



# Evacuee's reunion day

Joyce Race describes the Commemoration on 3 September: the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II.

**We assembled at Horse Guards Parade, and were told by the helpers the order in which we would march.**

We followed children dressed in the clothes of 1940, who had travelled from Durham. They had been travelling since 4am. The parade was headed by an excellent mixed junior brass band from Romford. There followed groups from England, New Zealand, America and Australia - some with banners and flags on their hats, many with Union Jacks.

Coloured tickets had been issued for the seating arrangements in Westminster Abbey. I was fortunate to have a pink one. This enabled me to have a front row seat by the chapel steps. The Abbey was crowded, and the atmosphere was wonderful. Michael Aspel - a patron of the Evacuees, who was evacuated himself - read the lesson. He was great and when Sue Bullock sang "Goodnight, Children, Everywhere," there was not a dry eye in the Abbey.

Afterwards, a wreath was laid by the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester outside the Great West Door, at the Memorial to

all Innocent Victims of Oppression, Violence and War. (Later this would be taken by the Royal Navy, and dropped in the Atlantic, where 77 evacuees lost their lives when The City of Benares was torpedoed en route to Canada.)

This was followed by a fly-past of Spitfires, which brought tears and shouts of "Bravo!"

We ate in Westminster Hall, and then watched "The Evacuees' Story", a presentation in words, music and pictures, nar-

rated by Michael Aspel.

We were asked if we had friends in the audience we would like to meet again, and the Duke and Duchess stayed for quite a long time, mixing and chatting to a great many people. It was a great experience.

*Footnote: For information about the Evacuees Reunion Association, please contact James Roffey at Suite 1, Goodbodys Business Centre, 17, Albert Road, Retford, Notts., DN22 6JD. Tel./Fax 01777 719800.*

# US Veterans Day

By John Larimer

**In 1921, an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. This site, on a hillside overlooking the Potomac River and the city of Washington, became the focal point of reverence for America's veterans.**

Similar ceremonies occurred earlier in England and France, where an unknown soldier was buried in each nation's highest place of honour (in England, Westminster Abbey; in France, the Arc de Triomphe). These memorial gestures all took place on 11 November, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of World War I fighting at 11 am, November 11, 1918 (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month). The day became known as "Armistice Day".

If the idealistic hope had been realised that World War I was "the War to end all Wars," November 11 might still be called Armistice Day. But only a few years after the holiday was proclaimed, war broke out in Europe. 16,500,000 Americans took part. 407,000 of them died in service, more than 292,000 in battle.

**Change to honour all veterans**

Realising that peace was equally preserved by veterans of WW II and Korea, Congress was requested to make this day an occasion to honour those who have served America in all wars. In 1954

President Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11 as Veterans Day.

On Memorial Day 1958, two more unidentified American war dead were brought from overseas and interred in the plaza beside the unknown soldier of World War I. One was killed in World War II, the other in the Korean War. In 1973, a law passed providing interment of an unknown American from the Vietnam War, but none was found for several years. In 1984, an unknown serviceman from that conflict was placed alongside the others. To honour these men, symbolic of all Americans who gave their lives in all wars, an Army honour guard, The 3d US Infantry (The Old Guard), keeps day and night vigil.

A law passed in 1968 changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. It soon became apparent, however, that November 11 was a date of historic significance to many. Therefore, in 1978 Congress returned the observance to its traditional date.

# New look Madden's



Kieron and Margaret Madden and Gerry, the builder responsible for the re-fit, pictured with the Mertell trophy. Photo by Frank Tymkow.

**Madden's Public House celebrated its grand re-opening on 16 September after substantial refurbishments.**

On display are the Mertell trophy won by "Bobby-Joe" in the 1999 Grand National in addition to his race colours, which have pride of place on the wall.

"Bobby-Joe" is owned by friend of the Maddens, Bobby Burke, who runs a near-by pub.

# Moving On

By Diana Cormack

**After sixteen years in East Finchley, two active members of the community have moved out to the country. Dale and Sandy Smith, with their children James, aged eight, and Lily, aged six, have left Baronsmere Road for Buckinghamshire.**

Sandy taught in the Special Needs Department of Christ's College and was an active member of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. She was also a staunch supporter and helpmate to her husband who, over the years, was involved in many different local issues.

**Friends and campaigners**

Dale fought hard to prevent the shop on the corner of Baronsmere Road and the High Road becoming a fish and chip shop. He was active in the campaign not to have a McDonalds take-away/restaurant on their present site. But perhaps he was best known for his role in "The

Friends of Cherry Tree Wood", which has served to raise public awareness and involvement in the plans for our park. It has also filled a few pages in *THE ARCHER!*

In the past few years the couple organised a petition about local parking and devised their own traffic scheme, with the hope that Barnet Council would do something to alleviate the problems caused to residents by commuters parking and "rat-running." It is ironic that, just when something seems about to be put in place, the Smiths have gone. But they do intend to come back to visit friends and to "see how the traffic is".

# Evacuees today

**UNICEF - the United Nations Children's Fund - was formed in 1946 to provide food, care and support for the six million refugee children in Western Europe at the end of World War II.**

Sadly, much of its work today is still concerned with unaccompanied, lost and orphaned children in conflict and emergency zones all over the world.

UNICEF attempts to reunite unaccompanied children with their families as quickly as possible. The children are identified, registered and medically screened. Parents of lost children are told where they can register and provide information about them. Meanwhile, children are placed in a setting as close to a normal family as possible, taking culture, language, siblings, etc, into consideration.

For further information, or to help raise funds, please contact UNICEF, 55, Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2A 3NB. Tel. 020 7405 5592.

# Are you entitled to a war pension?

**You do not need to have served during the wartime to claim.**

**You can claim a War Pension if: -**

- 1 Your illness or injury was caused, or made worse, by service in the Armed Forces at any time after 2 September 1939. This includes the Home Guard, Nursing and Auxiliary Services, the Territorial Army and Cadets.
- 2 You were a civilian or a Civil Defence worker, and you are suffering from an illness or injury as a result of the 1939 - 45 War.
- 3 You were in the Merchant Navy, and are suffering from illness or injury caused during wartime, or while being held prisoner.
- 4 You were a dependant of someone who has died as a result of such an illness or injury.

If you already get a War Pension, you may also be entitled to extra allowances. There is no time limit for claiming a War Pension. For general advice, ring the War Pension Agency Helpline, on 01253 858858. Information leaflets are available from the London Borough of Barnet.

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