a tunnel and stopped all traffic on the line for four days.

In one harrowing encounter a German officer on a train asked her for a light. Eliane had two boxes of matches in her bag – one of which contained a message from a network member but she could not tell which one. She handed a box over to the soldier who promptly pocketed it after he had lit his cigarette.

Discovery would have meant arrest, torture and execution. But she was in luck. She had not handed over the wrong box of matches.

She was arrested on March 23, 1944 after being inadvertently betrayed by a black-market contact who shared a mistress with a Gestapo collaborator. During questioning she hinted she would talk if her interrogator would buy her dinner. They duly went out, she dined well and then said that she had changed her mind.

She was moved to the notorious Fresnes prison in Paris and for three weeks suffered beatings and was endlessly tortured with electric shocks between her eyes.

On May 13, 1944 Eliane was transferred to Karlsruhe and then three months later to Dachau concentration camp with her fellow SOE agents Yolande Beekman and Madeleine Damerment. Within hours of arriving at Dachau they were taken out, made to kneel in front of the crematorium and shot in the head.



Graftan Street Air Raid Shelter



Fay Street Air Raid Shelter | 1939

The second world war saw waves of German planes bombing huge areas of UK cities. After London, Liverpool was the worst hit area in the country. This is because Liverpool was a major shipping port and very important to the British war effort. The Liverpool docks brought in food and materials vital to the country.

When war broke out in 1939, thousands of Liverpool children were evacuated to the safety of nearby North Wales. Over the course of 1940, Liverpool suffered 300 raids by German bombers, huge parts of the city were destroyed, and many wonderful buildings were lost forever.

The devastation was worse still during May 1941 when there was a huge attack by over 600 German planes. This bombing raid is now known as 'The Blitz' (from the German word blitzkrieg meaning 'lightening war') nearly 2000 Liverpool people were killed in one week alone and many more than this were left homeless and injured.



Officials conduct their meeting in the street surrounded by rubble

As well as being a major shipping port and navy base, Liverpool was also home to the headquarters of the Western Approaches Command – A strategic base for the Navy to plan the Battle of the Atlantic Sea. Captain Frederic John Walker masterminded the Atlantic sea battles from Liverpool, and his command destroyed 20 German U-Boats. A statue can be found at the Liverpool's Pier Head in his honour.

For everyday people the war meant terrible hardship – unimaginable for us today. With food in short supply, food rationing was introduced, with families only being allowed certain small amounts of food per week. This lasted for 10 years! Even the football league stopped - with no matches played for 6 years. During the bombing raids families would be forced to take refuge in an air-raid shelter, usually in their garden, but many did not have this 'luxury'.

Despite being the worst period in Liverpool's history, the War brought people together in a way that perhaps wouldn't happen today. Winston Churchill himself commented after the Liverpool Blitz that "I see the damage done by the enemy attacks but I also see the spirit of an unconquered people."

By a strange twist of history, Hitler's brother himself lived in Liverpool before the war and it is believed that the young Adolf Hitler himself visited the city once and had a pint in the Poste House pub on Cumberland Street.

See our collection

[Liverpool Blitz photos](#)

Next

[Finest Hour – Contains audio files of Liverpool Blitz memories](#)



Famed Desert Rats to lose their tanks under Army cuts

The Desert Rats, the most famous tank unit in the British Army, will be left without any tanks as a result of a shake-up of the Armed Forces brought about by the Coalition's austerity drive, it emerged on Tuesday.

The Army's 7th Armoured Brigade Headquarters will return from Germany and become part of a new infantry unit that will only be equipped with wheeled reconnaissance vehicles, the MoD admitted.

The move ends the armoured role of a tank force that won fame in North Africa under General Bernard Montgomery with victories in battles including El Alamein.

Tank crews fighting under the famous black and red badge also fought with distinction against Iraqi forces in both the first and second Gulf Wars.

Another celebrated unit, the 4th Mechanized Brigade, known as the Black Rats, will also lose its role as a tank force and become part of an infantry formation, it emerged.

Major General Patrick Cordingley, a former commander of the Desert Rats, said the change would still dismay veterans and the general public.



Click on the link to the right

[The History of the British 7th Armoured Division - Desert Rats](#)