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A very special resident

We have a very special resident here at Woodstock Residential Care Home; 98-year-old Gordon Frank Holland was awarded the Légion D'Honneur medal for his part in one of the largest military invasions in history.

*The French government awards the **Legion of Honour** awards, to both French and foreign nationals, based on a recipient's exemplary services rendered to France, or to the causes supported by France.*

On Tuesday 6 June 1944, Gordon became part of one of the largest military invasions in history, landing in France on **D-day** as a 21-year-old sergeant, in the RASC, commanding 30 men. His subsequent journey saw him participate in the liberation of Belgium and Holland before spending time in the early post-war reconstruction of Germany.

More than six decades later, in 2014, on holiday in France, his daughter took him to **Pegasus Bridge**, a notorious landmark on his wartime journey through Europe. A group of English school children were enjoying a history lesson at the bridge when a friend of Gordon's suggested they might want to hear the story from someone who was really there.

Gordon reluctantly said a few words to the group when the curator of **Pegasus Bridge Museum** asked for his name, regiment, and

army number. He returned with the news that upon checking Gordon's details, he could confirm he was part of a group awarded the **Légion D'Honneur medal** by the French Government. The award is the highest order of merit in France, both military and civil, established by Napoleon in 1802.

Although reluctant to accept the award after so many years, Gordon was persuaded to attend a ceremony on February 2017, at the **Battle of Britain memorial** in **Capel Le Ferne** where his medal was finally presented by James Ryeland, Honourable Counsel for France.