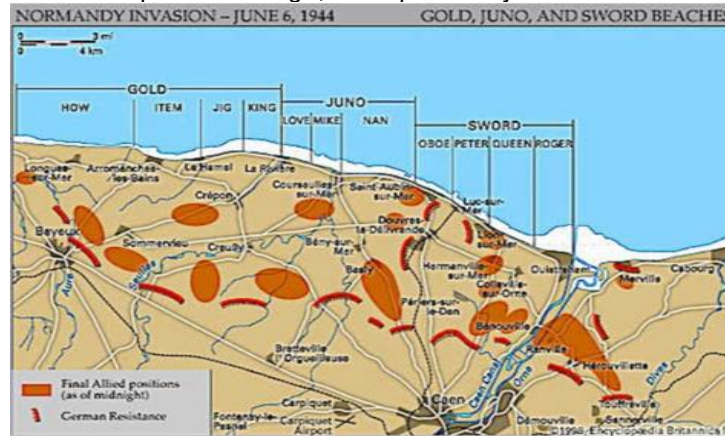


KOSB Nov 2022 AGM - BATTLEFIELD TOUR 2023 / 2024 – OPTIONS

Members will recall, pre Pandemic, we had several battlefield tour plans in mind after the very successful McCutcheon led one to Arnhem in 2019, and the previous 4 to WW1 battlefields. The pandemic scuppered all plans for last and this year. Below are current plans being worked on:

1. **BACKGROUND** – It will be **D Day 80** in 2024- and the KOSB Association should mark that with a commemorative tour. 1 KOSB landed on Queen beach (part of SWORD) on D day, and they and 6 KOSB were heavily involved later in the Break out battles. See the excellent Cooper article from the 2020 BC. Walcheren 80 and the 1945 crossing the Rhine - involving the 1st, 4th, 5th and 6th Bns - would also seem possible tour options. X-ing the Rhine would need to be a separate tour, and more complex to arrange, but a possibility for that 80th in 2025.



Flavour - 6 KOSB War Diary - An incredible entry for 1st Aug 1944:

*“After continuous recce during the day, orders were received to carry out a Bn attack from incl BARELIERE 7052 to wood and track junc 703517, commencing at 1700 hrs. In the afternoon Coys moved to FAAs and SLs and Bn HQ moved to 697528. At 1730 hrs the attack went fwd with B and D Coys leading. D Coy reached objectives without much opposition. C Coy encountered opposition, which was successfully dealt with, and in due course reached their objective. Int was received that large numbers of enemy were present in le BOIS du HOMME, and large arty concs were brought down on this area with great effect. 2 Lt P SOUTHWOOD was killed, and Maj JD HENSON and Lt RD CHAPMAN wounded in this op. **During the attack all ranks wore roses in their helmets in commemoration of the battle of MINDEN.**”* Who was the QM who fixed that!

a. **When** ? We will need a confirmatory recce in mid May 2023, after the 6 May 2023 Coronation, leading to making a final plan for May 2024. We are deliberately avoiding the actual anniversary date of 6 June- like we did on all other tours - so as to have a quieter battlefield to ourselves.

b. **Lead** ? We have arranged and run 4 WW1 tours and the successful McCutcheon Arnhem one, with fabulous help / admin back by a small team of Borderers. We can repeat the same formula, and divvy up the admin load.

c. **Guides** ?

i. **Peter McCutcheon** – very knowledgeable on this ,but has many other commitments again next year, and is unable to come, but:

“I’d be happy to offer some advice and support to a tour that focused on Normandy”

ii. **Lt Gen John Cooper** has led a family tour to the area, especially the break out, where his father fought with 4 Gren Gds, and the 6 KOSB part, and is keen to come and help guide.

iii. **WO2(SQMS) P R Barnes** (Universally known as Barney) AGC(SPS) | SO2 Warfare B | Warfare Branch | Headquarters, Land Warfare Centre - Ex Pay NCO in 1 KOSB, in the Mark Castle era - now works with my son Peter, writing doctrine at the Land Warfare centre . He has led many D day tours and has offered to help us run a KOSB specific one - he would do it in Army

time .He knows a lot about our two Bns there - 1 and 6. He loves all things KOSB and knows a lot of the characters.

".....there are a couple of venues in Hampshire which I believe to be important in telling the tale of Overlord: Southwick Park (Eisenhower's HQ) and the D-Day Museum at Southsea. I would foresee the trip happening in mid-May (the benefit of good weather and quieter sites) and lasting for a full five days. The content would focus on the KOSB battalions which fought in Normandy."

Start in Portsmouth, look at the things there as above – take the Brittany Ferries ship to Caen - two days on 1st Bn, incl generics like Pegasus Br, Utah/Omaha, and follow 1st Bn route off the beaches. Follow 6th Bn. on the break out battle South of Caen. A sequential 6 days. With commem. service at Bayeux CWGC cemetery, where 37 Borderers are buried .

2. A TWO PHASE PROPOSAL

I propose a small, short length, tour in 2023 as an advance party / recce, with max 6 planning pax, leading to an **80th anniversary** much larger, 6 days, tour to the D day and Caen break out battles in May 2024, for max 25 pax.

WALCHEREN . Could also be done in 2024- 80th -and the local people would very much welcome it. Ian Gibbs is the go to man here! See BC 2014 pp 62- 67, 70th anniversary visit.

3. The Long Shot. Burma (Myanmar) has been on several Borderers' radars for a number of years now. But this is even less of a runner sadly, because of the coup, than it was even pre pandemic, in terms of a more expensive option, with several health and journey risks. But it remains on a bucket list for many of us- to incl Kohima (which the KOSB didn't take part in) and Imphal (which we did) in India. The Admin Box battle in the Arakan, (Rohingya State) where CGM's father was KIA, as CO 2 KOSB, by own arty, is unlikely ever to be allowed for a long while- and is on the FCO no no list.

Rob Lyman- ex Reg Army - famous Burma expert, has offered to lead a small party- max 8-10 - KOSB specific one, which would be fabulous, as he is such a star and all round good guy – but it wouldn't be cheap. No time line yet – not before autumn 2023. He worked for me in Brunei as a young Captain in the UK Loan Service team, and recently spoke at the very successful Black Watch "Words of War" book festival in Perth .If you haven't read his new book on Burma – **WAR OF EMPIRES**- please buy it –it's gripping .

4. D DAY TOUR COSTS ? Not sure yet until after the recce– I'm guesstimating at c £600 +/- - pp. The Association is asked to look at subbing some costs as before- wreaths, printing of tour materials etc.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

a. MAY 2023

A small planning / recce party confirm the content/ route / admin/ travel / costs plans for D Day 80. After that an expression of interest letter will be circulated. Anticipating a big demand for this, hopefully, a WNG O now- we may have to conduct a ballot for seats on the bus, with a reserve list!

b. MAY 2024

KOSB ASSOCIATION conduct a **KOSB - D DAY 80** tour of up to 6 days, for 25 pax of Borderers, with TBC 2 SCOTS and QVS Dunblane.

c. WALCHEREN 80

Ian Gibbs is looking at the possibility of running a tour at the anniversary, or thereabouts - late Oct /Nov 2024- for our 4th and 5th Bns. He knows the area and some of the key players- especially the Inter Scaldis pipe band.

FINALLY –we have booked help from above. Padre Stephen Blakey- who came on two of our WW 1 tours- would be delighted to officiate, when needed, for D Day 80.

ANDY MIDDLEMISS BEM DL

XXV

26 NOV 2022