



**“I help the old to remember
and the young to understand”**

[Gervase Cowell MBE 1926-2000]

www.ww2escapelines.co.uk

Registered Charity No: 1148116



About E.L.M.S.

- During the 1980s and '90s, a group of service and ex-service personnel undertook a series of challenges – The Home-Run Challenges – to gain sponsorship to support the funds of the Royal Air Forces Escaping Society.
- The events followed the routes of many of the former escape-line routes that criss-crossed Europe, and involved parachuting, cycling, walking, sailing, and swimming parts of the routes from Norway to Gibraltar.
- Out of these events, contacts were established with many former 'helpers', escapers and evaders, encompassing people from all walks-of-life, and of many nationalities.
- During the events, support and encouragement were forthcoming from not only the RAFES, but also from members of The Army POW Escape Club, The Monte San Martino Trust, SOE veterans, the F.A.N.Y, the MGB Association, former Resistance workers, many others, and of course, the 'helpers' themselves.
- By 1994, the Escape Lines Reunion emerged – supported by the Home-Run participants and many members of the aforementioned organisations.
- By 1996, sufficient artefacts and memorabilia had accumulated to establish an 'Escape Lines' presentation at Eden Camp Museum.
- By 2002, support had grown sufficiently to establish the 'WW2 Escape Lines Memorial Society', and in 2006 ELMS unveiled and dedicated a unique memorial – 'The Helper Memorial' at Eden Camp [combining a base of Pyrenean Granite, topped by a plaque of Lakeland Slate – depicting the union between France and Great Britain during WW2]
- In May 2012 the Society unveiled their 'Home Run' Escape Lines Memorial at The National Memorial Arboretum, dedicated to all escapers, evaders and helpers of WW2.

ELMS is administered on a purely voluntary basis.

The Society is strictly non-sectarian, non-political, and non-nationalistic.

Members of ELMS receive quarterly Newsletters and eligibility to participate in our numerous events including: Annual Reunion, Service of Commemoration, AGM & Dinner in April at York; Christmas Dinner in London; Memorial Walking Trails [as walker or supporter]; and other smaller linked events and gatherings both in UK and on the Continent.

We have established a permanent 'Escape Lines' display by courtesy of Eden Camp Museum.

Memorial Trails have been established, or are under development, in Norway, Denmark, Holland, France, Italy, Crete, Poland and Slovenia.

The Society Logo depicts a lone man walking over mountainous terrain by moon-light, within a circle of barbed-wire, that is broken by the Dove of Peace – evocative of the experiences of former WW2 escapers, evaders and 'helpers'.



WW2 ESCAPE LINES MEMORIAL SOCIETY



OBJECTIVES

EDUCATION. To educate and inspire present and future generations throughout Europe, with reference to the role of the escape lines and their helpers by:

- Interaction with, and between, schools and other educational establishments;
- Interaction with, and between, military establishments and organisations;
- Collaboration with museums - national, international, and regimental;
- Collaboration with local authorities, local communities, and British Government representatives in the countries where ELMS operates;
- The preservation, maintenance, and sharing of the membership's collective archive information and research;
- Promotion of the role of the escape lines amongst local, national and international communities by lectures and presentations;
- The maintenance of an informative website.

MEMORIAL. To foster and maintain the friendships and the memories forged between nations by the WW2 helpers, escapers and evaders and their families by:

- Reunions and memorial visits;
- Commemorative retracing of wartime routes;
- Assistance with family research;
- The maintenance of regular contact with helpers, escapers and evaders and their supporters within the society.

HELPER ASSISTANCE. To provide relief and support to any ELMS 'helper' who assisted members of the allied armed forces to escape or evade capture in enemy occupied territories in WW2, who are now in need themselves as a result of their wartime activities, and to maintain the bonds of friendship with them and their families, through subsequent generations.

The Society shall be non-sectarian and non-political.



WW2 Escape Lines

Memorial Society

[ELMS]

- ELMS is a non-sectarian, non-political and non-nationalistic Society, dedicated to the memory and support of the 'Helpers' of the Escape lines who assisted allied escapers and evaders during WW2.
- We are a UK-based voluntary organisation, and have many members, friends, representatives and supporters in 26 countries around the world. We actively seek contact with former helpers, escapers, evaders, their families and descendants.
- The Society will assist and give help, when needed, to the men and women of the former WW2 Escape Lines [ELMS members] who risked their lives to assist allied escapers and evaders in the cause of freedom.
- We aim to foster relationships between nations, and second and third generation escaper, evader and helper families.
- We work to educate and inspire future generations on the role of the Escape Lines and their selfless 'helpers' in WW2. Links are being forged with schools in UK and schools on mainland Europe in an endeavour to promote international understanding and friendship.
- We carry out research to build up an accurate historic information archive on all European escape lines.
- We promote Freedom Trail walks [our 'walking memorials'] along former escape line routes to re-trace the footsteps of the 'helpers' and evaders, and through sponsorship, raise funding for the 'helpers' and the Society.
- The Society will support and promote, all historically accurate escape line routes and escape line museums in former safe-house villages and mountain areas. The Society has retraced and supports 'Freedom Trail' escape line routes in Norway, Denmark, Holland, France (4), Italy (5), Crete, Poland and Slovenia.
- ELMS members take part in the above Freedom Trails, as walkers, supporters, helpers and veterans, attending also the commemorative events that take place.
- The ELMS Reunion / Memorial Weekend, for all members, takes place annually on the last weekend in April in the UK. The Reunion is based on York, and the Memorial Service is held at the Eden Camp WW2 Theme Museum at Malton, North Yorkshire, where our Escape Lines Museum and our 'Helper Memorial' are situated.
- There is another Reunion, in London in December each year, and a gathering at the ELMS Memorial at The National Memorial Arboretum in August.
- Should you wish to know more about our Society or our activities, please contact our Director on 01423 508 667 [UK], or visit the website: www.ww2escapelines.co.uk
- ELMS members are available to give talks about the Escape Lines and the Society to schools and other organisations.

Thank you for your interest,
[Roger Stanton MBE – Director / Founder ELMS]
rogerstanton.elms@tpiz.co.uk