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HRH The Princess Royal becomes Patron to Liverpool campaign



HRH The Princess Royal becomes Patron of the campaign to create a memorial in Liverpool to the Battle of the Atlantic

Reported by Andrew Harris

The charity behind the campaign to build a national memorial in Liverpool to the Battle of the Atlantic – which this magazine supports – has just announced that HRH The Princess Royal has become its patron. In a letter to the campaign Her Royal

Highness said –

“The Battle of the Atlantic, a six-year long campaign, was enormous in its scale, both geographically and logistically. In total over 100,000 people lost their lives in this epic struggle between the convoys and the U Boat

packs. It required the combined efforts of huge numbers of men and women of many nationalities across their navies, air forces and merchant navies. The City of Liverpool, the command headquarters of the battle, became a target for some of the heaviest bombing



The Princess Royal joined the 2016 commemoration to mark 75 years since the first Arctic Convoys

of the Second World War due to its vital role as a port of entry to the UK. The city's seafarers, dockworkers, shipbuilders and inhabitants were crucial in winning the battle together with port communities around the country.

However, the Battle of the Atlantic, whilst being a story of sorrow, is also a story of success. Through the alliance of many countries, and along with technical innovation, intelligence, dedication and bravery, the onslaught at sea was weathered, Britain was kept supplied and the tide of the war was turned. It is important to remember that the fuel for the planes in the Battle of Britain came across the Atlantic, so did the US and Canadian soldiers who fought with us on D-Day to liberate Europe, as did so much else and so many others to keep the war effort going.

The establishment of a permanent commemoration of the international achievement in Liverpool is one I fully support and I look forward to the legacy and engagement it will create to inspire future generations."

The Princess Royal is the Chief Commandant for Women in the Royal Navy. HRH has a long connection with the former Women's Royal Naval Service or WRNS. She is Patron of the WRNS Benevolent Trust and is also Commodore in Chief (Portsmouth).

Gary Doyle is chairman of the Battle of the Atlantic Memorial charity and comments "It has been very clear that The Princess Royal has a deep respect for the Battle of the Atlantic and a real interest in our campaign. For Her Royal Highness to express her support for the memorial by becoming our Royal Patron is a tremendous honour and a

testament to how much The Princess Royal genuinely cares about seafarers and the immense contribution of the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy to World War II without whom the country would not have been able to arm or feed itself."

The campaign will be kickstarting a new memorial design competition shortly to find a suitable monument with a proposed position on Liverpool's iconic Pier Head waterfront near the statues of Johnnie Walker – the famous U-Boat hunter. The campaign is aiming to unveil the monument in 2023 – the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic official commemoration date and has a target of raising circa £2.5 million to fund the project.

The memorial project will work closely with the Museum of the Western Approaches in Liverpool, Merseyside Maritime Museum, National Museums

Liverpool and Liverpool City Council to create a Battle of the Atlantic heritage trail around Merseyside and develop educational projects for schools, colleges and universities. Contact has been made with a number of countries including the United States and the campaign is being supported by the British Embassy in Washington, the American Merchant Marine Veterans and Project Liberty Ship in Maryland. The campaign is now involving Canada, Poland, Norway, the Netherlands, France, China, India, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa as their nationals were in the Battle of the Atlantic. The UK Government is being asked to contribute as the D-Day memorial received £20 million from LIBOR fine cash although the D-Day losses were, while terrible, only a quarter of those of the Battle of the Atlantic.

We will report further on this campaign but if you or your company would like to support the project please visit www.battleoftheatlantic.org although it is currently being updated. It will offer a choice of donating directly by using your debit or credit card or by a postal contribution or via the Big Give. Modest donations are most helpful as they evidence public support for the project. Thank you.

The July 2018 article by Andrew E. Harris 'The Battle of the Atlantic – a national memorial in Liverpool?' can be seen at www.andreweharris.co.uk under Published Articles/ Marine Topics.

