



# THE DASH

## The Newsletter Of The Channel Dash Association



[www.channeldash.org](http://www.channeldash.org)

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1942 – 2012 : 70th Anniversary Commemorative Edition

### A Message From the Chairman.

Welcome to this very special edition of 'The Dash'. 2012 was been a very busy year for the association, being the 70th Anniversary of 'Operation Fuller'. The committee were determined that it should be remembered both fully and appropriately with major events to mark each of the significant events connected with the operation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone on behalf of the committee and members for supporting us in our quest to plan, design, fund raise and organise all of the events. In particular, I wish to thank the following, our Patron, Admiral the Lord Boyce for his staunch support and advice. The President, Malcolm Cornwallace for his continuing support and generosity, the Committee for all of their hard work, particularly the Vice Chairman/Events Manager, Malcolm Godfrey and Treasurer/Monument Coordinator, Jim Williams. There are so many others to thank including all of those organisations who helped fund the two monuments and our membership and Veterans from other associations who always turned out to mark the occasions with their Branch Standards. It is quite remarkable how much has been achieved since the Associations inauguration in June 2007 during the current economic climate and I am particularly delighted that all of the Channel Dash Heroes have been suitably remembered for their stirring attempt to try and prevent the great German Fleet from reaching their destination home ports. I know that our founding President, Edgar Lee and Vice President, Les Sayer would be very pleased with the monuments which now stand as a mark of respect to everyone who took part in 'Operation Fuller' and as a permanent acknowledgment of their bravery.



Chairman : Treasurer : Vice Chairman

### 2012–70th Anniversary Events

**17th January:** The year commenced with a moving gathering at the Woodlands Cemetery, Gillingham, beside the grave of Lt Cdr Eugene Esmonde. Present were the CDA President and Committee, Val Sayer, widow of Les Sayer of the squadron and Admiral Sir Ian Garnett.



Woodlands Cemetery

Following the laying of wreathes and a minute of silent tribute to the airmen of 825 NAS Admiral Sir Ian presented the association with a very rare framed photograph of Esmonde leading 825 NAS personnel into RNAS Lee-on-Solent following their safe return after the sinking of HMS Ark Royal in November 1941. The photo has been entrusted into the safe keeping of the association with the kind permission of Admiral Sir Ian and the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association who, presented Sir Ian with it whilst he was the serving Flag Officer Naval Aviation.

**Saturday 11th February:** A Remembrance Service was held at the 825 NAS monument at Ramsgate Royal Harbour whilst simultaneously, HMS Trumpeter accompanied by a Pilot Cutter from Estuary Services Ltd laid wreaths at sea. Guests attending the memorial service included our Patrons Admiral the Lord Boyce and Thanet South MP Laura Sandys, Admiral Sir Ian Garnett, Brigadier Simon Wolsey and Wing Commander Gerry Wilson, The Chairman of Thanet District Council and the Mayors of Ramsgate, Margate and Broadstairs. The Last Post was played by a Bugler from the Kohima Band of the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment.



Ramsgate Memorial Monument

David Kingsmill

On the evening of 11th a commemorative dinner was held in the Officers Mess at RAF Manston with Admiral the Lord Boyce presiding. Guests arrived to be greeted by a reception Guard from the Manston Squadron of ATC who formed up in front of full scale replicas of a Spitfire and ME109 kindly provided by Rex Cadman, the founder and owner of the annual War and Peace Show. During dinner the guests were entertained by a Quintet, also from the

RAF Manston Officer's MessAdmiral Sir Ian and Jochen Werne (GOST)

from the Kohima Band and by a very moving monologue of how it must have felt to have been a pilot of one of the six 825 NAS aircraft flying toward the German ships. Written and performed by CDA member David Kingsmill, grandson of one of the pilots of the Swordfish that flew out from Manston on 12 February 1942. After dinner, representatives from Airfix Models presented the CDMT with a mounted model of the Fairey Swordfish and a Spitfire from the newly released 'Channel Dash' boxed set and several boxed sets from the range for fund raising toward our Dover monument. Our Patron, presented the Officers Mess with a framed Canvas print of the Channel Dash painted by our Vice President, Reg Mitchell. Also present were Jochen Werne and Stefano Malvestio of the 'Global Offshore Sailing Team who planned and executed an expedition which would retrace the route of 'Operation Cerberus' the Channel Dash taken by the German Fleet. Following the Dinner the CO of RAF Manston remarked that the evening was, without doubt, the most significant occasion to take place in the Mess for more than 20 years.

**Sunday 12 February 2012:** The association held a memorial service at St. Mary-in-Castro Church within the walls of Dover Castle. The Service was conducted by Padre Steve Franklin. At the conclusion of the service another of Reg Mitchell's prints was presented to English Heritage for display at Dover Castle. The weather that day was very wet and cold with very low visibility over the White Cliffs which meant that a pre-arranged low fly-past by a Dakota aircraft of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight had to be cancelled. Following the service a specially arranged conducted tour kindly organised by English Heritage was available for members and guests to see Vice Admiral Ramsay's secret underground war rooms.

St Mary- in-Castro Church

**Saturday 13 March 2012—'Operation Cerberus':** The Global Offshore Sailing Team (GOST) set sail from Brest at 20.00hrs on their epic voyage to re-trace the route of the three German warships as they dashed from



Brest to their home ports in Germany. The trip would take them 800nm in their 50ft chartered yacht. On-board the yacht was our own 'Ambassador', Bernard Sealy, Commodore of the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club who had kindly accepted our offer to take part in the event as our representative. On Monday 19th March another yacht belonging to Dave Ford, Vice Commodore Cruising, sailed from Dover to Boulogne where,



after mooring overnight went out to sea to liaise with the 'Operation Cerberus' crew at 0800hrs off Boulogne. Both vessels then sailed together to a point off Cap Gris Nez where they hove to and a short service and wreath laying ceremony took place. Bernard later thanked the association commenting that he felt truly hon-



oured to have been invited and he now had 8 new friends for life. Bernard, we, the CDMT/CDA thank you for doing it on our behalf and for being such a good Ambassador for us and for the publicity and goodwill that you helped create between the association and the people of Germany. Such was the publicity generated that the association received a personal letter direct from the German Federal Government, Minister of Defence, commenting on the work of the association and GOST and pledging his personal support for the unveiling of the Dover monument in September by ensuring that personnel from the German Navy would be in attendance for the event.

**War and Peace Show - The Hop Farm. 18–22 July 2012:** At the kind invitation of the show organiser, Rex Cadman, the trust/association attended the event as exhibitors for the entire show. We were given a prime front site close to the main arena entrance and adjoined the 'Help for Heroes' stand and the RAF exhibition team. Our stand attracted a reasonable amount of attention however overall, the number of new members and



sales were not as high as expected although, after expenses we added almost £500.00 to the monument fund. The main reason it seems was that he normally expected large number of people who attend this show was down due to the recent bad weather with lots of very heavy rain which caused many difficulties during the first couple of days. Rex and his team were very stoic during the whole period and it was remarkable to see how they made things happen in spite of the bad conditions. The

weather improved significantly during the week and the three CDMT/CDA committee who ensured that the stand was staffed continuously are to be congratulated for a job very well done.



Stars from 'Allo Allo' at the show

### 22 September 2012—'Operation Fuller' Monument

The CDMT Committee are delighted that the new 'Operation Fuller' monument was unveiled and dedicated on schedule and on budget, with the ceremony commencing at 1330hrs and the dedication at 1400hrs. The proceedings started with a Parade led by the Central Band of the RAF marching along Marine Parade, Dover. Accompanying the parade was a Guard of Honour from HMS Kent, serving military personnel, veterans from many associations with in excess of 20 Standards and cadets. The parade halted in front of the monument to await the arrival of our VIP the 1st Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope GCB OBE ADC who kindly performed the unveiling. Immediately following the arrival of the 1st Sea Lord, and to start the service, a Spitfire from the BBMF flew overhead appearing from above the White Cliffs. The Spitfire performed a glorious fly past which concluded with a 'Wing Waggle' salute before returning home, disappearing back over the White

Cliffs. The Service of Dedication was led by the Rev John Chater. Following the unveiling ceremony and the laying of wreaths a lone Fairey Sword-



fish flew along the line of the white cliffs. Compared to the speed of the Spitfire the Swordfish flew slowly, but graciously overhead and performed a wonderful flypast for the occasion. It was without doubt a wonderful sight which, combined with HMS Kent moored alongside in Dover Harbour and MTB 102 laying at anchor just off-



shore adjacent to the monument, the War and Peace Show Spitfire and ME109 parked on the grass as a backdrop to the occasion with a collection of vintage military vehicle from WWII and re-enactors in uniforms of the period ensured a truly wonderful day for our guests and the many visitors and spectators attending.



We were particularly pleased that other very special guests were able to attend on the day to complete the occasion. They were **Major General Charles Ramsey** and **Vice Admiral Otto Cilliax**, sons of the British and German Commanding Officers during Operation Fuller and Operation Cerberus respectively. **Rear Admiral Ohlms**, The German Naval Attaché and official representative of the Germany Government. Apologies were also given for Heidi Galland, widow of Adolf Galland, the Luftwaffe Ace who master-minded the massive air cover which helped protect the German fleet.



To add to all of the splendour—the sun shone throughout.