



Welcome to the eleventh edition of this journal, I can't believe that I have been doing this for nearly a year, in which we hope to report on the activities of the Federation and of the member Associations. I would like to thank all those who have sent me information about various events, I am most grateful. I would ask that if you do send something in you include as much detail as possible and write it up so it is a short but concise statement of what happened.

The journal is not only for the officers of Associations but also Association members so we ask you to give it as wide a distribution as possible to members and anyone else you think might be interested.

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PAST EVENTS

There have been many events in the last couple of months and I hope to cover most of them in this month's Journal.

Monte Cassino memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum

Garth Wright our 93 year old Dunkirk Veteran went to the National Memorial Arboretum on the 18th May 2013 as part of the Monte Cassino Society who unveiled their new memorial depicting the Monastery atop Cassino. Garth had the honour of sounding the last post and the reveille at the ceremony.

Next May will be the 70th Anniversary of the battle and a week of ceremonies will be held at Cassino, including a parade at the cemetery and a service at Piscinisco.

During the Battle of Monte Cassino from January to May 1944 the Abbey made up one section of the Gustav line, which was a defensive German line designed to hold the Allied attackers from advancing any further into Italy during World War Two. It stretched from coast to coast and the monastery was one of the key strongholds overlooking highway 6 and blocking the path to Rome. On February 15, 1944 the abbey was almost completely destroyed in a series of heavy American led air-raids.



Garth sounding the Last Post at the service



The Monte Cassino memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum

Return of plaques to the Royal Marine Association

Whilst the R A F Association were cleaning the room out at the Raffle Club they found 3 plaque to do with the Royal Marines which they have now returned. Fred Ford, who is the Federation Fund Raiser, arranged for them to be presented to the Vice Chairman of the Royal Marines Association, Plymouth and District, Clive Hunter who is seen receiving one of the plaques below. Thanks to former Marine Donald Ligertwood who provided the photograph.



Armed Forces Day

As some of you are aware this event took place on the 29th June on Plymouth Hoe and it was a lovely day for it with warm sunshine but not too hot. The first event of the day was the Annual Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving at the **RAF and Allied Air Forces Monument**. The Royal Marine band, Standards and Veterans assembled at the east end of the Hoe at 0930 and Marched to the Memorial just before 1000. There was a very moving service and tributes from the Lord Mayor of Plymouth, Air Vice Marshal Stuart D Atha DSO MA BSc RAF, representing the Chief of the Air staff, Lt Col Piotr Pacek Polish Deputy Defence Attaché and Air Vice Marshal P J O'Reilly CB RAF Rtd President of the RAFA Wales, Midlands and South West. After the Last post and Reveille many wreaths were laid on the memorial. The Epilogue was read by Mrs Noreen Strickland Cooper, who is the daughter of Air Vice Marshal Don Bennett who, with WO Jim Davis, were

the moving force behind having the memorial erected. After the ceremony was completed the standards and veterans marched off to the east end of the Hoe.



Standards marching onto the hoe for the service at the RAF and Allied Air Forces Monument



Veterans marching onto the Hoe for the service at the RAF and Allied Air Forces Monument



Veterans marching of the Hoe after the service

The Lord Mayor and dignitaries then proceeded to the Veterans Marque where many Associations of the Federation had their stand which are too numerous to list. There was also a stand for the Federation manned by the usual stalwarts of Fred and Joan Ford and Phyllis Ainsworth. There were many activities on the Hoe throughout the day and it was packed with the general public whose support was god to see.



The Lord Mayor of Plymouth, with the Federation Chairman at the HMS Ganges Association stand in the Veterans Marque. The new Flag Officer Sea Training Rear Admiral B Key with his Flag Lieutenant enjoying at Tot at the RNA Stand.

In the afternoon veterans and standards again assembled at the east end of the Hoe at 1500 and at 1530 they marched across the Hoe and then wheeled right to pass the Saluting base where the Lord Mayor and other dignitaries took the salute. I would like to thank David Gerrard of the RFA Association for providing most of the photographs.

Sea Sunday

The Day after Armed Forces Day, Sea Sunday was celebrated at the Minster Church of St Andrews in Plymouth and this event was attended by the Lord Mayor of Plymouth Councillor Mrs Vivien Pengelly, Vice Admiral Sir Richard Ibbotson and Lady Ibbotson representing the Lord Lieutenant, Flag Officer Sea Training Rear Admiral B Key, the Naval Base Commander Commodore G Little and the Mayors of surrounding communities and many other dignitaries. Many standards were paraded and the church had a nearly full congregation which was nice to see. The lessons were read by the Lord Mayor and Sir Richard Ibbotson and a very interesting sermon was given by the Padre to 3 Commando Brigade and the Lord Mayor. Unfortunately there are no other pictures of this event due to the editor's finger trouble.



The Merchant Navy contingent outside St Andrews on Sea Sunday

The Federations Parade Marshal, WO Richard Bendell RM would like to thank all those who took part in these two events, the participation of some many Standards and Veterans shows that we a strong and vibrant Veterans scene in Plymouth and long may it continue.

Presentation of Arctic Medal

There had been much talk recently about the Arctic Medal which has finally been awarded to those who took part in this most arduous of campaigns. I am very happy to report on the presentation of the medal to Len Furgus on the 15th of June at a reception in the Council House.



The medal was presented by the Lord Mayor of Plymouth Councillor Vivian Pengelly, with many of his colleagues from the MN Association present. Len served in the Merchant Navy throughout his working life and His last ship was the former QE2 where he was Master at Arms. His time on Arctic Convoys was on the ex Blue Funnel ship SS Botavon which he joined for a second time in October 1941 in Hull where it was loading tanks. They sailed to Reykjavik and then onwards to Murmansk where the ship arrived with a severe list due to all the ice which had accumulated on one side. The cargo was discharged by woman stevedores and then they sailed for South Shields but on the way off the North Cape

they were attacked by German Stuka's and he lost the crew dinner in the action. On arrival in South Shields he left the ship as he did not fancy another trip to Russia and it was lucky for him that he did as the ship was sunk on the next voyage by an air launched torpedo and twenty five of the crew were lost.

FUTURE EVENTS

Thursday 15th August 1100 the Far East Prisoners of War Association will be holding a short service at the Rowan tree outside St Andrews church to commemorate VJ Day.

Thursday 15th August 1100 the Burma Star Association will be holding a service at the memorial in Belvedere gardens on the Hoe.

As there are two events at the same time it is hoped that Association will send members to cover both events.

Tuesday 3ed Sept 1030 for 1100 Merchant Navy Day - Barbican Mayflower Steps

Thur 12th to Sun 15 Sep Heritage Open Days

Sun 15th Sept 1045 for 1115 Battle of Britain Memorial Day - Minster Church of St Andrew