

**WIMBORNE**  
DRAMA PRODUCTIONS



# PRESSURE

BY DAVID HAIG



**18 - 20 MAY 2023**  
**TIVOLI THEATRE WIMBORNE**

# Director's Notes

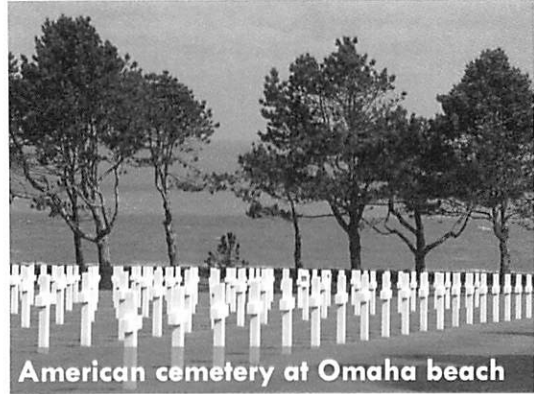
HELLO and welcome to the Tivoli Theatre for our production of *Pressure*, David Haig's play about D-Day. This pivotal moment of the Second World War, on 6 June 1944, has long been of great interest to me, and my wife Chrissie and I have visited the landing beaches, war graves and memorials in Normandy on many occasions. Seeing rows upon rows of gravestones at the American cemetery overlooking 'Omaha' beach, or visiting the impressive new British memorial at 'Gold' beach, have left an indelible mark on me.

It is hard to fathom the enormity of 'Operation Overlord': the months of planning, preparation and training, and the vast numbers of troops involved in the biggest invasion by sea ever known.

What is so fascinating about David Haig's play is that within the narrative of this huge event he tells the extraordinary and little-known true story of how one man affected the outcome, apparently from the sidelines.

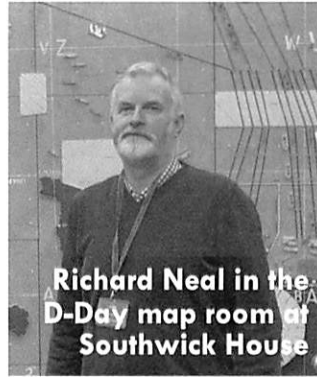
The play could be described as a thriller about weather and the unassuming hero of the piece is a Scot named James Stagg, who was the man in charge of the weather forecasting for D-Day. If you don't want to know the ending, stop reading until after you have watched the play!

Stagg essentially saved Europe, by persuading the Supreme Allied Commander, General Eisenhower, to delay the D-Day landings by 24 hours, against all the advice of the American forecasters.



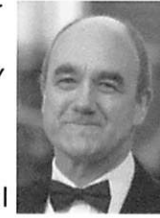
This play tells us how that decision was reached and the impact it had on the people involved. It is a huge honour to bring it to the stage. However, I could not have done it alone and I am hugely indebted to every member of the company, those you see on stage and the many people being the scenes, who have invested so much in this project. I should also like to thank the staff and volunteers at the Tivoli who always make us feel so welcome and offer such wonderful advice and support.

I hope you enjoy watching this incredible play.



**Richard Neal, Director**

**David Haig** is an actor and playwright. His stage plays include *My Boy Jack*, *The Good Samaritan* and *Pressure*, which premiered at the Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh in 2014. *My Boy Jack* was filmed for ITV, starring David, Daniel Radcliffe and Kim Cattrall. His distinguished acting career includes West End appearances in *Yes*, *Prime Minister*, *Art*, *Dead Funny*, *Journey's End*, *The Country Wife*, *Mary Poppins* and *Donkeys' Years*. He has worked extensively for the Royal Shakespeare Company. He won the Olivier Award for Best Actor for *Our Country's Good* at the Royal Court. His television and film appearances include *Yes*, *Prime Minister*, *Mo*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *The Thin Blue Line*, *Talking Heads*, *Killing Eve* and *Cobra*.



**Philip Pinsky** is a composer and sound designer working extensively in theatre and other media in the UK and overseas. For five years he was Associate Artist at the Royal Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh providing scores for more than half of their output during that period. He was winner of the Critics Award for Theatre in Scotland 2005 for best use of music in theatre and of a Sony Music Award for *Extraneous Noises Off*. Previously Philip was a founder member of electro-acoustic group Finitribe, releasing five albums.



Back cover: British Normandy Memorial, Ver-sur-Mer (Photo: Richard Neal)

## WIMBORNE DRAMA PRODUCTIONS

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Directed by Tracey Nicholls

can see she will be high on my list of favourites in the future. I always struggle with pin pointing moments I have enjoyed in theatre. I love the stage and every show comes with special moments, new friends and lots of giggles. **On being in**

**Pressure:** I have loved being in this play, because it's such an important part of history. I have read up all I can on Kay. She represents so many of the strong women who let their worlds be changed and did so much for the war effort. I feel so honoured to have the opportunity to introduce her to people and I hope she would be pleased with how she is depicted.

## Richard Scotson

**General Spaatz / Commander Franklin**

**Last role:** Trevor in *Bedroom Farce* for Wimborne Drama Productions in February. **Favourite roles and other highlights:** I enjoyed playing Trevor in *Bedroom Farce*, and Mr. Palmer in *Sense and Sensibility* (Summer 2022). I also enjoyed my debut as The Bead Seller in *Murder On The Nile* which was my first time treading the boards, in 2018. **On being in Pressure:** My family have a few military connections. My wife's Great Uncle Paul lost his life at Dunkirk at a very young age. He was a brilliant scholar who went to Cambridge. My Uncle David was a Colonel in The Gurkhas, who started as an Officer Cadet in 1959, and

joined The Gurkhas in 1965. The Gurkhas fought in many places during WW2 including, North Africa, Italy, Burma, Singapore, Malaya, and Hong Kong. He now lives locally.

## Kelly Webb

**Secretary**

**Last role:** I played Sophia in *Sense and Sensibility* last summer at Deans Court. **Favourite roles and other highlights:** Early days for me yet in theatre. I loved my small role as Sophia in *Sense and Sensibility*, with just a few lines to learn. I didn't need to panic too much about forgetting lines, I could just enjoy the costume and hairstyles (and a bit of retro dancing)! The highlight would be joining WDP for *Sense and Sensibility* and then never leaving because it's so much fun and all of the people involved, front and back stage, are so lovely and friendly and gave me a super welcome to the group. I have also been presenting a community radio show on Radio Wimborne for nearly 10 years. That's easier, I can make it up as I go along! 94.6fm! **On being in Pressure:** I feel an affinity with *Pressure* as I grew up in the military, so much of my early life was in and around barracks and various people in uniform. If we can make the Tivoli smell of grease during the play run, it will take me right back to being surrounded by tanks, ten-ton trucks and Land Rover Defenders!

# The D-Day Landings

THEY called it Operation Overlord. This was the codename for the allied invasion of north west Europe on 6 June 1944. It was to be the largest ever amphibious land invasion and would be a crucial staging post in the defeat of Nazi Germany. Along with Operation Neptune, the name for the naval plan, it would change the course of the second world war. Today we remember it better as D-Day.

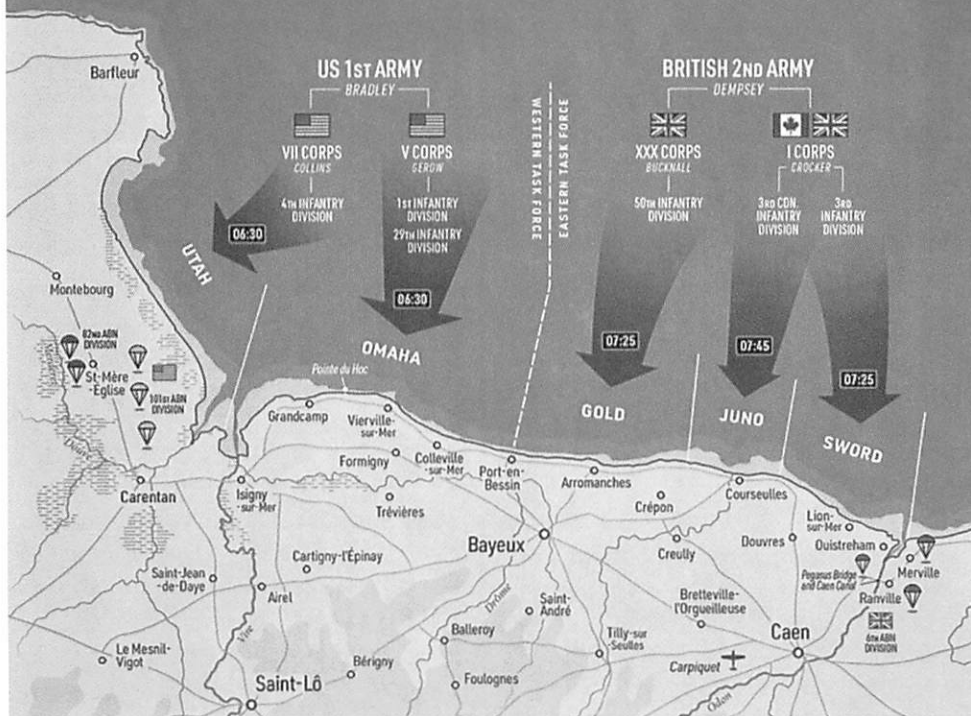
An invasion had been on the cards ever since 1940 when the British had been forced to evacuate from Dunkirk. But fighting back on this front would take considerable resources. Once the United States had been drawn into the war at the end of 1941, it was possible to imagine a combined assault, but it wasn't until a summit in Washington in May 1943 that Britain and the USA made a firm agreement to mount an offensive across the English Channel and, even then, not until the following spring or summer. In Cairo that November, US president Franklin D. Roosevelt and British prime minister Winston Churchill agreed to appoint General Dwight D. Eisenhower as supreme commander.

So it was, that in December 1943, Eisenhower took charge of Operation Overlord which had been developed earlier in the year by Britain's Lieutenant General Frederick Morgan. Working with Eisenhower were the leaders of Britain's air, sea and land forces: Arthur Tedder, Bertram Ramsay and Bernard Montgomery.

There were many practicalities to consider. The ideal beaches had to provide safe and sheltered landing for the troops. They also had to be within comfortable range for the fighter planes. Five beaches in the Baie de la Seine, between Le Havre and Cherbourg - codenamed Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword - fitted the bill, but that would leave them without a port to offload equipment and weaponry. To get round that problem, they had to construct two artificial harbours, known as Mulberries, and tow them across the Channel. They also had to lay pipelines in order to maintain the supply of fuel.

Meanwhile, in an operation codenamed Fortitude, the counter intelligence services were encouraging Germany to believe attacks were being planned on the Pas-de-Calais region, 230 miles north, a deception

# D-DAY LANDINGS



that would severely hamper the enemy response. A fortnight after the invasion, Germany was still holding seven divisions in the wrong place.

The state of the tides and the opportunity of a full moon (a boon for the paratroopers landing at night) made 5 June 1944 the ideal date. The weather, however, did not. Eisenhower's chief weather forecaster, the Dalkeith-born James Stagg, was the head of a team of meteorologists charged with predicting the conditions in the English Channel. It became apparent that wind, rain and stormy seas could scupper the entire operation. D-Day was postponed. Acting on Stagg's forecast of a break in the weather, Eisenhower delayed the go-ahead until the early hours of 6 June.

First 23,000 troops were dropped by the air force in the dead of night, and set about destroying bridges and gun positions. They were joined at dawn by five naval assault forces totalling 7,000 ships. The German forces

speeches in the last few years, including at a conference in Belgium, on topics ranging from autism to tall ship sailing. **On being in Pressure:** My grandfather was a navigator with Pathfinder Force, flying Lancaster bombers. He took off from RAF Downham Market late on 5 June and in the early hours of D-Day bombed a German heavy gun battery at Ouistreham, just behind Sword Beach, destroying it and thus saving many lives during the landings. So being in the play has meant a lot to me.

## Simon Jackson

**Air Chief Marshall Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory**

**Last role:** I played the Rev Clement Mercer in *When We Are Married* last year. **Favourite roles and other highlights:** Peter Van Dam in *Diary of Anne Frank* for Highfield Players in Huddersfield in 1962 and Mr Spettigne in *Charley's Aunt* for St Peters Players in Bournemouth in 1989. More recently, I have enjoyed playing Widow Twankey in the Tivoli panto *Aladdin* (2001) and Major Courtney in *The Ladykillers* for WDP in 2015. **On being in Pressure:** The play is about not just meteorological pressure, but also about the pressure on the men making the decision of when to invade Nazi-held Europe. A decision that if they had got wrong could have resulted in us living in a very different world today. While in the Army Cadet Force at school, I was

honoured to meet Field Marshall Montgomery, and Group Captain Douglas Bader. During the war, my father was a special constable and got a medal from the king. I also had a cousin who was a Flight Lieutenant in the RAF. So I feel I have a real connection with the play.

## Gary Paine

**Electrician / Admiral Ramsay**

**Last role:** Colonel Brandon in *Sense and Sensibility* for WDP in July 2022. **Favourite roles and other highlights:** Edward in *Ghost Writer* for Broadstone Players, Alderman Joseph Helliwell in *When We Are Married* for WDP and John Smith in *Run For Your Wife* for Broadstone Players. Another memorable production for me would be a thriller called *Sleuth* – a two hander and I played the part of Milo Tindle (on stage for the entire performance). **On being in Pressure:** Being involved with this production has quite simply made me realise just how huge the responsibilities were on some individuals in getting key decisions 'right'.

## Sali Pike

**Kay Summersby**

**Last role:** I played Fanny Dashwood, in *Sense and Sensibility* with WDP last summer. **Favourite roles and other highlights:** I think the last role I played was one of my favourites actually because she was so much fun. However playing Kay, I

relatives and the part they played in the war. My gran and her family are from South Africa. My great grandfather, Alexander Burnett, was a soldier in the second battle of El Alamein whilst my gran's uncle was a WW2 pilot, Edward 'Teddy' Morris CB CBE DSO DFC.

## Chris Durham

### General Eisenhower

**Last role:** Dr Gribble in *Love From A Stranger*, WDP, Tivoli, Oct 2022.

### Favourite roles and other highlights:

So many enjoyable roles, it is difficult to pick a favourite, but Mathew Treves in *Towards Zero*, Inspector Rough in *Gaslight*, Arthur Winslow in *The Winslow Boy* and Carson the Butler in *Relative Values*, all for WDP at the Tivoli, are all up there in a mixture of whodunnits, family dramas and comedy. **On being in**

**Pressure:** I was an officer in the Army for 17 years and the opportunity to play General Eisenhower in the days leading up to D-Day is a rare privilege which has given me a real insight into the tough decisions senior officers are required to make in war.

## Tony Feltham

### Colonel Krick

**Last role:** Nigel Lawrence in *Love From A Stranger*, here at the Tivoli last October. **Favourite roles and other highlights:** Lord Fancourt Babberly in *Charley's Aunt* and

Lieutenant Trotter in *Journey's End* with WDP, and Bill Snibson in *Me and My Girl* with BLOS. I'm lucky enough to have a family who also love the performing arts. My wife is a great actor; two of my children are in a band, *The Current Flavour* - check them out; and two are World Championship medallists in Tap Dancing. Performing on stage with them or watching them perform are highlights of my life and fill me with so much joy. **On being in Pressure:** I have loved being part of this play, how it shows that heroes are not always lauded as they should be, and it has reiterated how wars can be won or lost not just on the front line but also in the corridors of power or behind the scenes. Some of my family served in the forces in the Second World War. My dad was also in the Royal Artillery when he was a young man.

## Andy Gill

### Captain Johns / Lieutenant Battersby

**Last role:** This is my first acting role since playing Old Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol* at school in 1995.

### Favourite roles and other highlights:

I was vocalist/guitar player in several rock and metal bands in the late 90s and early 2000s. Recently I've done some open mics and poetry readings. I write and record music on guitar, cello and keyboard, and make music videos for my YouTube channel. I've made many public

were ill prepared. Hitler was asleep and none of his generals had the nerve to wake him. Erwin Rommel, who was supposedly in charge, was at home in Herrlingen celebrating his wife's 50th birthday. The Germans were outnumbered on the ground and outclassed in the air. All the same, they put up a fierce defence and fighting was tough.

Of the 156,000 British, US and Canadian troops who landed that day, around 2,500 were killed and 8,500 injured. Meanwhile, 127 planes were brought down. The losses were substantial, but by the end of the month, the initial assault phase was complete. The Germans were still holding their positions but, at the end of July, there were a million allied troops in Normandy. It meant the allies were able to split the German defences on 25 July, forcing an enemy retreat. Further troops moved in to liberate Paris on 25 August and Brussels shortly afterwards.

It was the start of the process that would culminate in Germany's unconditional surrender the following May.

There is an interesting footnote. If the invasion had not gone ahead on 6 June, the next opportunity, when the tidal conditions would have been favourable, would have been 19 June. On that day there began a severe storm, abnormal in its severity, that lasted four days. Indeed, disturbed weather dominated the whole summer and autumn that year. After seeing the effects of

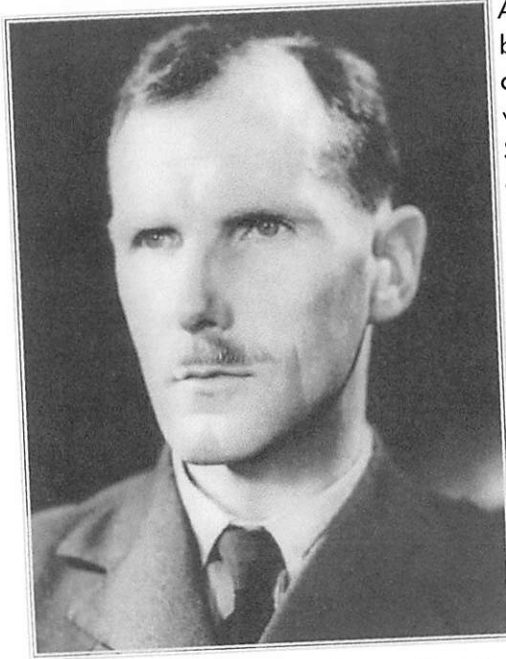
the storm, which did considerable damage to the Mulberry harbours, General Eisenhower sent Stagg a note which included the words, "I thank the gods of war we went when we did".



US troops heading for one of the landing beaches on 6 June 1944. (Photo: U.S. Army/National Archives, Washington, D.C.)

# Who's Who

## Group Captain James Stagg



Although daily weather forecasts had been around since the mid nineteenth century, the science of meteorology was still in its infancy when James Stagg joined the Meteorological Office as a professional assistant in 1924. Born on 30 June 1900, the plumber's son from Dalkeith, near Edinburgh, studied at Broughton Secondary School and the University of Edinburgh before becoming a science master at George Heriot's School for two years.

His quest for meteorological knowledge motivated him to lead the British Polar Year Expedition of 1932-33 to Arctic Canada. There, he gathered data to test the pioneering

theory that there was a connection between changes in the earth's magnetic field affecting activity in the upper atmosphere and the weather elsewhere in the world.

He became superintendent of Kew Observatory in 1939, the year before he married Elizabeth Kidner, with whom he had two sons, one of whom, Peter, would go on to play rugby for Scotland.

Appointed Chief Meteorological Officer for the Allied Forces in Europe in 1943, Stagg led the international team charged with identifying the ideal weather conditions for the D-Day landings. The fate of the war, and thousands of lives, depended on the accuracy of his forecasts. For his efforts, he received a special letter of commendation from General Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander, and was awarded the Legion of Merit by the US Army before being knighted in 1954.

He became president of the Royal Meteorological Society in 1959, the year before he retired from his position as director of services at the Meteorological Office. He died on 23 June 1975.

# Meet the Cast

## James Bourner

### Hamilton

**Last role:** Freddie/Young Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* for Bournemouth Little Theatre last December.

**Favourite roles and other highlights:** Tony Lumpkin in *She Stoops to Conquer* with WDP at Deans Court in the summer of 2019 and William Smith in *Murder on the Nile* at the Tivoli in 2018. I have also enjoyed doing some extra work for the BBC. **On being in Pressure:** My grandad was a rear tail gunner in a Lancaster who was shot down over Germany and held as a P.O.W for the last six months of the war. So it's been an honour to appear in this play about D-Day.

## Richard Cawte

### Group Captain James Stagg

**Last role:** My last role was as Bruce Lovell in Wimborne Drama Productions' 2022 staging of *Love From a Stranger*, a thriller based on an Agatha Christie short story.

**Favourite roles and other highlights:** Charles Bruno in *Strangers on a Train* (for WDP at the Tivoli), Robert Zeinfeld in *Forget Me Knot* (Broadstone Players) and Dr Alec Harvey in *Still Life* (Noel Coward's play that became the iconic film *Brief Encounter*) for ImpACT at the Bournemouth Little Theatre. **On being in Pressure:** Playing James Stagg is definitely the

most challenging part that I have taken on recently. As Kay points out in the play, Stagg is not the best of communicators. In real life he was, however, pivotal in the success of D-Day, with all the ramifications that failure would have brought. It's been an eye-opener for me. As a lover of history, I was amazed not to know this and am very happy that we are bringing his story to you this week. I love the play. It's a classic tale of one small voice struggling to be heard amongst the crowd, of the value in standing firm when our instincts are telling us that something is true, no matter how great the pressure to compromise. I hope you enjoy it!

## Rob Cording-Cook

### Andrew

**Last role:** My last acting role was John Willoughby in *Sense & Sensibility* at Deans Court last summer. **Favourite roles and other highlights:** I've enjoyed all of my roles with WDP but a particular favourite was Simon Bliss in *Hay Fever*. I was also very proud to win the Best Actor award at the Dorset Drama League Festival for playing a WW2 soldier in *In Room Five Hundred and Four* by Jimmie Chinn. **On being in Pressure:** I've thoroughly enjoyed being a part of *Pressure* as it has taught me so much about such an important part of our history, including learning about my own

## SECRET

*The following message from the Supreme Commander will be read to troops by an officer after embarkation, if prior to 0001 hrs. D + 1, and only when no postponement of the operation is likely; alternatively, when briefing prior to embarkation after 0001 hrs. D + 1.*

"You are soon to be engaged in a great undertaking—the invasion of Europe. Our purpose is to bring about, in company with our Allies, and our comrades on other fronts, the total defeat of Germany. Only by such a complete victory can we free ourselves and our homelands from the fear and threat of the Nazi tyranny.

"A further element of our mission is the liberation of those people of Western Europe now suffering under German oppression.

"Before embarking on this operation, I have a personal message for you as to your own individual responsibility, in relation to the inhabitants of our Allied countries.

"As a representative of your country, you will be welcomed with deep gratitude by the liberated peoples, who for years have longed for this deliverance. It is of the utmost importance that this feeling of friendliness and goodwill be in no way impaired by careless or indifferent behaviour on your part. By a courteous and considerate demeanour, you can on the other hand do much to strengthen that feeling.

"The inhabitants of Nazi-occupied Europe have suffered great privations, and you will find that many of them lack even the barest necessities. You, on the other hand, have been, and will continue to be, provided adequate food, clothing and other necessities. You must not deplete the already meagre local stocks of food and other supplies by indiscriminate buying, thereby fostering the 'Black Market,' which can only increase the hardship of the inhabitants.

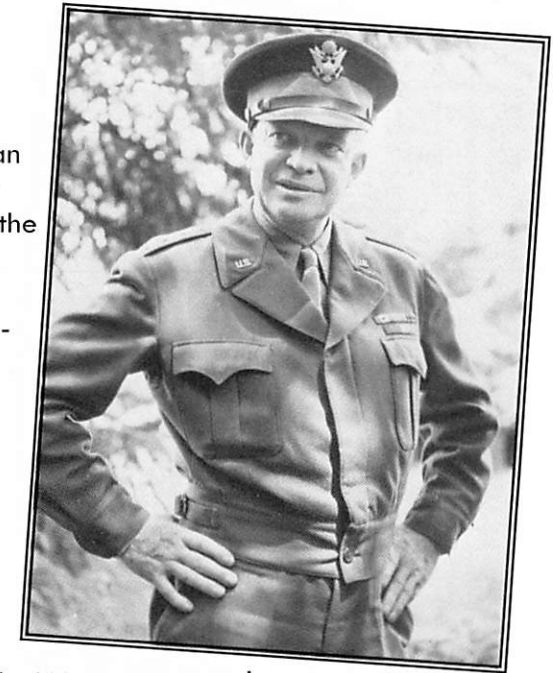
"The rights of individuals, as to their persons and property, must be scrupulously respected, as though in your own country. You must remember, always, that these people are our friends and Allies.

"I urge each of you to bear constantly in mind that by your actions not only you as an individual, but your country as well, will be judged. By establishing a relationship with the liberated peoples, based on mutual understanding and respect, we shall enlist their wholehearted assistance in the defeat of our common enemy. Thus shall we lay the foundations for a lasting peace, without which our great effort will have been in vain."

A message from General Eisenhower given to the invasion troops after embarkation on D-Day. From the family archive of Major H. L. 'Leonard' Douglas, T.D., who served with the 21<sup>st</sup> Army Group under General Montgomery (Source: Nick Clark)

## General Dwight D. "Ike" Eisenhower

The Eisenhower we see in David Haig's play is not yet the Republican President of the United States. That honour would come in 1953, when the Texas-born and Kansas-raised military man began two terms in office. Born 14 October 1890, Ike - a family nickname - trained at Westpoint military academy and served with the US infantry from 1915 before taking a series of military jobs, including an Army Service Schools instructor, a Tank Corps commander and a stint with the American Battle Monuments Commission.



Working his way up, he drafted the War Department's plans for industrial mobilisation and spent five years as assistant military adviser to General MacArthur in the Philippines. Upon the outbreak of war, he requested leave to return to troop duty and, in 1942, oversaw the allied amphibious attack on French North Africa. In 1943 he was appointed Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, the man in charge of Operation Overlord - the D-Day landings. Ike proved adept at co-ordinating forces from the allied countries. The meteorological team working on his D-Day mission was a case in point, being drawn from the UK and the US, and basing their weather forecasts on different sets of principles. His skill was to make everything run smoothly. He also took his responsibility for the lives of his men very seriously. On the eve of D-Day he made a surprise visit to American paratroopers stationed at Greenham Common, to wish them luck.

Following Germany's unconditional surrender in May 1945, Eisenhower was appointed military governor of the American occupation zone. With the establishment of NATO after the war, he was made the first supreme commander of the Combined Land Forces before going into politics. Despite never having held office, he won by a landslide and was re-elected in 1956. He and his wife Mamie were married for 52 years. After some years of ill health, he died on 28 March 1969, aged 78.

## Colonel Irving P. Krick



Irving P. Krick, born in San Francisco in 1906, was a child prodigy on the piano and played concerts around the Bay Area, but left music behind to study physics at the University of California at Berkeley. From there, he went to California Institute of Technology (Caltech) to complete a Master's degree in meteorology - one of the first people to do so.

He went on to set up the meteorology department at Caltech, while at the same time working as an independent weather forecaster. One of his

jobs was to advise the producers of *Gone With the Wind* about the best night to shoot the burning of Atlanta.

When the US joined the war in December 1941, Krick was recruited by the US Strategic Air Forces in Europe to head up the Weather Information Section. He'd already noted Germany's use of weather forecasts to help determine the best time for air and tank raids, and knew the Allies should be doing the same. With his Caltech colleague Ben Holzman, he joined Stagg and the international team working for Eisenhower, paying particular attention to historical weather records.

His meteorological work continued for the rest of his life. He was a pioneer in cloud seeding, the technique of spraying clouds with ice crystals to increase rain. He was called the 'milkman of the skies' after making it snow in time for the 1960 Winter Olympics in California, which had been at risk of cancellation. He also provided weather forecasts for the inauguration days of several US presidents. He was married with two children. He died in 1996 at the age of 89.

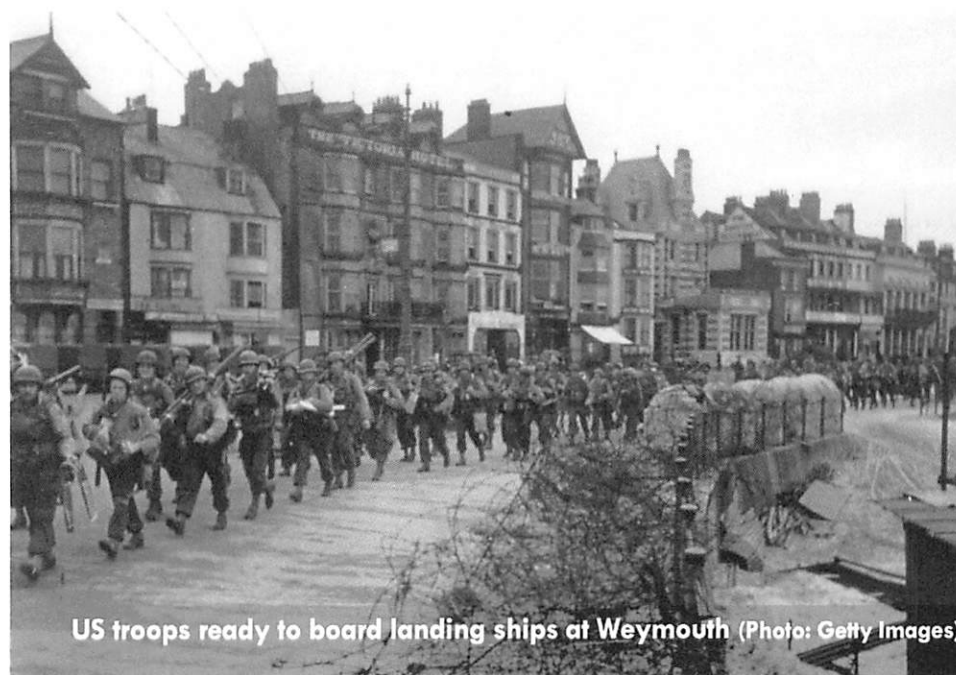
other VIPs. The town suffered many air-raids.

At Tarrant Rushton, gliders carried the first Allied troops and equipment to Pegasus Bridge, minutes into D-Day. Night flights dropped supplies for the French Resistance and Special Operations Executive. Injured troops were flown back here for transfer to the military hospitals set up around Blandford.

Shaftesbury saw the establishment of a military hospital where Guys Marsh prison is now. St Leonards Hospital near Ferndown was also set up to treat casualties from France.

Poole was the embarkation point for tens of thousands of troops. GIs were billeted in homes, the US Coastguard had a base and the US army took over quays, yards, and yacht clubs. Over 100 anti-aircraft guns protected the town.

Weymouth and Portland saw the biggest embarkation of men and equipment, primarily American. Nearly half a million men and 140,000 vehicles passed through these two ports. Portland was described as the "biggest little port in the world" by the Americans. The US 1st Division – the 'Big Red One' – was one of the first assault groups to leave from the port, bound for Omaha Beach.



US troops ready to board landing ships at Weymouth (Photo: Getty Images)



# Dorset's key role during D-Day

IN 1944 Dorset was a hive of activity as hundreds of thousands of troops from Britain, America and Canada were based in the county, preparing for the biggest sea invasion in history.

Some British soldiers were billeted here in Wimborne and Farris House was used as an officers' mess. Canford Bridge was an "immigration post" to keep civilians out of restricted Poole. A US field hospital was set up at Kingston Lacy.

US troops were billeted at Wareham, Corfe Castle, Lytchett Minster and Upton. Breamore House near Fordingbridge was used by General George Patton as his headquarters in the run up to D-Day.



**A US officer at Kingston Lacy**  
(Photo: National Trust)

Bournemouth was a "defence area" and all civilian visits were banned. Most hotels were requisitioned for military use. Aircrew trained in dinghy survival in the Pier Approach baths. Anti-aircraft guns were sited on high buildings like Beales. King George IV reviewed airmen in the Pavilion.

The New Forest saw over 100,000 men under canvas and thousands of military vehicles parked along its quiet country roads.

Bovington, home of the Royal Tank regiment, saw much training from the beginning of the war.

Paratrooper training took place at Hurn Aerodrome which was also the base for Typhoons, Mosquitoes and B-26 bombers. Christchurch aerodrome was a base for USAF Thunderbolts.

Studland Bay was the venue for practice beach landings, leading to a mock invasion in front of the King.

Hotels in Swanage became barracks and billets. The beaches were mined and swathed in barbed wire. The White Horse Inn was the US Red Cross centre and the Grosvenor Hotel hosted the King, Montgomery and

## Kay Summersby

Kay Summersby was born in County Cork, Ireland, on 23 November 1908, to an Irish father - a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Munster Fusiliers - and a Welsh mother. She moved to London in 1932, dropped her Irish accent, and worked as a model and film extra.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, Kay joined the Mechanised Transport Corps (MTC). She drove an ambulance throughout the London Blitz in 1940 and 1941, and was reportedly excellent at navigating the streets during blackouts and fog. When the United States joined the Allies in December 1941, Kay was one of many MTC drivers assigned as chauffeurs to high-ranking American military officers. She was assigned to drive General Eisenhower when he first came to London in May 1942. She later became his secretary and the pair became close, sparking rumours of an affair. Whether there was any truth in this, we may never know. But there can be little doubt that Ike enjoyed the company of the witty and vivacious Kay, who helped him relax.

After the war, Kay became a US citizen and a commissioned officer in the US Women's Army Corps, ultimately leaving the service as a captain in 1947. In her later years she worked as a set and costume designer for television and theatre productions. She was twice married and divorced and died on 20 January 1975, at the age of 66.

In David Haig's play, Kay represents all the largely unsung women who played such a valiant role in winning the Second World War.



## Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay



Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, born in 1883, was Commander in Chief of the Allied Naval Forces for Operation 'Neptune', the naval component of 'Overlord'. He had previously been responsible for the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk in 1940 and was the chief planner of amphibious landings in North Africa and Italy in 1942 and 1943. On D-Day, Ramsay controlled one of the largest fleets in history and the experience and skills gained throughout his 46-year naval career greatly contributed to the invasion's success. Ramsay continued to play a part in planning operations throughout the campaign in

north-west Europe. He was killed in a plane crash on his way to meet Field Marshal Montgomery on 2 January 1945.

## Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory

Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, born in 1892, was Commander in Chief of the Allied Air Forces for Operation 'Overlord' and was responsible for coordinating air support for the invasion. Leigh-Mallory was unable to work well with the Americans and clashed with Tactical Air Force commanders and RAF Bomber Command. However, the forces under his command contributed greatly to Allied success on D-Day and throughout the Battle of Normandy. Leigh-Mallory was reassigned Allied Air Commander in South-East Asia but was killed in a plane crash en route to his new post in November 1944.



## General "Tooe" Spaatz



General Carl Andrew Spaatz, nicknamed "Tooey", was commander of the US Strategic Air Forces in Europe in 1944. He was reluctant to bomb targets in Normandy for fear of killing large numbers of French civilians - a fear shared by Churchill - and wanted to continue to target German oil refineries and fighter production which had been successful. But he was overruled by General Eisenhower and President Roosevelt. He became Chief of Staff of the newly formed United States Air Force in 1947 and retired from the military in 1948. He died in 1974, aged 83.

Photos: Met Office and Imperial War Museum

## The Creative Team

**Director**

**RICHARD NEAL**

**Designer**

**CHRIS DURHAM**

**Stage Manager**

**TRACEY NICHOLLS**

**Deputy Stage Manager**

**NICK CLARK**

**Sound**

**COLIN PILE**

**KELLY WEBB**

**Properties**

**JUDY GARRETT**

**DEE HAWES**

**Costume Supervisor**

**CHRISSIE NEAL**

**Book Cover**

**JENNY HUGHES**

**Music Composer**

**PHILIP PINSKY**

**Publicity & Programme**

**RICHARD NEAL**

*For the Tivoli Theatre:*

**Technical & Production Manager**

**KYLE BEST**

**Head of Sound**

**CHANDLER WHITELOCK**

**Assistant Stage Manager**

**FABIEN BARROW-BLANKEN**

## Production Acknowledgements

Hierarchy Costumes for the hire of period costumes

John Dawson for the loan of meteorological equipment

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Produced by Wimborne Drama Productions at the Tivoli Theatre, 18-20 May 2023. This amateur production of "Pressure" is presented by arrangement with Nick Hern Books. The videotaping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings or streams of this production is strictly prohibited, a violation of United Kingdom Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and an actionable offence.

# PRESSURE

BY DAVID HAIG

## The Cast in order of appearance

Kay Summersby

Group Captain James Stagg

Andrew

Hamilton

General Dwight D. "Ike" Eisenhower

Colonel Irving P. Krick

Secretary

Captain Johns/Lieutenant Battersby

Electrician/Admiral Sir Bertram "Bertie" Ramsay

Air Chief Marshall Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory

General "Tooy" Spaatz/Commander Franklin

SALI PIKE

RICHARD CAWTE

ROB CORDING-COOK

JAMES BOURNER

CHRIS DURHAM

TONY FELTHAM

KELLY WEBB

ANDY GILL

GARY PAINE

SIMON JACKSON

RICHARD SCOTSON

## Setting

The play is set in Southwick House, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, near Portsmouth from Friday 2 June to Tuesday 6 June 1944

Running time approximately 2 hours 40 minutes, including interval

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**Chris Durham and James Bourner**



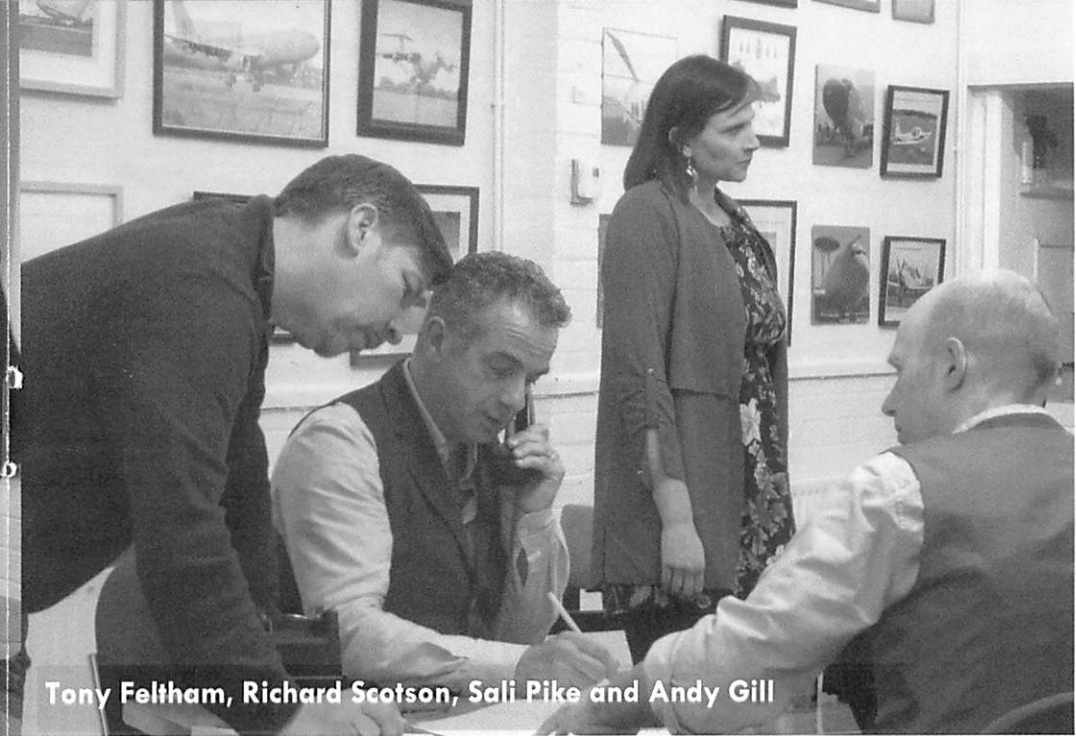
**Rob Cording-Cook and Richard Cawte**



**Richard Cawte**



**Kelly Webb, Richard Cawte, Chris Durham, Rob Cording-Cook  
Richard Scotson, Simon Jackson and Gary Paine**



**Tony Feltham, Richard Scotson, Sali Pike and Andy Gill**