



Paris
Branch

Newsletter

October 2022



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This month's lunch
Thur 20/Oct
1215 for 1230
See p 6 for menu

Poppy Appeal
Embassy
coffee morning
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RBL Centenary
Bennecourt
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Chairman's Introduction

Dear members,

Wow! October again! Doesn't time fly? Last month was both a sad month, and a busy one.

The monthly lunch was well attended, and as always Elaine produced an excellent meal, for which we are most grateful. We were joined by a Legion member from one of the London branches who was visiting Paris. I had met him at the Battle of Britain ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe and invited him to join us for lunch. He was greatly impressed with our club house and the warm welcome that he received from those attending, said he very much enjoyed the lunch. He also added that it was excellent value for money!

This month is a busy one. The approaching Poppy Appeal season involves a lot of work preparing and distributing boxes and tins for those who collect for us. We look to you all to help make this successful and, if you want a few poppies to distribute to your friends and colleagues - give us a call.

Janet, Pierre, Howard and myself attended a meeting at Saint Louis cathedral with members of the Embassy staff and a member of the Saint Louis staff to discuss this year's order of service for the 11th November. Embassy staff will print out the version to be handed out on the day. We shall be joined by our regular piper and a new bugler.

Our next club-house lunch is on the 20th. You will find details further on in this Newsletter. Do join us. You'll enjoy it.

On the 27th we have our annual coffee morning at the Ambassador's residence and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible there. See page 7 for details.

You will also find, on page 12, details of the unveiling of the RBL memorial bench and opening of the Rose garden at Bennicourt on the 5th of November. We look forward to seeing those of you who can come. The Ambassador will be present along with numerous official representatives. If you wish to attend please contact Didier Dumont on didierdumont0157@orange.fr so that he can send you an invitation.

Finally I have been informed that David Bean has been admitted to hospital for a heart operation. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

Richard Neave.

QUIZ

A curiosity of the English language is the number of words we have for groups of animals and sometimes people. Some are well known "a bench of bishops" "a herd of cattle" but here is a mix with a few uncommon ones. Can you match them? Yes I know - most of them are easy but there are a couple that might make you think - and a couple of them are used twice.

board
covey
flock
gaggle

glory
murmuration
pack
parliament

pride
school
shoal
skein

squad
stand

1. A _____ of fish
2. A _____ of geese (on the ground)
3. A _____ of lions
4. A _____ of directors
5. A _____ of owls
6. A _____ of partridge.
7. A _____ of sheep
8. A _____ of soldiers

9. A _____ of starlings
10. A _____ of thieves.
11. A _____ of birds
12. A _____ of dolphins
13. A _____ of flamingoes
14. A _____ of geese (flying in a v formation)
15. A _____ of goldfinches
16. A _____ of wolves

Answers on last page

"THE POPPY LADY" Anna Guérin:



"Originator of the 'Poppy Day'"

In 2015, I was asked *"who put the poppy on your lapel?"* and I could not answer. By asking that question I was set on a path of discovery which I am still following. I soon identified the person who had indeed put the poppy there and the more I learned of her, the more I came to the conclusion that this woman had been unjustly forgotten.

She was French woman - Madame Guérin. An independent character and a feminist, she devoted part of her life to raising funds for French widows and orphans, combatants - and also the sick and needy victims of war. Throughout the Great War she tirelessly raised funds in the USA which were sent to the French government for distribution to various charities.

Madame Guérin was born Anna Alix Boule, on 3rd February 1878, in Vallon, Ardèche, France. She was born to a Protestant couple, Auguste and Anna Boule and brought up on a large and profitable farm. Anna's education enabled her to pursue a career as a teacher, when she and her first husband, Paul Rabanit, moved to the French-ruled island of Madagascar. Her school became one of the best on the island. Anna and Paul had two daughters while they were living in Madagascar.



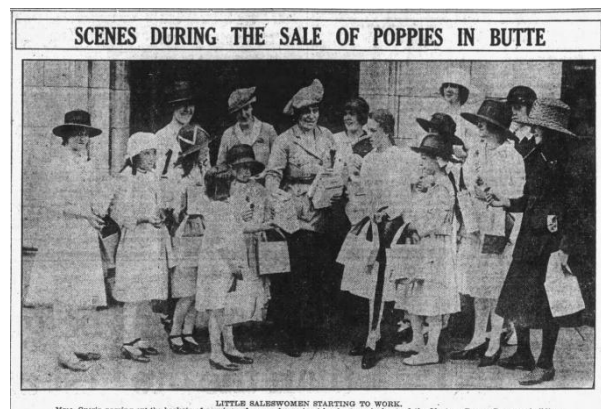
Divorcing in 1907, Anna remarried in 1910 and became Madame Guérin. Anna's husband was a judge and he returned to his duties in French African colonies. Anna continued teaching through a different medium - lecturing for the *Alliance Française*. Her early lectures were about Madagascar but she soon expanded her repertoire with accounts of historical French women, such as Joan of Arc, Marie Antoinette, and Josephine Bonaparte. Anna toured for most of each year, always spending her summers in

France. In Europe she began lecturing in the UK.

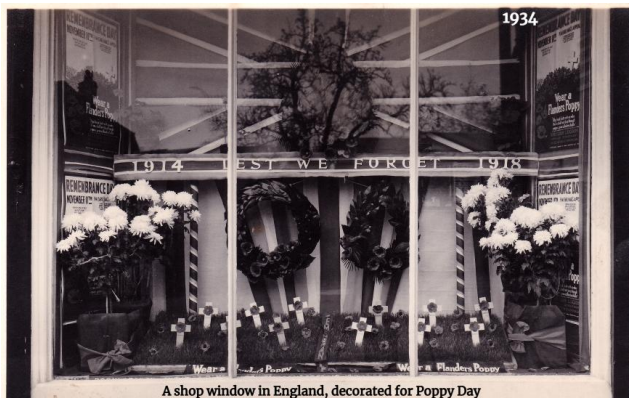
She was lecturing for the *Alliance Française* in the USA when the Great War began. When Anna lectured she discreetly told audiences of the suffering in France. A third party accepted donations and forwarded them to a relief agency in France. Once the USA entered the war in April 1917, Anna was able to become a War Lecturer and raised funds for several causes: the American Red Cross (for its work in France); the 'Food for France Fund'; French invalid soldiers; and French widows and orphans. She was described as "*the greatest of all war speakers*" and inspired her listeners. Reviews were full of extraordinarily positive comments and there were tales of grown men crying when she described the suffering in France.

After 4 years of lecturing in the USA, the 1918 influenza pandemic cut short Anna's tour and she returned to France. She was half-way across the Atlantic when the Armistice was signed. She thought her work was over but was summoned to Paris and asked by the French government to return to America to form a new charity. This charity was called '*The American-Franco Children's League*'. Money raised in the USA was to be sent to a committee in Paris for distribution,

Her main source of funds came from membership subscriptions and 'Poppy Days' which she introduced across the USA from 1919 onwards. Charity days were already regular occurrences in the USA and elsewhere amongst the Allied nations, when emblems, flags, etc were exchanged for cash donations. The UK held many such days and some offered artificial flowers - primroses, forget-me-nots, roses, etc.



Anna's League aimed to provide assistance to needy French children and promote a friendship between the U.S.A. and France, which had begun in 1776 when France helped



America in its War of Independence. She formed a League committee in each State she visited and prominent local people became members: State Governors; State Superintendents of Schools; Commanders of the American Legion (the largest veteran organisation in the US); local Presidents of the Federation of Women's Clubs; and the Chairs of local War Mothers' Associations (or similar). All flocked to her banner and even General Pershing's sisters became committee members.

As each State Committee was established, Anna advised on how to recruit fee paying members and organise 'Poppy Days'. Anna's first 'Poppy Day' was held in October 1919, in Baltimore, Maryland. Anna financed the making of artificial poppies for this first 'Poppy Day' and the funds raised were again sent to France. In her speeches Anna often recited *the* poem by Canadian John McCrae "*In Flanders Fields the Poppies Grow*" and her poppy sellers wore sashes bearing those words.

While campaigning, Anna wore a blue-grey tailored suit with a hat of the same fabric, styled on the uniform of the French *Chasseurs Alpins*. In 1920, she began promoting her "*big idea*", the 'Inter-Allied Poppy Day'. Although initially, American companies had made Anna's poppies,



now women and children in the devastated areas of France would be paid to make them, helping to get families back on their feet. Veterans' organisations would be able to order these poppies at cost price, which included a small amount for Anna's League, and keep the rest for their funds. Anna was invited to explain her idea at the American Legion's Convention in 1920. The Legion adopted the poppy and promised support for Anna with her "Poppy Days". It was then that Anna was given the name of "*Poppy Lady of France*". In May 1921, Anna's League held the world's first

nation-wide 'Poppy Day' in the USA, with the most of the proceeds going to France.

Anna then took her idea to Canada, where the Great War Veterans' Association adopted it. The Canadian veterans were the first of the Empire (now the Commonwealth) to do so. Anna's representative, Colonel Moffat, successfully took Anna's idea to New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa in 1921. Her sister and a friend even took the idea to Cuba.

In London, Anna took her "*big idea*" to the British Legion, of which Earl Haig was President. Haig and Sir Frederick Lister were instrumental in the four British veteran groups merging into this one organisation. The British Legion was sceptical, it doubted that such a 'Poppy Day' would be successful and didn't know much about this French woman. Sir Herbert Brown accompanied Anna to France, allowing her to prove her credentials. The Legion, however, was poor and Anna had to finance its order of French poppies, the loan to be reimbursed after the first 'Poppy Day', on 11 November 1921: Haig's 'Remembrance Day'. Orders started to come in from all around the country and the Legion realised it needed more poppies – more came from France and their manufacture began in Britain.



As from 1921, English-speaking allied countries made their own arrangements, their veterans making the poppies. The Poppy day was well and truly launched but the woman at its source, she who had been known as "*the Originator of the Poppy Day*", fell into oblivion. Now, I have taken upon myself the task of raising Anna Guérin from the shadows with, I am happy to say, some success.

2021 was the centenary year of the 'Poppy Day' and it galvanised veteran organisations. The Royal Canadian Legion produced a 'Tribute' poppy, accompanied by a card featuring Anna Guérin; the Royal British Legion featured Anna in its centenary book; the name of *Anna Guérin* was mentioned in the introduction of the televised RBL Festival of Remembrance; and PoppyScotland brought out a "100" centenary poppy. In France, there are many who support the cause of Anna Guérin. In Cher, Aubigny-sur-Nère

inaugurated an 'Espace Anna Guérin'. In the Ardèche, Vallon-Pont-d'Arc held an exhibition about her.

In March this year, in Vallon, a memorial stone was unveiled at Anna's grave and a plaque was inaugurated at her birthplace in the town for New Zealand's 'Poppy Day' centenary (for Anzac Day in April) the NZ Post issued stamps depicting various remembrance poppies and First Day Covers, featuring Anna Guérin's image. In June, the General Delegation of the Pas-de-Calais Souvenir Français asked me to contribute to an exhibition about her during an Entente Cordiale weekend (which celebrated Earl Haig's statue restoration). Members of that General Delegation of the Pas-de-Calais Souvenir Français are committed to the Guérin cause now. Either this year or in 2023, a road will be named after her in Annay-sous-Lens, Pas-de-Calais – 'rue Anna Guérin'.



'Remembrance Poppy Days' continue to be held throughout the British Commonwealth. The USA holds them to a much lesser extent. The poppy has become a symbol of commemoration and hope for veterans and their dependents. As Byng of Vimy said, '*Honour the dead by helping the living*'. This is Anna Guérin's legacy.

I believe Anna Guérin was born before her time. There is much more to her story than is written here and that is why I have written my book. I want more people to recognise this wonderful woman's legacy and her interesting life.

'The Poppy Lady' is now at the pre-order stage and is to be published by Pen & Sword in October.

Heather Anne Johnson, September 2022: heatherannej@hotmail.com



Don't forget to book for this month's lunch.

Thursday 20 Oct.
1215 for 1230
Only €23 - Pay on the day (in cash please)

Reserve through Richard at 06 45 10 47 70 or richard.neave05@gmail.com

Book soon to be sure of a place.
(Cancellations up to 48h before)



LUNCH MENU 20th OCTOBER

APERITIF

STARTER
Charcuterie

MAIN COURSE
Chicken oregano and courgettes

DESSERT
bananas/red fruit and yoghurt

WINE SERVED WITH THE MEAL

COFFEE OR TEA



POPPY APPEAL COFFEE MORNING 2022

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, PARIS BRANCH
invites you to attend a Coffee Morning in aid of the annual Poppy Appeal for

Vous invite à prendre du café au profit de notre "Poppy Appeal" annuel pour

THE EARL HAIG BENEVOLENT FUND

The Coffee Morning will take place by kind permission of HM Ambassador at
THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE

***Le "Coffee Morning" aura lieu sous l'égide de l'ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique au
RESIDENCE DE L'AMBASSADE***

**39 rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, Paris 8ème,
Jeudi 27 octobre 2022,
10h30 – 12h00.**

Please reserve through:
***Merci de réserver auprès de
Janet Warby :***

janetwarby@yahoo.com or/ou tel: 01 39 28 90 28 or at / ou à
Mme J. Warby,
5 allée des Pins, 78480 Verneuil Sur Seine.

to have your name added to the security list
pour faire ajouter votre nom à la liste de sécurité

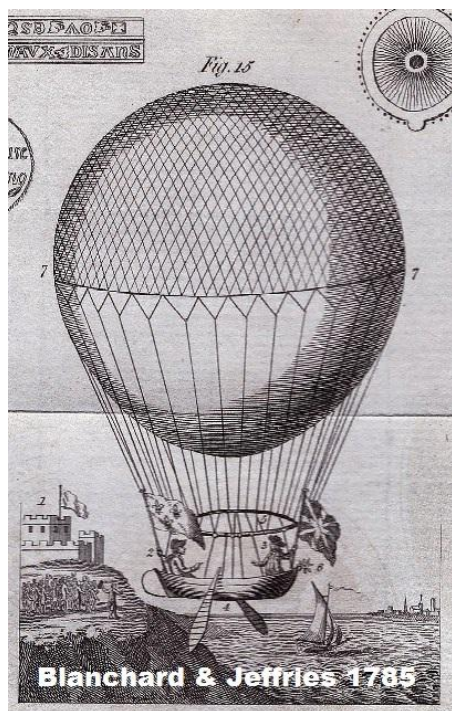
Please bring an ID document and your Covid vaccination certificate (virtual or paper).
Veillez apporter une pièce d'identité et votre certificat de vaccination Covid (virtuel ou papier).

**Please reserve before. 20/10/2022
Date limite de réservation 20.10.2022**

**Your generous participation will be
appreciated
Votre participation généreuse sera
appréciée.**

Napoleon's Air Force

Last month's edition contained an account of Napoleon's flirtation with the submarine as a means of attacking the English. It would appear that this was not his only excursion into futuristic arms. There was the question of the invasion of Britain by air.



At the time balloons were, if not a common sight, definitely, as it were, on the horizon. Notably in 1785 Blanchard and the Duke of Jeffries had crossed the English Channel in a balloon inflated with hydrogen. However, coming in from the sea, the balloon was descending so rapidly that Blanchard was reduced to throwing his trousers over the side in a (successful) effort to maintain a little height in the run-in.

It is thus in the context of substantial public enthusiasm, for balloons that, in December 1797 (Year VII), the French Councilor of State Jean Charles Thilorier, proposed to the Directory an aero naval operation by means of vast hot-air balloons which were baptized "*thilorières*" by some and "*melons d'Annonay*" by others. He was inspired to write to *Le Moniteur* in 1797:

"I propose a means to render useless our enemy's fleet, as well as the rocks and defensive batteries which protect their coast. It is a means which will seem the height of audacity, but which, in reality, is the least dangerous. A means which would end the war in a day, and restore the freedom of the seas to Europe, without our having to mourn the death of a single man... I propose to construct a portable camp and a hot-air balloon large enough to remove and transport it to the heart of England with an army to conquer it. That this is possible is a point that no physicist can dispute. I will prove that it is not only feasible but, indeed, less expensive than a naval force."

Following up in "*le Publiciste*" in 1803 : "*England insults us and defies us. The hero who presides over our destinies will know how to defend his work and punish the violation of treaties. There is more than one way to cross the channel. The most expeditious, the one which the least exposes the lives of the brave, must prevail. It was my idea that the aerostat would do this and I dared to say so. The public laughed - which was to be expected.*"

Also, as might be expected was the accompanying comment in the same issue:

"Montgolfière capable of taking off with 3,000 men and which will cost only 300,000 francs!!!! a lamp will be suspended from it which will have a sufficient flame to prevent cooling!!!!"

Unsurprisingly, the project was not pursued.

The idea was, however, not entirely forgotten - even in high places. Five years later, in 1808, a note from Napoleon mentions:

"General Clarke, Minister of War, submits to the Emperor the project of a Sieur L'Homond, ex-chief of a battalion of balloonists, who proposes to carry out a landing in England by means of one hundred hot-air balloons of 100 meters in diameter, whose gondolas could contain 1,000 men, with food for fifteen days, two cannons, 25 horses and wood to fuel the balloons.

Referred to M. Monge to find out if it is worthwhile to make a large-scale experiment.

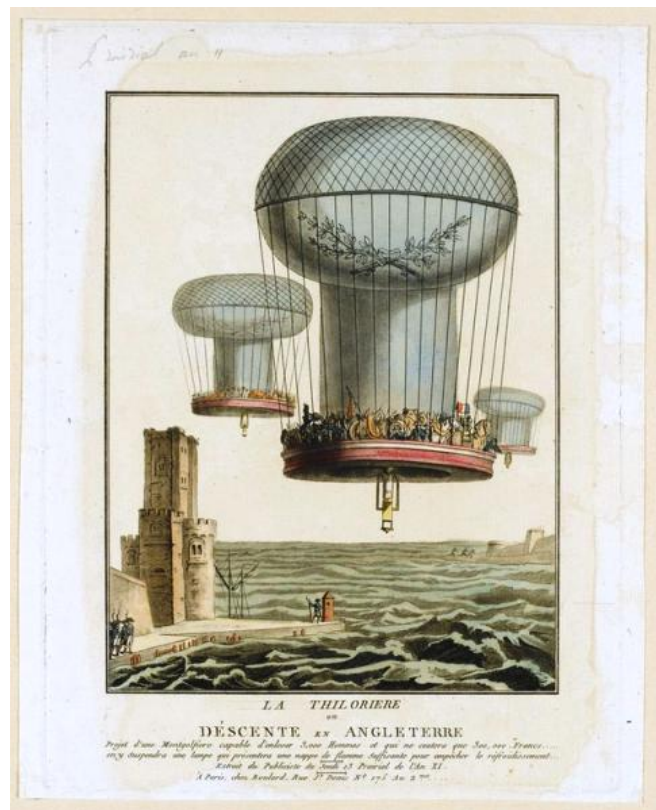
Monge responded with an admirably concise explanation of the principles of a hot-air balloon:

"His Majesty does me the honour of returning Monsieur L'Homond's memorandum and of asking me if I think it is appropriate to carry out a large-scale experiment with one of these hot-air balloons.

Until now, journeys into the atmosphere have been made either by means of hot-air balloons or by aerostats. The hot-air balloon is a light envelope whose interior is heated by a fire that is purposely kept alive. The hot air, whose gravity is less than that of the outside air, has an ascensional force which increases with temperature; and this temperature can easily be raised to such a point that the ascensional force exceeds the weight of the envelope and that of the objects suspended from it; In this case, the balloon rises in the atmosphere until it reaches a region with which it is in equilibrium; then it obeys all the movements of the atmosphere; it is carried along by the wind, whose speed it immediately assumes, and it continues to move until, admitting air by cooling, and rapidly increasing in weight, it descends little by little to the earth."

Monge continues his admirable lesson in physics with a succinct summary of the likely results:

"If a balloon is intended to carry a considerable weight, its envelope must be of suitably strong canvas and considerable capacity. When heavily loaded a high temperature in the interior cannot be maintained without a very large flame at the orifice; this will create a column of incandescent air which will rise to the top and soon char the envelope. The load carried by the



balloon will then be suspended on a charcoal tissue which will tear, let the hot air escape and will now serve only as an inadequate parachute."

Just to make sure he expounds on the subject for another paragraph or two and concludes:

"It is my opinion that the proposal made by Mr. L'Homond is not acceptable and does not merit a large-scale experiment."

Enough, one would think, to satisfy a reasonable emperor that a project was definitively moribund. Historians, however, appear to have excelled themselves in a search for more interesting, if ludicrously abstruse, reasons for his not invading England by air. One such reason for Napoleon's lack of motivation towards a military aerostation is found in the history of the coronation balloon:

This (unmanned) balloon, 3000 m³ in volume and carrying an imperial crown was constructed by André Jacques Garnerin to celebrate the coronation of the Emperor (2 December 1804), and was launched that evening at dusk from the square in front of Notre-Dame. It is said to have got as far as Rome by dawn the next day - and to have collided there with Nero's tomb. The balloon was said to have left the crown it carried hanging from a corner of the monument before falling into the waters of Lake Bracciano. Uproar resulted from articles in the Italian press, associating Napoleon and Nero. Napoleon was superstitious and sensitive to omens of any kind and this, surely, would have irremediably condemned balloons in the eyes of an emperor who hated any association of his name with that of Nero.

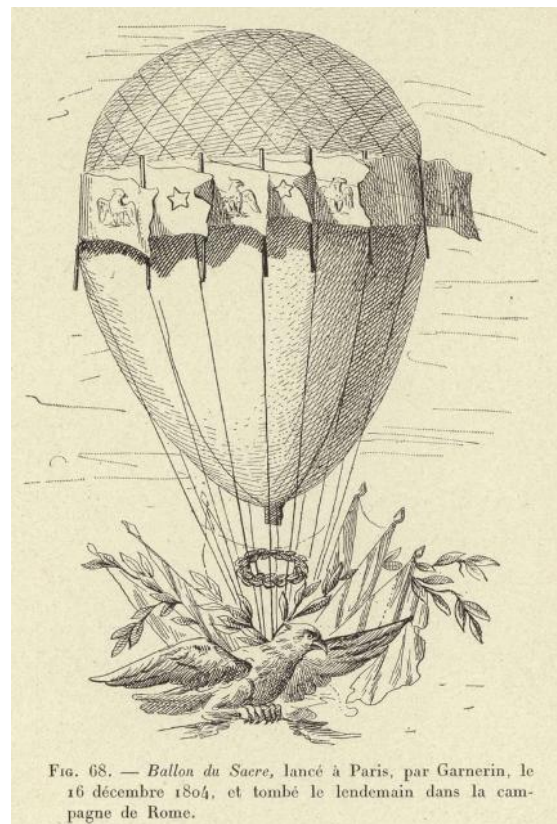


FIG. 68. — *Ballon du Sacre*, lancé à Paris, par Garnerin, le 16 décembre 1804, et tombé le lendemain dans la campagne de Rome.

On the other hand expert opinion has it that that only a balloon with modern technological equipment could cover the 1,100 km from Paris to Rome in about ten hours (between nightfall and the following dawn) - flying over the Mont Blanc Massif. Historian Frédéric Masson's account gives (without reference) a delay of a slightly more likely 46 hours between the launch of the balloon and its landing in the lake of Bracciano - but makes no mention of the Nero's tomb episode.

And then there is the letter from Napoleon himself to the Pope who had just got back to Rome from the coronation in Paris where he, famously, had not exactly crowned Napoleon emperor, but had passed him the crown so that he (Napoleon) could do it himself. It was the 4th Prairial (24th May) 1804, that Napoleon wrote to Pius VII about *"the balloon that had so happily arrived in Rome, and which had been launched in Paris on the day of the coronation. It seems to*

me that it should be preciously preserved in memory of this extraordinary event. I would like Your Holiness to have it placed in a special place where it can be seen and that an inscription should record that in so many hours it arrived in Rome."

This would seem more likely to inspire the credulous Napoleon to do his best to launch a 19th century blitz on Britain. So was he for or against? We'll never know as the project never got off the ground.

With thanks, once again, to Christian Bailleux whose book " Le camp de Boulogne et les nouvelles technologies" provided inspiration for this article.

Mark Yates

And whilst talking about balloons...

THE R101 DISASTER

On the 5th October 2022, the Royal Air Force Association Paris Branch and the Royal Navy Voluntary Reserve Paris Branch held a commemoration of the 92nd anniversary of the disaster, laying wreaths at the site of the crash.



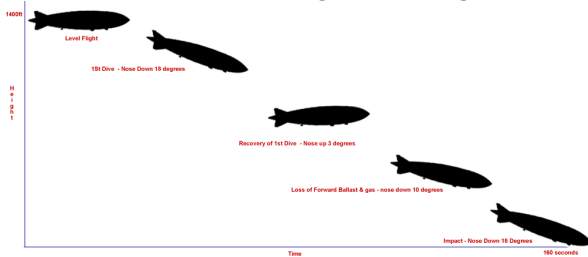
This provides an occasion to go a little further into the history of airship accidents. The R101 disaster in 1930, the most serious of its time and the gravest to befall a British airship, created an increasing awareness of the folly of using hydrogen as a lifting agent in airships. The Hindenberg disaster seven years later was the last in a sad series of accidents which effectively put an end to one hitherto burgeoning aspect of the aviation industry.

On the 5th October 1930: the Military airship R101, the world's largest flying craft at the time, took off for its inaugural voyage from Cardington, UK, to Karachi Pakistan.

The airship released 5 tonnes of water from its ballast tanks to gain altitude but over Picardy, at around 2am, the airship encountered gusts of wind which tore its upper outer shell, causing a rupture of one of the gas balloons. The R101 crashed on a hill in the commune of Allonne, just south of Beauvais, at only 20 km/h. The accident ignited the hydrogen leaks and the fire quickly engulfed the entire airship. 48 crew and passengers, who were mostly sleeping at 2am in the morning, perished in the fire, with only 6 survivors.



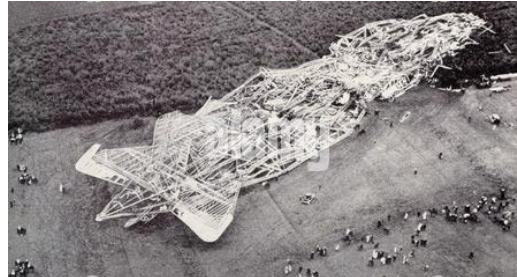
The airship at its mooring in Cardington



The last 160 seconds



The route from Cardington to Allonne



The wreckage of the airship

The crash of R101 effectively ended British airship development, and was one of the worst airship accidents of the 20th century.

It is interesting, in passing, to note that the Vickers' design team for the R101 was led by Barnes Wallis, better known for his part in the design of the Wellington bomber and for the bouncing bomb. His principal assistant was Nevil Shute Norway, the well-known novelist Nevil Shute who recounted the story in his autobiography, *Slide Rule: Autobiography of an Engineer*.



Commemoration on 5th October 2022

Further ceremonies are planned for 2025 (95th anniversary) and then 2030 (Centenary) at Allonne.

Thank you Bill Beauclerk for bringing this event to our attention.

COMING EVENT: RBL Centenary

YOUR INVITATION TO BENNECOURT: one hundredth anniversary of the RBL



LA COMMUNE DE BENNECOURT
& LA ROYAL BRITISH LEGION PARIS BRANCH

VOUS CONVIENT À
L'INAUGURATION DE LA ROSERAIE DU CENTENAIRE RBL
& DU BANC MÉMORIEL

LE 05 NOVEMBRE 2022 À 11 H 00
PROMENADE DES TILLEULS BENNECOURT

EN PRÉSENCE DE
DAME MENNA RAWLINGS AMBASSADRICE DU ROYAUME UNI
M. JEAN LOUIS AMAT, SOUS-PRÉFET DE MANTES-LA-JOLIE
M. GÉRARD LARCHER, PRÉSIDENT DU SÉNAT



PROGRAMME

11H00
CÉRÉMONIE AU MONUMENT AUX MORTS
DANS LE JARDIN LECLER

11H30
PLACEMENT DES DRAPEAUX ET DES JEUNES SAPEURS POMPIERS
SUR LA PROMENADE DES TILLEULS EN BORD DE SEINE
INAUGURATION DE LA ROSERAIE DU CENTENAIRE RBL
ET DU BANC MÉMORIEL PAR MME L'AMBASSADRICE DU ROYAUME UNI

12H15
VIN D'HONNEUR À LA SALLE DES FÊTES
ACCUEIL DES JSP ET DES JEUNES COUR DE LA MAIRIE



AVEC LA PARTICIPATION DE



Réponse au plus tard le 31/10/22 à
maire.bennecourt@gmail.com

The RBL Paris Branch and Bennecourt

Our Committee member Didier Dumont is Mayor of Bennecourt, not far from Mantes. It is a small town with a long history including a twinning with Coldstream. There are frequent exchanges between the two towns and regular visits from the Coldstream Guards. It is thus particularly appropriate that Didier has piloted a local project for a commemorative rose garden on the banks of the Seine.

Didier writes:

The story of the dynamic twinning between Coldstream which lies in a meander of the Tweed, and Bennecourt, embraced in a loop of the Seine, goes back some 32 years. The past of the Scottish town is essentially military, the home of the famous Coldstream Guards as well as, historically, the King's Own Scottish Borderers. In contrast Bennecourt boasts a more artistic heritage including the literary presence of Emile Zola, and the artistic works of the impressionists.

The twinning of these two communities, on the Scottish side, is one of the most active in Berwickshire. The prestigious link between the Senate, the Republican Guard, and the Coldstreams has encouraged mutual activity in many fields, arts, culture, traditions, festivals, events such as the Centenary of 1914, the rekindling of the Flame, the commemoration of Flodden and, not least, family gatherings where the heritage of each country is mutually explored. The Mayor of Bennecourt is a committee member of the Royal British Legion Paris branch which is particularly happy to participate in this commemorative project.

The Paris branch of the RBL has, with great pleasure, lent its support to this project which includes the installation of a wrought iron bench carrying our motto. As the Paris branch was probably the very first to be created In July 1921 it was particularly disappointing to see our centenary celebrations so sadly postponed last year - Covid was raging at the time. This rose garden provides, with its consecration to the memory of the vast numbers killed in two wars a fitting, if somewhat belated, memorial which we have adopted, to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the RBL.

This link will show you the location of Bennecourt on Google Maps.

<https://www.google.com/maps/@49.0314035,1.5701826,12.25z>

For further information copy this link into your browser

rblfrance.org/paris/downloads/xxx.pdf

The event is public but members can contact Didier Dumont on didierdumont0157@orange.fr for an invitation including the Vin d'honneur.

We hope to see as many of you as possible at the opening ceremony.

Some humour from your Chairman.

One day little Johnny was digging a hole in his garden.
The next -door neighbour spotted him and being nosy decided to investigate.
"Hello Johnny, what you up to" he asked.
"My goldfish died and I'm going to bury him". Johnny replied.
"That's a big hole for a goldfish, isn't it?". Asked the neighbour.
"That's because he's inside your cat!".

An old Arab lived close to New York city for 40 years.
He would have loved to plant some potatoes in his garden, but he is alone, old and weak. His son is in college in Paris, so the old man sends him an email. He explains the problem:
"Beloved son, I am very sad because I can't plant potatoes in my garden. I am sure, if you were here, you would help and dig up the garden for me. I love you, Your Father."
The following day, the old man receives a response email from his son: "Beloved Father, please don't touch the garden. It's there that I have hidden 'the THING' I love you too Ahmed"
At 4p.m. the US army, the Marines, the FBI, and CIA, and the Rangers visit the house of the old man, take the whole garden apart, and search every inch, but can't find anything. Disappointed they leave the house.
A day later, the old man receives another email from his son. "Beloved Father, I hope the garden is dug up by now and you can plant your potatoes. That's all I could do for you from here. I love you Ahmed".

After boarding in Nairobi the plane sat for ages on the runway-pilot apologised but explained the plane had a mechanical problem and waiting for an engineer to fix it.
2 hours later, everyone was hot and fed up that no engineer had come out to the plane.
Suddenly an announcement "This is your captain speaking, we haven't been able to get an engineer, I think we'll risk it man"!!

General Baldwin had barely arrived in the forward area when a sniper's bullet removed a button from his shirt.

He threw himself to the ground in terror.
The men stood around with the greatest unconcern.
The general yelled at a passing sergeant.
"Hey, isn't somebody going to kill that damned sniper?"
The sergeant looked down at the general and replied:
"I guess not, general. We're scared that if we kill him the enemy will replace him with somebody who really knows how to shoot".

A little boy was waiting for his mother to come out of Morrisons store.
As he waited, he was approached by a man who asked,

"Son, can you tell me where the Post Office is?"

The little boy replied,

"Sure! Just go straight down this street and at the end turn to your right".

The man thanked the boy kindly and said.

"I'm the new minister in town. I'd like for you to come to church on Sunday. I'll show you how to get to Heaven".

The little boy replied with a chuckle.

"Awww, come on...You don't even know the way to the Post".

Richard Neave.

Answers to the quiz

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| 1. A shoal of fish | 9. A murmuration of starlings |
| 2. A gaggle of geese (on the ground) | 10. A pack of thieves. |
| 3. A pride of lions | 11. A flock of birds |
| 4. A board of directors | 12. A school of dolphins |
| 5. A parliament of owls | 13. A stand of flamingoes |
| 6. A covey of partridge. | 14. A skein of geese (flying in a v formation) |
| 7. A flock of sheep | 15. A glory of goldfinches |
| 8. A squad of soldiers | 16. A pack of wolves |
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