



Meon Tidings No. 43 – October 2014 Vocational Month.

Future Meetings and Events.

October.

1st Vegetable spring rolls .Cottage pie and peas, Lemon cheesecake

Speaker. Joan Carnegie- Changes in the Probation Service

Ladies meet at Jean Lane's home.

8th Steak and ale pie, saute potatoes and vegetables

Fellowship meeting

15th Indian starters with mango dip, Mild chicken curry and rice, Strawberries and cream

Speaker. Stuart Thompson P.C.A.S.A. Screen day for Prostate Cancer

Saturday 25th October in the Fareham Shopping Centre

17th-19th District Conference at Bournemouth

20th Club Council meets at Arthur Mathisen's home

22nd Breaded whole scampi, chips and peas with tartare sauce

Business meeting

29th Gourmet dinner at Wheel House, Hill Head

Previous meetings and events

3rd September Geoff Thickett Volunteer Fareham in Bloom Organisation

Since the " Britain in Bloom" competition started in 1996 the Borough of Fareham has been very successful in winning many awards. Regular winning areas are Holly Hill Park and the Central Fareham Sensory Garden. Fareham's efforts are supported by the Council through the offices of the Borough's Horticultural Development Officer. He is responsible for the gamut of horticulture throughout the Borough, "Bringing People and Parks Together" is the main objective. Activities range from planting spring bulbs and wild flower areas to tree and shrub planting. A surprising fact is that the Borough plants approximately 9 million daffodil bulbs every year.

Country wide there are 21 different categories eligible for prizes including private gardens. It is disappointing that the latter only attracts about 27 entries from Fareham. Local businesses including nurseries are encouraged to sponsor public areas, such as roundabouts and verges. Children are encouraged to participate and several schools have been very successful. A very detailed and full account was delivered. John Lovell Hosted

17th September. We were very privileged to welcome 94 year old **Ronald Cross M.B.E.** to tell us about his experience landing on Juno beach Normandy in a swimming tank on D-Day at H. Hour 07 30 on 6th June 1944. Ronald left school at the tender age of 14 to become a carpenter and joiner. In 1940 he was conscripted into the Army and told he would become a Royal Engineer. Ronald started his talk by explaining that planning for D-Day began after the disastrous commando raid on Dieppe in 1942. No tanks got off the beach in support of the troops. So in August 1943 a new unit, the 79th Armoured Brigade was formed and trained to use a new Assault Vehicle Royal Engineers or A.V.R.E. This was a modified tank. Ronald was in 26 Squadron and there were 4 troops in the squadron each with 6 tanks. Ron's was No. 3 Charlie. The crew of each had a driver, a co-driver a sapper, radio operator, gunner, commander and a demolition expert, the latter was Ronald's role. He had sit on the floor.

Some training took place at New Milton and later at Stokes Bay where the crews camped on what is now the roundabout at the bottom of Gomer Lane. On the Saturday they were loaded on to land craft in Southampton Water.

The channel crossing was a nightmare with the decks of the ship awash and much sea sickness. The Churchill tanks were waterproofed to withstand 6 feet of water and went ashore at low tide to try to avoid obstacles. As they landed German guns made progress extremely dangerous but they survived and crossed a ditch with the aid of their Facine. The latter was a bunch of Ashwood sticks to fill the void. At this stage Ron had to disembark under fire to connect chains to a flail tank that had got stuck!

They then moved forward to their first designated target, a lateral road 75 yards away. Miraculously Ron's tank survived and carried on supporting troops during the advance through France and Germany. He concluded his talk by distributing several hand-outs which illustrated the various modified tanks. Coincidentally Roger Kidd revealed he did National Service in the same 26 Squadron driving a modified tank in Germany in 1956! (Ed. I always knew Bank Managers were a versatile breed) Peter Beasley Hosted and reported.



A modern (?) Churchill Tank.
Length 24ft 5ins Width 10ft. 8 ins.
Weight 42 tons. 350 twin six engine.
75mm. gun 2 Machine Guns.
Originally designed and built by Vauxhall Motors.

100 Club Lottery Winners in August

£100 Alan Causer

£50 Mrs D Vennis

£42.50 Vernon Clark



Still our lonely and only Business Partner!