

47 ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

Committee

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DESPATCH 31 January 2015

COMMENT

As long as I can remember, and I go back a long way, the annual subscription has been ten pounds so I guess it was inevitable that it should rise some time soon. That time has come. At the recent AGM it was decided that from 2015, to keep us solvent, it should increase to fifteen pounds per annum. It is hoped that it will still seem a very reasonable amount to belong to a unique organisation.

In 2014 succeeding seventieth anniversaries of momentous events were marked. In 2015 the sacrifice and achievements of 47 RM Commando will be just as great and the Association hopes that many members will be able to commemorate them, as before, with comradeship and good cheer.

Lannah

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear 47 Veterans, Friends and Families,

I hope it was a happy Christmas for you and your family.

Our 47 Association has had an amazing year. The anniversaries of 2014 saw the men of 47 RM Commando remembered for their sacrifice and bravery in France, the Netherlands and the UK. Our Veterans who travelled to these events were wined, dined and applauded at every turn. They shook the hands of hundreds of people. We made contact with "lost" veterans, John Archbold, Mark Packer and Charlie Wheeler. We paraded the standard and some of us met Prince Charles. The Government of France decided to award the country's highest honour - the Legion D'Honneur - to all D Day veterans. (If you are reading this and have not applied, please contact the secretary as soon as possible.) Most importantly of all, we remembered the 47 dead in the countries where they fell and were buried 70 years ago.

We had a full coach in France and the Netherlands. We held two socials in London where the singing and dancing of members was on display - some of it quite bad, some of it quite good! John Forfar's reprinted book has nearly sold 500 copies - many posted by veteran Ken Parker. Marc de Bolster's book was published in December and our membership grew to more than 130.



Two great friends to the Association marked major milestones - Major Bob Perry RM returned from foreign postings and Major Mark Bentinck retired as RM Corps Historian. Dan Holborough, grandson of Albert Rutherford ran up the Rock of Gibraltar to raise funds for the Royal Marines. You can still donate if you are inspired by his actions! At every turn the tone was set for us by Chuck Harris, President, who insists on solemn memorials when the time is right and social and friendly meetings at every other turn.

On behalf of all readers can I say a massive thank you to the amazing committee, especially Ingrid and Geof. Our standard bearers were on full duty making us all feel proud. - Thanks to Les Pike who has stepped down and to Lou Sartorel who has stepped up. John Wasley has travelled with us as Padre bringing bright and poignant new ways of commemoration. A final word for our friend Lannah who is publishing this Despatch having lost her dear husband of 50 years, Ted Battley. Ted did so much to build the modern Association, including designing the standard and the tie. I shall remember him for his kindness to all, his heartfelt tribute to John Forfar earlier this year in a day rounded off despite his war wounds by doing the conga. RIP Ted.

Best wishes to you, and apologies if I've left you out of this letter, there are more reports to follow in this edition.

Patrick O'Connell
Chairman
Son of Capt Guy O'Connell, HW Troop

Commemorations at Fécamp

Remembering the Liberation by 47 RM Cdo 2nd September 1944

Fécamp town were holding a 70th Anniversary Commemoration on the 2nd Sept 2014 and asked the Commando Veterans Association who asked Lannah if any 47 RM Cdo veterans would be in the area that day.

After a rapid ring round to the veterans, Ken Parker together with Lou carrying the Standard, Geof driver and Jill, Ken's "carer", were available to go. The town arranged the hotel plus an evening meal in a local restaurant. At the last minute this was all confirmed and we set off via Ouistram and the euro route over the Pont de Normandie to find our hotel was overlooking the marina to the cliffs. Here we were met by our contact and given a full programme including the booked restaurants.



Lou, Jill, Ken & Geof with the Deputy Mayor

The 2nd Sept was a very full day starting at 1000 with a private tour of the Benedictine Museum, Distillery and "tasting" area where we tried 3 types. Each received a small bottle gift then via the shop we stocked up for Christmas. In a private room we saw an original document dated 1001 about the liqueur, one with "Will the Conqueror" on it and an invoice to the German Occupation HQ for 600 bottles of Benedictine – yes they paid! An amazing place and a great Reception. After lunch on the sea front we went to the Heritage Centre where Ken led the way over a red carpet in his first "starring role" to

be met by the Archivist, Dept Manageress, TV and press.

Here we saw how local and “brought in” French working for the Todt Organisation built the Atlantic wall, how the town was bombed by the Allies and the Port totally wrecked by the departing Germans. We also learnt about some of the town’s citizens who lost their lives. After a quick change we went to meet the Mayor, a really charming lady who kissed Ken on both cheeks, the Town Councillors, civil dignitaries, military and emergency services plus local Veteran and Civilian Association members. We presented a 47 plaque for the town and a table flag to the Mayor. More TV and press for Ken before we went to the main cemetery where a crowd waited, among them member Roger Fidelin and his daughter. Lou was placed at the head of the Standard Bearers and with the Town Band playing we went to pay our respects at the main memorial followed by one to those killed when deported or in concentration camps and then the Belgian military memorial. In the British area Ken laid our wreath at the town’s plaque remembering Maj Walton MC RM, Jill laid a poppy posy at his gravestone and Geof at the stone of an ‘Unknown Marine’. Back to the Town Hall for a photo call before we again followed the band, Lou and our Standard leading the rest, to the town’s flagpole. Here the Tricolour was raised and the National Anthem played. After that the band led the way to the Town War Memorial. Among others, Ken laid the 47 RM Cdo wreath remembering the French losses. We then marched back to the Town Hall with a mid-route stop for WW2 tunes. Lou’s drill was immaculate as he led the parade behind the band.

The Mayor made a moving speech thanking and remembering 47 RM Cdo and the occupation. Ken was then presented with the Town Medal, photographed by TV, the press and all who could get near before moving into the building to sign the Visitors Book. That same book was signed by Col Philips in 1944 and by General de Gaulle so another real honour for Ken. At 2130 after more TV and press interviews, the Deputy Mayor, a former helicopter pilot, took us for a meal – yes, a long but very moving day.

Ken was the star. He said he was privileged and honoured to be there, humbled by the reception, accepted all and did all on behalf of the other Veterans and the Association. He wouldn’t have missed it for the world and was overwhelmed by how the whole day went. We in his shadow all felt exactly the same and were just so glad we could be there, regretting that no other Veterans could make it. Ken’s presence totally made it for the Town and they just couldn’t do enough for him/us. There was a huge graphic outside the Town Hall, flags and plaques on all the main buildings plus a very warm and genuinely thankful welcome from all we met.

The spare day we used to revisit the town and surrounding area before heading into town via the route 47 RM Cdo followed in and out. Needless to say little looked as it did in ’44 although Ken did recognise the Abbey Church and Main Memorial because then most was damaged whilst now it’s all bright and rebuilt.

On our last morning the Mayor came to the hotel to say goodbye before we returned home via Le Havre after an amazing trip we’ll all remember forever.

Geof Haywood

A variation of this account appeared in the Nov/Dec 2014 issue of The Globe & Laurel plus a photo (see back page) in the “Where Do You Read Yours?” feature.

Fécamp Extras

The Commonwealth War Grave stones were all freshly cleaned and the grass perfect – memorable!

This is told with Ken’s permission and we did say we wouldn’t let him forget it: When a naval officer laid his cap on the table while signing the Visitors Book – Ken, being used to seeing a collection at such events and being a generous man, promptly put a €20 note in the cap much to the surprise of all! Geof hurriedly told Ken good idea but no and he quickly retrieved the note. He explained to the Mayor why he’d done it and all collapsed in laughter!

Union Jack flying over not next to the Tricolour at the Benedictine museum – oops!

Lots and lots of Ladies were kissed!

Drinks in the hotel required a mortgage to cover.

Ken is currently featured on Facebook, newspapers and we hope to get photos or the TV DVD.

Lou is looking to take Cadets next year. No hint of free accommodation but they did offer a Camp site.

THE STANDARD

In military organizations, the practice of carrying **colours**, **standards** or **guidons**, both to act as a rallying point for troops and to mark the location of the commander, is thought to have originated in [Ancient Egypt](#) some 5,000 years ago. The [Roman Empire](#) also made battle standards a part of their vast armies. It was formalized in the armies of [Europe](#) in the [High Middle Ages](#), with standards being emblazoned with the commander's [coat of arms](#).

Today the carrying of colours or standards has changed from those bygone days.

We, in the association, have a standard that was designed by the late Ted Battley. He was a Royal Marine who had served in 47 Royal Marines Commando. It has been paraded over many years at Port en Bessin, Westkapelle and various other places with honour and pride. Not as a rallying point, but as symbol to those around that they are in the presence of men, past and present, who bravely served their country in the name of freedom.

Les Pike, a former Royal Marine (Les joined the Royal Marines in 1952, the year that I was born!), had the privilege of bearing the standard at memorial parades and funerals on behalf of the Association. He took over from Peter Spear (son of CSM Spear) and prior to that Cpl Gordon (Tim) Tye. Les undertook his duties with pride and enthusiasm but finally called it a

day and decided to retire as 47 Royal Marine Commando Association standard bearer after the 70th Anniversary of the liberation of Port en Bessin.

His retirement left the committee with a challenge.

Who do we get as a replacement? None of the remaining veterans could fulfil the role; other members of the Association could not take up the duties for varying reasons. Having joined the Association some three years ago I volunteered to take on the role.

This offer was accepted and a



Les, right, handing over the standard

date for a formal handover ceremony was made. Another excuse for the Association members to meet up and have a few lattes!

The date of Sunday 28th September was decided upon and the venue was to be the Union Jack Club in London. The Chairman, with the help of the committee decided that we should all have lunch afterwards. After the lunch the Red Hot Ukulele Duo would then entertain us. What a treat that was!!

The ceremony was conducted within the main lobby of the UJC. Les and I donned our best bib and tucker and paraded the standard. Our President, Chuck Harris, made a speech. Thankfully a speech of only a few words as the food was getting cold. Les marched on the standard and presented it to me and I took on the role as the new standard bearer.

My first official commitment was the 70th Commemoration of the landings at Walcheren. I

look forward to being the custodian and parading the standard at future events. I will do my best to continue to uphold the values that it represents.

Lou Sartorel

Lou served in 41 & 45 Cdo, also the Cdo Logistics Regt & aboard HMS Bacchante & HMS Intrepid, leaving the Corps in 1980.

WALCHEREN 2014

47 RMCA in Walcheren

Commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Liberation

In the late afternoon of Friday 31st October the gang arrived in Middelburg in time for a well-deserved drink, rest and dinner and probably another drink. There were some welcome new faces including two veterans and their families, John Archbold and Mark Packer MM. Chuck Harris, Harry Prescott and Norman Rose were the other 47 vets with Reg Stevens, a Royal Artillery veteran. Several of our regular veterans were unable to attend. We missed Pat Hagan, Aubrey James, Ken Parker, Ken Porter and Bob Pullin and, of course, Ted and Lannah Battley as Ted passed away on 26th October, losing his last battle, this time against pneumonia.

However, we had our new padre, John Wasley, present and also Major Bob Perry RM back after extended overseas service. Being the 70th anniversary of the liberation our numbers swelled to around fifty this year.

On 1st November we drove to Westkapelle with, first, a short stop at the Polderhuis Museum. As there were so many people, the official ceremony took place at Erica Beach. Another difference this year was that it was actually 19 degrees with the sun shining. As the rain wasn't

gushing down and there was no wind blowing us off the dike it was a very pleasant ceremony with 47, Norwegian, Dutch and Belgian veterans. Two re-enactment landing craft came ashore with "Germans" firing at it. Those on board, Commandos of the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps (RNLMC), fired back, fortunately all with blanks. Wreaths were



At Dishoek

laid by Mark Packer on behalf of 47 Commando, Tom Busby on behalf of 48 Commando and by Lt Col Jerry Slack, the RM/RNLMC Exchange Officer. Our 2 RM Buglers, Dave Nevatte and Ben Streeter sounded the Last Post and Lou Sartorel, now in his official capacity, carried the standard.

After Erica we drove to the lighthouse for the ceremony remembering the civilian casualties with a further wreath-laying and the local band playing.

The Polderhuis Museum made it another very special and well run day. During lunch Clare Hunt, Arthur Thompson's daughter, donated her father's 'liberated' German camera to the Museum.

After lunch we went to Middelburg for a ceremony at the Damplein, the square where the Germans surrendered 70 years ago. As on the 65th anniversary we marched through the city centre to the town hall where the Mayor made a speech and many historical vehicles arrived at the packed main square. Due to our schedule most of us were unable to attend the reception in

the town hall.

On 2nd November we began with a visit to the Dishoek tourist church. Mr Ton van Nimwegen was already there waiting for us. After the ceremony at the 47 plaque we were invited inside for some coffee, 'bolussen' (cinnamon buns, a local delicacy) and a chat. They made us feel very welcome and the vicar said a prayer. Some of the locals then came with us to the German bunker W11 where another warm welcome was given by John and Suzan Daane. Our Belgian friends, Tina and Roger, joined us and many of the group went on a battlefield tour with John who has successfully dug out more bunkers so there was lots for everyone to see.

In the afternoon a concert in St. Jacobs Church in Vlissingen (Flushing) was on our program with a variety of music and songs and ending with a pipe and drum band.

On Monday morning we went to the British Military Cemetery at Bergen op Zoom. The official ceremony took place a week earlier (Bergen op Zoom was liberated on 25th October 1944). We had our own ceremony with the buglers, standard and John Archbold laid the wreath.

Veterans Harry Prescott and Chuck Harris, our President, with Dave, the bugler, and Lou with the standard, then drove by car to the civilian cemetery at Sprang Capelle where Lt Adam's grave lies.

The coach took the rest of us to Vlissingen. At the Commandoweg the memorials for No.4 Commando and the Lowland Division have been moved to the sea side of the dike and a new memorial has been added for the Frenchmen who fought. When we got there the official ceremony was still going on and we waited for ten minutes before going over the dike to look at the new site and lay a wreath and also enjoy some real Walcheren weather. Our bugler, Ben, was amazing. With the wind blowing like crazy, he did an excellent job. After our ceremony we asked the local organisers about the landing craft memorial and were told that it was being cleaned and would be put back as soon as possible.

Later that day we had our AGM in the hotel and in the evening our farewell dinner. Our Dutch member and supporter Leen van de Merbel joined us for dinner and also Michel Déserable and Alex Wilson who had travelled from France for the reunion.

Lou Sartorel set up a separate table with a plate and a glass for absent friends and Marc de Bolster placed photos there of veterans who had passed away over the last ten years or so.

It was a good evening with speeches, thank-yous and plenty of laughter.

You probably left the next morning at about ten for the trip back to the UK.

Luckily passports were not a big problem.

It was the end of another memorable and excellent trip.

Mariel van Mierlo

A slightly shorter version of this report is due to appear in the Jan/Feb 2015 issue of The Globe & Laurel together with the photo.

WALCHEREN Extras

Arthur's Camera The late Arthur Thompson's famous German camera is back in Walcheren on display in the Polderhuis Museum, Westkapelle, thanks to his daughter, Clare.

It also features in the BBC online news at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-30613338> Many thanks to Ken Cowdery for pointing this out and also to Brian Eves who let him know. I believe the article arrived there through the influence of our Chairman.



Marc de Bolster was talking to a Norwegian journalist at Erica who told him that the Norwegian veteran was Kaare Robertsen. He was 92 years old and fought with No 5 Troop (Norwegian Troop 10 Inter Allied Commando). As far as she knew he was the last living veteran of this unit.

IN MEMORIAM

We have learned of the death of the following veterans and supporters and offer sincere condolences to family and friends:

Clifford Kingstone Dip.Arch.R.I.B.A. January 2013 Redcar.

Clifford worked on the design and structuring of the Memorial and Memorial Gardens on the Western headland at Port en Bessin. He gave his time and his professional expertise freely over a long period as the plans progressed, liaising with Malcolm Ross, our generous sponsor, and the Mayor and Council at the Port.

In recognition of their outstanding contribution to the memory of 47 RM Commando, the Commandant General Royal Marines awarded his Commendation to both Clifford and Malcolm. The awards were presented in September 2007 at an informal black-tie dinner in the Officers' Mess at Edinburgh Castle by the then Brigadier Andy Salmon OBE ADC Commandant CTCRM with Professor John Forfar MC and Major Bob Perry RM among those present.

Clifford will always be remembered with great affection as a generous friend and supporter of the Association.

Edward Lawrence Battley 26th October 2014, Carmarthen, aged 91. (CH/X103811)

Ted volunteered underage for the RN early in 1941 but was deflected to the 10th Battalion RM and eventually became a member of B Troop, 47 Cdo where he acquired the nickname Ben.



Wounded on 7th June 1944 in Port en Bessin, he rejoined the unit in August in time for the liberation of Fécamp. On 1st November, he was badly wounded when his landing craft was hit at Walcheren. Lt Lloyd and Cpl Albert Rutherford managed to "float" him ashore and he eventually spent 18 months in various hospitals and many more months still on crutches. He suffered the nightmares and traumas of a serious wounding but, despite his shattered leg, was still a physically strong and fit young man, known to dance on his crutches on occasion or even jump over objects like a pole-vaulter.

Being disabled, finding work was difficult but Ted eventually became a night telephonist in central London. As a schoolboy in East London he'd shown great talent as an artist and had work exhibited at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. He began to use his artistic skills again to paint scenery for the GPO drama group. He also began to act, taking major parts and winning many awards at Drama Festivals. He could also belt out music hall songs on stage with the best of them. He was offered a job as scenic artist at a repertory theatre and there he designed and painted the scenery, played small parts and met his future wife who was an actress and stage manager with the company.

Later he became a printer and he and Lannah moved from London to Yardley Gobion in Northamptonshire where their daughter Nicola was brought up. Over twenty years ago, they moved to Wales where he founded the Emlyn Art Society which met regularly in his studio converted from a barn at the back of the house. The Society is still going strong.

Ted hadn't thought much about his war service until after he retired. He went back to Normandy in the mid-1980s and eventually became an active member of 47 RM Commando Association. Even there he was able to use his artistic abilities, designing the Association tie

and also the forty-seven standard.

Quietly spoken and humorous, Ted was a modest man despite his considerable talents. Much missed.

A variation on this obituary with the photo will appear in the Jan/Feb issue of The Globe & Laurel

Aubrey Lancelot James 8th December 2014, Ipswich, aged 90.

Aubrey trained as a signaller with the Royal Marines and served with various commando groups including 47 RM Commando. At Walcheren he landed at Flushing attached to 4 Commando. He was then involved in various raids on the surrounding islands where, as signalman, he would wait for hours on the beach for the raiding parties to return. After Holland he went to the Far East, some of the trip being extremely rough. As a good sailor, Aubrey was one of the few who enjoyed the bad weather in that he was always the first in the queue for food.

After the war, to the disappointment of parents and teachers, he turned down a place at Aberdeen University to study forestry. It seems that after serving, he couldn't face being a full time student. However, he did undertake forestry training, becoming a Forester, Head Forester and ultimately a Chief Forester. After retiring from the Forestry Commission he became a lecturer at Otley Agricultural College on arboriculture where he was highly regarded and also wrote one of the first training manuals for chain saws.

Over the years Aubrey was able to take part in various Association events. A few weeks before he died he wrote to Ingrid, our Secretary, and the letter includes the following: "My thoughts throughout this week have been with my ex-comrades and there have been many tearful moments associated with flashbacks to those terrible days in 1944. My son Neil and the two grandchildren who came with you all seem to have enjoyed the trip and talk at the moment of going back – a fact which I find very comforting as I have never talked much to any of them about these traumatic times – I do so hope that some of them, at least, will maintain the contact." He then sends warm wishes to Patrick and all the members and especially the surviving veterans: "Tell them all that it has been a privilege to have known them and to have served with them. A finer body I could never have wished to meet. As you know, I am by nature a rather quiet person but as I am passing to pastures green I felt that I should express my feelings and appreciation in this way."

There will be a memorial service for Aubrey at 2 pm on 26th March at St Mary the Virgin Church, Church Road, Otley, Suffolk IP6 9NP and afterwards at Otley Hall. All welcome. It might be an idea to let Ingrid know if you are going.

IN THE PRESS

Jenny Fischer, daughter of the late Peter Ford (B Troop), had an article in her local MAGAZINE CHORLEYWOOD in July about the family's trip to Normandy with 47 for the 70th anniversary of D-Day. She included some excellent photos taken in Port en Bessin and also one of Peter, with Green Beret and medals and one of him as a young Royal Marine.

Lou Sartorel had an excellent article in the Sep/Oct 2014 *Globe & Laurel* about the Cadets joining 47 RM Cdo in Port en Bessin for the 70th anniversary of D-Day together with a good photo. He mentions them taking part in the commemorations, how they assisted the veterans and their other activities. Lou also says that they learned and gained a great deal as well as enjoying themselves. Certainly we, and especially our veterans, appreciated their enthusiasm and enjoyed talking to them.

Dispatches, the Commando Veterans Association newsletter, included an account of 47 in Normandy for the D-Day 70th in their Autumn 2014 issue. This was a shortened version of the report in the July *Despatch* and *The Globe & Laurel*.

FUNDRAISING FOR 47

The Association is all about supporting our veterans and their families, honouring and remembering their fallen comrades and the 47 story. But, we also aim to support the welfare of our veterans. In the past we have received generous support from Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund but, as ever, our veterans and the Association would prefer to stand on their own two feet. If you have any ideas for fundraising activities or would be interested in participating in some fundraising activities then please contact Ken Cowdery (ken.cowdery@tiscali.co.uk or 07710 724637).

KAPELSCHE VEER

The local people will, as usual, hold a commemoration at Kapelsche Veer on 31st January 2015, the 70th anniversary. Unfortunately, the planned new monument won't be ready. They received the necessary text from 47 RM Cdo and the 1st Polish Armoured Division but are still waiting to receive the same information from the two Canadian regiments. The Burgomaster of Waalwijk will have another meeting this month when they hope that everything may be resolved. When they have a date for the unveiling of the new monument, they will let us know.

NEWS

Michel Laulier emailed to say how happy he was that 47 veterans will be awarded the Legion d'Honneur and gave some further information. It is the highest award in France and was created by Napoleon I (he is a little apologetic at mentioning this name but we really don't mind!) for people, both civil and military, who have done something of value for France. Next in importance comes the Medaille Militaire for soldiers and non-commissioned officers which was awarded to both his grandfathers. After that comes l'Ordre National du Mérite for civilian and military services instituted by General de Gaulle in 1963 which I believe has been awarded to Michel.

Juergen Baas Juergen, our member in Germany, sent Christmas greetings via Geof to all members.

££ MONEY MATTERS ££

IF you haven't paid your SUBSCRIPTIONS recently PLEASE pay now together with your 2015 sub. The new subscription of £15 per annum is still not excessive and well worthwhile. It is also very unfair that those who do pay should foot the bill for those who don't.

AND MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO PAY REGULARLY

Please renew now for 2015 sending your cheque, made payable to "47 RM Commando Association", to our Treasurer:

Mrs G Davison, 91 Catherine Street, Rochester, Kent ME1 2HL
Veterans have free membership

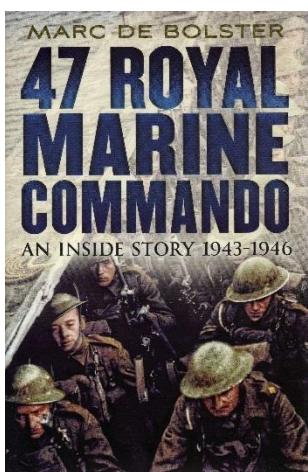
BOOKS

Paul Winter Paul has been in touch with us over a considerable time. His book **D-Day Documents** was published in July by Bloomsbury in partnership with the National Archives. A collection of previously unpublished documents, it includes intelligence reports, RAF Photographic Reconnaissance prints, the ship's log of HMS Warspite and a host of other official documents concerning Operations Neptune and Overlord. The cover price is £40 with an offer price of £32 on publication which is probably no longer in place. Amazon offer it at full price but there are several used copies on offer there at about £20 including postage.

Andy Holborn who has been in contact with many veterans from a variety of units including 47 RM Cdo, now expects **D-Day Landing on Gold Beach, 6th June 1944** to be published later this year, also from Bloomsbury.

REVIEW

Marc de Bolster *47 Royal Marine Commando: an inside story 1943-1946* Fonthill Media, 2014. £20 with free postage via Amazon.



This is an incredible addition to the 47 RM Commando story. It's all there in their own words from both men and officers. There's a wonderful array of photographs, including many personal photos of veterans, and reproductions of maps actually used during the landings plus many useful listings. But the main text is the unrolling of events as they happened from the Commando's inception and training to its disbandment and all from the viewpoint of those who took part, straight from the horse's mouth. If you want to know how it felt to land on D-Day in Normandy followed by Walcheren and the slog through war-torn Europe this will help. You could be there. There are a few places giving the effect of misprints where possibly hand-written accounts have created difficulties in transcription. If there's a second edition it would be very good to iron these out. Also I would have liked an index but, on the other hand, there is a

comprehensive contents page and everything runs in chronological order. There's also a list of abbreviations, invaluable if, like me, you need help sorting out your FOOs from your FOPs. Overall the book is a huge achievement, very impressive and highly recommended. LB

THE ANNUAL YOMP

All are invited again to join our annual yomp (NB a 'slow motion' version) on 6th June. We will be walking the 12m from Asnelles to Port En Bessin - following the footsteps of 47 on D-Day. It's a great way to learn more about their story but also to enjoy the beautiful Normandy countryside.

If anyone wants to find out more please contact Ken Cowdery (ken.cowdery@tiscali.co.uk or 07710 724637). Details about the itinerary will be uploaded onto the website nearer the time.

And see the following:

NORMANDY 2015

This year's trip to Port en Bessin will be from 5th to 9th June. If you intend to travel please let the Secretary, Ingrid Fearne, know **as soon as possible**, sending a £25 per head deposit to:

Mrs I Fearne, 138 Beauchamp Road, Upper Norwood, London SE19 3DB
Please make cheques payable to '47 RM Commando Association'.

The coach will pick up (very early) at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth, on the 5th. If you stay there you need, of course, to book overnight on the 4th. It will also pick up at the ferry terminal. If you plan to stay at the **Royal Maritime Club** it is worth booking as soon as possible. (Advance Bookings: 0239 2837681). Say that you are with 47 Cdo (Association Membership No 4600) to obtain a slightly better tariff and order a packed lunch at the time of booking as we leave long before breakfast is served!

Due to the increasingly high cost of coach travel, people travelling out separately from the coach will need to make some contribution if they use it while in France.

If you have any queries, please ring Ingrid on:

0208 2390145 or email: ingrid.fearne@blueyonder.co.uk

47 RM Cdo Ties

The Secretary has acquired a new supply of 47 RM Commando ties. They are £12 each including post and packing. To order, cheques should be sent to Ingrid as above.

Geof's Amazing RM Shop

All the following are available:

"From Omaha to the Scheldt" John Forfar, new edition £20

"From Gold to Omaha" - £12 unsigned, £15 signed by Professor Forfar.

47 RM Cdo Plaques - £26

47 RM Cdo Baseball Caps - £8

"The Capture of Port en Bessin" Prints: Unsigned £20

Numbered & signed by artist David Rowlands £35

Large postcards - £2

Small postcards - £1

Table Flags - £8

Also available – RM Pin Badges - £5

All items plus postage from:

Geof Haywood, 10 Elizabeth Road, Wimborne. BH21 1AX

0044 (0)1202 888194 geofandjillh@btinternet.com

From the Editor

I'd like to thank all those who were able to make the long trek to west Wales for Ted's funeral. It made it a very special occasion to mark his passing. Also I must thank everyone who sent messages of sympathy. There was an overwhelming number and they were a great help at a difficult time. Donations in Ted's memory from family, friends, neighbours, Art Society members as well as 47 Association members amounted to £500 now forwarded to the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund. Many thanks to those who contributed.

Plans for my novel had to be put on hold but I hope it will see the light of day a little later in the year and I certainly hope before the next issue of *Despatch* in July.

Wishing a happy and successful 2015 to all

Lannah

47 RM COMMANDO WEBSITE

Thanks to Marc de Bolster for his time and expertise in administering and maintaining the website. These days it is a very important part of our communications. People from all over the world are able to find us and get in touch, join the Association if they so wish and get answers to all manner of queries. The website provides a huge amount of information on the history of

47 RM Commando and its personnel and also covers Association events. There is also an extensive photographic record and new items get added on a regular basis. Well worth revisiting if you haven't looked on there recently.

www.47commando.org.uk



In Middelburg

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