

Project Blue Beach- David Roy Fields & Gerald Fields Remembered

Officially listed as missing, then later discovered to have survived the Dieppe Raid, Provost Sgt.* David Roy Fields and Pte. Gerald Fields, uncle and nephew respectfully, served together in the same Company. They were only four years apart in age, owing to David Roy being the youngest of 10 children, and grew up together in Sandwich East, Windsor.

At the start of the war, both young men determined to sign up together, however Gerald was a year too young. To avoid being recognized, they hitchhiked to Toronto to sign up with the Royal Regiment and so set their course together for Blue Beach, instead of with their friends and neighbours in the Essex Kent Scottish on Red Beach.

David Roy was wounded on landing, taking 8 machine gun rounds and mortar shrapnel before he found refuge in a capsized landing craft. In a desperate bid for survival, he made a swim for a British Navy craft, but he was not able to pull himself aboard and was left for dead. Taken prisoner after being washed ashore, David Roy was a POW in Lamsdorf and was set to work in Lingel's shoe factory. Taking every opportunity to resist, he conspired with other POWs to sabotage equipment and boots, while back at camp he worked on an escape tunnel- until it was discovered. Afterward he was sent to work as a nurse at Colditz Castle where he tended to wounded POWs, including famous British pilot Douglas Bader.

Both men were reunited at the end of the war, had families and lived long lives. David Roy lived to 82, had one son, 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Gerald lived to the age of 90, had 6 children, 14 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

* David Roy was demoted to Pte. before he was discharged for failing to return promptly after their 2 week leave upon their return to England. He felt no remorse for his demotion after having survived his ordeal.