

# The Quickfirer!



*Bringing alive the dry pages of history*

## Cockleshell Heroes Raid Re-visited



The epic story of Op Frankton was re lived by Lee Hanmore, son of Battle Honours stalwart David “Minty” Hanmore recently. Lee a serving member of the Royal Marines has held a long fascina-

tion with military history and so set about his three year project to retrace their footsteps. With ground breaking research they created a replica “cockle”, wore the same equipment, ate the same rations, trained for the same length of time & to the same methods before launching off the same Eastney beach as the heroes of 1942. They completed the historic journey using the same laying up points & time frame. Their efforts were so accurate that the replica “cockle” is now a permanent display in the Royal Marines Museum, Pompey. Well done Lee & regards to all our Bootnecks serving around the Globe

## This month in History – March

**On Land** – 26/27 March 1917 saw the unsuccessful “First Battle of Gaza” designed to clear the path for the invasion of Palestine later in the year. After a breathtaking advance across Egypt, as well as some impressive railway construction, three infantry, two cavalry divisions and the Camel Corps were poised to attack spearheaded by General Chetwode’s Desert Column. The 16,000 waiting Turks under Von Kressenstein had well dug in artillery positions and held air superiority. With the defenders preparing for surrender and destroying documents, the situation was not realized by the British command and the moment was lost. Casualties were 4,000 British and 2,400 Turkish. It would take two further battles before the campaign was finally won.

**VC**– Herbert Columbine 9th SQN MGC Hervilly Wood, on the 22 March 1918 kept his gun firing in a forward position for four hours without even barbed wire cover, his gun held back waves of Germans before with the aid of air support they were able to surround him. After insisting his two



comrades retire he remained alone causing further enemy casualties before finally overwhelmed by both air attack and grenade. Though London born, he is listed on the Pozieres Memorial & has a bust in Walton on the Naze his mothers town & who’s council still publicly own Herbert’s medals.

## The following units wear this honour with pride

*Castle Hill (Monte Cassino) March 1944*

The Queens Own Royal West Kent’s, The Essex Regiment, The Rajputana Rifles, The 9th Ghoorkha Rifles

## Issue 27 March 2008

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## Forthcoming Tours Update

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