



TILLY WHIM

A PURBECK NOTEBOOK with GEORGE WILLEY



Salute to secret army

"RECOGNITION at last for Langton's Secret Army", says an information sheet I have just received about a memorial being installed next to St George's Church in Langton Matravers.

This refers to one of the

best-kept secrets of the Isle of Purbeck during the Second World War.

The news item says: "It is hard to believe that the quiet village of Langton Matravers in Purbeck was once a centre for Britain's secret resistance force. During the Second

World War, local men formed a highly trained unit of auxiliaries ready to cause maximum disruption – and sacrifice their own lives – in the event of a German invasion."

On Saturday at noon a ceremony was held to commemorate seven members of the Langton Matravers auxiliary unit, as well as other local people who played a part in those wartime years.

A memorial stone was unveiled by Mrs Anthony Pitt-Rivers, Lord Lieutenant of Dorset.

After the ceremony members of the public had the chance to meet relatives of those gallant members of the unit, as well as experts from the Coleshill Auxiliaries Research Team – Coleshill near Swindon was the headquarters for



PAYING TRIBUTE: Valerie Pitt-Rivers, Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, unveils the memorial for Langton Matravers Auxiliary Unit in Langton Matravers

Picture: Jon Beal

were so secret that even their families didn't know about them. This could make their day-to-day life very difficult, especially for their children. My brother and I had a hard time at school because other children thought my father wasn't doing his bit for the war effort."

● Full story: Page 7

Here for the beer

TO quote from SAGA magazine is to admit to having reached old age.

But we oldies are a lively bunch, and I was delighted to read in that admirable publication this month an article that began, "As I relaxed outside the Square and Compass pub near Swanage, drinking in the beauty of Dorset's Jurassic coast." It went on to say, "My head was turning by a stunning blonde", and this turned out to be about a "golden ale" produced from the town of Whimple, near Exeter.

Any publicity is good publicity, they say. And if they come to this part of the world to taste the beer they will stay to admire its other attractions. In fact they may venture further on and discover the taste of "Sharp's Cornish Coaster" – and come to the West Country (and Purbeck) more often.

Remembering our Reg

I MUST pay tribute to a popular figure in Swanage's business and trade circles – Reg Rowley, of Rowleys the jewellers in Institute Road.

He was a keen and dedicated member of the Round Table, and was a valuable asset in their fundraising.

Reg had a dry sense of humour and a fund of anecdotes, though he gave the impression of being quiet and self-

effacing. He served in the Royal Mechanical and Electrical Engineers in the years before he came to Swanage – a far cry from his childhood home of Birmingham.

He was a family man first and foremost, but the service he gave to the community through Round Table and 41 Club (ex-fablers) was his way of thanking Swanage for what it meant to him.

Recognition at last for covert WWII fighters

A MEMORIAL stone honouring members of a covert British World War Two army has been unveiled near Swanage.

The Langton Matravers Auxiliary Unit was one of many secret squads trained to cause maximum disruption in the event of German land forces occupying Britain.

Fearing imminent invasion after the 1940 Dunkirk evacuation, wartime leader Winston Churchill ordered the formation of the secret units, sometimes referred to as part of the British Resistance Organisation.

A campaign to recognise these men – who were forbidden from discussing their guerrilla warfare training with anyone at the time – has been spearheaded by Langton Matravers Parish Council

By Jim Durkin

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chairman Peter White.

Peter's dad, Fred White, was a Sergeant in the Langton Auxiliaries.

Peter said: "The auxiliaries' activities were so secret that often even their families didn't know about them. This could make it very difficult, especially for their children.

"My brother and I had a hard time at school because other children thought my father wasn't doing his bit for the war effort."

This secret army operated from hidden underground bunkers equipped with food, supplies, explosives, guns and other weapons.

The Langton bunker was hidden in woodland between Langton and Harman's Cross.

Such was the secret nature of their work, many members kept silent about their involvement for decades afterwards.

Another Langton man, Marty Dallenager, only recently discovered his dad, who died six months ago, had served with the Creech Barrow Auxiliary Unit.

He said: "I didn't believe it at first, then I found an auxilier's badge pinned to the underside of the collar of my father's favourite sports jacket.

"I don't think anyone in the family knew about his involvement."

The memorial, opposite St George's Church, was unveiled by Lord Lieutenant of Dorset Mrs Anthony Pitt-Rivers.



SECRET WORK: An underground bunker, above, and the hidden entrance, below; left, Peter White's father Fred White



Fury at fly tipping

ANGRY walkers have slammed those responsible for illegally dumping household waste at a woodland beauty spot.

Ramblers were shocked to come across a "disgusting" pile of rubbish strewn across a popular area of Wareham Forest.

Purbeck District Council officers, who have already launched an investigation, have now pledged to track the fly-tippers down and bring them before the courts.

The rubbish was discovered last week at the Forestry Commission's Lawson Clump car park, off the B3075 Morden Road. Amber Haines, who was

walking her dog, Blue, with young son Calum, said: "It is quite extensive. There appears to be a whole bedsit with a sofa, kitchen stuff, clothes and personal information.

"We walk here every day and this is the first time we've seen fly tipping in the area. Given that you've got a tip just down the road, this is a little bit cheeky. Actually, it is disgusting because this place is so beautiful."

Council officers have inspected the site and are liaising with the Forestry Commission, who are making arrangements to have it removed. Evidence is being collected and the matter investigated.

SWANAGE HOSPITAL AUTUMN FAYRE 2012

INVITATION

"Roll up, Roll up"

Our Autumn Fayre will take place at the HOSPITAL

On 3rd. NOVEMBER, 10.00 AM TO 12 noon.

Come for an update, join the friends and HELP SAVE THE HOSPITAL

Find CAKES and home made produce, branded Christmas Cards, crafts, raffle and tombola, books and something for the children

ALL welcome



NEWS IN BRIEF

Deadline for tax feedback

PURBECK: The deadline for feedback on proposed council tax benefit changes is November 5.

From April 2013, council tax support will be administered by Purbeck District Council, with government giving ten per cent less than current funding.

For details visit dorsetforyou.com/counciltaxsupport

Mail office to get windows

SWANAGE: Work should be carried out soon to replace the windows at the Royal Mail delivery office on Kings Road East.

An application has been lodged to replace the existing steel framed glazed windows with Purbeck District Council.

Charity coffee morning is on

WAREHAM: A Save the Children coffee morning takes place in the town hall on Saturday from 10am to midday.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION Swanage Branch A.G.M

THURSDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2012 at 7.00 for 7.30pm

All members are invited to attend

2012 - 2013 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE (£20)

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