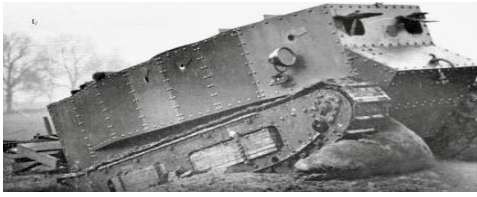


A Personal History of the British Army Tank led by Neil

How did we get from this



to this?



Neil explained how the tank originally envisaged by Leonardo Da Vinci was first developed to become one of the most sophisticated fighting machines in the world.



He drew on his personal and family history to tell a story of intrigue, jealousy, scandal and stubbornness that has resulted in today's modern fighting vehicle.

The personal story started with the rescue of Betty's Grandfather's ship's crew from the desert of North Africa by the Duke of Westminster and his troop of armoured Rolls Royce cars. (A subject for another GH talk). The introduction of tracked tractors and the development of the first tanks and their appearance on the battlefield of Cambria in WW1, through the inter war years and the pivotal role Vickers Armstrong played at this time was highlighted.



The use of specialist tanks during the D Day landings was a personal experience for Neil as he worked on one of those tanks in the 60s when posted to Germany.

After the war, the tank was used during the testing of the British atomic bomb in Australia. During this period, the development of gun stabilisation was pioneered in the Scotswood Road factory. Neil explained about laser sights and the work he was involved in during its development. It became very personal when he showed a photo of his retina with a laser burn on it.

During the talk, he told of the fight between the diehards of the cavalry wishing to retain their horses and the advocates for the role of tanks in the modern army.

He ended the talk with these statistics for today's army:



227



485

Members asked several questions about the tanks especially since this was a new topic.

Neil was thanked for this insight not only into the development of British army tank but also for sharing some of his family's history.

OUR NEXT MEETING:

DECEMBER 19TH

AND OUR CHRISTMAS

'DO'!

