

Report on 14th June 2024 Meeting

As a homage to the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings on 6th June, Andy W told us a remarkable story about his father, subtitled 'Adolf Hitler – My Part in His Downfall', to borrow the title of Spike Milligan's wartime autobiography. It was so well illustrated with photos taken during the advance through Normandy and beyond. Taken by George Whalley himself, or by his comrades, around their Churchill Mk 1 tank. Pictures of captured Nazi flags, of cheering locals welcoming their liberators, maps of the Beaches, of team photographs, then more recently of a renovated and polished Tank 13 'Sandgate' in a modern museum setting, with Andy's children. Very moving.

Mark P remembered his father's long and well documented life, which sadly ended on 26th May. It was a very long innings, and Mark will share with us his family tree at a future meeting, from 1745 to the present.

Terry G provided us with a tale of mystery about her coal miner forebears from St Helens. Well, that's where the mines were, so why did these men described as coal miners - in Cheshire? Salt would be a more obvious occupation, wouldn't it? Ah, the answer lies beneath. Beneath the tidal river Dee, where colliery shafts were sunk in the first half of the 19th century, and where bitter and violent clashes occurred between rival mine owners. Joseph Jones married Maria Lightfoot in Neston in 1855, and later moved where the work was, after the local collieries closed, to St Helens.