

YORKSHIRE

In the first days that this report covers, numerous Yorkshire Area MVT members were returning from Normandy (me included) but plenty was also happening closer to home. Mark Illingworth (26431) from Bingley emailed saying, "I thought I would share pictures of my 1943 Ford GPW that I've finally finished restoring and took its first outing on Armed Forces day to the Acorn Inn near Bingley in West Yorkshire." It's nice to see another Jeep join Yorkshire's motor pool.

Tim Benton went to Flying Legends and reported thus, "After 30 years at its original home of Duxford, the Flying Legends folks have decamped and come north to East Leeds Airport, although I am sure it will always be Church Fenton to you and me. It was the home of 71 Squadron, the first of the US Eagle squadrons that came across to fight in WW2. Mother nature seemed determined to scupper the weekend's activities and managed to turn on the taps big time late on Friday afternoon/evening. At one stage there was a genuine question as to whether the weekend would even go ahead. The waterproof qualities of good old fashioned ex-military canvas shone through and turned every drop. We drifted into sleep to the wonderful sound of the patter of raindrops on the outside.

Saturday dawned with bright skies and sunshine but a quick check on the Met Office App showed it was a false dawn. For the first half of the day, the flight line is open to the public. It's a chance for everyone to get up close (no touching) with a terrific line up of WW2 fighters and medium bombers all of which had flown in specially. The local ATC supplied hundreds of cadets to assist us in flight line jobs and were all a credit to their uniform. Interestingly the cadets' instructors knew Jim Waterhouse through his cadet career and were forthcoming with some great embarrassing titbits!

The afternoon's flying was opened by the glorious sound of Merlins flat out overhead and, interspersed between lightning storms, the flying displays continued; Spitfires of every mark, Hurricanes, Mustangs, Me 109s, B-25, P-38, four different Curtis, Corsair, Bearcat, Sea Fury... too many to list but numbers topped 40. Where else can you see a Spit and Mustang chasing a Me 109? (I know it's a Spanish built jobbie). Some fantastic flying kept everyone thrilled despite the weather doing its worst.

Sunday dawned with cheery skies and a promise of good flying and we were not disappointed. An aerial display with a P-38 and B-25 together was awesome and to see a medium bomber thrown about at low level like a fighter was impressive to say the least. Throughout the weekend there hardly seemed to be a spell where there was not at least one aircraft in the sky above. The finale puts as many aircraft into the air as possible so producing an impressive raft of mechanical marvels, piloted by some of the world's best. Known as the Balbo, it was named after an Italian flying ace, who was unfortunately shot down by his own anti-aircraft fire. They land individually, and as they circle round to do so, the 'Joker', in the form of a Spitfire, whizzes in and out of the pack and beats up the runway - impressive stuff! All in all it's a fantastic weekend that is a must to go on the calendar for next year. It's on the doorstep too."

Additionally, Steve Thorp reports that, "on Saturday July 1 members put on a display of

vehicles at the Beverley Armed Forces Day. This was an open day held at the Defence School of Transport, Leconfield. During the day we put on a great display of our old but bold military vehicles and also had the chance to look around displays of military and civilian service vehicles including Transport, Recovery, Emergency and Combat vehicles. Without a doubt the main attraction at whole event were the MVT vehicles. As a thank you to the MVTers attending the days event, the Commandant, DST very kindly allowed us to take a short convoy drive on the cross-country driver training area. This cross-country drive ended a very enjoyable day out so many thanks to all who supported the Armed Forces Day."

On the same weekend Nick Dunford and I were at Packington Hall for the LRSOC's 75th Anniversary rally so I guess it's been a busy summer so far and next time's report will no doubt start with news from the Yorkshire Wartime Experience. John Carroll

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