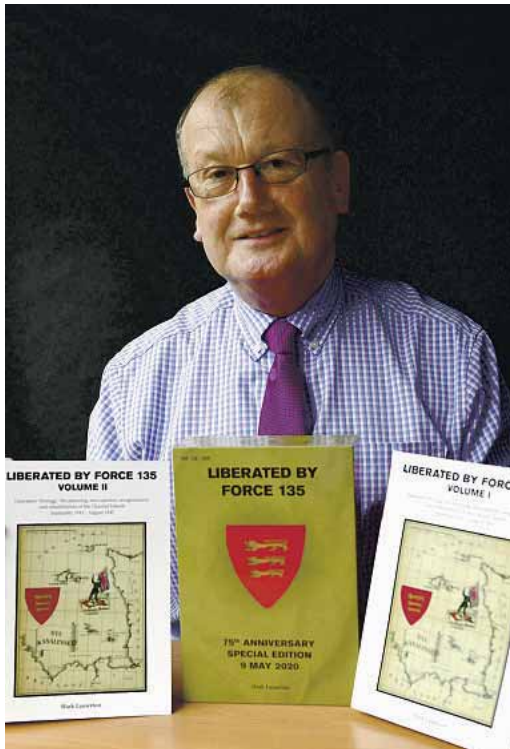


## NEWS

# Hobby that became an obsession leads to 1,200 pages of work

## Local historian's 26 years of Liberation research printed



By Rod McLoughlin

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A NEW two-volume history of Jersey's Liberation is being released this week charting events from the earliest planning for the recovery of the Channel Islands in 1943 to the restoration of post-war government in August 1945.

Local historian Mark Lamerton published a history of Jersey's Liberation in 2000 as a project for the millennium, but the new history is much more than a revision of that book.

'Since publishing the first book, my vision had been to produce another volume about the transitional period of reorganisation and the handover back to the civil administration. However, I obtained so much more information on Liberation and the training of Force 135 that from 350 pages, the whole text ended up at 1,200,' he said, adding that the only practical approach was to publish it as a two-volume set. The two books contain ten times as many photographs as the original single volume.

Launched at the Jersey Museum on Friday, Liberated by Force 135 also puts considerable emphasis on source material and annotations that enable the reader to

track down specific references to individuals, whether members of the Liberating forces or some of those deported to internment camps in Germany who have their own story to tell.

Mr Lamerton was partly inspired to include such detail by information he discovered about his own family.

'If someone recognises a relative in a photograph, for example, they could go to the Archive or JEP and obtain a copy for their family.'

'I have also tried to incorporate lists of those involved where they exist, so I'd like to think that somebody could pick up the book and, if they saw a name they recognised, find out more about the person's experiences,' he said.

What has engaged Mr Lamerton most in this expanded story is the post-war detail of setting Jersey on course again after the interruption of the Occupation.

'It's been reinforced to me that the planning was a bit like a mini D-day. They had a plan for absolutely everything, whether communications, banking, rehabilitation of property, air and boat services – every aspect had been considered and the logistics looked into.'

Fascinated by local history

since he was a child – when he created his own collection in an upstairs bedroom to which he charged sixpence admission – Mr Lamerton hopes that readers will enjoy the publication as much as he did researching it.

'The project is self-funded and published, not a profit-making venture, and therefore I hope to recover the cost of having the book printed, while keeping the retail price affordable. It is a labour of love and the reward is to see my 26 years of research in print.'

'It started as an interest, turned into a hobby and then became an obsession. People would cross to the other side of the road because they would know what I would ask them or want to talk about,' he said with a smile on his face.

Copies of the two-volume history are available in a special edition with slip case at £48, or £39 for the loose books, and can be purchased at the launch, which takes place between 5.30pm and 7pm on Friday 20 March at the Jersey Museum, or online using the website: force135.je.

● The JEP is publishing a series of extracts from Mr Lamerton's work throughout this week. The first can be found on pages 16 and 17 today.

■ Mark Lamerton with his two-volume history of Jersey's liberation

## Group shines light on neurodiversity



■ NeuroDiversity Jersey

By Jonny Drury

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AN initiative has been launched to increase awareness of neurodiversity in the Island.

Neurodiversity is a term used to describe variation in the human brain relating to sociability, learning, attention, mood and other mental functions, and is especially used in the context of autistic spectrum disorders.

The initiative is being launched by local campaigner Jonathan Channing and Eliot Lincoln, former president of the Jersey

Chamber of Commerce.

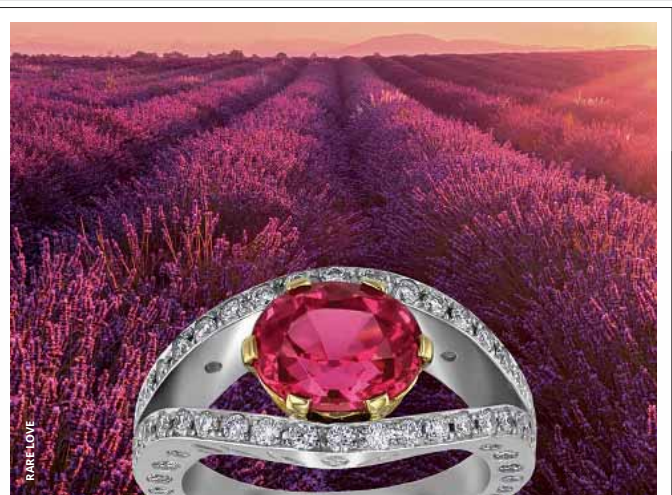
The pair want to raise awareness of the issue and are working with Skills Jersey to distribute posters to secondary schools to be displayed during Neurodiversity Celebration Week, which begins today, as well as producing video interviews with neurodiverse Islanders that can be played during assemblies to raise awareness.

Mr Channing said: 'I am thrilled to be announcing the launch of NeuroDiversity Jersey and our campaign to raise awareness of neurodiversity in secondary schools across the Is-

land during the nationally observed Neurodiversity Celebration Week.'

The initiative has also received the backing of ministers including Assistant Health Minister Jeremy Maçon, who said: 'I fully support the work of NeuroDiversity Jersey, which will help raise awareness across the community. I have dyslexia and dyspraxia myself.'

'I would stress the importance to professionals of how crucial an understanding can be, not only for learning but for a person's mental health and general wellbeing.'



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# Liberated by Force 135

# Rehearsals in Devon for



■ A rehearsal for the reading of the Proclamation Ceremony, which was planned for Guernsey and Jersey following re-occupation by Force 135, took place in Palace Avenue, Paignton. Picture: MARK LAMERTON COLLECTION

■ The Channel Islands contingent from Force 135 at Fenham Barracks, Plymouth, September 1944. Picture: MAJOR LE BROCC COLLECTION



**Celebrating a 100th birthday or a milestone anniversary?**

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Please contact our newsroom by phoning **611640** or email [news@jerseyeveningpost.com](mailto:news@jerseyeveningpost.com)



Today we begin a series of extracts from a new two-volume history of the Liberation, *Liberated by Force 135*, by local historian Mark Lamerton

*IN April 1945, Force 135 rehearsed the liberation of the Channel Islands with exercises in Devon to deal with possible hostile action by enemy forces. In an extract from 'Liberated by Force 135', Mark Lamerton describes some of the situations that Commanding officer Brigadier A E Snow envisaged.*

THOSE Security personnel taking part in Exercise 'Sparhawk II' at Paignton were Field Security Officer (FSO) Captain C. P. R. Bake, Officer Commanding 159 Field Security (FS) Port Section with six FS NCOs (two NCOs who were to land with Section Transport on 'C' Day plus 1 were not come within the scope of the Exercise).

The main aims for Security personnel on 'C' Day were as follows:

a) The seizure and safeguarding of German Military and Administrative documents in occupied Headquarters. The preservation of civil records.

b) Maintenance of a high standard of Security within the Force. Close liaison between (b), Civil Police, and Public Safety Section. Control Civilian communication and movement.

c) An immediate survey of the harbour area by Field Security NCOs to provide a preliminary basis for Security controls and for recommendations to the Executive Committee.

The seizure and safe custody of all German documents which may have escaped destruction at German hands could not be accomplished without the cooperation of every member of the Force. The im-

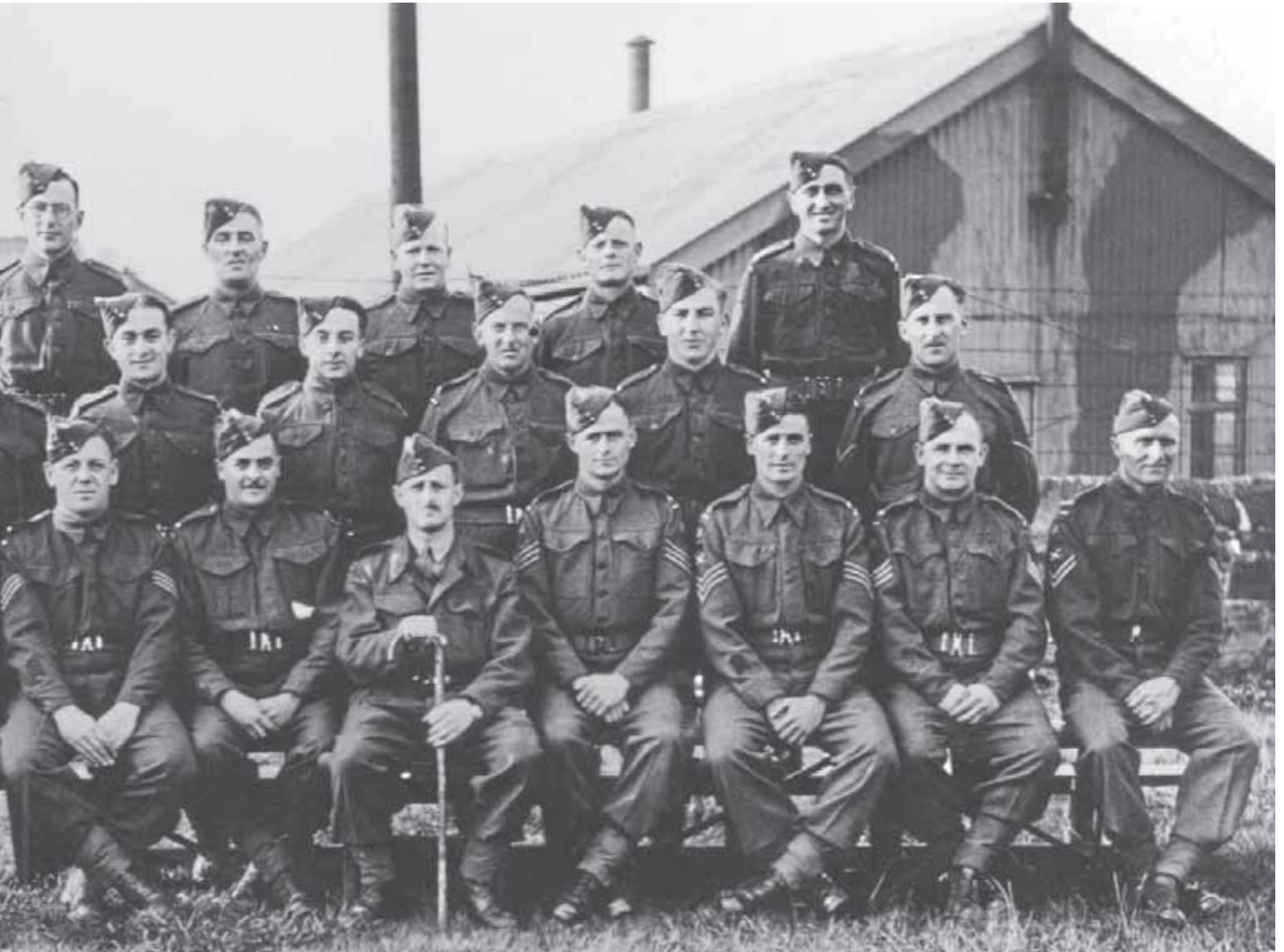
portance of preserving enemy documents and the drill for dealing with them was impressed upon the individual soldier...

Security considerations were impressed upon all ranks in preliminary talks and at briefings for the exercise. Exercise 'Sparhawk' was taking place in a populous built-up area (Brixham and Paignton) where the interest of large numbers of civilians was likely to be aroused. Every soldier in the Force was therefore reminded of his individual security responsibilities. The highest standard of routine security was required.

During the exercise the composition of the Force (strength, component units, equipment etc.) was exposed to public scrutiny. Any revelation of the ultimate destination of the Force would therefore be the more damaging because the civilian population would have the answer not only to 'where' but also to 'how much?' It was this combination of information that was to be prevented. Civilian curiosity must not be gratified. The danger of leakage of information to the enemy was not to be ignored. British Liberation Army (BLA) troops returning from leave provide a likely channel for the transmission of information from this country to the Continent where the possibility of leakage was very real.

The importance of maintaining a high standard of security while training and on exercises in England was emphasised in view of the complexities of the prisoner of war situation on the actual operation (Operation 'Nestegg'). Concealment of weap-

# the islands' liberation



ons, attempted sabotage, misuse of civilian clothes or Allied uniform were probable dangers – amongst others – to the security of the Force. While it was obvious Germany could not win the war, it was unfortunately not so apparent that any relaxation of security discipline could still cost many valuable lives. The extremely favourable war situation had induced in all ranks a certain apathy towards security. It was a tendency of which the Germans would take immediate advantage and should be combated by every possible means.

A small 'enemy' force would take part in the Exercise to provide the liberating troops with opportunities for tactical initiative on a minor scale. The Force Commander, Brigadier A. E. Snow, OBE, expected sporadic resistance from embittered Nazis or small fanatical groups who have ignored their own Commander's Order to capitulate. Without impeding unduly the phasing of the Exercise, their aim would be to achieve the maximum destruction before being themselves 'killed' or captured. Within this situation it was proposed to arrange a number of 'incidents' of Security interest both for the training of security personnel and to introduce units to simple problems which could be encountered on the actual operation.

While it was not possible, in view of the limitations imposed by the present exercise, to organise activity by dissident soldiery or spurious civilians on a large scale, units needed to be prepared for 'enemy' efforts to achieve the following:-



a) The sabotage of military stores and means of communication (which must be adequately guarded).

b) Attempts upon the lives of Senior Officers (who should not expose themselves to unnecessary risks).

c) The destruction of German military documents and probably civilian records as well (which must be made secure without delay).

While these three aims by no means

exhaust the possibilities of covert attack, the successful accomplishment of no more than the first two by a handful of fanatical Germans would hamstring the Force at the outset. The diehard minority would be quickly reinforced by many of their comrades from "over the line" with unpredictable results to the entire operation. Good all-round security – an attitude of suspicious alertness in the individual soldier – is the best answer to the situation.

Twelve incidents were arranged to take place during the exercise – not all of which were of security value – but would serve as an introduction to some of the problems of the actual operation. Each of the situations had a simple solution.

i. A collaborator will appear at a German Headquarters already occupied by BLA troops and endeavour to reclaim incriminating papers.

ii. A German soldier masquerading in civilian clothes will try to commit some obvious act of sabotage.

iii. A Polish Todt worker will approach one of the forward BLA patrols and ask for weapons with which to kill Germans.

iv. A hungry youth will attempt to steal rations from troops.

v. An allied national – a Norwegian – will ask the military for immediate repatriation to Norway.

vi. A municipal official will be reported shot in mysterious circumstances at the Food Office.

vii. A young man will approach a military policeman and say that he wishes

to denounce the pro-German activities of some of his compatriots.

viii. A British Merchant Seaman newly liberated by the Germans will call at British Military Headquarters and enquire where he can embark for Birkenhead.

ix. Two unarmed German soldiers in uniform will stand smoking on a street corner. They will wander nonchalantly around for as long as they are permitted. If approached they will endeavour to ingratiate themselves with our troops.

x. Information will be received that a man of given description may attempt to assassinate Senior Officers of the Force. As a result this man should be arrested at the Proclamation Ceremony.

xi. An impressed Russian in German uniform (a Georgian) will inform advanced troops in bad but emphatic French that certain premises in the town have been mined.

xii. A rejoicing citizen will tell a British soldier that he is on his way to a celebration – a liberation bonfire of German administrative records found in a shed at the back of the Labour Office. An effigy of Hitler is to be burnt as well.

Captain Bake's general observations of Exercise 'Sparhawk II' were that troops on the exercise showed a high degree of suspicious alertness. Guarding of military headquarters etc. was good and perfectly innocent civilians did not escape close scrutiny and examination in cases where they showed the slightest signs of curiosity...