

Commander Michael Healy (Royal Navy, retired) gave this speech on Remembrance Sunday 8 November 2015 at the Sir Winston Churchill Memorial, ave de Grande Bretagne.

We are gathered here today to celebrate Remembrance. Not to glorify War! Remembrance Sunday is a British tradition – France remembers its war dead on Armistice Day, next Wednesday 11th November. The Custodian of Remembrance is the Royal British Legion. Our Royal Patron is Her Majesty the Queen, the embodiment of all we stand for. As the longest serving British Monarch ever, and now in her 89th year, Queen Elizabeth is our continuity and our shining example of service. The British Legion, founded to provide help to the military casualties of the First World War, now helps thousands of modern veterans with support and advice. And this is funded largely by the Poppy Appeal, which I commend to you. In our two-minute's silence, shortly, we thank these modern veterans too for their sacrifice. We should wear our Poppies with pride and humility.

The Queen's very first Prime Minister, in 1952, was Winston Churchill. It is 50 years since Churchill died, aged 90. 25 Jan 1965. By order of the Queen, he was accorded a State Funeral. A totally remarkable man, he was voted No 1 in a poll of the 100 Greatest Britons of all time. He was : a journalist, historian, soldier, polo player, prisoner-of-war, freemason, brick-layer, author, wit, MP, minister, family man, Statesman. He is generally credited with winning the 2nd World War. If he had not been out of political office for most of the 1930s,, he probably have won the Peace instead, because he was a firm believer in Re-armament in the face of the rising Hitler menace. **Si vis pacem, para bellum!** But Britain stuck to appeasement and Defence Cuts, and so we were far too weak militarily to deter Hitler from conquering so many countries, and occupying France and indeed Monaco. It was a close-run War.

And so, his admirers arranged for this bust of the world statesman, who had links with the Principality, to be erected here, and it was unveiled in 1969 by the British Ambassador and Prince Rainier. Or was it? NO, an earlier version of this bust behind me was used, because the sculptor Oscar Nemon was not ready with his masterpiece on the planned date. Two years later, the final bust that you see here replaced the temporary one, in some understandable secrecy and with no ceremony. I was able to track that bust down a few years ago, because it was removed to store in the Palace archives. A few weeks ago, Prince Albert put it up for auction at a dinner at Sothebys in London, where it fetched the fantastic sum of £450,000, bid by a Monaco resident. The whole auction raised £2.25 million, or 2.5 million Euros, which goes to the Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco, dedicated mainly to the Protection of the Environment, to deal with the challenges of Climate Change, Preservation of Biodiversity, and adequate access to fresh water. Anyone wishing to support these initiatives is invited to join the "March to Save the Climate" on Sunday 29 November at 10h45, in front of the Prince's Palace.

And now I invite the president of the BAM, Vanessa Ilsley, to lay our wreath in homage to this world figure: Sir Winston Churchill.