



AIR SEA RESCUE DURING THE SIEGE OF MALTA

AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF LIFE WITH HSL 107 1941-43

Bill Jackson

This important new book is one of few available eyewitness tales about the often overlooked role of the Air / Sea Rescue teams during World War II. Focussing on High Speed Launch (HSL) 107 which rescued close to 100 pilots during the siege of Malta, this tale of heroism is a historically important personal account by Bill Jackson, a crew member of HSL 107.

While everyone around them was hell-bent on death and destruction, the crews of the Air / Sea Rescue Units were dedicated to the survival of both friend and foe alike. They carried out their job with little recognition and with great heroism. Battling the elements, often in appalling sea conditions, and under near-constant air attack from a most determined enemy, the units shared the privations endured by the islanders, coming close to starvation as the Axis forces inched toward invasion.

This book shares with the reader the elation of successful rescues, the exhilaration of the High Speed Launch at full throttle, and the determination of the Units to turn out at all hours in all weathers to go to the aid of both Allied and Axis pilots. Relief, anticipation, joy and fear are all related to the reader as well as the sheer determination to maintain their rescue capabilities 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This fascinating book is set to fill a large gap in the existing literature of World War II.

Within these pages are Bill Jackson's personal recollections of his wartime duty on Malta where he served as Wireless Operator Mechanic on High Speed Launch 107, based both at Royal Air Force Station Kalafrana (ASRU 204) and St Paul's Bay (ASRU 205).

This first-hand, eye-witness account is full of fascinating recollections which still grip your attention, even though we are now experiencing the 70th anniversary of the siege.

Frederick Galea, author of *Call Out*

About the Author:

Bill Jackson was born and raised in Workington, Cumbria. He attended RAF Cranwell No 1 Electrical and Wireless School and was posted to Malta as a Wireless Operator Mechanic (WOM) with crew of HSL 107, the 'Old Lady' of Malta. Bill was repatriated in Sept 1943. He sadly died in late 2009, before this account was published.

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