

COPP HEROES NEWS 2

JUNE 2012

We have some exciting news to report on progress and events scheduled for the rest of this year. These include delivery of the granite centrepiece, and the dedication of the memorial in late September, as the culmination of a week of events, commencing with the opening of the Hayling Island WW2 Heritage Trail on Saturday 22nd September, at the HIADS Station Theatre.

In January, COPPist Roger Gilbert put us in touch with the Special Boat Service Association, who in turn approached their patron Countess Patricia Mountbatten on our behalf. The Countess is the daughter of Lord Louis Mountbatten, the former Head of Combined Operations, who set up the COPP unit late 1942. She expressed her pleasure in agreeing to dedicate our COPP Heroes Memorial, and talked fondly of meeting members of COPP 6 prior to the D-Day operations.

She was most impressed by photographs of the completed memorial stone, and said she looked forward to thanking and congratulating stonemason Ian Piper for his generous gift.

We still continue to find new friends and re-unite old comrades, and are now in contact with ten members of the unit, in person or through their families, so we're looking forward to quite a re-union on Hayling in late September. Our next step will be to lift the granite out, and for 24 Regiment Royal Engineers Commandos to transport it to Hayling from its Cornish hillside quarry this July.

Below: Royal Engineers' transporter crew

*Above:
Countess Mountbatten of Burma*

The COPP Heroes Memorial will be dedicated by Countess Mountbatten on Thursday 27th September 2012.

There will be a reception and dinner at the Newtown House Hotel for COPPists and their families on Wednesday 26th, and following the dedication ceremony a further gathering will be had at Hayling Island Sailing Club.



Hayling Island Sailing Club 2012 [CJB Photography]

The Club will make a splendid location to round off the day - this is where the COPP story all began 70 years ago, under Lieutenant Commander Nigel Willmott in December 1942.



The quarry site of C.J. Piper & Son

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Since our first Newsletter, our COPP Heroes website, together with national press coverage has prompted contact with a further five members of the COPP unit; Roger Gilbert, John Ainsworth-Davis, Nick Goodyear, John Peacock and John Bowden.

We look forward to seeing as many of them as possible, at the Memorial dedication ceremony in September together with families of their former comrades.



Jim Booth



Logan Scott-Bowden



John Ashford



David Owen



John Ainsworth-Davis



Roger Gilbert



Nick Goodyear



Peter Palmer



John Peacock



John Bowden



Countess Mountbatten

Right:
Stonemason Ian Piper
and completed memorial
at his Cornish quarry

Work on the central memorial stone is nearing completion at Ian Piper's quarry works in Cornwall. Ian made the generous gift of the stone in 2011, and has made fine progress. The Combined Operations emblem has now been carved and is ready for installation.

The stone was lifted into a vertical position in early May so that we could assess what more needed to be done, ready for shipping out to Hayling by the Royal Engineers on July 12th. It's certainly impressive now it has been lifted upright.



We formally established the COPP Heroes Memorial Fund in early 2010, and look forward to completing the project this year on Thursday 27th September.

There will be a week of events commencing with the opening of the Hayling Island WW2 Heritage Trail on Saturday 22nd September followed by an exhibition at the Newtown House Hotel, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday the following week.

We look forward to meeting all our COPP friends, hopefully on Wednesday 26th, otherwise on the the big day. You will receive full details of the arrangements by email and post, but please ring me any time if you have any questions on 02392 718441.

Robin Walton June 2012

Hayling Island Sailing Club 1944



Saturday 22nd	Opening of Hayling Island WW2 Heritage Trail	11.30am
Tuesday 25th-27th	COPP Exhibition at the Newtown House Hotel	
Wednesday 26th	Welcome tea and get together at the Newtown	4.00pm
	Reception and dinner at the Newtown.	7.00pm
Thursday 27th	COPP Heroes Memorial dedication	11.30am
	Reception and buffet at Hayling Island Sailing Club	12.30pm