



DISPATCHES

Vic Ralph (No 1 Cdo) - Founder of the Commando Veterans Association



Patron: Countess Mountbatten of Burma CBE., MSC., CD., JP., DL.

President: Brigadier JF Thomas CBE (Retired) (No 6 Cdo)

Chairman: Tpr Stan Scott (No 3 Cdo)

Issue 25 - September 2012

Greetings to all. Wow, it seems only a few weeks since I was preparing the May edition of Dispatches. The summer has been so busy that it has simply flashed by in a blur. The weather has been 'predictably on and off however we were blessed with sunshine for our Commando Summer Service at Arewas in June (see page 3) and at least the period covering the Olympic was dry - didn't we do well by the way?

We hope that this edition finds you in good health and spirits and we look forward to seeing some of you in Fort William in November. Once again, hotels are nigh on fully booked and we are particularly excited about the opening of the new Commando Exhibition in the West Highland Museum.

Wartime Army Commandos and dependants: Please be reminded that the Commando Benevolent Fund are always there if needed. I cannot stress this enough - if you feel that you can benefit from their assistance then please get in touch! Contact can be made directly (see contact details on Page 2) or through the CVA (see contact details at bottom of this page). *Editor*

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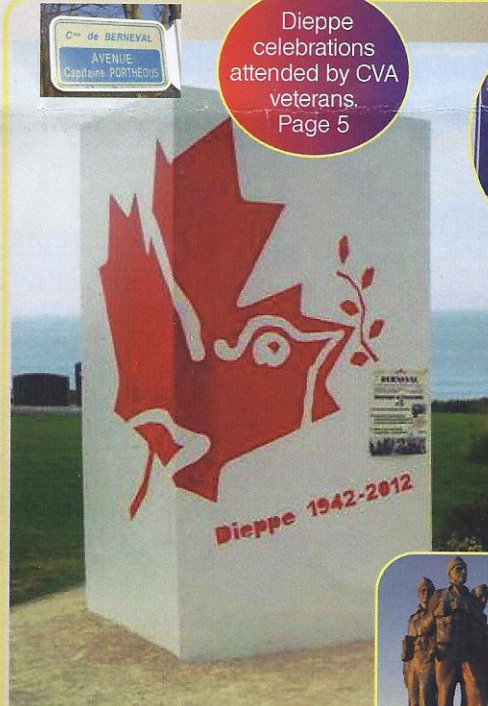
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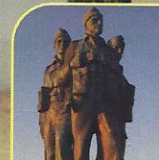


Lt Col Edward Dawes leads his Regiment down Royal Parade in Plymouth

Dieppe celebrations attended by CVA veterans. Page 5



60th Anniversary of the Commando Memorial. Page 4



How would you like to play your part in taking forward the history of the Commandos?

NEW COMMANDO EXHIBITION IN FORT WILLIAM!

We are delighted to announce that the new Commando Exhibition in the West Highland Museum in Fort William will be officially opened on Saturday 10 November 2012 at 10.30 am. Although there will still be extensive work to be completed in early 2013, including the fitting of display cases, it is hoped that the initial display will generate much interest amongst the Commando community and highlight the opportunity that will exist to place our personal items of Commando interest into a safe, professional and secure environment. The family of 'Gentle Johnny Ramensky', former Commando and safe cracker, will be loaning many of their family items for the initial opening and it is expected that there will be much local and national publicity. We do still need more items so if any members have or know of any items that would be suitable for the exhibition then **please contact CVA HQ immediately**. Items can be loaned on a short or long term basis, or donated to either the CVA or WHM. Many thanks to those who have donated/loaned so far - it is very much appreciated. Regular updates and photos will be added to the CVA website in due course.



The West Highland Museum in conjunction with the Commando Veterans Association



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Words from your Committee



A few words from our President - Brigadier (Retd) Jack Thomas CBE (No 6 Cdo) After a damp and dismal Spring the weather appears to have taken a turn for the better so with encouraging forecasts for the Summer and Autumn we can gather our strength and spirit for the Commando Remembrance and Association Annual General Meeting at Fort William next November. We were fortunate to have had three fine days for the Alrewas weekend that, thanks to impeccable planning and organization, was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended. Our Irepressible standard bearer, Fred Davies, revealed himself as an accomplished cabaret compere , worthy successor to Larry Adler and an inspired impresario - whilst our National Secretary, Geoff Murray, delivered a 'state of the union speech' that would have gained an overwhelming vote in the House of Commons. It is time also for a special word of thanks to David Davies who is not only a faithful supporter of the CVA but also a very accomplished photographer who has compiled a brilliant and comprehensive record of CVA events that will be of great importance to future historians. Sadly our number of World War II veterans continue to dwindle making the photographs that much more important. It was good to learn from our Secretary that the Board of Directors for the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, will meet on 23 September 2012 to discuss the proposed renovation of and addition to the Commando Memorial. It is reassuring to know that he has put aside sufficient funds to meet the estimated cost together with a donation to the West Highland Memorial Trust to help with the setting up of the Commando Exhibition in Fort William. I look forward to seeing you there next November.

Jack Thomas



Words from the Chairman - Since the last newsletter I have seen, as you may have, several documentaries on TV featuring Lofoton Islands, D-Day, Burma etc. I am dismayed - no very annoyed - at some of the so-called information regarding the Commandos. Why can't these people seek information from source? We still have veterans from all theatres of war who could advise. Many facts, very important facts are either misconstrued, inaccurate or downright twaddle. Rant over. The Commandos, every man a volunteer, Army or Royal Marine, shone the light, changed our training systems and lead from the front - and we shall continue today. So wear that Green Beret with pride! My best wishes to you all - hope to see you at Fort William.

Scotty



National Secretary - I have spent many hours, days, weeks committed to projects for the CVA over the last 9 years and have taken much satisfaction and pride in seeing each and every one of them come to fruition. From the annual events such as our St George's Day celebrations at the Royal Hospital Chelsea to our visits to various schools to celebrate our Commando VC winners; from the unveiling of our Army Commando Memorial by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in 2007 to the unveiling of the 'Commandos in Lochaber Stone' in 2010. Of all the numerous events that we have had over the years, I have to admit to being most excited about our current project of establishing a new Commando Exhibition in the West Highland Museum (WHM) in Fort William. The new exhibition will compliment our existing exhibition at the Spean Bridge Hotel and each will sign-post one another. It will offer a professional and secure environment for members of the Commando community to either loan or donate their items to enable the history of the Commandos to be taken forward, particularly that of the Commando training in the local area. It will have humble beginnings, and I have been working very hard with the trustees in order to have a worthy opening on Saturday 10 November at 10.30 am. We hope that as people realise its potential that it will then develop into a substantial and very informative display of all things 'Commando'. If any members reading this think that they have any items that may be of use to the exhibition, whether equipment, uniforms, badges, documents, photos, personal items etc, then please get in touch with either myself or directly with the WHM. We'd be delighted to see you at the grand opening in November.

Another project we have in progress is the refurbishment of the Army Commando Memorial at Alrewas which will include the replacement of over 300 memorial pavers and the inclusion of 2 new marble stone walls with the names of the 900+ Army Commandos who lost their lives during WW2. The project application was submitted for approval at the next board meeting on 23 September - so fingers crossed. If given the ok we should have the refurbishment work completed prior to Christmas and the walls in place by March 2013.

Plea: At the risk of repeating myself could I please ask that any wartime Army Commandos or their dependants that could benefit from any kind of assistance from the Commando Benevolent Fund (CBF) get in touch with either the CBF direct or through me. The CBF has been in existence since the end of WW2 and has given sterling support to thousands of members of the Commando community over the decades. As our wartime veteran numbers dwindle, requests for support are becoming fewer, however the support is always there for those who need it. *Please* make the most of this offer and help the CBF to help you - it is **YOUR** fund! All the very best. **Geoff**

Please help them to help you!

Please all be reminded that the CBF is here to help all wartime Army Commandos and their dependents. If you have a genuine need such as help towards fuel bills, travel or funeral costs, or would benefit from a contribution towards a special shower, stairlift, wheelchair ramp or mobility scooter, then please contact the CBF. Either write to the CBF at PO Box 104, Selby, Yorks, YO8 5YY or call CVA HQ.



The Commandos Benevolent Fund



Vic Ralph No 1 Cdo Founder of the CVA

Vic's phoenix rising from the ashes.....

When we were first starting out with the Commando Veterans Association, our dear friend and founder, the late Vic Ralph and I had to design and procure items such as association ties, blazer badges, pin badges etc. One of our main tasks during these early days was to acquire our own Association Standard. We threw around many ideas, knowing that the basic style had to be that of the previous Commando Association Branch standards, which I think we certainly achieved. An initial idea that Vic had was to incorporate a large Phoenix, representing the resurrection of the CVA from the ashes of the Commando Association, which we later discounted. With the final design eventually agreed, I actually purchased the finished article from a Pakistani tailor whilst I was serving on



operations in Afghanistan (some have you may have noticed that I also bought a cheap suit!). Sadly, only weeks after receiving the Standard, our dear friend Vic passed away. In Vic's memory, and in time for the unveiling ceremony of the Army Commando Memorial, where our Commando Reverend George Parsons blessed the Standard, I added a small phoenix, as seen above and on the photo right, with Vic's initials alongside. This in some way, has enabled Vic to be with us at all of our events since and in future. Not a lot of people know that! Keep an eye out for it at our next event.

SUBSCRIPTIONS..... MANY THANKS to all those who have caught up with their annual subscriptions since the previous issue of Dispatches. We do however still have a number of members who have yet to respond. If you have not paid your subs then please respond accordingly and support us by paying - we cannot continue if subscriptions are not paid.
If you are uncertain please just give us a call asap.



Recent CVA Events



Annual Commando Summer Service at Alrewas

30 June-1 July 2012



Debbie Wood making her Granddad very proud



Reverend George Parsons delivers the Commando summer service

Our annual trip to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas this year for our Commando Summer Service was definitely a weekend to remember. Although the number of wartime Commando Veterans was down on previous years, we still had enough 'old 'n' bold', mixed with serving Commandos and families and friends, to have an excellent weekend to remember those that have gone before us and to enjoy each others company.



Brigadier Jack Thomas CBE paying his respects on behalf of all present

Our new choice of hotel, the Lea Marston Hotel and Spa near Sutton Coldfield was perfect; the food, the service and the actual location were brilliant and we have our lovely Joan Davies to thank for all of her hard work in assisting with the hotel and dinner arrangements.

We were delighted to have our President, Brigadier Jack Thomas and his lovely wife Dorothea join us. Also many serving Commandos from the Commando Logistic Regiment in Chivenor and 383 Commando Troop in Plymouth, all who were absolute gentlemen and did themselves and the present day Army Commandos proud. Thanks to SSgt Jase Green for putting in the ground work and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.

On Saturday we were fortunate to be able to enjoy the events laid on at the Arboretum for Armed Forces Day and along with a visit to our Army Commando Memorial and the adjacent Royal Marines Memorial, we were able to take the opportunity to enjoy some of the other fabulous areas of the Arboretum, ultimately ending up in the main marquee bar!

Our dinner on the Saturday evening was a delightful occasion with speeches, much entertainment, our summer draw and many ending up on the dance floor until the early hours. I must mention our dear friend Ernie Mason (No 4 Cdo) who managed to drink all and sundry under the table until 4 am and still turned out in immaculate order and as fresh as a daisy (on the surface!) for breakfast at 8am (the serving Commandos were suitably in awe!).



Our Sunday morning events at our Army Commando Memorial commenced at 10.45 am and we were delighted to have additional CVA members join us for the service. We must thank our Commando Reverend, George Parsons (No 2 Cdo) for again doing us the honour of delivering the service in fine style, and also thanks to Debbie Wood whose pitch-perfect delivery of the Last Post and Rouse on her bugle would have certainly made her Granddad, the late John A Morgan (No 3 Cdo) a very proud Commando.

On completion of the service we managed to have a group photograph (above) before saying our fond farewells and departing in high spirits. Thank you to all of those who attended over the weekend and we hope to see you all again next year.



A wonderful photo of all of those CVA members present at the Commando Summer Service on Sunday 1 July 2012. Photo courtesy of Nick Collins.

A Brief History of the Forming of the Commando Gunners

By John Noble and John Goodhall
(Ex 8 (Alma) Cdo Bty RA)

29 Field Regiment Royal Artillery consisting of 8 Alma, 79 Kirkee and 145 Maiwand Btys RA were serving in Cyprus on an Emergency Internal Security Tour from June 1957 to May 1960. On completion of the tour the Regiment were embarked on the Troopship HMS Devonshire bound for the Regiment's new home – the Royal Citadel in Plymouth.

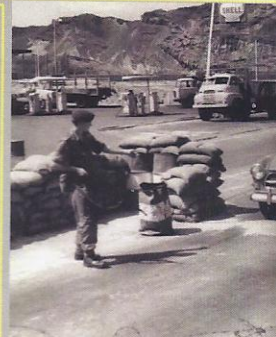
After settling into their new home, 8 Alma Battery were preparing to go on a 72-hour leave pass around the beginning of April 1961 when the BBC World Service announced trouble had flared up in the Middle East. Iraq was preparing to invade the relatively unknown small country of Kuwait. All leave was immediately cancelled and the Battery was issued with tropical clothing. Before departing we said our farewells to mates who were not coming with us. Many of the lads left behind were some of the last National Servicemen who had also served in Cyprus and were being de-mobbed. It was an honour to have served with these men. It was sad that it was the end of an era for National Service, which ran from 1939 to 1961.



First CO of 29 Cdo Regt RA - Denis O'Flaherty CBE DSO. He was awarded the DSO for his gallantry as a Lt of 6 Tp No 3 Commando during the raid on Vaagso in WW2.

Over the following weekend we were transported to RAF Lyneham and flown out to Kuwait via Bahrain. Within a couple of days the Battery were issued with 25 Pounder Field Guns from storage in Bahrain - these guns were probably last used in North Africa during WW2 and were not exactly in tip top condition, we were also issued with civilian trucks to tow the guns. The Battery, 42 Royal Marine Commando and other units deployed into the desert along the border with Iraq. Over the next few months the politicians began to negotiate and the Middle East began to settle down. By September 1961 we were moved out of Kuwait and into a transit camp in Aden.

As we all know the Army Commandos were formed in 1940 and disbanded in 1945-46 and rumours were about that the Regiment was to change its role to a Commando Regiment. Possibly the first Army Commandos since WW2, following the re-organisation of 3 Commando Brigade RM. In October 1961 we boarded the troopship HMS Oxfordshire en-route from Hong Kong to the UK. It was during this time that it was deemed that not all members of the unit would be suitable for the new Commando role and once confirmed these personnel were to be posted on arrival back in the UK. HMS Oxfordshire was diverted and we arrived back in Plymouth at the end of October 1961, disembarking in Plymouth Sound onto large pontoon barges and being greeted by HM Customs at Millbay Docks. After a thorough search we were allowed to go on some well-earned disembarkation leave.



Gnr Jimmy Walton 95 Commando, Checkpoint Charlie, Crater District, in Aden 1967



The Royal Citadel in all of its glory.



Gnr Harry Jackson, 8 Bty, Australia 1966

Reporting back to the Royal Citadel in January 1962 - by which time the Regiment's strength had reduced by 25%, we began training with other members of the Regiment and others who had been posted in to form the new 29 Commando Light Regiment RA. A small advanced party of PTIs and training staff had been sent to CTRM Lymington to get trained so they could train up the remainder of the Regiment. The remainder started training in earnest in The Royal Citadel and on the moors during January and February of 1962, the days were long and the nights cold not a good time to be on the moor. Eventually we moved to CTRM Lymington and on 16 March 1962, the completion date for the first Commando Course, those that had passed were awarded the coveted Green Beret. By now Army Commandos were back in a Commando Brigade for the first time since the end of WW2.



29 Commando in Iraq 2003



The Commando Gunner Memorial outside the Royal Citadel

The first Commando Batteries to be formed were 79 Kirkee Cdo Light Bty RA and 145 Maiwand Cdo Light Bty RA, both being equipped with the new 105mm Pack Howitzer, 8 Bty being part of the HQ Bty. 29 Cdo Light Regt RA now being formed as 2 x Cdo Btys and a HQ Bty. In July-August 1962, 79 Cdo Light Bty RA were posted to Singapore for a 3-year tour of duty, the Royal Citadel was now occupied by the now reformed 8 Cdo Light Bty RA and 145 Cdo Light Bty RA. The Royal Citadel, Plymouth was now the home of '29 Commando' and would remain so for the next 50 years.



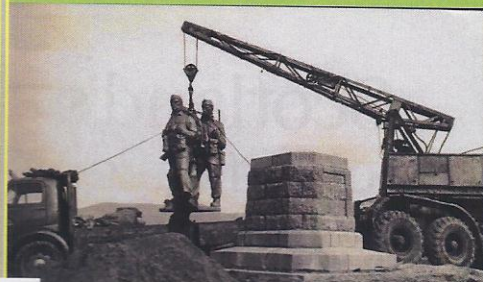
29 Commando guns in Helmand Province.

60th Anniversary of our wonderful Commando Memorial

This year is the sixtieth that the Commando Memorial has stood 'on the hill' overlooking the River Spean valley with a view of Ben Nevis. The Memorial is a Category A listed monument, dedicated to the men of the original British Commando Forces raised during World War II. Situated around a mile from Spean Bridge village, it overlooks the training areas of the Commando Basic Training Centre, established in 1942 at Achnacarry Castle. Unveiled in 1952 by the Queen Mother, it has become one of Scotland's best-known monuments.



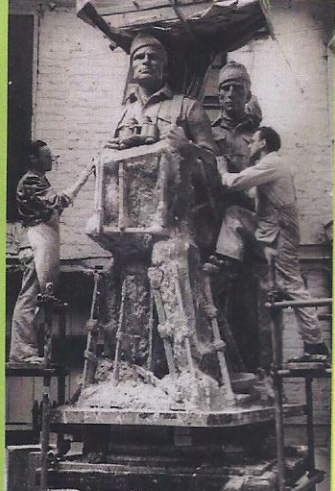
The Queen Mother unveils the Commando Memorial in 1952



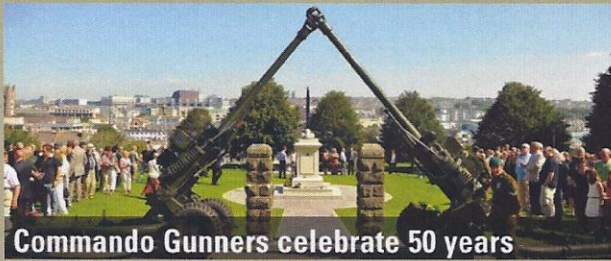
4 The Commando Memorial being lifted to the main plinth

"On a hill in the heart of the country where they did their training a memorial was raised. A memorial at once striking yet simple. Three gigantic bronze figures of Commando Soldiers, in cap comforters and SV climbing boots, facing up to the elements", "Is it just another monument - another Glenfinnan - to another lost cause? Is it for the piper to play and lament again 'Lochaber No More'? Or will those who pay the piper call a different tune?"

Donald Gilchrist (No 4 Cdo and CBTC) from his book Castle Commando.



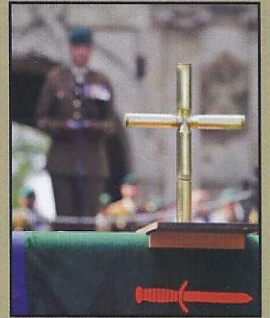
Scott Sutherland (left) during the plaster casting process



Commando Gunners celebrate 50 years

Preparations for the 50th Anniversary of 29 Commando Regiment RA had begun some years earlier and all culminated in the Anniversary weekend of 20-22 July 2012. The celebrations really began on Friday 20 July with an unofficial get together in one of Plymouth's many watering holes. This being organised by the Plymouth Branch of the Commando Gunner Regroup & Commando Veterans Association.

As normal it's hard to predict numbers for such events but we estimated 100 or so and in reality more than 300 turned up; the evenings curry supper was stretched to the limits. Veterans from 29's formation in 1962 to the present day were present including veterans from 95 Cdo Regt RA, 145 Maiwand Cdo Bty



RA & 289 Cdo Bty RA (V) all long since disbanded or placed into suspended animation along with their share of characters.

The evening passed off well and an excellent time was had by all - most trying to keep an eye on the next morning's church parade followed by the serving Regiment exercising its freedom of the City by marching down Royal Parade followed by the veterans of yesterday. Saturday 21 July 2012 was a glorious day and the serving Regiment and Veterans turned out in full to the extent that standing room only in St Andrews church was available. The Service was taken by Carl Freeman, the Regimental Padre and the 3 Cdo Bde Padre; their enthusiasm for the service being matched by the singing.

Again numbers hard to predict for the march past! The Regiment expected 100+ but again in true Commando spirit over 400 Vets with medals and Green Berets marched with the serving Regiment down a packed Royal Parade. The people of Plymouth turned out magnificently and this was truly appreciated by all members past and present on Parade - the Salute being taken by General Sir David Richards, Chief of the Defence Staff, another one of those Commando Gunners that just seem to get everywhere. The RSM's job being a lot easier as we all kept the step - just about! Up and down Royal Parade and back to the Royal Citadel.

The parade was followed by celebratory gunfire from the battlements and a send-off in true style for the late Major Pete Geary RA, whose ashes were included in the volley, Pete undoubtedly one of the most colourful characters to ever have graced the Royal Citadel, a true "Kirkee Boy".

The day was now well and truly in swing with many old friends and acquaintances being renewed. This was greatly assisted by the presence of the beer tent. One moving event that took place was the presentation of a commemorative 29 Cdo Regt RA - 50th Medal to the families of fallen comrades; the Medals being organised, paid and presented by members of the Plymouth Branch.



The 50th Anniversary gunfire giving Maj Pete Geary RA a great send off...

Sunday 22 July was a parade of serving members and veterans at the Regimental Memorial outside the Royal Citadel to remember all fallen comrades in action and peace time operations. This being followed by the traditional curry lunch in messes before saying our goodbyes and for many a one last visit to the Barbican!

To summarise the weekend was a huge success for the Plymouth Branch and a massive well done must go to our Branch Chairman Neil 'Randy' Randall and his faithful assistant Mo for their organisational skills in making the weekend a huge success for the Veterans-not forgetting Alan & Ros Timson for their excellent efforts in procuring commemorative ties, T-Shirts and other memorabilia. Also to the sheer number of veterans who turned out to make the weekend such a success.

To look forward the Commando Gunner Regroup annual 30-Miler will take place over the weekend 25-26 August 2012 to raise funds for this years adopted charity Hounds for Heroes. Once again any ex or serving Commando who wishes to join our branch is welcome to come along. We are Commando Gunner top heavy but all cap badges welcome and it would be nice to see some new faces, the first Friday of the month at the Sergeants Mess 29 Cdo Regt RA.



Ex-WO2 Alan Carruthers
Plymouth Branch



70th Anniversary of Operation JUBILEE - Dieppe



Freddie Walker laying the CVA wreath



Fred Walker, No.3 Commando, with Sister Agnes-Marie Valois who was a nurse in Rouen Hospital in August 1942

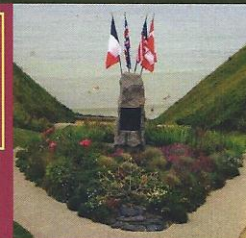


Photos of Freddie Walker and Roy Cadman (No 3 Cdo) and Stephane St Martin representing the CVA for the Dieppe celebrations in August.



Stephane Saint-Martin in Dieppe

Lest We Forget



Roy Cadman and Freddie Walker (both No 3 Cdo) with Dan Snow

Other Interesting or Amusing Stuff!

Standing Orders for Rogers' Rangers (Major Robert Rogers)

Rogers' Rangers was an independent company of colonial militia, attached to the British Army during the Seven Years War (called the French and Indian War in the United States). The unit was informally trained by Major Robert Rogers (an artists impression at photo on right) as a rapidly deployable light infantry force tasked with reconnaissance and conducting special operations against distant targets. Their military tactics were so bold and effective that the unit became the chief scouting unit of British Crown forces in the late 1750s. The British valued them highly for gathering intelligence about the enemy.



A fictional version of Robert Rogers' 'Rules of Ranging' taken from Kenneth Roberts novel 'Northwest Passage'.

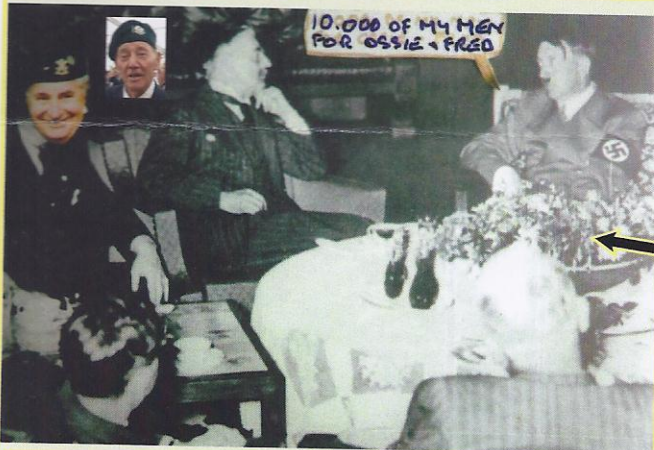
1. Don't forget nothing.
2. Have your musket clean as a whistle, hatchet scoured, sixty rounds powder and ball, and be ready to march at a minute's warning.
3. When you're on the march, act the way you would if you was sneaking up on a deer. See the enemy first.
4. Tell the truth about what you see and what you do. There is an Army depending on us for correct information. You can lie to all you please when you tell other folks about the Rangers, but don't never lie to a Ranger or Officer.
5. Don't never take a chance you don't have to.
6. When we're on the march we march single file, far enough apart so one shot can't go through two men.
7. If we strike swamps, or soft ground, we spread out abreast, so it's hard to track us.
8. When we march, we keep moving till dark, so as to give the enemy the least possible chance at us.
9. When we camp, half the party stays awake while the other half sleeps.
10. If we take prisoners, we keep 'em separate till we have had time to examine them, so they can't cook up a story between 'em.
11. Don't ever march home the same way. Take a different route so you won't be ambushed.
12. No matter whether we travel in big parties or little ones, each party has to keep a scout 20 yards ahead, twenty yards on each flank and twenty yards in the rear, so the main body can't be surprised and wiped out.
13. Every night you'll be told where to meet if surrounded by a superior force.
14. Don't sit down to eat without posting sentries.
15. Don't sleep beyond dawn. Dawn's when the French and Indians attack.
16. Don't cross a river by a regular ford.
17. If somebody's trailing you, make a circle, come back onto your own tracks, and ambush the folks that aim to ambush you.
18. Don't stand up when the enemy's coming against you. Kneel down. Hide behind a tree.
19. Let the enemy come till he's almost close enough to touch. Then let him have it and jump out and finish him with your hatchet.



What a Ranger may have looked like.

Deal or No Deal Mr Chamberlain?

A photo sent in by our lovely Nan Davidson (wife of the late Dan Davidson (No 3 Cdo)). The photo was edited many years ago. Originally a photo of the Chamberlain - Hitler Peace Agreement talks of 1939, the heads of Freddie Walker and the late Ossie Osborne MM (both No 3 Cdo) have been added with Hitler attempting to pull off a very wise deal indeed. Hitler later commented that he regretted coming in with such a pathetic first offer for Fred and Ossie.



If you have any articles of interest or amusement please send them to the National Secretary **now!**



Every Senior Officer Speech You Ever Heard.....

I think we need to hit the ground running, keep our eye on the ball, and make sure that we are singing off the same song sheet. At the end of the day it is not a level playing field and the goal posts may move; if they do someone else may have to pick it up and run with it. We therefore must have a golf-bag full of options hot-to-trot from the word 'go', to deal with any number of crocodiles nearest to the canoe. It is your train set but we cannot afford to leave it on the back-burner; we've got a lot of irons in the fire right now.

We will need to un-stick a few potential poo traps but it all depends on the flash-to-bang time and fudge factor allowed. Things may end up slipping to the left and, if they do, we will need to run a tight ship. I don't want to re-invent the wheel but we must get right into the weeds on this one. If push comes to the shove, we may have to up stumps and then we'll be in a whole new ball game.

I suggest we test the water with a few warmers in the bank. If we can produce the goods then we are cooking on gas. If not, then we are in a world of hurt. I don't want to die in a ditch over it but we could easily end up in a flat spin if people start getting twitchy. To that end, I want to get around the bazaars and make sure that the movers and the shakers are on side from day one. If you can hit me with your shopping list I can take it to the head honchos and start the ball rolling.

There is light at the end of the tunnel and I think we have backed a winner here. If it gets blown out the water, however, I will be throwing a track. So get your feet into my in-tray and give me chapter and verse as how you see things panning out. As long as your ducks are in a row I think the ball will stay in play and we can come up smelling of roses.

Before you bomb burst and throw smoke, it is imperative we nail our colours firmly on the mast and look at the big picture. We've got to march to the beat of the drum. We are on a sticky wicket. We'll need to play a straight bat and watch out for fast-balls.

I've been on permanent send for long enough and I've had my ten pence worth. I don't want to rock the boat or teach anyone to suck eggs. We must keep this firmly in our sight picture or it will fall between the cracks. If the caps fits, wear it, but it may seem like pushing fog up hill with a sharp stick..... ZZZZZZZZ

HAVE YOU A "COMMANDO" FIGURE?



COMMANDOS are the cream of Britain's perfect physical specimens of manhood. They are the fittest of the fit. Do you envy them? Do you chafe against the fact that you are weak, easily tired, under-weight, nervous or depressed? Snap out of it! Get a Commando figure for yourself. Try a course of IRVONA the celebrated Nerve and Body Builder. It will enable you to put on the weight you lack, to build up the resistance and reserve of energy you need. It will give you not only the urge but the ability to "do your bit" with the full abandon of physical excellence. IRVONA supplies just what the thin, under-weight, under-powered body lacks. IRON to enrich the Blood, CALCIUM to combat Debility, PHOSPHORUS to strengthen Nerve and Brain. IRVONA is obtainable from all chemists price 1/5, 3/4 and 5/7 or direct by sending the price to The London & Colonial Export Co., Ltd. (Dept. 9), 1, Gresse Street, London, W.1.

IRVONA NERVE AND BODY BUILDER

Quite a funny extract from a 1950's newspaper. Well, have you?

Obituaries

We say a final farewell to the following Commandos:



'Jock' HERD (No 11 Cdo)
died 4 July 2012 aged 92 years



LCpl Erik DONSMADSEN
(No 9 Cdo) died March 2012



Pte Lewis John JONES
(No 4 Cdo) died 5 April 2012



Dr Fred MANSBRIDGE (2 SS Bde Sigs)
died 22 April 2012 aged 93 years



Major Ian CD SMITH MC Bar
(No 2 Cdo, No 12 Cdo, SOE, SBS)
died 3 May 2012 aged 92 years



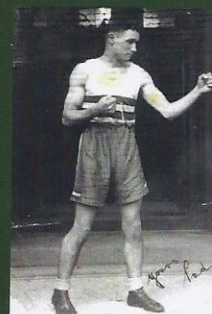
George Leonard Percy BREAM MBE, BEM
(48 RM Cdo) died 7 May 2012



Fus George Norton BARNES
(A Cdo RM, No 1, 3, & 5 Cdos)
died 28 July 2012 aged 88 years



Pte Thomas Appleby DUNCAN (No 3 Cdo)
died 23 May 2012 aged 91 years

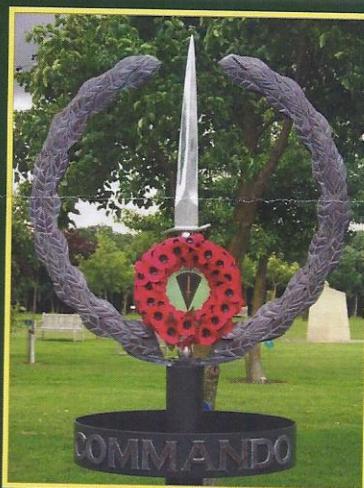


Patrick McVEIGH DCM (No 4 Cdo)
died 25 July 2012 aged 99 years



WO1 (SSM) Clive CRAISTER
(Commando Ordnance Squadron)
died 10 July 2012 aged 57 years

We will remember them



Dr John PATERSON (No 1 Cdo)
died 12 July 2012
aged 91 years

Stanley William ELLIS (No 3 Cdo)
died 7 April 2012 aged 89 years

Bdr George C HOWAT (No 4 Cdo)
died 24 August 2012

Daniel HOULDSWORTH (No 4 Cdo)
died 9 June 2012 aged 93 years

Edward 'Ted' RICHARDSON (No 5 Cdo)
died 28 May 2012 aged 91 years

Pte Daniel Charles Thomas HARDY (No 3 Cdo)
died 12 August 2012



Ron ROBERTS (No 1 & 12 Cdo)
died 19 June 2012
aged 90 years

William WAUGH MM (No 9 Cdo)
died April 2012 aged 89 years

Terrence J KEALY (No 4 Cdo)
died February 2012

Pte JW 'Joe' WARREN (No 12 & 6 Cdo)
died 26 August 2012

Colin SAYLES (No 5 Cdo)
died 21 February 2012 aged 87 years

Jan HEUSSCHEN (10 IA Cdo - Dutch Troop)
died 2 May 2012

Ordering of Wreaths - The Commando Benevolent Fund will provide wreaths for annual events such as trips to Normandy, Holland, Dieppe etc and for our annual CVA events at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, Alrewas, Fort William and also for the Commando Plot in the Field of Remembrance. Wreaths for trips can be booked for delivery to a specific address. Quantities will be limited and only one order will be accepted per event.

Contact CVA HQ to place orders.



A poem by our fellow CVA member
John F Buxton (No 5 Commando)

John added:

Fanling, China, in about
September 1945. At the age
of nineteen I had my first
introduction to what was
loosely called 'rum punch'.
We youngsters tried to keep
pace with the older soldiers.
I think I lasted half an hour
before I passed out.

Soldier old,
Very bold,
Many drinks,
Soldier thinks,
Soldier sober,
Heeling over,
Soldier young,
Head hung,
Belly heaving,
Legs weaving,
Eyeballs burnt,
Lessons learnt,
Soldier tough?
Soldier rough!

Memorial Pavers

Leave an Everlasting Memorial

Individual Memorial Pavers can be added to the Army Commando Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. Pavers cost only £25 which includes brick, paver, engraving and installation. Please allow 8 to 10 weeks for installation. Call Fred Davies on Tel:01217 458494



COMMANDO

Merchandise

New Polo Shirts!



Small Combined Ops Logo on right sleeve

Black or Green



Polo Shirts - Now in stock. These are great quality and have an FS Fighting Knife (6cm) on left chest area and the Combined Ops badge with 'Commando' above and 'United We Conquer' below, on right sleeve. Sizes: M, L, XL. Colours: **Black Green** £16.50 - Don't forget to state colour & size.

1st Pattern Fighting Knife
Tie Pin
30mm
£3.50

CVA Tie
Polyester CVA Motif with fighting knives and 'United We Conquer' on blade. £9



CVA Blazer Badge
Diameter 95mm
£8.50



CVA Plain Greeting Card - Plain interior
210mm x 150mm
Pack of 5 - £3
Pack of 10 - £5.50



CVA Xmas Cards
210mm x 150mm
Pack of 5 - £3
Pack of 10 - £5.50

Remember!!! Postage included in prices shown!



Slate Coasters
Polished Welsh slate 100mm
£4.00 each



Individual Rollerball Pens
Excellent value at £3.50

CVA Pens - CVA logo, website and FS knife. Black ink.



Ballpoint Pens
Only £6 for pack of 6

Greeting Cards - Blank interior
Spean Bridge
Commando
Memorial.
Pack of 10 - £3
Pack of 20 - £5



CVA Lapel pin
20mm - £3.50



Associate Lapel Pin
20mm - £3.50

Commemorative Covers -

Cover 1 - Lt George A Knowland VC - £1.99
Cover 2 (as shown) - Lt Col Geoffrey CT Keyes VC, MC - £1.99



2012/2013 events for your Commando diary:

14/15 September 2012 - The Commando Loggie Reunion at RMB Chivenor and Plymouth. Formerly the Commando Ordnance Squadron Reunion, this gathering is now open to all Army Commando Loggies (RAOC, RCT, ACC, RLC, REME, R Sigs) or attached Royal Marines who have served in Commando Logistic Regiment, 3 Cdo Bde HQ, or attached to the Commando Gunners or Sappers. There will be a dinner at the Wos & Sgts Mess RMB Chivenor on Friday 14 commencing around 1800hrs, followed by an RV in Plymouth on Saturday 15 at the 383 Commando Troop Bar in Deriford, at around 1300hrs for a Leo Sayer-all dayer!. All ashore who's going ashore!

9/11th November 2012 - Commando Remembrance at Fort William - Our usual events and parades over the weekend with the grand opening of our new Commando Exhibition on Saturday at 1030hrs. The Alexandra Hotel is now fully booked, however there are still rooms available at the Ben Nevis Hotel (call 01397 702331) at the same CVA rate. Also try Margaret at the Spean Bridge Hotel (call 0800 6199462). Any queries please call the CVA Secretary.

22 January 2103 - Elmwood School Croydon to celebrate Lt George Knowland VC (No 1 Commando) - Details in next Dispatches.



Caption Competition!

A really nice photo from our weekend at Alrewas in the summer when our London Branch Secretary, Sylvie Townshend, had her fair share of attention from the Army Commando lads. Can you imagine what she may have been thinking at this moment in time? Let us know - but only if it is really funny!! Oh and we have already had -

"Now..... which one do I take home?"

CVA Annual Draw -

Please find enclosed tickets for our national draw which takes place annually at Fort William. Tickets remain at £5 per book and further tickets can be obtained from CVA HQ now, or from the National Secretary in the Alexandra Hotel in November during our Remembrance celebrations. Prizes last year included a 40" LCD TV, various luxury hampers, weekend retreats at hotels in Fort William, many cash prizes and more.

Please send your payment and completed stubbs to CVA HQ prior to the end of October.

Good luck!

All money goes to the CVA Memorial Fund



If any members would like to post any requests for information then please send them to CVA HQ. Remember that we also have the CVA website forum for those online.

Fellow CVA member **Mick Fay** has been trying for 39 years to find out what happened to his old friend **Cpl JOE BASTIN** who was a member of No 12 Commando. Please get in touch if you can help.

Commando Basic Training Centre - Harry Williams asks if anyone remembers 'Achnacarry Argus' that was posted with Part One Orders at weekends. Also the little angel **Anne Cameron** who used to work in the NAAFI and listen to all our troubles. And lastly, who can forget **Cpl Dusty Miller RM** who took you by the seat of your pants when he dropped back on the road walk and run, what a man!



A social gathering at Achnacarry circa '42-'43

