



Memories of a member of Churchill's Secret Army

CHURCHILL'S Secret Army is a secret no more - 60 years later a member of that army has written about his experience and it has sparked a great deal of interest amongst the public.

At the official launch of Bill Watson's book 'Gone to ground' last Monday, 30 people travelled to Duns to hear a talk on the subject of the secret army by David Blair of CART (Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team).

It was the Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team who came across the manuscript of Bill's secret life before joining the Scots Guards as a Volunteer, and although Bill had sadly passed away without ever revealing to his family his involvement in the auxilliary the importance of his memoirs was not lost on the CART team and David Blair.

Bill Watson, like his compatriots, had signed the Official Secret's Act when he joined Duns Auxiliary which is why he never let on about his role behind the lines and his instructions to disrupt the invading army, should that day arrive. He was one of around 3,500 throughout the UK trained in all aspects of explosive, booby-traps, time fuses, mines and unarmed combat.

After carrying out the official launch of 'Gone to Ground' Mr Blair went on to explain what the work of the highly trained, secret units, entailed and how they would have operated if Britain had been invaded in World War II.

During the talk at Duns Library a letter of greeting from the author's family was read, and a gentleman from the Kelso unit was present to hear Mr Blair speak about the auxiliary army units. The audience was unanimous in acknowledging Mr Blair's wealth of knowledge, the unique story in the book, and the courage of the men in the units.

Mr Watson's account of the auxiliary unit is probably one of very few that remain as they had been sworn to secrecy and as such it is seen as important piece of the history of the period, giving a first hand account of what life might have been like.

Copies of 'Gone to Ground' can be reserved from www.gonetogroundnovel.com. As a thank you to the Red Cross, to whom Bill owed so much during his time as a prisoner of war in Germany, 15 per cent of the profits from the book will go to the charity.

David Blair of CART Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team. He explained the work of the highly trained, secret units, and how they would have operated if Britain had been invaded in WW2