



Notes on Remembering the Great War in Bucks, 7th Meeting, held at Viney House, Aylesbury on 23 April 2016.

The Lord Lieutenant, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Bt. welcomed those attending the meeting, especially anyone attending for the first time. He invited Lieutenant Colonel Simon Wilkinson to take the chair.

Professor Ian Beckett (Bucks Military Museum Trust) reported that there were now over 70 images on the HLF-funded 'Buckinghamshire Great War Virtual Trail'. More images had recently been found for Chesham and, with the better weather approaching, work would begin anew on photographing present-day locations, notably in Chesham, High Wycombe and Milton Keynes. The Trust's next Great War 'Roadshow' would be held at the Old Gaol in Buckingham on Saturday 2 July 2016, with the likelihood of another in Marlow in the autumn, and possibly also at Milton Keynes.

Following the exhibition on the Royal Bucks Hussars at Gallipoli held at the Old Gaol in 2015, this year's exhibition would be on the Bucks Battalions at Fromelles and Pozières. Initially it would be shown at the RBL headquarters in High Street, Aylesbury, and transfer to the Old Gaol on 12 September 2016. The Trust had also agreed to deliver presentations on Fromelles and Pozières to RBL branches. Thus far, dates had been suggested for Aston Clinton (1 June) and Olney (10 August), with the possibility of additional talks at Buckingham and Wolverton.

In conjunction with the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, the Trust had succeeded in securing a grant of £11,995 from the 'Gateways to the First World War' AHRC-funded Engagement Centre at the University of Kent for a project - 'Casualties of War' - on the unique casualty books of the 1/1st Bucks Battalion. The grant would cover the transcription and digitisation of the casualty books together with the surviving company order books and trench logs held in CBS. The images would be put online through the separate HLF-funded 'Great War Buckinghamshire' website together with supporting contextual narrative. The grant conditions also required the preparation of both an academic and a more general article

for publication, which would be undertaken by Professor Beckett and Dr Tim Bowman of the University of Kent. www.bmmt.co.uk

Laura Cotton (Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies) introduced Alex Moss as the new acting project officer for the 'Great War Buckinghamshire' project. Alex would be on a six-month attachment before a more permanent appointment was made. It was important to recruit more volunteers to assist on both the 'Great War Buckinghamshire' project as well as on the 'Casualties of War' project. The former involved researching a coherent picture of individuals and their stories. Volunteers would be allocated individuals and/families to research, and the results would be digitised. The research would be based primarily at CBS but much could be carried out at home. There would be a training day for volunteers at CBS in May. The target number of individual stories covering all aspects of the war in the county to be collected for the 'Great War Buckinghamshire' project had been set relatively low but was already on course to exceed this. amoss@buckscc.gov.uk

It was intended to hold a number of events - perhaps 15 - prior to the end of the project in 2018, to which the public would be invited to bring memorabilia. Should organisers of local events wish to include CBS then this would be welcomed. It was also important that materials generated locally should be made available to CBS so as to preserve a complete record of centenary commemorations. lcotton@buckscc.gov.uk

Lieutenant Colonel Simon Wilkinson (BMMT) reported that, while the Australian Government was organising the main commemorative event at Fromelles on Tuesday 19 July 2016, with restrictions on British participation that had been well publicised in the national media, the mayors of Fromelles and Fleurbaix had invited Buckinghamshire to hold its own centenary event on Sunday 17 July. Accordingly, a reconnaissance had been undertaken and a programme of events outlined from 1400-1800 including church service, parade, museum and cemetery visit, and entertainment. Colin Doyle of the RBL was co-ordinating the visit on 17 July with coaches being arranged to pick up at various points in the county at a cost of £34 return per person. RBL Standard Bearers and Bucks Cadets would be participating, with the cadets camping out at Fromelles overnight on 16-17 July. cmdoyle2000@yahoo.co.uk. More information would be circulated to all those on the database.

An official county party for the event on 19 July was also being arranged but it had become apparent that individuals in the group would have to apply separately to the Australian Government for tickets albeit that these

tickets would be from the allocation for the mayor of Fromelles. The official visit was being co-ordinated by Joe Bradshaw at the County Council at a cost of £125 to include overnight accommodation on 19 July at the Holiday Inn, Lille. It would not be possible to make an official trip to Pozières although a visit could be made on Monday 18 July by any individuals remaining in France for both events.

jbradshaw@buckscc.gov.uk

Attention was drawn to the CWGC's 'Loving Memory' project, through which some funding would be available for the restoration of war memorials and plaques in the UK. Information would again be circulated to all on the database. www.cwgc.org/about-us/cwgc-projects/living-memory.aspx

It was also announced that the next Armed Forces Day would be held on the weekend of 25-26 June 2016 at Bletchley Park. This would not be on the same scale as more recent years and a limited number of tickets granting free entry to Bletchley Park would be available on a first come first served basis.

Joanna Barclay (Buckinghamshire in the Great War film) reported that the preparation of the film was on course for its premiere at Pinewood Studios on Tuesday 28 June 2016. The professional film maker being used had been found by the National Film and Television School at Beaconsfield, while the narrator would be the lady who was the voice of the Jubilee Line. The 30-minute film would be available for local groups to be shown at events although its distribution to schools in the county was yet to be finalised. The Chairman of the County Council undertook to ensure all county schools were informed.

Paul Cawte (High Wycombe) reported that a performance of a 'musical play, 'Of Heroic Hearts', with a Somme theme would be held in All Saints Church, High Wycombe at 1930 on Saturday 9 July 2016. Proceeds would be donated to the RBL. <http://www.ofheroichearts.com>

Linda Smith (Chalfont St Peter Heritage Group) reported that there was an exhibition on the two VCs buried at Chalfont in the Parish Council Offices. The Memorial Garden project was progressing with a garden designer who had been a Chelsea Flower Show prize winner undertaking a preliminary design. The Chiltern Open Air Museum had acquired two original Great War Nissen Huts and it was anticipated that there would be war-related displays mounted in them when they were assembled in 2017.

Flackwell Heath Local History Group reported that it had been agreed to add five missing names to the war memorial with an unveiling later in the year.

A representative from Great Missenden reported that Jill Robertson's work on the names on the war memorial would now be published as a book.

John Lovelock (Hedgerley Historical Society) reported that the memorial stone for Private Bowden had now been installed by CWGC, and it was hoped to have it dedicated on Remembrance Sunday 2016.

High Wycombe Museum would be staging 'Tell Them of Us: Wycombe and the Somme' from 1230 on Sunday 2 July 2016, with pupils from John Hampden Grammar School and Wycombe Abbey as well as other local groups. A series of living history activities and cemetery visits would highlight the role of Wycombe people in the war in 1916 with reference to both the Somme and the Home Front.

museum@wycombe.gov.uk

Mike Hyde (Marlow Museum) reported that there was a changing exhibition each quarter focussing on the events 100 years ago. The survey of war memorials was continuing, and a short commemoration was held on the anniversary of each death. There would be a display in the park and library for Armed Forces Day. The 1916 documentary, 'The Battle of the Somme', would be screened in the town on 1 July 2016 and there would be a display on the wartime role of Wethered's Brewery on Heritage Day on 11 September 2016. This would be followed by a concert in the church on 12 September commemorating the Australian composer, Septimus Kelly, who had lived in Bisham. Kelly was killed on the Somme in November 1916.

John Mole (Oakley Parish Council) reported that plans for the commemorative event for the laying of the VC paving slab for Edward Brooks VC on Friday 28 April 2017, and related events on Saturday 29 April 2017, were progressing. oakleyvc@molesekin.org

Stephen Barker (Soldiers of Oxfordshire) reported that an event, 'Unknown Stories of the Great War', would be held at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum at Woodstock on Saturday 17 September from 1000-1600. The public was invited to bring in memorabilia and there would be displays and activities. Some 15 spaces were available for those local groups wishing to promote their own commemorative work.

stephen.barker@sofo.org.uk

Nigel Crompton (Western Front Association) reported that the group was attending fewer events this year but was able to supply a range of speakers on a variety of Great War subjects. Enquiries should be directed to Nigel. www.wfaoxbucks.co.uk

It has since been agreed that the **next meeting should take place on 22nd October 2016 at Viney House at 10.00 am.**