

# GLEN'S WWII NEWSLETTER

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Apr/May 2011 #12

## Welcome



**Glen Morris**

### *Spring is finally here!*

After a very snowy and cold winter in the Midwest, spring has finally arrived. The tulips on the side of our garage have already bloomed and the bugs are out! The yard

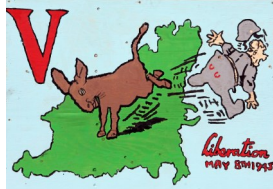
has been cleared of winter's tree branches and twigs, and the grass has been cut for the first time. All the signs of spring are evident.

Because of the long, cold winter we had in the Chicago area, I have a new awareness and appreciation for those men and women who have to make their living working outdoors in extreme weather.

It was in January 11, 2010 that I began working for a worldwide security firm. My first assignment was working outdoors and on my feet for almost eight hours a day at the gates of the BP refinery in Whiting, Indiana. All the previous security positions I have had over the years at least I had the "luxury" of walking around, sitting some, and most important, being indoors! How easy it is to take working inside for granted. At least, now, I have a very comfortable job working at a local community college (indoors) just nine miles from our house.

## *Happy V-E and Liberation Day!*

Everybody knows what V-E Day is (Victory in Europe), but few, except for Channel Islanders,



The stubborn Guernsey donkey finally kicks the German out!

know what Liberation Day is. The Islanders celebrate Liberation Day much like we Americans celebrate the Fourth of July, our Independence

Day on July 4. Here are some links which describe how the two of the occupied islands celebrate their liberation:

- \* [www.guernseyliberationday.com](http://www.guernseyliberationday.com)
- \* [jersey.com/English/aboutjersey/history/liberationday/Pages/default.aspx](http://jersey.com/English/aboutjersey/history/liberationday/Pages/default.aspx)

Because the circumstances were different on the island of Alderney, which most of her inhabitants evacuated, their holiday is called Homecoming



Occupying Germans parade through St. Peterport, Guernsey, July 1940.

Day, which is celebrated on December 15.

## *How I Got Interested in The Channel Islands*

In 2005, I came across a set of videos at a Salvation Army resale store which reenacted the German occupation of Guernsey. Because Channel Islanders speak English, I thought it would be fun to try to contact some of them and learn what I could about their war experiences and general way of life. After a little work

*(Continued on page 2)*

## *Thank You!*

I am grateful to you who help support this newsletter. Sorry, I can't send you a tax receipt because this is not a non-profit organization.

Funds go toward the purchase of paper, envelopes, ink cartridges, printing, and postage.

The following have donated since the last issue:

Christine Kennedy

## What you may submit to be in this newsletter

Some examples and ideas as to what may appear in this newsletter are:

1. Your World War II trivia, stories, and pictures (Unless you state that you want me to keep them, do not mail original pictures). E-mailing them is best.
2. Highlighting interesting things I get from you
3. Anecdotes and quotes
4. Favorite Scriptures
5. Funny and cute things that happened in our lives
6. Introducing my pen pals to others, especially as your biography relates to World War II. This will be my most enjoyable feature.
7. Current and past family and home pictures

The list could be endless. It all depends on your participation. You may also help by letting other know about this newsletter.



A Guernsey German fortification picture provided by pen pal Mr. Alf Ingrouille.

contacting some Channel Island newspapers (*Guernsey Press*, *Jersey Evening Post*, and *Alderney Journal*) sending them my request finally paid off. I also sent in a request to *The Baptist Times*, a major Baptist magazine in England, which also reaped a few pen pals.

This issue is dedicated to the special affection I have for the Islanders as well as their unique experiences each of them during World War II.

### Introducing the Channel Islands

Twice since 2005, the kind people at *The Guernsey Press* have placed my press release for pen pals in their newspaper. As a result, my first contact with the Channel Islands was with the island of Guernsey. Also, a special thanks goes to John O'Neill of *The Guernsey Press Co Ltd.*, who so kindly provided the Liberation Day pictures you see in this issue. Pay them a visit at: [www.thisisguernsey.com](http://www.thisisguernsey.com) and send Mr. O'Neill an e-mail of thanks for the pictures: [joneill@guernsey-press.com](mailto:joneill@guernsey-press.com).

Thanks also goes to my only pen pal from Alderney, Pamela R, for sending me the very fascinating book: *The Alderney Story 1939/49*, which not only recorded the events prior to and during the German occupation, but also the difficult events after the war in getting reestablished.

As I studied each island, much like individual people, I discovered how different each island



Showing off vintage vehicles and honoring veterans.

is from the others, both now and in their histories.



It seemed like everyone from Guernsey showed up for the celebration.

### The Island of Alderney

Of the five inhabited Channel Islands, it seems that the saddest story of the Occupation would be from Alderney. Granted, none of the islands had a picnic during the nearly five years of occupation, bordering on starvation, but it seemed that it took longer after the war for the residents of Alderney to be reestablished and get their lives back to some normalcy than the other four islands. It would take a book, as many have been written, to tell of all the unique stories of each of the islands during the war. There is no way I could possibly exhaust so much information in this small article.



In this issue, I will share a few interesting facts that I came across while reading *The Alderney Story 1939/49*, which I hope you will also enjoy. I welcome any other facts that any of my Islander friends may have about what they know about their particular island. Following are some notes I took from the book.

Because the Germans had occupied France in June 1940, of the 1,432 occupants in Alderney, most left the island for England and only 15 stayed behind. By the time Alderney was liberated in 1945, due to not enough people being able to care for the island, it was a mess, with weeds everywhere. For some reason, the island was infested with fleas and rats, and most of the birds had fled. Since the island was the closest to France, it also received the most bombardment from Allied planes.

The number of German troops on the Channel Islands totaled around 35,000, of which about 2,200 of these were on Alderney. This was a major frustration for Erwin Rommel, who thought occupying the islands was a waste of manpower and resources which could have been better used in the defense of the Normandy coast; but of course, Hitler had to have his piece of England! What a difference this may have had on D-Day had these 35,000 Island troops been stationed on the Normandy coast.

Unlike the liberation of Guernsey and Jersey, Alderney was liberated over a week after on May 16, 1945; the Post Office reopened on September 21; and resettlement began on December 2.

There were over 30,000 mines around the coast of Alderney, which, after the war, were dug up by the now German prisoner's of war.

Due to Allied bombing, which destroyed the C.I. Granite Company, and had employed so many before the war, decided not to return.

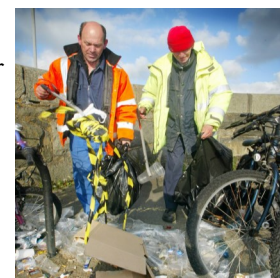
If there was a silver lining around Alderney's dark cloud it would be that the Germans had built a bakery, a Lyceum (public theater), new roads, and improved electrical and sewer services, which were much needed in rebuilding the island.

The Channel Islanders, just like her British cousins across the English Channel, rebuilt and went on with their lives as best as they could. The scars

and bitter memories of war will always be there, but we saw how the Allied powers fought together side-by-side to defeat a common enemy.



Now, islanders may enjoy the food they didn't have during the war.



After the crowd has gone home, the unsung heroes of the cleanup crew begins.