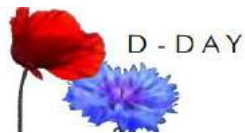


D-DAY QUORN - WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

The 6th June 2024 marks the 80th anniversary of D-Day, when Allied forces mounted the largest amphibious invasion, the world has ever witnessed. In 1944 Operation Overlord saw around 4,000 ships and landing craft set down about 132,500 troops on five Normandy beaches in an action that would bring about the liberation of north-west Europe from Nazi occupation. On the evening of the 5th June 1944 up to 1,500 aircraft with gliders flew 13,000 soldiers from the British and American paratroopers, air landing infantry and support units to Normandy. By the day's end, over one hundred and fifty thousand Allied troops had successfully stormed the now famous Gold, Juno, Sword, Utah, and Omaha beaches to achieve a toehold in France.

Quorn has particular connections with D-Day, the US 82nd Airborne's 505 Parachute Infantry Regiment, HMS Quorn, the ATS, nearby Beaumanor Hall and of course the many local people who also contributed.



The Quorn Local History Group instigated the collection of people's views of the events. Dennis Marchant worked to collate them as an appropriate tribute to those that served and to support the 80th D-Day Commemoration.

The stories or the ideas that follow were all submitted by the people who knew that the project was being undertaken either from social media or newspaper reports. I do hope you enjoy and appreciate what follows and hope that you agree that they are both varied and interesting tales. If, as there invariably will be, errors then they are either repeated from the submitted texts or are my fault. The text that follows have been collated from the submissions, most are in the public domain and acknowledgements are included below. Finally, thank you to all who have submitted items and to the QLHG committee who help make this possible with encouragement and the QLHG Project Fund which means that the booklet is free to all members and supporters.

Dennis Marchant.

January 2024

Acknowledgements:

The Royal British Legion in Quorn - Quorn RBL

Quorn Then and Now by Mike Speight

And Suddenly They Were Gone by Adam G.R. Berry

Put on Your Boots and Parachutes by Deryk Wills

82nd Airborne Veterans Associations

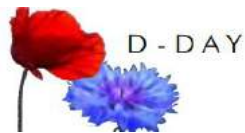
Sue Templeman and the Quorn Village Museum

East Midlands Oral History

The Beaumanor Staff Magazine (BSM)

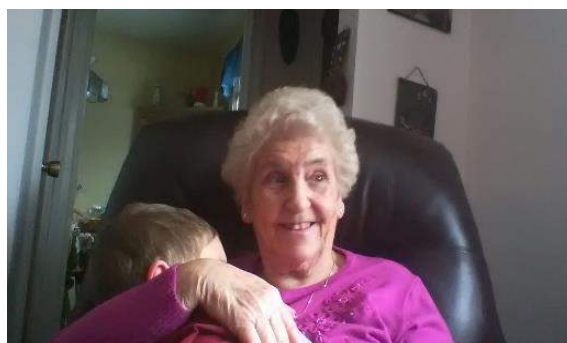
Quorn Parish Council





Mark Ladkin - Innisfil, Ontario, Canada:

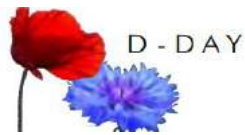
My mother Audrey James as a child would collect washing from the camp. Her mother would wash and iron and then my mother would return it to get paid and for her the highlight was the soldiers would give her candy. She returned a batch of washing in late June, and nobody was there to receive it, an officer came out and paid her, it was only later she realized the owners of the laundry were not coming back, they had dropped into Normandy and sadly many of them did not survive.



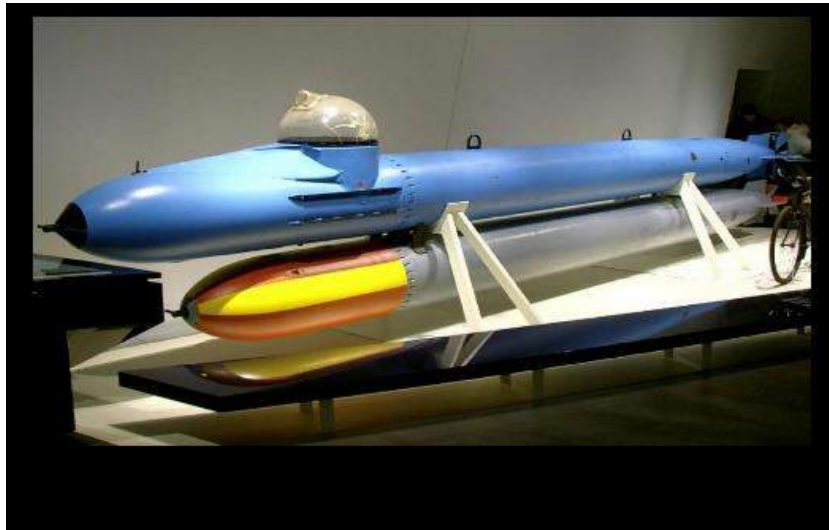
Audrey in 2023 with one of her great grandchildren

Ferdinand Hoffmann tells of his role as pilot of the Kriegsmarine Human Torpedo (Marder) that sank HMS Quorn on 3rd August 1941. He told his story to Alfons Steck in 2005:

In the evening our 'Marders' were tied into the water by pioneers and round about 10 p.m. we started our attack. We had been informed, where the allied ships should have been. I did not know anything about the attack of explosive boats after our attack in the same night. We had been told too, that the German Air force would fly an attack on the ships to help us to orientate ourselves. It had been expected that the ships would fire on the aircraft and that we in this way could find the ships. But there was nothing to be seen of German aircraft and there was nothing to be seen of firing ships, it was rather dark, you could see next to nothing. The sight out of the cupola of a human torpedo is extremely bad. At last however I found the warships. I saw a destroyer, fired my torpedo, and hit the destroyer. The time was about 3 a.m. I am sure, that the ship was a



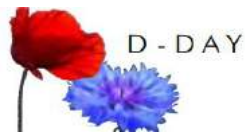
destroyer, because I had seen the high upstanding canon, and I am of the opinion, that the destroyer sank at once.



A Marder on display at the Bundeswehr Military History Museum

Private Charles E Johnson tells his son Mike of his time at Quorn Camp:

“Yea, our regiment was quarantined before the invasion and forced to stay in policed areas unable to come or go for security purposes. So I’d get thrown in the stockade on purpose, because we knew there was a hole in the stockade fence that we could sneak out through at night and go into town. When they discovered we were doing this, they fixed the hole. I didn’t know they had fixed the hole and got thrown in the stockade when the hole was no longer there. So my best friend and squad leader, ‘Tiny’ Howarth and my future wife, Joyce Pringle, got-together when I was in the stockade and toured all the pubs in Loughborough with a baby buggy which carried a large bottle in the seat. They would dispense a shot or two at each pub into the bottle. This continued until the bottle was full. Then they pushed the baby buggy with the full bottle to the stockade and threw the bottle over the fence so me and the boys could enjoy our stay in the stockade. Me, Joyce, and Tiny would sit at the fence and gad and laugh until daylight. Hell, we enjoyed ourselves as much as possible before we got the call to go. It could have been our last days alive together. Tiny’s and my wife’s escapade with the baby buggy, was the talk of the town the next day.”



“It was something being part of the Normandy Invasion. Everyone knew it was ‘big’ and history making. The fervour that led up to the invasion was memorable. It was hard not to catch the frenzy and you could tell everyone, up and down the ranks, were resolved - within themselves - to do their best...’cos they knew it was big. We all figured we weren’t coming home in one piece.”



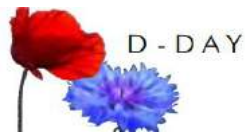
Private Charlie Johnson and Joyce Pringles Wedding reception at the Unicorn Pub Loughborough on 3rd of August 1944 – Charlie is far right lower row.

HMS Quorn Survivor, Christopher Yorston, an Able Seaman at the time, was in the gunnery tower when Quorn was hit on 3rd August 1944.

“Within seconds I was in the water, looking up at the ship split in half,” he said. “If I had been in a cruiser, where the gun turret is completely sealed, I’d have been a goner. I grabbed hold of the first thing in the water, a lump of wood, and a converted trawler picked me up. It’s the luck of the draw.”

Gordon Edgar Wagg of Quorn - killed in action:

Private Gordon Edgar Wagg was a Private in the 1st Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment when on 21st October 1944 aged twenty-seven, he was killed in action during the liberation of Belgium. The 1st Battalion had landed in Normandy on 3 July 1944, came under command of 147th Brigade of the 49th Division. After taking part in the fighting in the bridgehead, it advanced to the Seine and took part in the capture of Le Havre. From there it carried out some short, sharp engagements against the retreating enemy in Belgium and Holland. Gordon was the son of Walter and Hilda Wage and a husband of Ann of Quorn. He is



remembered on the Geel War Cemetery Memorial (III.D.15), the Quorn War Memorial and the St Bartholomews Church wooden triptych.

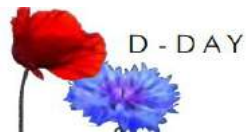


Gordon Edgar Wagg

The 82nd Airborne in Quorn - memories from Clifford Newton:

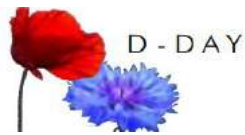
Born in Quorn my most treasured memory began in 1943 when I was 10 years old and ended 65 years later at the age of 75. My father was in the army throughout WW2 and my mother worked at Newbold & Burton boot and shoe factory in Sileby. The American 82nd Airborne Division, 505 Parachute Regt GI's were camped at the Farnham Family Estate in Wood Lane, Quorn. For us youngsters, with no realisation of war, it was an exciting time. Curiosity quickly drew us to the GI's camp, and it was not long before a number of village lads plus a couple of London evacuees (Tommy Sunderland & Vic Hood), found ourselves useful to the 'Yankie' troopers, running errands for them to the local shops after school, evenings, and weekends. Summertime daylight hours were extended by 2 hours during the war, so it was light up to almost 10pm. I was 'adopted' by Platoon Sgt. Louis Yarchak under canvas in bell tents which housed twelve troopers. Regular visits to the village included the King William (King Bill) Pub next to the Village Hall, Wakerley's Bakery, Harold Armston newsagent, Mr Ottey at the Post Office, and Mr Martin's fish & chip shop at the 'Cross'.

A crate of beer or £1's worth of chips would fill a big carton and heavy for a young'un to cope with even on a set of old pram wheels. Mind you, I never grumbled, my GI's friends were good to me, especially Sgt Yarchak (Mr Louis) who was a kind and generous man. My Granny also took in the Troops laundry



which was a very welcome form of extra income in those days. Frequent exercises by the paratroopers, with small boats on the River Soar near Freehold Street, caused a good deal of interest with parents and grandparents. One of the favourites was watching three or four GI's climbing beneath to wire up the old iron bridge near Meynell Road and 'blowing it up' with dummy explosives. One evening I saw a GI outside the White Horse pub at Quorn Cross light a cigar with a £1 note. As the months passed, I grew fond of my newfound friend and mentor Mr Louis who soon became something of a father figure.

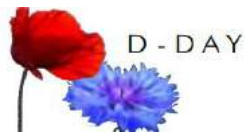
Then one morning in the spring of 1944 the 505 Parachute Regiment were gone as if by magic, and my friend with them. Years passed, and in 1954 at the age of 21, I too moved away and joined the army, serving with The Royal Leicester's in Germany, the Sudan and Cyprus. In 1956 I married my wife Georgina and raised a family. Even so, I never forgot my GI friend whose unusual name was fixed in my mind. Indeed, my memory of him grew stronger. Had he been injured, killed or did he make it back home? Later I understood that he might have taken part in the 1944 Dutch 'Market Garden' allied offensive, though after 60 years, any chance of my tracing him had faded to little more than wishful thinking. Then in 2003 an incredible coincidence - in a chance conversation with a member of the Quorn Royal British Legion I was advised of the UK Quorn/US Chapter organised by Mr Deryk Wills of Oadby, Leicester. To my amazement Mr Wills provided me with precise details of my wartime friends' full-service record. Staff Sergeant Louis Yarchak US 1st Company 505 Parachute Regiment, Service No: 33143760 joined the forces in 1942. He had four combat jumps in Sicily, Italy, Holland, and Normandy being awarded the Silver Star for Bravery. He returned home safely to Philadelphia in 1945 and joined the Police Force. Regrettably, the story turns sadly here. On the evening of 8th September 1953 Louis was called to attend a domestic brawl. Emerging from his police car the troublemaker came running out of the house and shot Louis dead. Though his life was taken no-one can take away my school-boy memory. Ironically, 55 years on from that fateful day there was a much happier sequel. Somehow an article had found its way to a Philadelphia USA newspaper. As a consequence I was traced to Lincolnshire where I now live, by a family member Mrs Agnes Yarchak (Louis' sister-in-law) now in her 90's, and living in Laporte, PA 18626, USA. An email friendship developed and 2008 on her first vacation to the UK, my wife and I took a flight



to Scotland to meet Agnes and her friend Peggy for a truly memorable occasion. In 2014 we're still in contact 70 years on.

Norbert Beech, 505PIR, H Company, 3rd Battalion, Headquarters Platoon dictated his remembrances to Paula DeForrest in January 2003:

"We spent Christmas 1943 in Northern Ireland. In early February 1944 we again trucked to Belfast, got on boats, and went to England. We were in a camp we called Tent City. The whole regiment was stationed in that area in Quorn, England. There were two larger towns nearby, Loughborough and Leicester. Our liberty was good. We could get a pass almost every night when we were not in field training. While there we got replacements from the States and made two practice jumps. One jump I remember where I landed on a down slope of a little ravine, landing heels first, which jarred me pretty good. But I was lucky, Sgt. Don Edwards of my platoon, landed on the upside of the ravine, ploughing into the embankment, bleeding his nose. One funny incident I recall, while on manoeuvres, we were supposed to have everything blacked out. Another soldier and I got under a raincoat to try to read a map with a flashlight. Apparently, we didn't get covered good enough because the company commander, Capt. DeLong came along telling us 'Get the dam light our or I'll stick it up your ass - cross ways!' We got a big laugh out of that. Toward the end of May 1944, things got real tense. We moved to the airport where they had set up cots and started briefing us on our landing in France. They had sand tables set up to represent the terrain where we were going to jump, but they apparently forgot to put in the hedgerows. While there, there was quite a lot of gambling going on. We were given French money and told to cut our hair short as we were going to be in combat for a long while. We were issued a full load of ammunition, two regular hand grenades, a plastic hand grenade and a land mine. I had all this plus my 300 radio which weighed 40 pounds. My lightest piece of equipment was my cricket, everyone was issued one. This was a child's toy used to identify friendly troops. The code was one click, answered by two clicks. Once I got all my equipment on it weighted over 100 pounds. On the 4th June 1944 we got already to go, getting into our equipment and the mission was called off. On 5th June 1944 at approximately 10pm we again got our equipment on and headed toward the plane (C-47). We were loaded down so heavy that we had to help each other

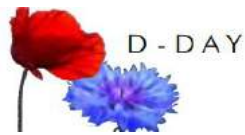


into the plane by pushing from behind. We taxied down the runway. It seemed like we bounced three times before we got off the runway. The plane was loaded down so heavily it had a hard time taking off. As we flew over the ocean, we could see all the ships down below. We flew low until we hit the mainland then we raised to our jump altitude. Soon after hitting the mainland, we drew a lot of anti-aircraft fire plus we hit a fog bank. We jumped at approximately 12:30 a.m. Numerous planes got lost and they scattered over a great area of the Normandy peninsula.”

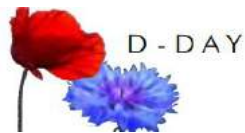


Frank Hearn from Barrow Road in Quorn was in the 64th Medium Regiment Royal Artillery during WW2. This regiment was particularly remarkable as it participated in virtually every campaign in the Mediterranean and Western theatres of war. Here he tells Sue Templeman from the Quorn Village Museum of his time during D-Day and the Normandy Landings:

By June 1944, the regiment was back up to strength, both in terms of men and equipment, and were ready to embark on their next major campaign. This was D Day and the Normandy landings, as part of Operation Overlord, which began the liberation of German occupied Europe. The 64th were vitally important as they were highly skilled and exceptionally experienced. Frank describes how



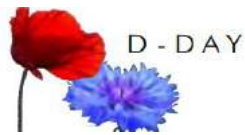
they loaded their massive trucks on to the LCTs (Landing Craft Tanks), to cross the channel. An LCT was like a steel narrow boat, just wide enough for two trucks. By the time the trucks were on, you were stuck in the cab as there was no room to open the doors. It was “not nice” going across the channel, there was enemy fire all around, but when they arrived at Gold Beach in Normandy, it was even worse. The LCTs went in as far as they could, but the trucks still had to drive off into four or five feet of water. Before they had loaded, Frank had been given a large lump of plasticine, with which he had to cover all the electrical parts in the engine, oil seals etc, to make it waterproof (but NOT the exhaust pipe!), and strips of colour had been put on the front of each wagon to denote which regiment they belonged to. Up until then Frank had never had a lot of time for the MPs (Military Police), but as they drove up the beach with gunfire whistling all around them, the MPs were acting as Beach Masters, and were waving each regiment in the right direction, despite being the perfect standing targets for snipers. As part of their training Frank and his fellow soldiers had been told that “if your mate either side falls down shot, you do NOT attempt to save him”. This was an order, with the idea being to get as many men onto the beaches and to their destination as possible. After landing at Gold Beach they pushed on through Normandy up the coast. Frank recalls that they went through the town of Bayeux, where in the Church Hall hidden behind sacking, they saw a reproduction of the famous Bayeux tapestry. They didn’t stay anywhere for long and slept where they could, sometimes in a trench with shots being fired over them and Lancasters swooping through at what seemed like head height! Frank said that it was amazing what you could sleep through. Normandy is an area famous for making Calvados, an apple liqueur, which, after many years in the army with three years in the desert, the men were happy to enjoy. Sadly, Frank remembers that one chap drank himself to death on it. Further research showed that he filled his drinking flask, but the spirit was so strong, that it dissolved the lining and he died from lead poisoning.



Frank Hearn

Norman Ackroyd HMS Quorn survivor provides an eyewitness account of the events of the night of 3rd August 1944:

"The ship had been part of the beach head defence force for some nights before, on the night of August 3rd we sailed as normal just before dusk and went to all night action stations (I was part of No 3 guns crew on the quarterdeck) again as normal, this time however we were accompanied by an American radar ship and we were informed over the Tanoy that at dawn we were going in close to Le Havre in order to bombard the e-boat pens. The American ship was to control the shelling. Just before midnight however there was a massive explosion amidships and I understand we had been hit in the boiler rooms, the ship broke in two, and sank in a few minutes. I personally was blown overboard by the blast and found myself in the water fully dressed. A large number of my shipmates must have gone down with the ship but there were quite a lot of us in the water. The American ship left the scene at full speed which caused a lot of resentment at the time, but it was explained to us later that if she had stayed, she would possibly have sustained the same fate as the QUORN. A lot of those with me in the water did not last the night but quietly slipped away, I was in the water for eight and a half hours before we were picked up by an armed trawler looking for us, by that time we were only a small band. We were informed after that the ship had been sunk by a German human torpedo on which the pilot sat on a type of torpedo which had an explosive torpedo slung underneath and that the German pilot had been picked up by another of our destroyers of the defence



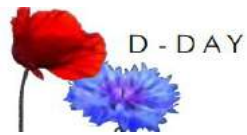
force. We were also told that we had run into a number of these torpedoes which were being carried into the beach head by the tide but as a result of the QUORN being sunk the alarm had been raised and the other torpedoes had been dealt with."

Mary Totman (nee Webster) grew up in Quorn in WW2, later moving to Canada. On 11th November 2020 Mary spoke at the remembrance ceremony at her retirement home in Canada about the impact that the war and the Americans had on Quorn. She has been kind enough to share these memories with Quorn Village Online Museum:

"I grew up in Quorn, a village of 3,000 people – and 13 pubs! We were spared the heavy bombing which took place in many communities during World War 2. Food, clothing, and petrol were rationed, and we all had gas masks; and evacuees also came to Quorn. Two incidents seemed to bring the war closer to us: one was the sound of the big anti-aircraft guns in Derby, about 20 miles away, as they defended the Rolls Royce factory there; and the other was the all-encompassing red sky when Coventry (30 miles away) was burning. But on 14th February 1944 something happened which had a significant impact on us all: 2,000 members of the US 82nd Airborne Parachute Infantry Regiment came and lived in tents in the grounds of the local manor house.

The effect on our small village was immediate. I was only 12 at the time, but I clearly remember that if we saw the soldiers on the street in their glamorous (to us) uniforms, we would shout "got any gum, chum" and they were always very generous! Families would invite a couple of soldiers for tea/supper, and one who visited us was thrilled to be able to play the piano – something he hadn't been able to do for quite a while. I also remember the bus which ran to the nearby town of Loughborough. It was so small that, when it was full inside, soldiers climbed onto the roof, or hung on the outside of the door and the rear of the bus – so keen were they to go to a proper town. No one was ever charged. And then – on 29th May there was silence in the village.

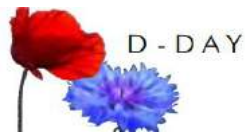
The soldiers had left overnight. My father said, "The invasion must be close", and of course it was. Only 1,400 soldiers returned, and on 15th September they all went to Holland to continue fighting there. In 1952 an avenue of trees was planted to commemorate the presence of the American troops and in 2010 a



metal arch was erected in tribute to their contribution to the war. When I visited Quorn about ten years ago, I saw both, and it was very poignant for me. I thought of those men with sadness and regret, but above all with overwhelming gratitude.”



Mary in 1947 at Rawlins Grammar School



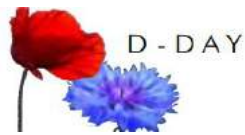
Michael Speight from Quorn has provided the following photographs:

Mike tells us that the ATS girls are photographed in the garden of 12, Loughborough Road with my father and my grandparents. The ARP wardens are photographed parading past what is today the White Horse patio area, the Home Guard, probably the area company are photographed on the cricket field:



By D-day, there were more than 1,200 ATS women operators and 300 male civilians working at Beaumanor, many of whom were billeted in Quorn.



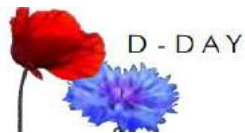


Air Raid Precautions (ARP) services included several specialist branches but the ARP wardens were the ones that ensured the blackout was observed, sounded air raid sirens, safely guided people into public air raid shelters, issued and checked gas masks,

evacuated areas around unexploded bombs, rescued people where possible from bomb damaged properties, located temporary accommodation for those who had been bombed out, and reported to their control centre about incidents, fires, etc.



Following D-Day and the success of Allied armies in France it became increasingly clear that the role of the Home Guard was over. They were stood down with a parade in London on 3 December 1944. The whole Home Guard was officially disbanded on 31 December 1945. Amongst other tasks, in Quorn they had guarded the railway, A6 road, explosives stores and Wrights Mill.



James Bilton was born in 1901 and lived in Quorn in a cottage (since demolished) next to what is now the Quorndon Fox. He was recorded in 1988 as part of the Leicestershire Oral History. This transcription is courtesy of East Midlands Oral History:

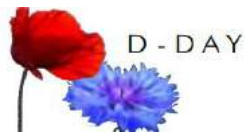
I had a friend, an American that helped me get fruit from the orchard, he was stationed in Quorn at Farnham's place. Mathew used to come up and help with the fruit in the orchard, he had a friend who was an ATS girl from Newcastle, she was the friend of our lives. They used to come to the house to pass the time away.

One night they came along, with two or three others and we were having a beano, the girl was at piano, not playing common music. She was a tip top musician. That type of person is refined, and we had a sing song. An American knocked at the door and said "I'm sorry I thought it was a pub!" Of course, you know the busy bodies in Quorn, the Vicar got to know about it, and he sent the Sargent of the ATS, who was billeted at the vicar's house down to interview us about the carryings on he heard about. She said, 'what is this all about.' Go back and tell whoever told you this to mind their own business and don't be so narrow minded, it's just a harmless sing song, and we thoroughly enjoyed it, all of us.

It was home from home for one or two of those ATS girls with nowhere to turn just stuck in the huts. There's no harm in inviting them in anytime and by a warm fireside. Their families thanked us for giving them a home from home, and the Americans as well and Mat.

At D-day they were fetched up so quick, I was out in Loughborough, he went hunting all over for me to say goodbye. Come Christmas time his fiancée, Elsie from Newcastle, she was worried. I said 'he ain 't got time to write now when they are busy hunting enemy out. No news is good news so to say.' When the Americans came on leave and told us he'd got killed by a simple throwing of the rifles out on manoeuvres one day. So, a chap tripped on one and it went off and he copped it, killed him after having been through air drops in Italy and D-day.

That year I had a Williams pear tree and it used to pear so heavily, that year though it was scarce be about only 4 or 5 pears on it. One, and it takes some believing when I weighted it was 2 pound in weight. A big pear! And I said we'll save this for Mat when he comes back on leave and the pear kept lovely. I got it

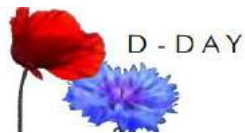


out and gave it to his fiancée and said, 'look I've saved it for Mat and it's a beautiful pear, yellow and ripe and 2 pound in weight.' That tree never bore no more fruit, funny ain't it!

Dennis Marchant tells us of his Grandfather Walter John Marchant who served in one of the WW2 secret resistance units known as the Auxiliary Units. As a result of the success of the D-day landings, they were disbanded in November 1944.

Burley is a village on the edge of the New Forest and was considered to be in the frontline for a German invasion. Walter was a professional soldier and had served as an artillery gunner in the Great War and had been injured. When the second world war came and because of his injuries he could not enlist so he joined the Local Defence Force (Home Guard). Churchill proposed that there should be a secret resistance network of highly trained volunteers prepared to be Britain's last-ditch line of defence. They were to operate in a network of cells from hidden underground bases around the UK. Walter was selected to join the Burley Patrol. Although the Burley members were older than the average Auxiliary Units, all of them were very experienced soldiers and had fought in WW1.

Shortly after the war, Dennis's dad, Brian was taken by his father Walter Marchant to see the underground Operational Base. It was hidden in woods just outside the village. He described a hidden hatch, with steps down to a fair-sized room with wooden bunks and a table. After the war all traces were removed and by 1971, when Brian returned to show Dennis the site, there was nothing left to find. Dennis says his dad Brian remembered once finding his father Walter's Thompson Sub Machine Gun hung behind the backdoor hidden under his father's coat. Dennis still has his Grandads Stand Down letters from November 1944.



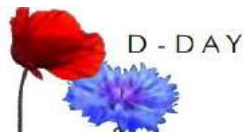
Walter Marchant in 1918 and 1929

Dianna Wallace (nee Baker) was a cook in the R.A.F she had been stationed at Biggin Hill before being promoted to Corporal and transferred to Lympe in Kent, where she was during D-day. She tells us:

We had the dreaded Doodle bugs, V2's – sleepless nights – censored letters – the everlasting black outs and someone shouting, 'Put that light out!' The D-day offensive with many pilots missing and always someone else to take their places. Many things happened which are best forgotten about – in between time we enjoyed our time off duty spells. We went to shows arranged by ENSA – to the town, which entailed a mile walk to the nearest bus stop – and to the dances. We made friends and lost them and prayed hard for the end of the war and a return to civilian life. One thing about being a cook – we were excused all parades and marching which suited me fine!

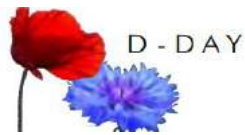


Diana Wallace



George Farnham lived at Quorn House and was recorded in 1986 as part of the Leicestershire Oral History project. This transcription is courtesy of East Midlands Oral History:

About a year before D-day, the stable block and part of the park was requisitioned and American paratroopers suddenly appeared, there was not very much 'by your leave' on this occasion. I think my mother was just told that they had arrived and that the stable block and so many acres in the parkland was now taken over by the Army and that was that. They, the GIs were a very attractive bunch certainly to the young ladies in the village and we got some of the problems that a lot of parts of England got about this time when there was a large influx of Americans. The GI's average pay, I gather was about the equivalent of a majors pay in the British Army so, you can see how easy it was to turn the heads of the local girls. I think there was about a thousand stationed here and they were paratroopers. I was at school most of this time and then when I left school, I immediately joined the Army so didn't see too much of them. One day they were all here and the next day they were all gone and that particular day that they went was of course D-day and they were dropped into France on the day of the Normandy invasion. They did a certain amount of training but certainly not jump training as far as I know. There was a journey back into time last year on the 40th anniversary of D-day and one or two Americans came back here to renew their acquaintance with Quorn. One or two married local girls, one of the local girls was a Barbara Spore. Bob Spore was a great character who lived in Quorn, and he was a horse coper and had stables just beyond Station Road. He used to hunt with the Quorn and his daughter also rode she married a GI and went to America and as far as I know she is still living over there. In fact, Bob Spore taught me to ride, and I did for a short time hunt with the Quorn Hounds. Although the hounds went on hunting during the war, it wasn't the sort of recognisable hunt that Prince Charles goes out with. It was on a very much reduced basis and most of the followers were either above military age or considerably below military age. The Master was a man called Cantrell-Hubberesty who I remember as a young boy standing in awe of. We had two Land Army girls here I think one of them was called Edith she was rather attractive, and I think she was in great demand with the Americans. After the Americans went the camp in the park became a prisoner of war camp.

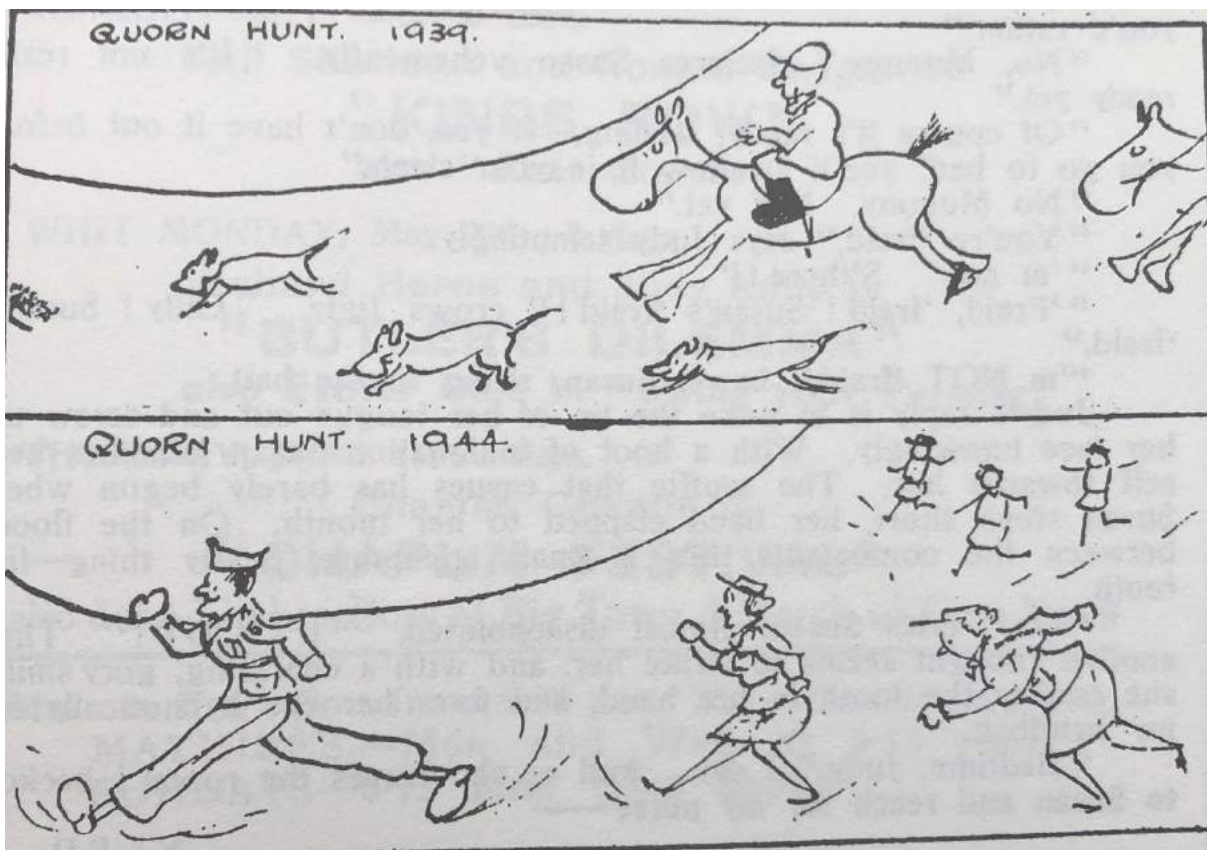


The Beaumanor Staff Magazine (BSM) was published for four years during the war time. It was for the Royal Signals, ATS and Intelligence Corps stationed there and was full of wit, humour and advise. Extracts below are from the magazines for the D-day period:

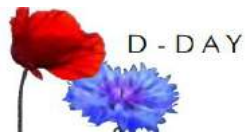
Fuehrer

Into the limelight Adolf trod,
An adulated demi-god,
But see him now, obscured in fog,
A poor deflated demagogue.

G.M.S



After our American friends of Hut 'C' had drawn lots for the task of polishing the floor, T/Sgt. Fred Allred elected to remove his pants for the job rather than spoil his immaculate crease. We wonder if the ATS girls will follow his example when it comes to their turn.

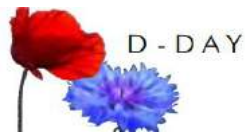


Beauty Hints – Dandruff, the bugbear of us ATS – is something that little can be done about, but some Borax dissolved in the rinsing water does improve the condition. Another little tip (particularly for red-heads) is to massage a little Dettol into the scalp – you’ll be surprised at the results.

**Leicester Evening Mail -Tuesday 3rd
August 1948,**

Goode – Silent thoughts of dear Stan
Chief E.R.A., Royal Navy. Lost at sea
on H.M.S. ‘Quorn’ Aug. 3rd, 1944 –
Loved and longed for always, Mam,
Dad and Margaret.

E.R.A.= Engine room artificer

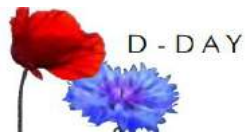


Beaumanor Hall was the site of a vital wartime intelligence service, namely the War Office “Y” (wireless) Group or W.O.Y.G. In the lead up to and during the D-Day invasions the role it played was vital to the allies success:

The top secret “Y” Group was part of M18 Wireless Intelligence and Beaumanor was a highly strategic “Intercept Station”, concerned with monitoring the enemy’s main channels of wireless traffic and communications. The “Y” Intercept Listening Service operated from 1941 to 1945 and its wartime activities were as top secret as those at the Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park. Many of the ATS girls were billeted in houses in Quorn including the Tower House (HQ), the Old Bulls Head (Mess), Soar House, The Hurst, Rose Cottage and even the vicarage didn’t escape having the Commanding Officer billeted with them.



ATS personnel based at Beaumanor Hall

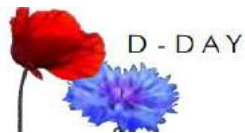


The words of Petty Officer Fredrick James William (Jim) Baker as told to his niece Eliza Hill in 1994:

“After completing another training course at H.M.S. VERNON, I was drafted to an aircraft carrier H.M.S. HUNTER, and again finding myself back in the Mediterranean, giving support to our troops landing in Italy and later after the Normandy invasion of Europe, supporting landings in the south of France.”



HMS HUNTER – Escort carrier and Jim Baker

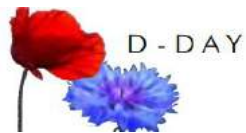


During the Second World War, PDSA (the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals) founder Maria Dickin CBE was aware of the incredible bravery displayed by animals on active service and the Home Front. Inspired by the animals' devotion to man and duty, she introduced a special medal specifically for animals in war.

The PDSA Dickin Medal is the highest award any animal can receive whilst serving in military conflict. It is recognised worldwide as the animals' Victoria Cross. Instituted in 1943 by PDSA's founder Maria Dickin CBE, it acknowledges outstanding acts of bravery or devotion to duty displayed by animals serving with the Armed Forces or Civil Defence units in any theatre of war throughout the world. The Medal has been awarded 75 times since 1943 plus 1 Honorary PDSA Dickin Medal which was awarded in 2014. The recipients comprise 38 dogs, 32 pigeons, 4 horses and 1 cat. It is Pidgeon's that feature in the D-Day Normandy Landings: **Gusta**, Pigeon NPS.42.31066. "For delivering the first message from the Normandy Beaches from a ship off the beachhead while serving with the RAF on 6 June 1944." **Paddy**, Pigeon NPS.43.9451 "For the best recorded time with a message from the Normandy Operations, while serving with the RAF in June 1944." **Navy Blue**, Pigeon NPS.41.NS.2862 "For delivering an important message from a Raiding Party on the West Coast of France, although injured, while serving with the RAF in June 1944 and **Flying Dutchman**, Pigeon NPS.42.NS.44802 "For successfully delivering messages from Agents in Holland on three occasions. Missing on the fourth mission, while serving with the RAF in 1944."



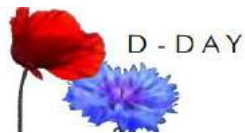
RAF homing pigeons Paddy, left, and Gustav, with their PDSA Dickin Medals



Michael Speight provided this photograph of his Grandparents helping out at the Forces Canteen at the Woodgate Baptist Church in Loughborough:

Mikes Grandmother Annie is in the centre and his grandfather on the far right. The canteen was open to all members of the armed forces, British and American.

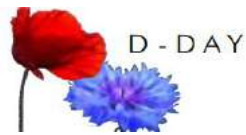




The ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service) played a vital role in the lead up to and during D-Day and the Normandy Landings. Many worked at the 'Y Station' at Beaumanor Hall and were billeted in Quorn. Sue Templeman met with one ATS girl, Joan Thornton (nee Bradshaw), who had worked at Beaumanor as a listener for three years and during that time was billeted at no less than three places in Quorn, Soar House, Rose Cottage, and the Hurst Hotel.

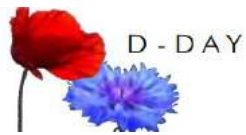


I was recently lucky enough to talk to Joan Thornton (nee Bradshaw), who worked at Beaumanor as a listener for three years and was billeted in Quorn. Joan was 22 and living in Liverpool when she was conscripted into the ATS in 1942, and like many others, she was sent off to Halifax for her initial training, which not only included the normal drill of 'square bashing', but also included many aptitude type tests. When their training was over, four of the girls were sent to London to sit before members from the War Office for further aptitude tests, particularly referring to the sounds of Morse signals. As a result three of them were sent to Trowbridge for wireless instruction, although at this point, they were still not clear exactly what they were being trained for. It was here that



they learnt Morse code and were taught to use radio sets. After their training they were on the move again, this time to live in Quorn and work at Beaumanor Hall.

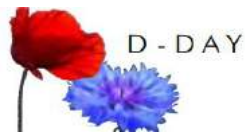
Joan was billeted originally at Garats Hay in Woodhouse, then in Quorn - firstly at Soar House, then Rose Cottage and after that, next door at The Hurst. The Beaumanor listening station worked around the clock, so the girls' shifts covered all hours. They would be picked up from their billet by a 'troop carrier' and Joan remembers climbing aboard, sometimes at 1am in the morning, and on occasions being driven like the wind, by Nancy their driver, along Woodhouse Road and up past the Manor House Hotel. Soldiers were billeted at the Manor and would wolf whistle and wave as the carrier passed by. The occupants (the girls) would, of course, retaliate! When they arrived at Beaumanor, the girls would make their way to their stations. The listening itself was not carried out in the main hall, but in cold huts in the grounds. Joan was in 'J' Hut. As soon as the shift started, they were handed a list of wavebands to listen to. They would then sit at their machines, put their headphones on and adjust the radio knobs to find one of the right frequencies and pick up signals. They would sit listening to the Morse code – a series of dits and dahs (dots and dashes) – and interpret the individual letters, which were recorded on grids in blocks of five on a 'W/T Red Form'. The recordings would of course mean absolutely nothing to them, as they were simply letters from the alphabet. Joan explained how your ears had to be 'trained' to pick up these signals through interference from different frequencies, some loud and some quiet. The information collected by the listeners, was taken daily by dispatch riders, down to Bletchley Park, to some of the best brains in Britain - the codebreakers. The girls got to know many people in Quorn and had great fun at dances and social events. Joan remembers dances at the Church Room, marching the squad down the main road from The Hurst to their Mess at the Old Bull's Head, (now 18 High Street), drinking tea in the hut on the corner of Meeting Street and Spinney Drive (now the Scout and Guide hut) - and the stir that was caused when the Americans arrived in 1944!



Michael Speight remembers taking a day off work to help out at the White Hart in Quorn:

Mike recalls that in the mid/late 1990s veterans of the 82nd attended a memorial service held at the war memorial. Some of the veterans and their families came into the White Hart for lunch. Nearly all of them opted for fish and chips and they left me a hefty tip. I wish I had taken more photos.



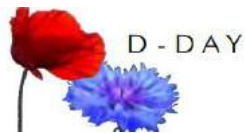


Thanks to the Quorn Branch of the Royal British Legion we know that the three brothers Percy, Maurice, and Kenneth Sykes all served in the second World War in different branches of the armed services. Their sister Amie married George F Huston a Sergeant in the 505th PIR who had been based at Quorn Camp:

Percy was also known as Bill and joined the RAF in 1938, Maurice joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and Victor the youngest joined the Royal Marines.

Both Maurice and Victor took part in the D-day invasion.





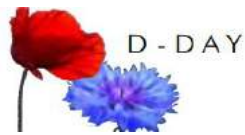
Bernhard Wenke was a prisoner of war at Quorn POW Camp. His grandson Jürgen Schneider, kindly got in touch with the Village Online Museum in 2013 which enabled his story to be told:

Bernard was 36 when war broke out. He was married to his wife Anita, and they had three young children, a son Hans Dieter aged 6, and two daughters Marion (Jürgen's mother), aged 5 and Ursula aged two. Bernhard was captured by British troops, close to Calais after D-Day. He was taken as a prisoner of war and brought to the POW camp in Quorn. He had been seriously wounded by a shell which destroyed his left elbow. The injury was something that upset him for the rest of his life, as before the war he had played the violin very well, and it was a cause for great sadness for him, that he could no longer do this with his stiff and damaged arm. Jürgen remembers that someone told him that Bernhard worked as a translator in the camp. This is very likely, as official translators would be in very short supply, and anyone who could speak both languages, would be very useful. During his time in Quorn, Bernhard wrote the following postcard to his wife Anita on the 11th January 1945:

*"Dear Anita,
May these lines tell you that nothing changes here up to now. I do not know when I can be with all of you again. Please write to me!
I didn't receive any letters from you, only a third postcard. Everything is well with me. I hope that all of you are well too. Do you get my post on time? Every 8 days a postcard and every 14 days a letter?
Kind regards for you and the kids. Daddy"*

When Bernhard left Quorn, he took back to Germany with him a small salt glazed stone rabbit. It is not known whether this was a present, or a memento he acquired himself.

Jürgen tells us that, like in many German families, this generation of soldiers didn't talk much about their time at war. As far as Jürgen knows, Bernhard was a gunner in an anti-tank battalion. Bernhard was released from Quorn POW camp in spring 1946. After he returned to Germany, he had to go into hospital for quite some time because of his seriously injured left arm. When he finally



returned home, he went back to work as a schoolteacher in Hinnebeck, the little village where his grandson, Jürgen, would eventually grow up. Bernhard Wenke died in 1978 when his grandson Jürgen was 13 years old.



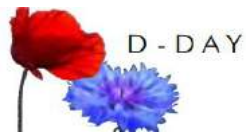
Bernard photographed in France on 28th April 1944 and the Quorn rabbit.

Baseball on Stafford Orchard - The Quorn Parish Council archives record that the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment were granted permission to play Baseball on the Stafford Orchard:

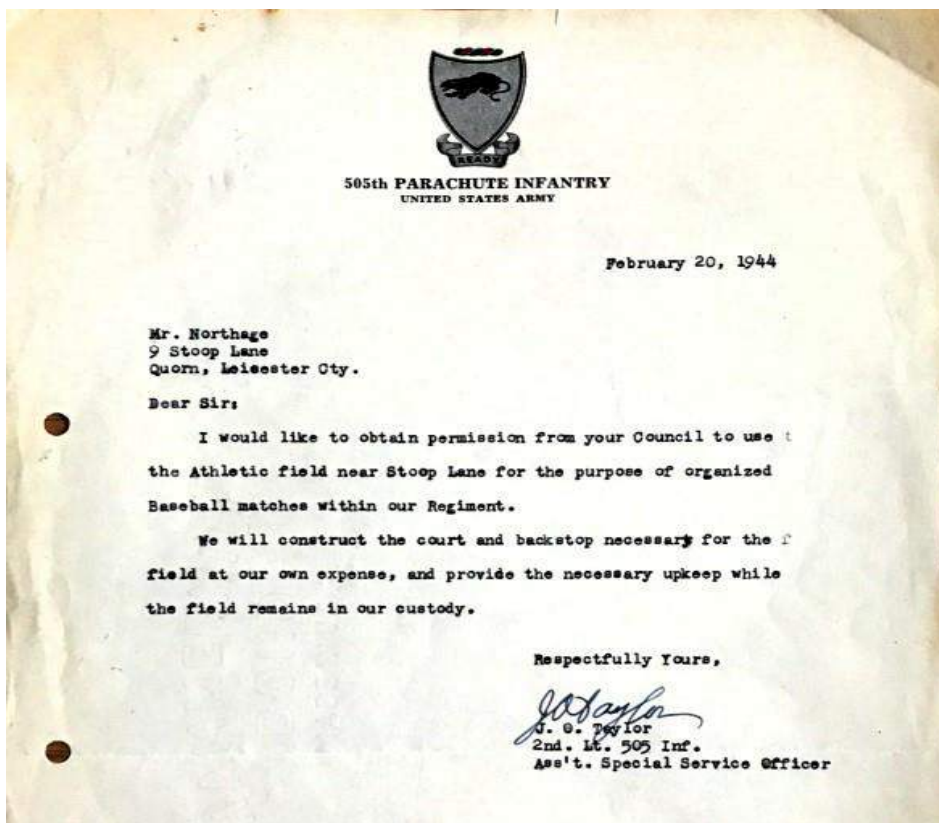
Americans are of course associated with baseball and the military were no exception with impromptu 'snatch' and game practice whenever, the opportunity arose. So, it is no surprise that the letter below was found in the Parish Council archives. In February 1944 the Quorn Parish Council were asked permission by the 505 Parachute Infantry, United States Army if they could use the 'Athletic Field' for the purpose of organised Baseball matches.

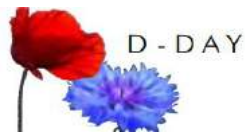
Although there is no record of the council response, they must have agreed to the request as the 505 PIR formed a team called the 'Panthers' and we know that they used Stafford Orchard for practice and played recreational games there. The games were organised between Regiments and Battalions.

Just a week before D-day, on 27th May 1944 the 505 'Panthers' were summoned to play the 508 'Red Devils' at the Notts County football ground, Meadow Lane. Not expecting to play again they had packed their game kit away and had to play in fatigues and jump boots, not so the 'Panthers' who looked resplendent in their team kit. However, it did them no good as they lost 18-0. In his book 'And



Suddenly They Were Gone' Adam Berry believes the match was called to distract the Germans from thinking an invasion was imminent.



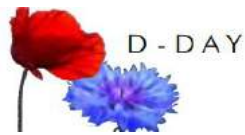


With thanks to the book 'The Royal British Legion in Quorn,' we know that the picture below, was taken on 1st June 1994. The 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment veterans escorted by a colour party of serving Quorn British Legion members parade to the Quorn War Memorial:



Did the Princess Elizabeth visit Quorn during 1944 when the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment were in town? This is a question that has vexed many:

“Charles Kaiser reports that Princess Elizabeth, then in the ATS, came on a visit to Quorn and was invited to sit in the reviewing stand as the 505 paraded. The men could not believe a ‘real live Princess’ was in their midst.” Deryk Wills when researching his book ‘Put on Your Boots and Parachutes!’ was unable to find any facts about the visit but he does say ‘somehow this event is firmly fixed in several veteran’s memories. Somehow and somewhere that pretty twenty-year-old Princess captured many a paratroopers heart and it is known that some jumped into Normandy with her picture in their pockets.’

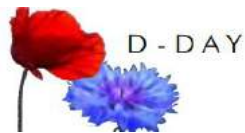


After an enquiry of Buckingham Palace, village historian, Sue Templeman was informed that the Princess Elizabeth did not join the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) until 1945. The letter from Buckingham Palace went on to say, 'that it is possible that a visit may have been made by Queen Elizabeth or the Princess Royal (Princess Mary) and it is also possible that Princess Elizabeth may have accompanied them, although not as a member of the ATS.'

However, there is a photograph of the Princess visiting the ATS at Beaumanor Hall in April 1943 in what appears to be a ATS uniform. It is known that when the Princess turned 18 in 1944, she had insisted upon joining the ATS, the women's branch of the British Army and formally joined in 1945.



Princess Elizabeth during ATS training 1945

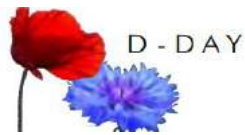


In November 2023, Edward Connolly contacted the Quorn Parish Council Manager with information about his father who had served on and survived the sinking of HMS Quorn on 3rd August 1944. 139 souls were lost and only 7 survived. The Loughborough Echo on 12th August 1994 had reported that six survivors had attended a 50-year commemoration service held at the Quorn Parish Church. The six named were: Able Seaman Les Penhye, Kenneth Hennessy and Christopher Yorston, Lieutenants Harry Schofield and Robert Slater and Commander Ivan Hall. Edward Connolly was the other survivor.

“I was interested to read recently that the ship was named after your village. My late father who sadly passed away in 1986 was one of the seven survivors of this ship. He was Ordinary Seaman Edward Connolly and had volunteered aged 19 years 11 months. I owe my very existence (now 76) to the fact he was lucky enough not to be killed outright and was an excellent swimmer, having learnt to swim in the Thames at Limehouse where he grew up. His medals from WW2 are amongst my prized possessions including the posthumous one, I obtained for a convoy he was on to the arctic after being assigned to another ship HMS Brecon after his survivors’ leave was over.

My father passed away just after my 40th birthday aged just 63, dying of a sudden fatal heart attack in 1986. He did not speak much about that fatal night of the sinking of HMS Quorn. I consider myself and my brother very lucky to have had a life at all considering the loss of life among the 149 souls on board that night.”





Quorn Camp came into existence in 1943 and fulfilled various military functions until it closed in 1959. It housed the US D-day forces in 1944. As soon as they left it was prepared ready to house some of the thousands of Germans and her Allies prisoners of war who were arriving in the UK following the invasion. Once the war was over it became a repatriation camp, and the regime was relaxed with inmates being allowed out to live and work in the community. Heinz-Otto Georg was one and below is a letter that he wrote, thanking Mr and Mrs Preston of the Old Bulls Head for their hospitality. Their daughter Christina, who provided the letter, although only a young girl at the time, clearly remembers looking out of the window with her grandfather when a column of German PoW's marched by when two broke ranks, lifted up two ATS girls and swung them round:

Envelope

Lt. Heinz-Otto Georg

97386, Featherstone Park Camp 18, Hathwhistle , Northumberland

Letter

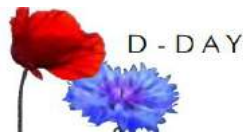
Featherstone Park

1st Dez 1947

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Preston,

I must apologise for not writing earlier as I promised to you when leaving Quorn. I am sorry about that but writing with only 5 letters allowed in a month is quite a desperate struggle against the wishes and demands of all my relatives and acquaintances. But this is not even the main reason of my being guilty. It is my repatriation which took up too much of my letters. I am no longer a spectator of the events in Germany, and it is most urgent to me to evade as many difficulties as possible, which I surely can do by my letters.

May I ask you how you are feeling? I should like to thank you again for your hospitality you offered me when I was in your house. I am sorry that we could no longer stay at Quorn. The time we had spent there was really the nicest one of all our years which we had to be in England. Thanks to the kindness of the people of Quorn, that period is the only one we don't want to forget after being at home again. Except our personal relaxations we learned much about your way of life and many of your customs. I hope that the connections with the English will contribute to a better understanding our two nations.



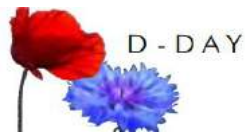
We are now living in Northumberland near the Scottish border. The countryside is very beautiful, though its beauty is quite another one than that of Leicestershire. It is not so 'civilised' here and not so companionable. There are only a few people living in this region. Sometimes a bus takes us to Newcastle on Tyne for a day. It is the only common monotony of our camp life. This life will now come to an end for me. I shall leave this country on December 16, so that I may be at home just at Christmas. That is a good end, or a good beginning, respectively! - Please excuse me making faults, which I surely done. It is my personal future! With my best wishes to you.

Yours sincerely, Heinz - Otto Georg

Authors note: Quorn PoW Camp was to close by the end of December 1947. Remaining inmates were move to other camps.

Geraldine Marchant (nee Rigler) remembers her father with affection, Arthur died at 58 years old. Apart from mentioning that he had been wounded during the war, his wartime experiences were never mentioned. It was only after his death in 1976 and later after her mother died that some of the story came together:

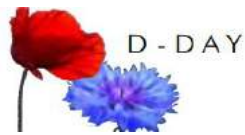
Opening a prayer book I found an inscription containing a service number, dads name and the 5th Battalion Dorset Regt. This provided the key to the start of my interest to try to find out something about his part in the war. A book about the battalion in Northwest Europe by Majors Hartwell, Pack and Edwards provided some useful information. The regiment was part of the 43rd Division and was formed in August 1939. They appear to have spent much of the early part of the war training and defending airfields and defences along the south coast of England and before D-day the 5th Battalion were based in Hastings, Kent. During May and early June, time was spent in waterproofing, receiving inoculations, checking stores, and carrying out inspections. Dad did say that he had met Winston Churchill, and it was probably during this time when the Commander-in-chief did visit the battalion. It was D-day + 7 that orders were received to land in Normandy. The wheeled and tracked vehicles embarked in London and the troops in Southampton. Setting sail aboard SS Ocean Vulgar on the 19th June, a severe storm in the Channel meant that they were held off landing for four days. They finally landed on 'Gold Sector' near to Ver sur Mer. They seem to have had



a torrid time facing enemy counter attacks and stragglers. They moved on fighting their way through Cheux, Caen, Chateau de Fontaine, and Hill 112. They struggled through mine fields and faced air attacks. The 5th battalion attacked the village of Ondefontaine where they came under heavy machine gun and tank fire. Toward the end of August they had reached the river Seine. They met with heavy resistance and on 28th August when eight separate battalion attacks were carried out and was described as an 'epic operation.' The 43rd Division were the first British troops to cross the Sein and were requested to stay in position for thirteen days rest. This was mainly because their transport was needed to supply petrol and supplies to the fast-moving advance. On 10th September, orders were received to advance into northeast Belgium, and they were to be part of operation 'Market Garden' or specifically 'Garden', as this was the ground forces element whilst 'Market' was the airborne element all aimed at capturing the key Rhine crossings at Nijmegen and Arnhem. Setting off on the long move eastwards on the 11th September 1944 the battalion were said to be in high spirits. They moved on through places familiar to us from the Great War such as Beauvais, Arras, Vimy Ridge. Eventually, after battles, not with the enemy, but with welcoming inhabitants and military traffic on the roads, they made it to the bridge at Nijmegen. There, thanks to the work of the airborne troops they find the bridge was intact but fighting continued through 18th and 19th September. Dad's name appears in the 5th battalion Dorsetshire Regiment Casualty List dated 1st to 20th September 1944, so I will probably never know exactly where he was wounded but the family like to think that he made it to the Arnhem bridge. His possessions included his medals and pictures including a German insignia and a glider photo – more questions than answers!

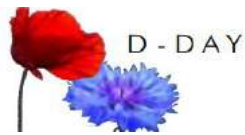


Arthur and his Prayer Book

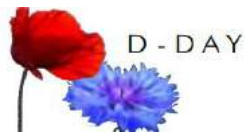


Lloyd Eric Tomlyn, (1928-2016) was born in Mountsorrel and in his later years he authored the story of his life, and after he died, his family put it all together into a large folder, which they subsequently lent to the Quorn Village Museum for publication. Lloyd's memories provide an interesting, valuable, and unique insight into life in Quorn in the mid-1900s. This edited section deals with Lloyd's time in Quorn, and the lead up to and after D-day:

Conscription had started and young men were being "called up" for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. All the men being called up for the army meant that they needed training and Quorn had a fair number of recruits stationed here. Soar House and the Old Bull's Head on High Street were taken over and used as barracks, as well as the stables at Farnham's and a large house that used to be on Loughborough Road near to what is now the Chequers restaurant*. I think it was called Rose Cottage and was demolished a few years after the war. Being a cul-de-sac Mansfield Street made an ideal parade ground and soldiers would march up and down learning basic foot and rifle drill. They used the Stafford Orchard for more practical field training. After a few weeks they would go off and another lot would arrive. Not all the troops were infantry though and at one time we had a battery of Royal Artillery who would leave a couple of 6-inch Howitzers parked at the top of the road. What a great time we had at the end of the day playing on them when the soldiers simply went off and left them. During this time too, there would be huge convoys of lorries, Bren gun carriers and tanks rolling through the village, sometimes we used to count more than a hundred. Then there were what we called 'Queen Marys' that carried aircraft wings and fuselages. They appeared to be huge then but hardly as big as some of the trucks we see today. The other big interest for me and my friends at this time was to bike up to Wymeswold, to first of all, see the aerodrome being built and eventually the Wellingtons and other bombers taking off. At various times we also had the girls of the ATS who I think were probably employed at Beaumanor Hall at Woodhouse, which became a signals and communications centre and was an outstation for Station X at Bletchley Park where they solved the Enigma Code that the Germans were using, though we didn't know that at the time. Between Woodhouse and the Great Central Railway, there was a Searchlight unit, where we would go in the evenings to see them do a test of the searchlights and to make sure everything was working O.K. As far as I recall there were no Anti-aircraft guns around though. One certain regiment I have cause to remember was a Scottish Infantry one called the Cameron Highlanders. Whether they were



all Scots I don't know but certainly the drill sergeant was, Mark Middlemass. The sureness of this was because, during their stay my cousin Doreen, daughter of my Aunt Ivy, sometimes came to visit, perhaps looking for a young man! Anyway the pair of them were to meet eventually and marry. One unit that also certainly came to the area, I believe, was the Royal Army Service Corps or Royal Engineers.** Not to train, but to work. Up at the Central station they put in several new sidings for the handling of ammunition trains before D-Day. We would watch from the road bridge, as trainloads of shells would be brought in, then loaded onto lorries, and taken and stored on the verges of lots of the country roads around Charnwood. Some of these had simple corrugated iron covers, with open ends, over them. No security of any kind. Remembering these events, it is sometimes rather difficult to be sure I have them in the right order. Talking of all the military happenings that were coming to Quorn, one of the biggest things to happen started one sunny day when we were playing on the green. Several army lorries arrived, the like of which we had not seen before, accompanied by some Jeeps. They were Chevrolets of the American 82nd Airborne Division. The first thing to happen was that one of the lorries tipped a complete office building, (what we would now call a Portacabin), on to the green and 2 minutes later some guy climbed up the adjacent telegraph pole, the stump of which still stands there and connected up the telephone system. They were in business! These were the advance party of what in the end proved to be many hundreds of soldiers. They were to build a camp, mainly under canvas in Wood Lane where the housing estate now stands, Paddock Close. What an eye opener they were. We had never seen anything like it. They were loaded with money; food, sweets, the lot, and girls appeared from far and wide, shall I say to befriend them! They just seemed to be so technically in front of anything we knew, it was mind-boggling. One of the things they didn't have though was beer. The pubs in the village began doing fantastic business. Dad also made a few quid here too. Some guys appeared one day in a Jeep at the bake house to see if they could get some cakes made. They would bring all the supplies and just wanted to benefit from the facilities. The result was he turned out load after load of large slabs of fruitcake, for which he was well paid. They didn't seem to mind whether you kept a bit for yourself either. I think that was when I got my baseball bat also. I have it still. Apart from the overtime Dad was earning for doing all this extra baking, my mother together with a number of women in the village, also earned a bit by doing the officers' laundry. Money never seemed to be a problem with



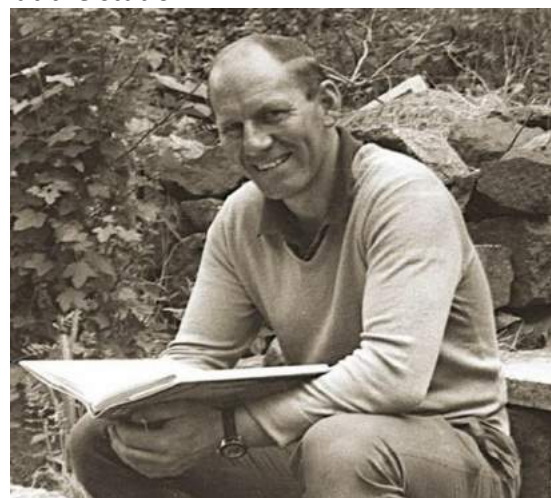
the Americans, and they were always very generous. They were very welcome in the village, though a few fights didn't always show them in their best light. It was great to have them, but in the end, they were to pay a terrible price for the help they were giving.

Shortly before D-day they were nearly all gone. We didn't realise it at the time, but the invasion of Europe was about to begin. I well remember a short time before they went, they had a ceremonial parade on the cricket field, and I remember another parade some months later when they returned from France. I should think only about a third of them came back to receive the Purple Heart medal. There are some things that I don't like about the Americans, but I have to be thankful and grateful for what they did at that time. All young men. Not too long after this, they left, and now the camp had another use. It was turned into a prisoner of war camp for the Italians and then the Germans. The war was drawing to an end, and I don't think any of the prisoners were very intent on trying to get back to Germany. So it was that they were fairly free to do other things and they would do work on farms, and around the village, like cleaning out Quorn Brook. One worked for the father of a classmate at Rawlins, Betty Lane. Her Dad was a small-time builder named George and the German was Joachim Berger. He was later to marry Betty and spend the rest of his life here. I got to know him later and he was quite a pleasant chap. What are wars all about?

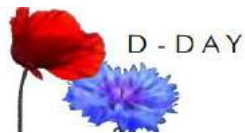
Notes!

* *The Chequers restaurant was demolished and replaced by a Midland Coop mini supermarket.*

** *The soldiers Lloyd refers to were in fact, the Royal Pioneer Corps, who were stationed in Quorn. The Royal Engineers did oversee their work at the station.*



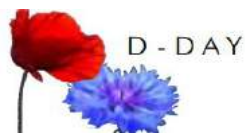
Lloyd pictured in 1946 in his Rawlins Army Cadet Force and later at home in Mountsorrel.



Christopher Read from Cambridgeshire posted the following about his Uncle Thomas Albert Read on Facebook:



This picture is of my Uncle Thomas Albert Read. He was a Stoker 1st Class aboard the HMS Quorn when it was on manoeuvres in Sein Bay off the Normandy coast of France during the D-day landings. On 3rd August the ship was hit by a Mander Human Torpedo which sank it. There were only a handful of survivors unfortunately, my uncle was not one of them. My Dad always told me that his brother Tom should have had three war medals and a Royal Oak Leave for a 'Mention in Despatches' but he died before he could be presented with them. With the arrival of the internet, I decided to research my uncle and found that he did indeed win these medals. I then spent over a year arguing with the Royal Navy, etc. I wanted to know what had happened to my uncle's medals. In the end, they told me the medals had been presented posthumously to his father in November 1950. Disappointed, I went to tell my father the news and his reply was 'well they must have dug him up to present them as he died in 1949.' Armed with this I then tackled the Royal Navy and War Office, but they refused to do anything other than present me with a Certificate of Entitlement which allowed me to BUY the medals from a specialist supplier. I did buy them and presented them and the other information that I had gather to my father. During my research I even managed to talk to one of the survivors from the ship who very kindly went along to the memorial in Portsmouth and took pictures of uncle's name on the monument.



What was on in the Local cinema and theatre in June 1944?

YOUR FILM ATTRACTIONS for JUNE

SHOWING AT THE ODEON THEATRE

Sunday, June 4th—Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce in **Sherlock Holmes in Washington**. Also Will Hay in **Old Bones of the River**

MONDAY, JUNE 5th, and all the week:
Nelson Eddy, Susanna Foster and Claude Rains in
The Screen's "Classic" of Terror
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
in Technicolor

Sunday, June 11th—Walter Brennan and Anne Baxter in **The Man Who Came Back**. Also Sidney Toler in **Castle in the Desert**

MONDAY, JUNE 12th, and all the week:
James Cagney
in his greatest of films
JOHNNY VAGABOND
with Grace George and Marjorie Main

Sunday, June 18th—Ginger Rogers and George Montgomery in **Roxie Hart**. Also Roddy McDowall in **On The Sunny Side**

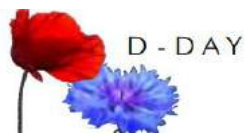
MONDAY, JUNE 19th—3 days **THURS., JUNE 22nd—3 days**
Leni Lynn & Will Fyffe in Louise Rainer & Paul Lukas in
Heaven is Round the **HOSTAGES**
Corner

Also William Boyd & Andy Clyde Also Bing Crosby & Franciska Gaal
in in
UNDER COVER MAN **PARIS HONEYMOON**

Sunday, June 25th—Marlene Dietrich and Randolph Scott in **Pittsburg**
Also Robert Paige in **Hi! Buddy**

MONDAY, JUNE 26th, and all the week:
Alice Faye—Carmen Miranda—James Ellison in
The Day's Musical Comedy
THE GIRLS HE LEFT BEHIND
in Technicolor

Continuous Performance Daily 1-45 p.m. Sunday, One Performance at 6 p.m.



Theatre Royal

LOUGHBOROUGH.

PROGRAMME FOR JUNE, 1944

THE FRANK H. FORTESCUE

Famous Players

PRESENT

Monday, June 5th—(6 days)

Common Clay

By Leah Corentz

Monday, June 12th—(6 days)

FOR ADULTS ONLY.

The Dominant Sex

By Michael Egan

Monday, June 19th—(for 5 Nights Only)

Prior to London Production—
A GRIPPING DRAMA

Murder in the Shelter

By Paul Courtney

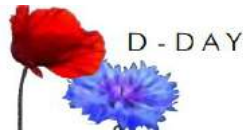
Friday, June 23rd—(for One Night Only)

East Lynne

Monday, June 26th—(6 days)

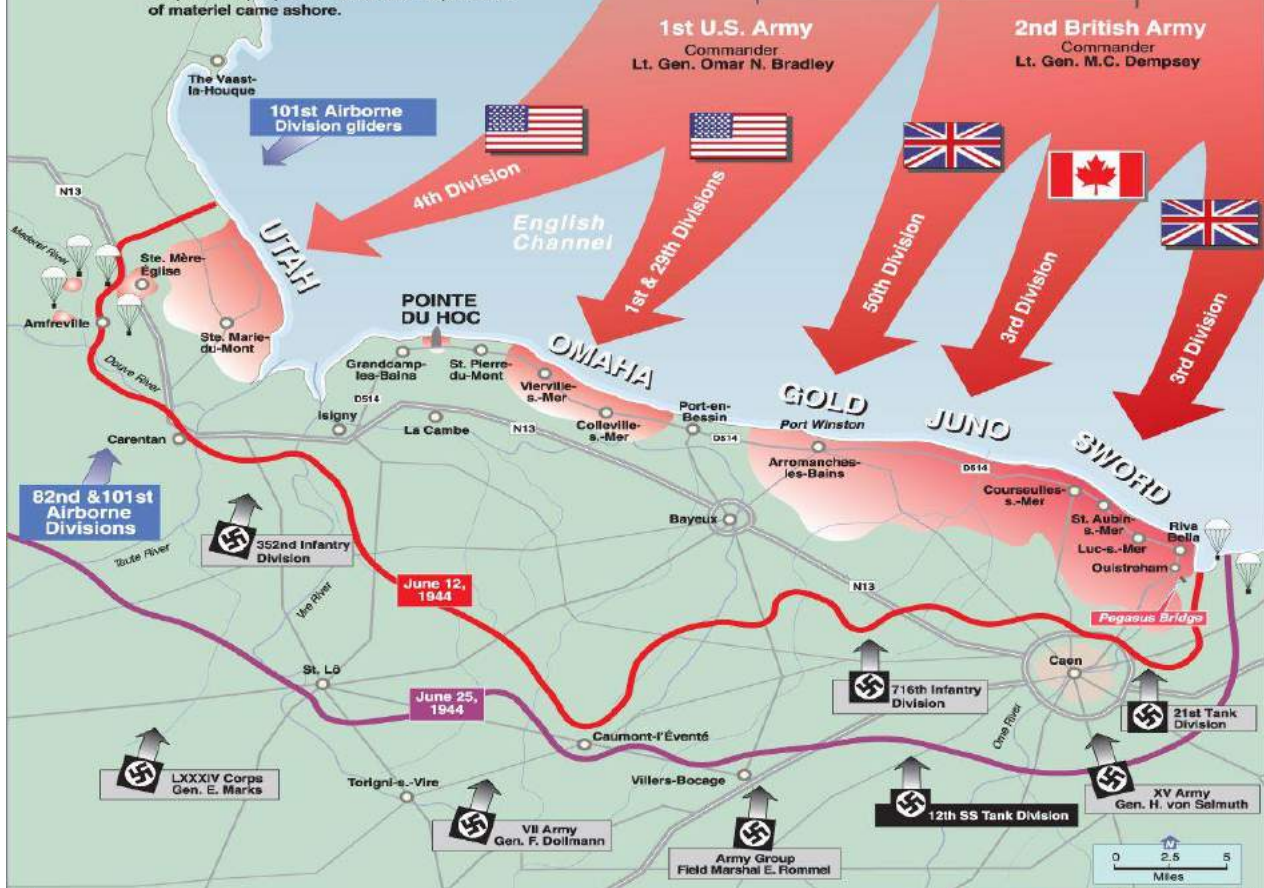
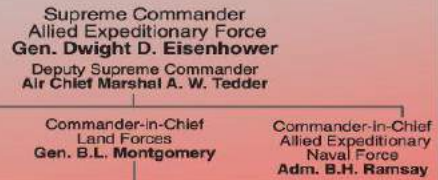
Ladies in Retirement

By Edward Percy and Reginald Denham



D-Day

On June 6, 1944, 160,000 Allied soldiers assaulted a 50-mile stretch of the Normandy coast of France, launching a pivotal effort against Nazi Germany. The Allied armada was composed of 700 warships and 2,500 landing craft. In the first six days, 326,000 men, 64,000 vehicles and 104,000 tons of material came ashore.



Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force

Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force!

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In the company with our brave Allies and brothers in arms on other Fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely. But this is 1944! Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans

great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory!

I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full Victory! Good Luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.

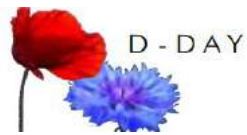
Dwight D. Eisenhower
Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower

Legend

- Allied beachheads, D-Day, June 5, 1944
- Allied airdrops
- German movements
- Allied line June 12
- Allied line June 25



Stars and Stripes



The stone was retrieved from the damaged Nijmegen church in Holland, the scene of a 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the US 82nd Airborne Division engagement in 1944. The attached plaque refers to the avenue of lime trees which was presented to the village by local businessman F.A.Stenson and dedicated in May 1952 to those in the US Forces stationed in the parish between 1939 and 1944 that did not return from their missions.