



British Forces landing during the Invasion of Normandy June 6<sup>th</sup> 1944

# D-Day – 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944 – 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

This week sees the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ‘D-Day’ when 160,000 Allied troops, marines, airmen and naval personnel (under the overall leadership of Dwight Eisenhower USA) managed to successfully establish four sizeable beachheads as a crucial step taken towards liberating Europe from the tyranny of Nazi Germany. Years of planning had gone into this vast project which ultimately destroyed the German war machine in Europe.

On June 6<sup>th</sup> 1944 many Ansty families would have been listening to the ‘wireless’ when at 10 am John Snagge (a top BBC newsreader) read the news headlines:

*‘This is the BBC Home Service – and here is a special bulletin read by John Snagge. D-Day has come. Early this morning the Allies began the assault on the north-western face of Hitler’s European fortress. The first official news came just after half-past nine, when Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force issued Communique Number One...This said: ‘Under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies this morning on the northern coast of France’.*

The villagers instinctively knew that the ‘hour of liberation was approaching’ and that the dreadful War that began in 1939 was coming to an agonising end.

During World War 2, there were plenty of reminders of the war all around Ansty village. Soldiers were billeted in neighbouring villages and there were endless military convoys on the road to Shaftesbury and Warminster and venues all along the south coast especially so in the run up to the D-Day Landings.

There would have been a number of Ansty folk involved in all sorts of military aspects during the duration of World War II - Indeed the names of two men who lost their lives are commemorated on a plaque in St James Church - Gordon Frank Brown and John Percival Owen New, the latter was buried in St James' churchyard.

[Gavin Mortimer](#) wrote an excellent piece in ‘The Spectator’ paying a great tribute to the generation who fought in WWII. This was the generation who had to go and fight another World War to clear up the mess left behind by the previous World War I (1914-1918). They knew what they were defending; they knew what was right and wrong and they did it with a sense of fair play and decency throughout. That is how we should remember them all including those brave Ansty men and women for the part they played throughout WWII in ensuring that our country remained a free democracy.

Read the whole article here: [The Generation with a respect for democracy](#)