

Ramsay Memorial Unveiled ¹⁹

Lt. Commander J Owen, Royal Navy

ON FRIDAY, 10 DECEMBER, 2000, at the Admiralty Lookout and Signal Station, Dover Castle, His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh, KG. KT. unveiled the larger-than-life-size statue of Admiral Sir Bertram Home Ramsay.

The Duke was accompanied by the Patrons and Trustees of the Admiral Ramsay Appeal Trust. Major General Charles Ramsay CB OBE (son) was also present as was the 1st Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Michael Boyce GCB OBE ADC. The Chairman of Dover District Council and Mayor of Dover Town Council attended the ceremony along with much individual local support. The Dover Society was represented by Chairman Jeremy Cope.

They were joined by several veteran groups, including former members of the WRNS who served on the staff of Admiral Ramsay at Dover (Dunkirk evacuation) and in some cases also at Portsmouth (Allied Naval Task-Force Normandy landings) and also in France, where he died on duty in an air accident in January 1945.

The statue by local sculptor Peter Melton is raised on a plinth designed by Duncan Scott and faced with bas-relief plaques depicting Dunkirk and Normandy on either side with a plaque to the front, which reads: *"In memory of Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay KCB KBE MVO 1883-1945 Vice Admiral Dover 1939-42 C-in-C Allied Naval Expeditionary Force June 1944 and those who died in the Dunkirk and Normandy Operations."* To the rear of the plinth is a plaque inscribed: *"I ploughed a passage through the foam Dunkirk and Deal Dieppe and Dover I brought the flower of Britain home and took the fruit of freedom over - A.P. Herbert"* From the White Cliffs of Dover, Admiral Ramsay with telescope in hand, faces seaward in the direction of France as he did in Britain's darkest hour of WWII.

Spending considerable time in the Dover Patrol (1914-18) in command at sea, Bertram Ramsay became very familiar with local waters and having achieved Flag rank was an obvious choice, though retired, to be recalled to Dover in the emergency of 1939. It was as Vice Admiral Dover with his Headquarters in Dover Castle that he took charge of 'Operation Dynamo' in 1940. Subsequently he saw service as a senior commander in the North African landings of 1942 and the invasion of Sicily in 1943, followed by his appointment in command of 'Operation Neptune' in 1944.

Rear Admiral Chalmer's biography of Ramsay 'Full Cycle' quotes the 1st Lord of the Admiralty in March 1945 commenting on Ramsay's untimely death: "Deeply tho' we must deplore his loss we cannot but rejoice that he lived to see the full cycle from the desperate days of Dunkirk to the triumphant return to France".

All who in any way contributed to bringing to fruition this fitting memorial, can be proud of a job well done.



Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay KCB, KBE, MVO
1883-1945