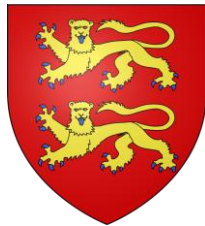


## ‘D-Day Landings 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944’

*A Battlefield Tour to the Normandy Beaches  
8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011*



“Two kinds of people are staying on this beach, the dead and those that are going to die. Now let’s get the hell out of here!”

*Brigadier-General Norman D Cotta, 6th June 1944. Omaha Beach, leading his men of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry*



### ***This Tour***

Normandy provided the start point for the invasion of Europe and the defeat of Nazi Germany. This 5 day tour visits the landing grounds of the greatest military operation in history to understand why and how the Canadian, American and British Allies came ashore believing in their cause, their leadership and in themselves. We stand on the Normandy assault beaches of Sword, Juno, Utah, ‘*Bloody*’ Omaha and Gold, where the only Victoria Cross was won on D-Day. We tour the Airborne Landing sites at Ste Mere Eglise, Pegasus Bridge, Ranville and Merville to learn of those momentous events of the 6<sup>th</sup> June some 67 years ago. We visit Arromanches and visualise the logistics that enabled this massive seaborne assault landing, the German heavy guns at Longues and the scene of the US Ranger’s dramatic attack on Ponte du Hoc. We include Bayeux’s Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery and the opportunity to visit the famous Bayeux Tapestry.

## Tour Itinerary

### Day 1: Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September via Calais to the Calvados Coast

- **An early start** from Fyfield via pick up points: Moreton - Brentwood (Holiday Inn on the A12/M25)- Maidstone Services and Dover to catch an early Dover Ferry to Calais.
- **Pont de Normandie:** After a lunch stop we cross the River Seine over the spectacular Pont de Normandie on our way to Bayeux on the Calvados coastline and a battle front 55 miles wide.
- **Bayeux Military Cemetery:** We arrive in the ancient city of Bayeux where Odo, brother of William the Conqueror was the Bishop. We visit the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery and the grave of a winner of the Victoria Cross and contemplate the selfless commitment of the crew of a Lancaster Bomber.
- Arrive Bayeux Hotel.

### Day 2: Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September - The American Sector

An early start to the Longest Day of the tour.

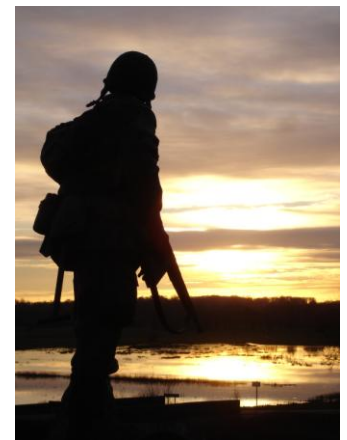
- **La Cambe German Cemetery:** Understanding the German culture of remembrance and the actions of Michael Wittman the Tiger Ace and Wagner, Weber, Reimers and Hirschel, his tank crew.
- **Utah Beach:** The defences, the elements, the tides, the timings and the President's son who decided what happened here. By the end of the day 23,250 Americans had landed here but not for the pleasure of a coffee ... as we will!
- **St Mere-Eglise:** The small town which was at the centre of it all. We understand why it had to be taken by the paratroopers of the US Airborne 505th Parachute Infantry Regt who 'dropped in' here to secure the strategical and tactical objectives that secured the Allied west flank. To take the town their commander issued an unusual order. We contemplate glider and parachute operations through the tales of the airborne landings of the 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Divisions. We visit their superb museum.



*St Laurent Cemetery*



*Anti tank defences Utah Beach*



*Iron Mike*

- **Point du Hoc:** The epic mission by Colonel Rudder and his 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion whose task it was to take out the quick firing naval guns that protected Omaha Beach. We hear of the cliff top battle, its prolonged aftermath and how these American Rangers delivered success out of chaos. A very memorable

example of where human error was rectified by sound leadership under extreme pressure.

- **Omaha Beach:** America's painful memory. "Bloody Omaha". What happened at the water's edge? – Objectives of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> US Divisions. When the best laid plans go awry who pulls the irons out of the fire? We examine the chaos on the beach and how the situation was slowly brought under control and success achieved.
- **American Military Cemetery:** St. Laurent-sur-Mer where 32 pairs of brothers and a father and son are buried. We visit the new Visitors Centre, the terrace overlooking 'Bloody Omaha' Beach where the sea literally turned red and the hallowed acres where 10,944 US soldiers are remembered.
- Dinner at Hotel.

### Day 3: Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September – Gold Beach, Arromanches & the Bayeux Tapestry

- **Gold Beach:** The landing of the 50<sup>th</sup> Tynes Northumbrian Division, its objective, a rhubarb patch and the only VC on D-Day.
- **Arromanches:** The administration of combat supplies and a film that puts you right there where they are needed. The brainchild of an inspirational leader whose imagination and foresight saved time and lives. The unique floating Mulberry Harbours ensured the delivery of combat supplies to the expanding bridgehead. It was a key factor in both enabling the strategic intent and servicing the tactical battle. But was it really required?



*A mistaken target*



*VC's route to rhubarb*



*Mulberry Harbour 'B'*

- **Longues Battery:** Where HMS Ajax entered the fray. Four monsters and the making of a famous film.
- **Port-en-Bessin:** This fascinating scenic little village with its ancient harbour was one of many ports that saw the departure on William's fleet in 1066. The D-Day stories of Royal Marine Commando George Amos, and pint-sized Geordie Bren-gunner Arthur Delap will bring what happened here to life. Then there is PLUTO.
- **The Bayeux Tapestry:** Fascination and intrigue. Firstly a magnificent treasure but also a stunning exercise in storytelling. Is it a true representation of the climactic events of 1066 and the Battle of Hastings or is it a masterpiece of propaganda?
- Dinner at Hotel

## Day 4: Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September – The British & Canadian Sectors

- **Merville Battery:** The raid that went horribly wrong until good leadership and determination won through. We take in its planning, preparation, execution and unique museum.
- **Pegasus Bridge:** No substitute for surprise. We stand at the spot where they landed. We discover the importance of the 2 bridges across the River Orne and Caen Canal and what happened when the glider-borne assault by 52<sup>nd</sup> Foot Ox & Bucks Light Infantry triggered to start to this momentous of days. British paratroops landed just after midnight on D Day in a classic coup de main exercise and liberated the first house in France from Nazi oppression (the famous Café Gondree). It is a story of remarkable courage and an example of a simple plan, simply executed, with integrity and moral courage and it has resonance in our world today. The Museum there ... you won't forget it.
- **Sword Beach:** We view the landing site of the British 3<sup>rd</sup> Div and Hobart's Funnies of the 79<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division. We visit the Free French memorial; connect with Lord Lovet's Commando and the champagne drunk at a most appropriate moment in the battle.



*Sword Beach*



*John Howard*



*Pegasus Bridge*

- **The Coast Road to Courcelles:** Taking the coast road westward, one begins to comprehend the enormity of the D-Day operation. We view the landing beaches of Sword and Juno with historical vignettes and learn of the battlefield actualities and sacrifices of those involved on the day. We relive the history of D-Day.
- **Juno Beach:** Where time and tide waited for no man. The desperate scene's where Canada's 3<sup>rd</sup> Division landed. Where Churchill, de Gaulle and King George later visited and Bill Dunn made an emotional return.
- **Depart for Caen Hotel.**
- **Dinner** in Hotel.
- **Caen by Night:** A short stroll around this historic place to comprehend its vast history.

## Day 5: Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September

- **Ranville Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery:** A para and his dog and the risks of an airborne assault. We visit the grave of the first Officer to be killed on D-Day

- Depart for the Calais Ferry. Arrive Moreton 2100 Hrs.
- Lunch en route.

## YOUR GUIDE

Graeme Cooper has been battlefield-guiding for several years and operates Cooper's Waterloo Tours, specialising in tours to the battlefields of Europe for adults, and leadership training for the military. A Fellow of the International Napoleonic Society, Graeme's interest in military history was sparked during his time as a cadet at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst by the lecturer and renowned military historian and author, the late Dr David Chandler. In November 2002, Graeme founded the International Guild of Battlefield Guides, of which he is a Director on Guild Council. In May 2006 he started Corporate Battlefields, a business leadership training company for corporate management. He is a recognised Great War and WW2 guide, member of the Battlefields Trust and former Chairman of the British Army of the Rhine Branch of the Western Front Association. Graeme is married with a son and a daughter, both of whom are commissioned in the British Army.

**Tour price per person sharing £735 - Deposit £250 – Single Supplement £125**  
*(Tour Ref: CWT Normandy 11)*

\*\*\* **PLACES AVAILABLE** \*\*\*

### Included in the price of the Tour will be:

- 4 Nights 3-Star Hotel Bed & Breakfast
- 4 Dinners (including wine)
- Luxury Coach from Lodge Coaches
- Qualified Guide, Guild of Battlefield Guides
- Tour Manager
- Tour Brochure

### Excluded from the price of your Tour will be:

- Hotel extra services (telephone, bar, business facilities etc)
- Dinner on 12<sup>th</sup> September
- All Lunches
- Insurance

### For Booking and Further Details Please Contact:

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*Graeme Cooper-Qualified Guide  
 Guild of Battlefield Guides  
 Badge No 7*