# Veterans of D-Day Reflect on Sacrifices and Memories of Normandy Campaign



Eric Suchland, a veteran of D-Day, celebrated his 100th birthday at Holly Bank Care Home in Halifax, West Yorkshire. The Royal British Legion commemorated the event with a guard of honour. Suchland, who also celebrated his 74th wedding anniversary, recalled his experiences from the 1944 Allied invasion of northern France, where he served in a three-man signals unit supporting a field ambulance brigade.

Unable to land on D-Day due to obstacles, Suchland arrived on Sword Beach the following day, witnessing scenes of devastation, including shell holes, mines, and casualties. He shared vivid memories of the Normandy campaign, including harrowing experiences like witnessing friendly fire incidents and overcoming numerous challenges on the way to Caen.

Ending the war in Germany, Suchland used his draughtsman skills to map his post-D-Day campaign. He married Dinah in 1950, with whom he has two daughters, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. Suchland urged the importance of educating future generations about the sacrifices made during the Normandy campaign. He was awarded the Legion d’honneur for his contributions.

Ada Chell, another 100-year-old veteran, served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service, overseeing dispatch riders in Northern Ireland. She recalled the jubilation and hardships experienced during D-Day, including the loss of her friend Robert Nicholson, a Royal Marine. Chell highlighted the resilience and resourcefulness required during wartime, from rationing essentials to maintaining morale.

George Horner, 97, from Carrickfergus, served with the Royal Ulster Rifles. Landing on Sword Beach on D-Day, he vividly recalled the events and challenges faced, from avoiding enemy fire to fighting in the Ardennes. Horner emphasized camaraderie and the significance of their service, stating he simply did what was required.

Additionally, the village of Graignes in Normandy experienced a brutal massacre by Waffen-SS troops after US paratroopers landed there by mistake. The villagers and soldiers faced severe retribution from the SS, resulting in the death of soldiers, villagers, and the destruction of the village. Memorials and annual commemorations in Graignes serve as potent reminders of the atrocities and sacrifices associated with the D-Day invasion.