Today, as we pause to remember the thousands of Canadian men and women who have served and continue to serve our country during times of war, conflict and peace, the story of one Second World War veteran’s return to Juno Beach last June honours those who are still among us.

Henry “Harry” Greenwood was a signalman in the Royal Navy during the Second World War and, at just 17 years of age, he was aboard HMS Stormking on D-Day as shells rained down on Caen, France. In June 2019, on the 75th anniversary of D-Day, Harry returned to Juno Beach with the help of Air Canada.

“I didn’t think about it then, but I thought about it afterwards, about the people who were receiving these shells. They weren’t necessarily the enemy. There were many of them just civilians and that is sad,” Harry Greenwood said.

“I think returning for the 75th (anniversary of D-Day) was extremely special for both of us. I know it’s been a very emotional trip for my dad and emotional for me as well,” said Harry’s daughter, Jill Greenwood.

Jill Greenwood was aboard an Air Canada flight when service director Travis Peterson noticed her using a laptop, browsing the Air Canada website for flights, which prompted him to stop and talk to Jill.

“I walked by a couple of times and she was still on the home page. It caused me to just stop and ask. Then she started telling me about her father, about being a veteran from WWII, and it just became the thing to do. We were going to get him there,” Peterson said.

Air Canada helped send Harry, Jill, a travel companion and a pair of documentary filmmakers overseas to capture the moment Harry returned to Juno Beach. In the documentary that resulted from that trip, Harry had the chance to meet some WWII
survivors who were in Caen on D-Day, revisit the sites and speak to his vision of the world.

"In 1944, before the war was over, the countries of Europe met to hammer out the charter for the United Nations. But one of the British delegates was asked what he saw in the united nations. And he said what I want to see one day is a mother who will look out of her kitchen window and see children of all races, all colours and all creeds hopping and playing in a large green meadow. He said, that’s my vision. Well, that is my vision, too, and that is the way the world should be.”

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 🌟