

Remembering the Generation of 1944



1944 was a crucial year in the story of the Second World War, and one in which millions of allied personnel from dozens of modern-day nations were engaged across the globe.

In the Far East, British and Indian troops bore the brunt of Operation U-Go, a Japanese offensive to capture the strongholds of Imphal and Kohima. After months of bitter fighting, both would be held, but at great cost, with 16,000 allied casualties sustained in their defence.

On the Italian Front a multinational force fought four brutal battles in as many months around the ancient abbey of Monte Cassino. All told, 55,000 of the 240,000 men engaged would be reported killed, wounded or missing by the time the road to Rome was finally opened.

On the 6th June, on the French coast, the long-awaited 'D-Day' invasion would come. Carried by an Armada of 7,000 ships, 130,000 personnel would storm five Normandy beaches, supported by thousands of allied aircraft and airborne troops. In a fight that would last until the end of August, almost 2 million servicemen would play a role in 'Operation Overlord'. Yet 72,000 of them would never return.

As a champion of Remembrance, the Royal British Legion remembers the generation of 1944. To find out more scan the QR code.



As the fight moved on into September, daring attempts to bring the war to a swift conclusion were made. Best known was 'Operation Market Garden'; an armoured thrust through the enemy lines to cross the Rhine into northern Germany. Despite the incredible courage shown by airborne troops holding key river crossings along the route of advance, including in the Dutch city of Arnhem, it was destined to be 'a bridge too far'.

By the end of that historic year, victory was still some way off, but real progress had been made. When fighting ended on the Scheldt Estuary in November, the port of Antwerp and its vital approaches lay in allied hands. The much-needed supplies which would ultimately lead to victory in Europe could finally begin to flow.



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