

D-Day revisited.

- A. A report on the 70th Power Boat Squadron visit to France.
- B. Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day landings.

Purpose.

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings in France, in 1944.

Requirement.

- a. To prepare MGB 81 and HSL 102 for a trip to Ouistreham and Caen, and return.
- b. To liaise with MTB 102 and Medusa, as vessels accompanying the Trust boats.
- c. To liaise with Buckingham Palace for a visit from HRH Prince Charles to the boats at K1, Pegasus Bridge.
- d. To liaise with the various Mayors of the places we would visit.
- e. To liaise with the Pegasus Museum re visits to the Museum, and use of their facilities.
- f. To arrange transport, accommodation, ablution facilities for crews.
- g. To liaise with the Millin Pipe Veteran team, using the Trust Flagship Pontoon as the final arrival point of the pipes on their voyage from Scotland.
- h. To liaise with the American Veterans, via the Portsmouth City Council.
- i. To liaise with the Royal British Legion, and local school, to provide 220 RBL crosses, and an RBL wreath to be delivered to Ouistreham, Benouville graveyard and Pegasus Bridge.
- j. To arrange a "thank you" cake from a local village of Totton, to the Mayor of Benouville.

Actions.

- a. Much work was undertaken over a 6 month period prior to sailing for Caen. This included amongst other tasks, a complete electrical rewire of MGB 81. Engine service to engines on both boats. Installation of electronic navigation systems on MGB81 In addition to "cosmetic" works carried out on MGB 81, a number of similar works were carried out on HSL102. These works covered the interiors, as well as above decks woodwork and paintwork. Both boats were subjected to a diving team, who were tasked with cleaning the underwater hulls, all propellers, rudders, shafts and skin fittings. Both boats were refuelled to near full capacity. Sea trials undertaken by both boats, a satisfactory result in both instances.

- b. Both MTB102 and Medusa included in all the planning processes. MTB102 fitted in with all the plans. Medusa had her own agenda for most of the trip, and we were together as a 4, briefly in Portsmouth and Caen.
- c. Admiral Rankin attended to all the liaison with the Palace and other related persons, covering the visit of HRH.
- d. Thanks to our agent in France, Jean Carteron, RH was able to meet with all the relevant Mayors, Port Captains, Yacht Club, Camp site managers, etc. These meetings covered all of the events, berths, ceremonial and social activities which we would be requested to take part in, during our visit.
- e. The Pegasus Museum opened its doors to us, and we had use of facilities during our stay at K1.
- f. We were able to put in place accommodation ashore for NR and PG. At the same time transport, was arranged. Showering and ablution facilities were arranged, at the camp site close to K1, and at the Caen Yacht Club, in Caen.
- g. The Millin Pipe Group were an addition to the original task, but as they were in the same position as we had found ourselves, having to provide a large sum of money for use of the Marina next door, we offered this team the use of Flagship pontoon for the delivery of the Millin Pipes, as well as inviting the Veterans to spend some time in the Historic Dockyard. In addition, as the Southampton stop over for the Pipes had to be cancelled due to lack of interest, we arranged for this stop over to take place, courtesy of the Royal Southampton Yacht Club.
- h. The American Veteran group were also an addition to the original task. We were asked by Portsmouth City Council if the AV Group could Join the Millin Pipe group for the Monday visit to the Historic Dockyard. This was agreed, and they were welcomed along with the Millin Pipe Group, By Admiral Neil Rankin, on the day. PNBPT Jim Brooke Jones, arranged for coach entry to the Dockyard via the Victory Gate, as well as for a splendid meal for all the Veterans, in Boathouse 7. PNBPT NR arranged for a Pussers Rum tasting session before lunch, as well as a miniature bottle of whisky, presented to each Veteran after the meal. The American Naval Attache attended, and made a speech after the meal. PNBPT Volunteers provided excellent coverage of the boat visits, escort work and general PR work during the visit. PNBPT NR and PG were invited to attend an evening meal at Southwick House, with both UK and USA Veterans.
- i. The Royal British Legion were requested by RH to provide 242 RBL crosses. 220 of these were to be placed in sand from the beaches, brought to the Grand Bunker in Oustreham, by local school children. 22 crosses were to be placed in individual graves, by local school children, in the Benouville

Church Cemetery.

Each of the crosses were annotated with dates, and the number 10, by the school children of a school in Totton, near Southampton.

The number 10 stood for 10 casualties suffered on the first day of the landings, giving a total of 2,200 casualties.

The crosses were delivered by the school children and the RBL, to MGB81 on Monday the 2nd June.

A RBL wreath was also provided by the RBL, to be placed on the Memorial situated at Pegasus Bridge, Benouville.

All the crosses were subsequently landed in France, taken and placed in their intended position in France.

The wreath was placed at the Pegasus Bridge Memorial, as planned.

- j. RH arranged for a local cake maker in Totton, Southampton to make a cake for the Mayor of Benouville.

The cake simply stated "Thank you for looking after the graves of our fallen"

Crew.

<u>MGB 81</u>		<u>HSL102</u>
N Rankin	(PNBPT Leader)	P Goodship (PNBPT)
R Hellyer	(Skipper Volunteer)	N Hardesty (Skipper Volunteer)
T Ray	(Volunteer)	J Brooke Jones (PNBPT)
T Juden	(Volunteer)	T Gibson (Volunteer)
J Finch (Disembark Caen. Volunteer Electrician)		F Attwood (Volunteer)
S Jupp (Disembark Caen. Volunteer Engineer)		C Ashworth (Volunteer)
I Parry (Joined in Caen) (Volunteer)		

Accommodation.

NR and PG accommodated ashore.

Balance of crew remained on board. The Trust provided Euro 30 per man per day subsistence.

Passengers.

Jean Carteron. Caen to Portsmouth. (Our agent in France)

Patrick Conard Caen to Portsmouth (Our agent in France)

Passage detail.

Depart Portsmouth 3rd June 0600. Arrive Portsmouth 9th June 1450. = 6 days 8 hours 50 minutes.

Round trip distance MGB81= 235.2 nautical miles. HSL102= 225.2 nautical miles.

Fuel consumed = MGB81 about half a tank per engine. HSL 102 about half a tank per engine.

Problems.

No serious problems experienced onboard, and any which did crop up, were efficiently dealt with by the crew.

Arrangement / plan change problems occurred on a regular basis, but these were dealt with by the crew.

Monday 2nd June 2014.



4 boats alongside Flagship Pontoon.



Millin Pipes arrive on MTB 102.

Veterans visit to the Historic Dockyard from 0930 to 1330.

The Millin Pipes arrived safely on MTB 102.

MGB81, HSL102, MTB 102 and Medusa alongside Flagship pontoon.

Tuesday 3rd June

0830 All 4 boats, MGB 81, HSL 102, MTB 102 Medusa, sail from Portsmouth. Medusa returns to Portsmouth.

Weather a bit rough to start with, but improved for the most part.

1310. 3 boats arrive Ouistreham. RBL 220 crosses landed to the Grand Bunker.

1530. 3 boats enter East Lock.

1700. 3 boats arrive Caen.

Wednesday 4th June.



Canoes arrive Pegasus Bridge.



Canoes depart Caen.

0900. 3 boats depart Caen with the canoe group.

1130. 3 boats arrive Pegasus Bridge berth K1.

Afternoon open to the public.

Thursday 5th June.



3 boats at Pegasus Bridge berth K1.



NR welcomes HRH on to MGB 81.

Morning prepare the boats for Royal visit.

1320 HRH Prince Charles and HRH the Duchess of Cornwall arrive. Visit the boats and meet the crews. Veterans on the quay greeted and met by the Royal Couple. HRH started both engines on MGB 81.

1830. MGB 81 proceeds to Ouistreham West Lock. Visitors on board, but after an hour they were stopped by Port Control, as the access was considered too dangerous.

2300. MGB 81 returns to K1.

Friday 6th June.



RH + IP Give crosses to children.



NR + PG + RH + IP Cross Pegasus Bridge with Mayor Benouville.

Boats open to the public.

1115. NR + PG + RH to Mayors office. Join the school children and Veterans . March to the Benouville Church yard. RBL 22 Crosses placed at each of the 22 graves.

1230. NR + RH + IP + PG march across Pegasus Bridge in Company with the Mayor and guests.



RH laying RBL wreath.



RH presents cake to Mayor.

1300. Wreath laying at the Pegasus Memorial. RH Placed the RBL wreath alongside other wreaths.

1430. Attend Benouville Mayors reception. Totton cake handed over to the Mayor.

1500 till late. Boats open to the public.

Saturday 7th June.

1000. 3 boats depart K1 berth at Pegasus Bridge. Arrive and berth Caen.

1145. berth Caen.

1700. Jean Carteron reception. Guests visit the boats and then to the Caen Yacht Club.

Sunday 8th June.

Morning prepare boats for Mayor Caen visit.



Mayor Caen starts MGB 81 engines.



NR presents Mayor Caen with bell.

1130 Mayor arrives. Presentations made by the Mayor to each Skipper, PNBPT and NR.

NR presented a bell to the Mayor.

1230 Mayor departs.

Monday 9th June.



Caen Mayor driving MGB81 past Pegasus Bridge.



7 boats proceed down Caen Canal.

0845. 7 boats depart Caen. MGB 81, HSL 102, MTB 102, Medusa, P163, P293, MHV 651.

Caen Mayor group board. Cadets from RN ships join. Mayor on MGB 81.

1000 Into West lock Ouistreham. All canal passengers disembark.

1100. Depart Ouistreham bound for Portsmouth.

1105 MTB 102 parts company, bound for Dover. Medusa to other French ports.

Weather rain but calm. Easy passage back to Portsmouth.

1450. Arrive Flagship pontoon. Deployment completed.



MGB 81 homeward bound somewhere in the English Channel.



HSL 102 homeward bound somewhere in the English Channel.