

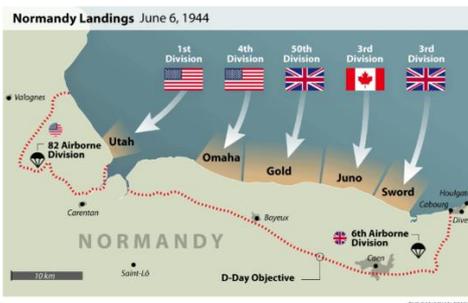
## Pentangle Chapter's Almoner attend the D-day celebrations.



**E. Comp. Ian McLeod , the Almoner of Pentangle Chapter No. 1174** with his wife, Ruth, was privileged to attend the D-Day

Commemorations on 6<sup>th</sup> June. Ian joined The Black Watch in 1956, passed through Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and served with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion the Black Watch from 1958 to 1964, first in Cyprus and then at the School of Infantry in Warminster.

The 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Battalions of The Black Watch took part in the Normandy landings from 7<sup>th</sup> June 1944 as part of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division which subsequently fought through Germany, ending the war in Northern Germany. Codenamed Operation Overlord, the battle began on June 6, 1944, also known as D-Day, when some 156,000 American, British and Canadian forces landed on five beaches along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of France's Normandy region.



The 5th Battalion Black Watch – the Angus battalion – were there at the beginning. They landed on D-Day but later on. They weren't in with the first wave. It was closer to the evening. They were 800 to 1000 Officers and men.



They were then followed by the two other battalions of the Black Watch – the 1st Battalion and the 7th Battalion – originally the Fife battalion – which were part of the famous 51st Highland Division. It has to be remembered, however, that by this stage in the war the Black Watch would have had members from across the UK. A dwindling number of

veterans remain to give first-hand accounts of what it was like to be involved in this most ambitious and dangerous wartime operation. However, their stories of bravery and sacrifice live on within the regiments history and the soldiers that followed.

Most veterans' voyage in MV Boudicca from Southampton to Normandy for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations, which was organised by Arena Travel, with the Royal British Legion and received wide publicity. Ian and Ruth reached Normandy more informally on a cruise down the River Seine from Paris to Honfleur in MS Seine Princess. This ship, with cabins for 138, was chartered by The River Cruise Line, part of Arena Travels also as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> celebrations.

Ian says "So many memories remain from such a short trip. Pegasus Bridge, where one could see the precise points where the three Horsa gliders had made their night-time landings. The beach at Arromanches with remaining parts of the Mulberry harbour still in place. Sword Beach, where a contingent of Westminster Dragoons were holding a quiet ceremony.



The services in Bayeux Cathedral and at the British Military Cemetery. Most abiding, the road from cathedral to cemetery, lined with cheering French people of all ages as the veterans passed by in their wheelchairs. And not to forget the kindness of Prince Charles, Colonel in Chief of The Black Watch, who recognised the only Red Hackle that seemed to have been present and stopped for a chat."

