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Dieppe: Tragedy or triumph

Into the beaches of death went our Canadians

By BOB BERGEN
This Sunday, August 18, will be the 32nd anniversary of the raid on Dieppe on the coast of France during the Second World War.

The raid is still surrounded by controversy. Of the nearly 6,000 men taking part in the first allied raid of the war, less than 2,000 returned.

Several men from Mississauga were on the beaches at Dieppe during that raid. Not all of them wished to talk about what happened to them, not all of them could be reached.

HEAVY LOSSES
In spite of the heavy losses suffered by the allied troops most maintain that many valuable lessons were learned as a direct result of the raid.

They learned that close co-operation between both army and navy ranks was necessary for the success of any future operations.

The operation itself was supposed to take place in July but weather didn't allow it.

They learned to make plans for any such future raids independent of the weather conditions.

According to one veteran the "If we had done this" theories about Dieppe are endless. He simply said, "We had a job to do. We went in to do it and we failed."

WISH TO FORGET

In spite of the fact that there are some who wish to forget Dieppe there are others to whom dying for their country and the things they believed in was the supreme sacrifice and was, in itself, a heroic action.

This year for the first time the Dieppe Veterans will be marching as a unit in the Warriors Day Parade during the Canadian National Exhibition.

This week to commemorate the heroism of those who were at Dieppe and for those who gave their lives, The Mississauga News tells the story of three Mississauga residents who were on the beaches at Dieppe.



"You didn't have time to be scared," says Bill Konkle, who 32 years later is a constable with the Ontario Provincial Police. He displays the colorful

souvenirs of a man distinguished in the war.

(Mississauga News photos by Fred Lock)