

OBITUARY



PETER WOOD 1917 - 22 March 2015

Our former branch vice chairman, Peter Wood of Thornham, died on 22nd March at the age of 92. He had served in the Army during the Second World War, including the action in north Africa which defeated Rommel, and then in Italy, taking part in the assault on Monte Cassino. About 16 branch members attended his funeral, including national chairman John Crisford, branch chairman Terry Austin, branch standard bearer Steve Greef and branch chaplain Peter Cook. Two standards were paraded, the second being from the Monte Cassino Society.

The funeral commenced 30 minutes late, as the cortège had been stuck in traffic! We felt that Peter would have enjoyed all the jokes which ensued about 'being late for his own funeral'. Peter always described himself as a "D-Day Dodger", and a recording of the song "We are the D-Day Dodgers" to the tune of 'Lili Marlene', got the proceedings off to a good start. The term was claimed to have been used in parliament by Viscountess Astor, although there is no official record and she denied using it, to describe those servicemen serving in Italy while others were storming the Normandy beaches. The song commences:

We're the D-Day Dodgers out in Italy - Always on the vino, always on the spree. Eighth Army scroungers and their tanks We live in Rome - among the Yanks. We are the D-Day Dodgers, over here in Italy.	We landed at Salerno, a holiday with pay, Jerry brought the band down to cheer us on our way Showed us the sights and gave us tea, We all sang songs, the beer was free. We are the D-Day Dodgers, way out in Italy.
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Words taken from www.wikipedia.com

Another of Peter's pet phrases, in response to the question "How are you today?", and quoted in a eulogy read by his daughter in law, was: "Maintaining my position, above the grass"! Sadly, no longer the case.