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DAYS OUT

This weekend is all about ap-peeling apples

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TRIBUTE
Right, Countess Mountbatten Lady Patricia, during her speech at the dedication service of the Copp memorial

Pictures: Sarah Standing (123157-4262)

Plans to turn young people's home into flats

NEIGHBOURS are being invited to look at an exhibition of plans to turn a former home for vulnerable young people into flats.

Housing association First Wessex wants to convert Portsmouth Foyer, in Edinburgh Road, Landport, because it has fallen into disrepair and can no longer be lived in.

A new home for the residents, aged 16 to 25, is being built in Greetham Street, Southsea, and the work will be finished next month.

The plans for Portsmouth Foyer's former site, which will be presented at St John's Cathedral Discovery Centre on Tuesday, October 2 between 2pm and 7pm, include 45 flats for rent and a shop.

Hazel Warwick, asset management director at First Wessex, said: 'We are delighted to display the proposed plans to regenerate the old Foyer building and hope to lead the way with the regeneration of this part of the city.'

Man made threat

A MAN has been fined for using threatening behaviour.

At Fareham Magistrates' Court Christian Darvill, 29, of Highland Road, Southsea, admitted committing the public order offence in Guildhall Walk, Landport, Portsmouth. He was told to pay £125.

Councillor campaign

TORY councillor Stephen West will launch his campaign to be the first Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police and Crime Commissioner on Saturday.

Mr West, who represents Tadley in Basingstoke, will talk to shoppers in Eastleigh Town Centre from 11am.

Secret war heroes are recognised 70 years on

Hundreds attend dedication for memorial to Hayling troops

by ELISE BREWERTON

The News
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UNDER the cover of darkness, men in canoes surveyed enemy shorelines, risking their lives to bring an end to the Second World War and save the lives of thousands of Allied troops.

Now, 70 years on, the bravery of the secret, elite Combined Operations Pilotage Parties has been officially recognised as Countess Mountbatten unveiled the 12-ton granite memorial to them on Hayling Island seafront yesterday.

The sun shone on the hundreds of people who gathered in support of the Coppists, seven of whom attended the ceremony.

Such was the significance of the occasion, Chief of Defence Staff General Sir David Richards joined mili-



DEDICATION Left, General Sir David Richards, chief of the defence staff and is Countess Mountbatten during the dedication service

tary top brass to pay tribute to the commandos who were based at Sandy Point on the island from 1943 to 1945.

It has taken Hayling historian Robin Walton, helped by a small band of dedicated volunteers, three years of campaigning and fundraising to bring the project to fruition.

Actresses Anna Chancellor and Wendy Adams-



Evans presented the ceremony where Countess Mountbatten was guest of honour. Her father Lord Louis Mountbatten gave the order to establish the unit.

She said: 'It's lovely because it's a sort of DIY memorial. All of you have been wonderful in bringing it here and contributing.'

'It's wonderful to see so many people, bearing in

mind we're talking about something 70 years ago.

'I was a Wren serving down the coast at the River Hamble at the time. We tremendously admired the commandos. Copp was quite secret, nobody liked to talk too much about them, but we were very aware that they were there.'

'Thank you to everybody who has contributed. It's a great feather in the cap to

have achieved this.'

Gen Sir David said: 'Their exploits at that time were rightly secret and now can be remembered with great pride.'

'It's wonderful to be here to remember the brave men of the Copp whose work did so much to guarantee our freedom today.'

He added: 'This is something Hayling Island should be very, very proud of.'

After the Copp unit was disbanded in 1945 the mantle was passed to the Special Boat Service.

Major General Ed Davis, who is in charge of the SBS, called the memorial 'magnificent'.

Sprightly Coppist Jim Booth, a 91-year-old retired Royal Navy Lieutenant asked for a round of applause for Mr Walton who worked to raise money needed for the memorial.

And he is not giving up yet. After the ceremony he said: 'It's the fruition of three years' work but there's more to come.'

'We've got all the material. Wouldn't it be nice if we could permanently display it in full here?'

For more see coppheroes.org.

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