

Ted Castle - NARPO Derbyshire Branch member awarded Chevalier in the Order of the Nations Legion d'Honneur

Ted joined the Army in 1938 as a boy soldier bandsman as a 15 year old and later was a Sgt in the Gloucestershire Regiment 28/61 of Foot. He was at the 'D' Day landings and as they say the rest is history. He was wounded twice. He served with distinction. He joined the Derbyshire Police in December, 1952 and served in Chesterfield and Long Eaton and retired in 1980. He was 91 years of age on the 20th November, 2015.

He has been awarded as Chevalier to the Order of Legion d'Honneur by France for his part in the 'D' Day Landings. This is the highest award that France can bestow. It was sent through the post as Ted's wife Grace was unable to travel to the French Embassy and was accompanied by a letter from Sylvie Bermann, The French Ambassador. At 10.00am on Saturday 21st November 2015, *Sean Murphy (secretary)* went to Ted and Grace's home in Long Whatton, Leicestershire where Jean-Claude Lafontain, Honorary Consul to the French Embassy presented Ted with the award in the presence of his family and friends.

Copy of the Letter from the French Ambassador reads:

Dear Mr. Castle I have the pleasure of informing you that the President of the Republic has appointed you to Chevalier in the Order of the Nations Legion d'Honneur. I offer you warmest congratulations on the high honouring recognition of your acknowledged military engagement and your steadfast involvement in the Liberation of France during the Second World War. We contemplate this Europe of peace; we must never forget the heroes like you who came from Britain and the Commonwealth to begin the liberation of Europe by liberating France. We owe our freedom and security to your dedication because you were ready to risk your life. I am happy to enclose your insignia of Chevalier of Legion d' Honneur and once again extend to you our congratulations

Signed

Sylvie Bermann, French Ambassador.

Speech at presentation by Jean-Claude Lafontaine reads:

On the 6th June, 2014 on the beach at Ouistreham, in the presence of Her majesty Queen Elizabeth 11, French President Francois Hollande sent a strong message of gratitude to allied soldiers and particularly to the British.

Today, one year on, it is a true honour for me to come here and echo that message

You are living witnesses to a history you wrote on our soil, a history which shaped your identity, our identity and those of Britain and France.

In addition to the pleasure of meeting you and the honour of your presence, I want to say what a great example you represent for me, for young people, for our countries and for Europe.

This ceremony is not only a thank you to the men who were ready to give their lives to liberate us. It is also a message to every British person that we shall not forget. That we shall never forget.

To salute your bravery France has awarded you its highest recognition. The Legion d'honneur which was established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte. It is France's highest distinction and is awarded in recognition of both military and civil merit.

On average, just 10 British nations receive the Legion d'honneur, so you are joining a very exclusive club.

Today we are commemorating your personal commitment, the French-British Entente Cordiale and the triumph of freedom.

May your commitment, your bravery and your spirit of fraternity continue to act as a ferment in the hearts and actions of the living

Long live Britain

Long Live France

Long live Franco-British friendship.



Ted receives award



Ted with award



Ted's medals



Ted with wife Grace