

Birmingham Medal Society – Meeting Thursday 7th June 2012.

Members Own – Normandy Landings 1944

An enlightening evening, and although only two members bought items to speak on, the spin off discussions were interesting and ranged from the qualifying criteria for the Defence Medal, to the anomalies of groups not containing the 1939-45 Star, Eisenhower and HM George V wearing the numeral 1 and 8 on their Africa Star ribbon, alternative history if Montgomery had had his way and been first into Berlin, the purchase and wearing of unofficial medals and the pity of families not having any interest in their deceased relatives awards.

The first speaker showed an actual battle dress worn by Field Marshall Montgomery from 1944 and presented to his Batman in 1947. It was interesting to muse that this may have been worn for the D Day landings as well as the surrender at Luneberg Heath. It was also interesting to note that out of the Field Marshall's 34 medal ribbons, only 13 were UK awards and the remaining 21 were foreign!

The second speaker's talk entitled **Medals in a Hat**, was a sad story of a family who had only recently disposed of the group as they had no interest in them. Leonard Sherwood only died in April of his year in his late 80s. The Naval group contained a 1939-45 Star, Atlantic Star, Defence Medal and War Medal 1939-45. Leonard had not been entitled to a Defence Medal and his miniature group reflected this fact. With the medals came a large number of unofficial medals, lapel badges and his beret bearing the Landing Craft Association badge. Most importantly however was the archive of paperwork, which on its own would have been of little interest to anyone and possibly destroyed.