

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Tributes paid to D-Day troops ahead of 75th anniversary

Veterans at a Solihull care home have paid tribute to the men who lost their lives on the beaches of Normandy, ahead of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings.

A wreath from The Royal Star & Garter Homes was laid at the memorial in the Bayeux Commonwealth Military Cemetery in France and signed on behalf of its residents. The Home cares for ex-Servicemen and women and their partners living with disability or dementia.

It was placed by Charlie Wilson, Activities & Volunteers Manager at the Home, on Friday, 15 March, and included a note written by Joan, a resident who served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) – the women's branch of the British Army – during the war, and whose husband took part in the Normandy landings.



It read: *“On behalf of all veterans of World War II, grateful thanks to our brave souls who gave their lives on the Normandy beaches 75 years ago to secure our freedom. We and the nation salute you.”*

Charlie also visited the five D-Day landing beaches, Allied cemeteries and museums during her week-long trip around the battlefields of Northern France.

She said: *“I come from a military family, with both my parents serving in the Navy and in the Falklands, so we've been brought up with a real respect for troops and services. And working at The Royal Star & Garter Homes, I have a huge amount of respect for older Servicemen and women.”*

She said the D-Day tour opened her eyes to the sacrifices they made: *“You learn more about what they did, what they went through, and they went through hell. But they still managed to fight and they still managed to win. You truly appreciate what they did, the sacrifices they paid for our freedom, and it fills you with pride.”*



Along with the message written on the wreath, other residents also gave notes for Charlie to take with her to France. She said: *“It was special for them that their messages and tributes could be taken to the memorial. D-Day is really special for a lot of residents, it means a lot for them. It was a lovely tribute.”*

# MEDIA RELEASE



**The Royal Star  
& Garter Homes**  
Caring for the nation's military family since 1916



The D-Day landings, which commenced on 6 June 1944, was the largest seaborne invasion in history, and began the liberation of German-controlled France and eventually the rest of Nazi Europe.

Next month, Solihull Home Activity Coordinator Kevin Dempsey will visit the same sites, taking more messages from the veterans at The Royal Star & Garter Homes.



## **ENDS**

### **Captions**

D-Day France 1: The note on the wreath, written on behalf of residents at The Royal Star & Garter Homes

D-Day France 2: Activities & Volunteers Manager Charlie Wilson lays the wreath at the Bayeux Commonwealth Military Cemetery

D-Day France 3: Activities & Volunteers Manager Charlie Wilson lays the wreath at the Bayeux Commonwealth Military Cemetery

D-Day France 4: The memorial at the Bayeux Commonwealth Military Cemetery

D-Day France 5: The Royal Star & Garter Homes' wreath

D-Day France 6: Gold Beach, where British troops landed on 6 June, 1944

D-Day France 7: Graves of Commonwealth troops at a cemetery

D-Day France 8: Graves of American troops at a cemetery

### **About the Bayeux Commonwealth Military Cemetery:**

Bayeux War Cemetery is the largest Commonwealth cemetery of the Second World War in France and contains burials brought in from the surrounding districts and from hospitals that were located nearby. It contains 4,144 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 338 of them unidentified. There are also over 500 war graves of



## MEDIA RELEASE



**The Royal Star  
& Garter Homes**  
Caring for the nation's military family since 1916

other nationalities, the majority German. The Bayeux Memorial stands opposite the cemetery and bears the names of more than 1,800 men of the Commonwealth land forces who died in the early stages of the campaign and have no known grave.

Source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission

### **For further information please contact:**

Goolistan Cooper

Communications Officer

e: [goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org](mailto:goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org)

t: 0208 481 7669 / 07391 868796

Cally Madden

Marketing & Communications Manager

e: [cally.madden@starandgarter.org](mailto:cally.madden@starandgarter.org)

t: 020 8481 7692 / 07881 017299

### **About The Royal Star & Garter Homes:**

**The Charity provides award-winning care for military veterans and their partners who live with disability or dementia.**

The Royal Star & Garter Homes is a charity founded in 1916 to care for the severely injured men returning from the battlegrounds of the First World War.

Today our friendly, state-of-the-art Homes offer a pioneering approach to nursing, dementia and therapeutic care. We have award-winning Homes in Solihull, West Midlands and Surbiton, Surrey. Our third Home in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire opens in spring 2019.

We continue to expand our services to reach even more veterans. In 2018, we were able to support 185 residents and over 60 guests at the Star & Garter Club, our day care service. We also offer interim care for young disabled Service personnel. We provided 11,700 individual sessions of physiotherapy and speech & language therapy last year to support our residents' health, and over 5,600 places to residents for activities, outings and events, to promote well-being.

We are proud to have enjoyed Royal patronage since our foundation, including that of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II from 1953 to the present day.

**Twitter:** @starandgarter

**Facebook:** facebook.com/starandgarter

**Website:** [www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)



The Royal Star & Garter Homes is a member of the National Care Forum – the leading voice for not-for-profit care providers. A national perspective may be available from [info@nationalcareforum.org.uk](mailto:info@nationalcareforum.org.uk) or by contacting 02476243619. More details on NCF available

at [www.nationalcareforum.org.uk](http://www.nationalcareforum.org.uk).



# MEDIA RELEASE



**The Royal Star  
& Garter Homes**  
Caring for the nation's military family since 1916

