

INVASION!

THE NAVY ARTISTS THAT WENT WITH THE TROOPS ON D-DAY

AMERICA HAS COMMEMORATED THE 82nd ANNIVERSARY OF THE D-DAY LANDINGS. THE EVENT THAT LITERALLY CHANGED THE WORLD IS BUT A DIM MEMORY FOR A NEW GENERATION THAT UNDERSTANDS LITTLE OF THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SACRIFICE. HOWEVER, THE WORK CREATED BY UNITED STATES NAVY ARTISTS WHO TOOK PART IN THE INVASION IS FOREVER MEANINGFUL AND STANDS AS A BRIGHT TORCH LIGHTING A TIME WHEN AMERICA SAVED THE WORLD

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PAINTINGS COURTESY OF THE NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND

Prior to the Invasion, Navy artists traveled through cities and towns in Britain to record daily life. *The Queue* is a gouache on paper work by Alexander P. Russo. The artist had gone into an unrecorded town and painted Britishers patiently waiting for their local bus. Because of shortages of just about everything, British citizens had learned to stand and wait their turn. As the artist noted, "at any minute the eerie wail of the 'alert' may sound." Civilians had noted the massive build-up of American forces but could only speculate on what was coming that June.



Planning for the invasion went on in great secrecy. *Control Room* is a watercolor on paper done by Dwight C. Shelper and depicts Americans and British working together. In the background, a Navy PB4Y-1 Liberator crew is briefed on a coastal patrol mission they will undertake a few days prior to the invasion in a search for German U-Boats that, if not neutralized, could cause immense damage to the invasion force. Long-range *Luftwaffe* fighters posed a distinct threat to the Navy aviators and some of the PB4Y-1s that went out on patrol simply disappeared forever.



As a rising sun brought some life to the gray sky over the French coast, the elderly USS *Arkansas* (BB-33), matriarch of the invasion fleet, began firing at the beachhead with her main battery guns. This watercolor on paper titled *Opening the Attack* by acclaimed artist Dwight C. Shelper depicts the battlewagon in action while to the seaward, the French cruisers *George Leygues* and *Montclam* — flying extremely large battle flags to encourage French citizens ashore — began firing into their homeland. Assault waves of landing craft streamed toward the beaches while attack transports fill the horizon. This is the way the artist saw "Arkie" through binoculars from the bridge of USS *Emmons* (DD-457) at a bombardment station that was farther inshore.