

Notes on Remembering the Great War in Bucks, 10th Meeting, held at Viney House, Aylesbury on 28 October 2017

The Lord Lieutenant, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Bt. welcomed those attending the meeting, especially anyone attending for the first time.

Professor Ian Beckett (Bucks Military Museum Trust) reported that there were now 146 contemporary images on the Bucks Great War Virtual Trail (plus the modern view of the same locality), and it was anticipated that there would eventually be about 150. The AHRC-funded digitalisation of the Casualty Books of the 1/1st Bucks Battalion was proceeding and, through the Army Museums Ogilby Trust, Libor funding had been promised for the digitalisation of the Great War records of the Royal Bucks Hussars. The Trust's major exhibition, 'The Last Charge' would open at the Bucks County Museum on Tuesday 31 October until Friday 5 January 2018. It would be formally opened by Lord Parmoor on Thursday 2 November. The Trust had secured on loan the celebrated painting of the charge of the 1/1st Royal Bucks Hussars at El Mugar on 13 November 1917 by James Beadle, commissioned by the United Services Club in 1921. It had never been seen previously outside of that building in Pall Mall, now the Institute of Directors. Thomas Dugdale's painting of the charge, together with Beadle's original pencil study, would also be on display together with other unique artefacts relating to the participation of the Royal Bucks Hussars in what was widely acknowledged as the last major British cavalry charge. The small exhibition on the Bucks Battalions at Passchendaele would continue to run at the Old Gaol in Buckingham until Tuesday 28 November 2017.

Laura Cotton (Centre for Bucks Studies) reported that the HLF-funded 'Great War Buckinghamshire' project would run until the end of 2018. Approximately 100 biographies of men and women from the county involved in the Great War at home or at the front were already completed and the project website was in its BETA test phase. The digitalised casualty books and RBH records would be included on the website in due course, and it was intended that the transcripts of the casualty records would be crowd-sourced to enable individuals to transcribe further entries to the site. Articles relating to Bucks during the war that could also be included on the website were welcomed together with more volunteers willing to work on project research. Volunteers had been taken recently on a trip to the Trenchard Museum at RAF Halton. Events were planned for the spring and autumn of 2018 while the annual History Fair would take place at CBS on

Saturday 18 November 2017. Organisations were reminded that copies of any material generated from Great War research would be welcomed by CBS.

Aylesbury Royal British Legion (Patricia Chadwick) reported that the RBL intended to mark the 90th anniversary of the 'Great Pilgrimage' for the unveiling of the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing at Ypres in 1928. There had been a series of small events in the course of 2017 and a pack on 'Somme 100' designed in co-operation with Northamptonshire Libraries had won an award. Publicity had been given to the successful attempt to reunite a photograph of Private Arthur Nappin of the 1st Battalion, The Hampshire Regiment from Aylesbury, who was killed in May 1918, with his descendants. Work was underway with AVDC to commemorate the Armistice in 2018.

Bledlow and Saunderton (Bill Bendyshe-Brown) were undertaking research on the names on their war memorials for publication in 2018.

Beaconsfield (Charlene Lister) would be marking the centenary of the end of the war with the 'Paths of Peace Flower Festival' at St Mary and All Saints Church from 24 to 27 August 2018. Attention would be paid to the memorials in the church. Shared Intent Theatre would be performing 'What Greater Glory', a collection of readings and passages, at 8.00 p.m. on Saturday 25 August 2018, and there would be a Taizé service at 6.30 p.m. on Sunday 26 August 2018. (angeshep@sky.com for details).

Burnham Royal British Legion (Jackie Slater) would be holding a concert featuring the RAFA President's Band and Pop Goes the Choir to mark the centenary of the RAF on Saturday 7 April 2018 at Burnham Park Hall from 6.30 to 10.30 p.m. Tickets would be £10 and all proceeds would go to the Wings Appeal, RAFA Benevolent Fund, and Burnham Veterans. There would also be a tea party involving local schools on Saturday 17 November 2018, for which the schools would be undertaking research. Attention was again drawn to the opening of the Royal Star and Garter Home in High Wycombe, probably in the autumn of 2018.

Bucks County Council (Bill Bendyshe-Brown) would be participating in the proposed 'Battle's Over: A Nation's Tribute' commemoration for Armistice Day on Sunday 11 November 2018 with a piper on Coombe Hill at 6.00 a.m. and a church service in St Mary's, Aylesbury at 3.00 p.m. There would also likely to be a beacon on Coombe Hill at about 7.00 p.m. with a bugler but details had yet to be finalised. It was noted that 98% of English cathedrals had

agreed to participate in the 'Battle's Over' pipe and bugle tribute. It was also noted that the ringing of church bells at 11.00 a.m. as proposed by the National Council of Church Bellringers would conflict with the 'Silence'. In addition to the commemoration of the armistice, there would also be a memorial service at St Mary's Chesham for the centenary of the RAF on Sunday 15 April 2018.

Chalfont St Peter (Linda Smith) had received a full design for the proposed development of the Memorial Garden from a young prize winning garden designer at the Chelsea Flower Show. The cost, however, amounted to £500,000, of which £210,000 would be for paths and £75,000 for lighting. Serious fund raising would be required.

Flackwell Heath Local Area History Group (Sally Scagell) was planning a costume pageant to commemorate the village's war dead in June 2018.

Gerrards Cross (Charlene Lister) had made a grant application to the Town Council to help fund an event on the weekend of 10-11 November 2018. Attention was also drawn to the on-going digitisation of the records of SAFA relating to the Great War.

High Wycombe Heritage Trail (Sally Scagell) was now available for visitors to tell the story of the town in the Great War. It was designed for use as an app on mobile phones and includes videos, photos and commentary. The map was fully accessible and designed to work with screen reader technology. There were 12 stops ending at the museum (www.wycombe.gov.uk/pages/Sports-leisure-and-tourism/Tourism/High-Wycombe-heritage-trail.aspx). A booklet was also available on the war graves in Wycombe Cemetery.

Marlow Remembers (Mike Hyde) was still placing crosses for the centenaries of those buried in Marlow. There would be a presentation on the Home Front in Marlow to the Local History Society on Monday 20 November 2017. All information researched over the course of the centenary for quarterly displays in the museum would be put together for one final exhibition in 2018.

Oakley Parish Council (John Mole) had commemorated the award of the VC to Edward Brooks in April 2017 as previously reported. A commemorative booklet with many photographs of the weekend's events had been published. Work was now underway on a booklet commemorating the Oakley dead. A new flag for the Scouts would be dedicated on 11 November 2017 while the exhibition used for the VC event would be displayed again in November 2018.

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (John Sheldon) would be opening the second part of its Great War exhibition, 'Oxfordshire Remembers', curated by Stephen Barker and covering the period from 1917-1918, at Woodstock on Saturday 18 November 2017. The Duke of Marlborough would open the exhibition formally at 4.30 p.m. In addition, SOFO would be mounting a small exhibition, 'The Indian Army in the First World War: An Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Perspective' at Wycombe Museum from 6 to 30 November 2017. The exhibition would then be shown at Banbury.

Stewkley Local History Group (John Sheldon) would be holding an exhibition in the Recreation Ground Pavilion on 10 and 11 November 2018 to mark the Armistice. Attention was also drawn to the 'Returned from the Front' project recording the battlefield crosses held in English churches or elsewhere (www.thereturned.co.uk). The intention is to photograph and record all such returned grave markers from the Great War. There are 16 crosses in Bucks (15 of them in churches), on six of which reports had been completed (including Stewkley). Volunteers were needed to record the remainder. [Note: The most recently completed report on the battlefield cross of an unknown soldier in Cuddington has now been identified through local research into its surviving metal tags as a soldier of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Warwickshire Regiment originally buried at Frezenberg and reinterred at Tyne Cot. There is also a campaign to raise funds to repair a family headstone in the churchyard that includes the name of a soldier of the Australian Imperial Force killed in 1917.]

Waddesdon Manor and Archive (Catherine Taylor) reported that there would be a documentary aired on BBC2 on Tuesday 31 October 2017 on the centenary of the Balfour Declaration (2 November 1917), as well as other commemorative events in London on Thursday 2 November 2017. The principal effort for 2018 would be the completion of the Waddesdon Estate Roll of Honour with a commemorative tile for each of the 179 men from the estate who went to war (from a workforce of 350), of whom 40 did not return. It was intended that children would assist in the making of the tiles, which would probably be placed in the Stables Courtyard.

Wendover Remembers (Mike Senior) reported that Val Moir's *Men of Wendover* had been published in June 2017.

Western Front Association (Nigel Crompton) reported that it was intended to hold an exhibition in 2019 rather than 2018 as wartime casualties continued to

occur well after the armistice, for example during the British intervention in the Russian Civil War. WFA had attended some 25 events thus far in 2017 and, having concentrated on more general themes in its displays, was now developing more specialist displays on such areas as war hospitals, munitions work, and animals at war. These themed displays were always available to other organisations and groups.

It was agreed that there should be another meeting in March 2018.