



A Postscript to the only Anzio VC P15



War memorials in the UK and how you can help conserve them P12



DESPATCHES

the magazine of the International Guild of Battlefield Guides

Should you visit the Efford Cemetery to the north of Plymouth not far from the A38, you will find a large municipal cemetery which contains 447 Commonwealth War Graves. Predominantly from the First World War era, these graves contain the remains of men from all over the world who had come to fight for King and Country. Amongst the headstones there are 10 named to men of the 28th New Zealand Reinforcements who died in tragic circumstances at a little railway station some seven miles to the north of Plymouth at a place called Bere Ferrers.

The Bere Ferrers Tragedy

The story starts with the arrival of two New Zealand Expeditionary Force troopships, the Ulimoroa and the Norman in Plymouth Sound. The Ulimoroa had left Wellington on the 26th July 1917 and arrived at Plymouth on Monday 24th September along with the Norman which had transhipped men from the Te Kiwi at Cape Town. In total there were 2178... *continued on p5*

The railway station today



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

BATTLEguides

Photo's of guides in action!



GUIDElines

Your news and views

PLUS

What happens when when someone comes up and says they lost their passport...

AND

WOT WE DID ON ARE HOLIDAYS

by ERIC

BATTLEguides: IN ACTION



Above: John Greenacre talking battlefields and demonstrating WW1 kit - credit Dr Ed Packard UCS



Above: Starting young on the battlefields - Vern Little's son, Matthew at the Menin Gate and Ryan Gearing's son, James at Tyne Cot.



Above: Joe Hamon with a group in the Land Warfare Hall at Duxford (clearly he's crossed over to the other side)



Left: Simon Worrall finishing the story of the Dieppe Raid on the main landing beach (and seeing how far he can lean over without falling flat)

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BATTLEFIELD BINGO

You are on a battlefield tour as a client. As the tour progresses you realise that the Guide is not a member of the Guild. They are bad. Very bad. Just how bad would have been a subjective judgementuntil now. Equipped with this checklist you can now play "Battlefield Bingo". Simply tick off the phrases as your guide uses them (or a very near equivalent) and when all ten have been used, cry "Bingo" and resolve to use a badged Guide in future.

1. "History does not relate"
2. "You can't actually see it from here but...."
3. "Sorry but I have not had time to recce/prepare this stand/day/battle/tour...."
4. "The ground has changed completely since the battle...."
5. "Don't worry, not long to go"
6. "Oops. I didn't know the museum/monument/café closed on Mondays"
7. "Obviously....."
8. "Stay on the coach/talk amongst yourselves/just switch off if this bit does not interest you..."
9. "We have not got time to cover that subject/area/question on this day/tour" (With no alternative suggested)
10. "Has anyone been here before? Because I'm not exactly sure"



OPENINGshot:

THE CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

Welcome to the first issue of *Despatches* our new in-house magazine. The launch of our own dedicated Guild

magazine is an exciting and timely development, at the beginning of what promises to be the most dynamic period of development for the battlefield tour industry in living memory. The next 4 years look set to see a huge growth in the volume of tourists visiting battlefields worldwide; hopefully, this momentous surge will trigger a corresponding increase in our own membership.

Despatches will build on the success of its journal style predecessor, *The Battle Guide*. It is a key component of our communications strategy, complimenting our new website, and our very active social media feeds. Members and Guild Partners can now look forward to receiving 3 issues per annum. We will be adhering to a loose format that is aimed at keeping our membership informed, showcasing the Guild to industry, and getting our message about battlefield guiding out to a much wider audience.

If we are to make this magazine a success,

what we will need from you the membership, is participation. We want to hear from you about your experiences on the battlefields that you work on. We hope to feature letters from members on a regular letters page, also, photographs, humorous battlefield tour stories and articles that relate to battlefields and battlefield tours that you experience – we need you all to contribute. Guidance on submission format can be gleaned from our Guild Secretary, Tony Smith.

Before closing I must thank all of the members who have contributed to this issue, and a special thanks to Tony Smith and Ryan Gearing for pulling it all together. I hope that you will all enjoy the magazine and contribute to its pages in the future. So finally, as another busy year draws to its close, and we all prepare for the FWW Centenary, Normandy 70, and Arnhem 70, I wish everybody in the Guild and the battlefield tour industry, the best of luck on the historic battlefields and heritage sites of the world. Most of all, enjoy your guiding, wear your badges and look out for your fellow members.

Mike Peters

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From front cover



men whose destination in England was Sling Camp near Bulford on Salisbury Plain. Here they were to receive their basis training before being sent on to France.

From Plymouth the men were to be moved by train to the camp. Marching from the docks, they entrained at Plymouth Friary Railway Station at 15:00 and the train set off sometime before 15:30. By this time the men were hungry and tired – they had last eaten at 6:00 that morning. The first scheduled stop for their train was to be Exeter and the men had been instructed that when the train reached the city two men from each carriage were to get out and collect rations for their coach from the goods van. These rations were to be supplemented on the platform by tea and buns which were to be provided by the Exeter Mayoress' Comforts Fund

At 15:50 the train was approaching Bere Ferrers and, due to an obstruction on the line, was signalled to stop which it did at 15:52. The train was a long one of eighteen coaches and not all were able to pull up alongside the platform. Some of the men in this rear section decided that they must be at Exeter and ignoring the 'two men from each carriage' instruction jumped down from the train onto the track and headed back towards the goods van. Not thinking they left the train on the side in which

*Memorial Plaque
at the station*

they had got in. This put them onto the down line track.

At 14:12 the Waterloo to Plymouth express had left its scheduled stop at Exeter on time and at 15:52 was rounding the sharp bend just before Bere Ferrers station at around 40 mph. The driver sounded his whistle and seeing the stationery train on the other track gave an extra-long burst. At 15:53 the express passed the rear of the troop train and the fireman, Charles Thorn, shouted "Whoa soldiers on the road". John Skinner the driver applied his brakes but it was too late to stop. It was some 300 yards further down the track before he was able to halt his train. At the subsequent inquest it was noted that 'the soldiers seemed to be confused, and made a "scuffle" to get out of the way'.

It was carnage, nine men were killed instantly, and a number could only be identified from their identity discs. Three men were injured and



*The plaque on the village war
memorial*

taken to Tavistock Hospital. One of these later died of his injuries bringing to total number killed to ten whose ages ranged from 20 to 36 years old.

THE TEN WERE:

William Simon Gillanders – aged 36
a sheep farmer from Christchurch
William Frederick Greaves – aged 31
a farm hand from Manawatu
John Stanley Jackson – aged 20
a coppersmith from Featherstone
Joseph Judge – age unknown
a labourer
Chudleigh Inwood Kirton - aged 21
a farmer from New Plymouth
Baron Archibald Wilson McBryde –
aged 24 a labourer from Dunedin
Richard Vincent McKenna – aged 20
a farmer from Pahiatua
William John Trussell – aged 28
a cabinet maker from Wanganui East
John Warden – aged 33 a farmer
Sidney Ennis West – aged 21
a farmhand from Taranaki

The local people felt the tragedy deeply and it was noted that the 'parish went into mourning'. Church services were held and a brass memorial plaque was erected in Bere Ferrers church. For many years afterwards one villager in particular would regularly go down to Plymouth to tend the graves of the men.

Eighty four years after the tragedy the memory still remained strong. In September 2001 the names of the dead were added to the village war memorial at a special ceremony organised by the New Zealand National Army Museum and attended by the New Zealand High Commissioner to Britain, Bryce Harland.

Today if you visit Bere Ferrers station you will see a memorial plaque and garden commemorating the men. They had travelled half way around the world to support the old country and the local community still remains loyal to their memory.

Tony Smith

The BOY COLONEL

It was a blustery day on the 25th January 1920 at remote Palm Beach to the north of Sydney and the surf was wild. Two attempts had already been made to save a young woman caught in the undertow and dragged out when a young man; skinny, gangly, frail from war wounds and known to be a poor swimmer, threw off his coat and shoes and raced into the surf.

As his fiancée and young nephew watched, the sea closed over him and he disappeared. His body was never recovered.

This was the sad and tragic fate of a gallant, highly decorated and promising young man named Douglas Gray Marks. And it was a great loss to a nation whose manhood had been decimated and where the pain of the war and the loss was still very evident and raw.

Douglas Marks was born in 1895 and like so many

Douglas Gray Marks



enthusiastic and patriotic young men with basic military training, signed up two days after the declaration of war. Before embarking from Melbourne in November 1915, he had received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in the AIF.

After a period of training in Egypt, he embarked for the Gallipoli peninsula and landed on the second day. Spending a great deal of time in the dangerous frontline trenches at Quinn's Post where he was wounded, he remained on Gallipoli until the evacuation in December of that year. Just twenty years old, he was seen as an inspirational young officer, promoted to captain and given acting command of his battalion.

Marks then travelled back to Egypt, saw the re-organisation of his beloved 13th battalion and the raising of its sister battalion, the 45th. Sailing from Alexandria, he crossed the Mediterranean to Marseilles and took the train to the north of France and the area around Armentieres and Bois Grenier.

From here, Douglas Marks found himself in the worst battles that the AIF were to fight in: Pozieres and Moquet Farm, Flers, Gueudecourt, Stormy Trench and Bullecourt on the Somme. He then travelled north and was part of the horrendous battles around Ypres in 1917: Messines, Polygon Wood, Hollebeke and Passchendaele. Back on the Somme in early 1918, the brigade was thrown into the line at Hebuterne and held off repeated German assaults for three weeks without relief.

He then fought at Villers Bretonneux, where his continual "nibbling" and "peaceful penetration" helped to force the Germans from the east end of the village. His battalion was then part of the attack on Le Hamel, the Battle of Amiens from the 8th August and in the fighting through to the Hindenburg Line up to the withdrawal of his battalion in September 1918.

By this time he had been wounded twice, was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in command of

the 13th battalion (4th Australian Infantry Brigade) and had been decorated with a Military Cross, a Distinguished Service, the Serbian Order of the White Eagle and mentioned in despatches on four occasions. Known as the “Boy Colonel”, he was the youngest battalion commander in the AIF and highly regarded not only as future military commander, but as a business and community leader.

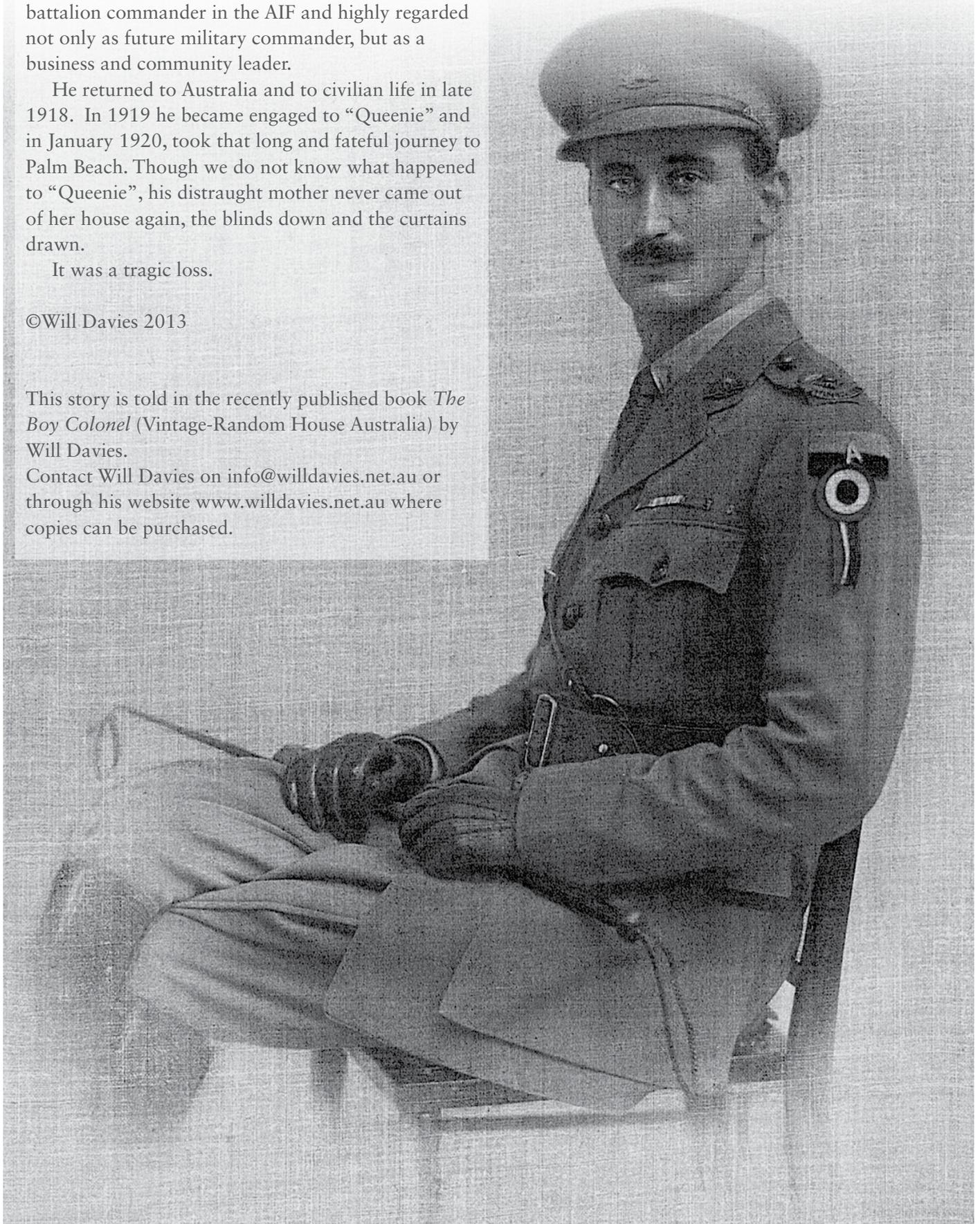
He returned to Australia and to civilian life in late 1918. In 1919 he became engaged to “Queenie” and in January 1920, took that long and fateful journey to Palm Beach. Though we do not know what happened to “Queenie”, his distraught mother never came out of her house again, the blinds down and the curtains drawn.

It was a tragic loss.

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This story is told in the recently published book *The Boy Colonel* (Vintage-Random House Australia) by Will Davies.

Contact Will Davies on info@willdavies.net.au or through his website www.willdavies.net.au where copies can be purchased.



You're on a Tour when someone comes up and says they lost their passport.....

LIVING IN THE MIDDLE EAST HAS MANY BENEFITS, NOT LEAST THE WARM WEATHER AND SHOPPING, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE AMOUNT OF HISTORY IN THE AREA. THERE ARE A VAST AMOUNT OF BATTLES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE AS WE ALL KNOW.

I have lived in Dubai now for two years with my family and have had my eyes on a trip to neighboring Oman since we arrived. Having worked at Hereford (non-badged), I was particularly interested in the SAS action on Jebel Akhdar of the late 50s. I gathered as much information as I could¹, researched the battle and offered up a free tour to family and friends.

For those not acquainted with this battle I will give a brief history. Although British ties with Oman go back many years, they began officially in 1789 when they signed a treaty of friendship with the Sultan of Muscat giving the British East India Company commercial

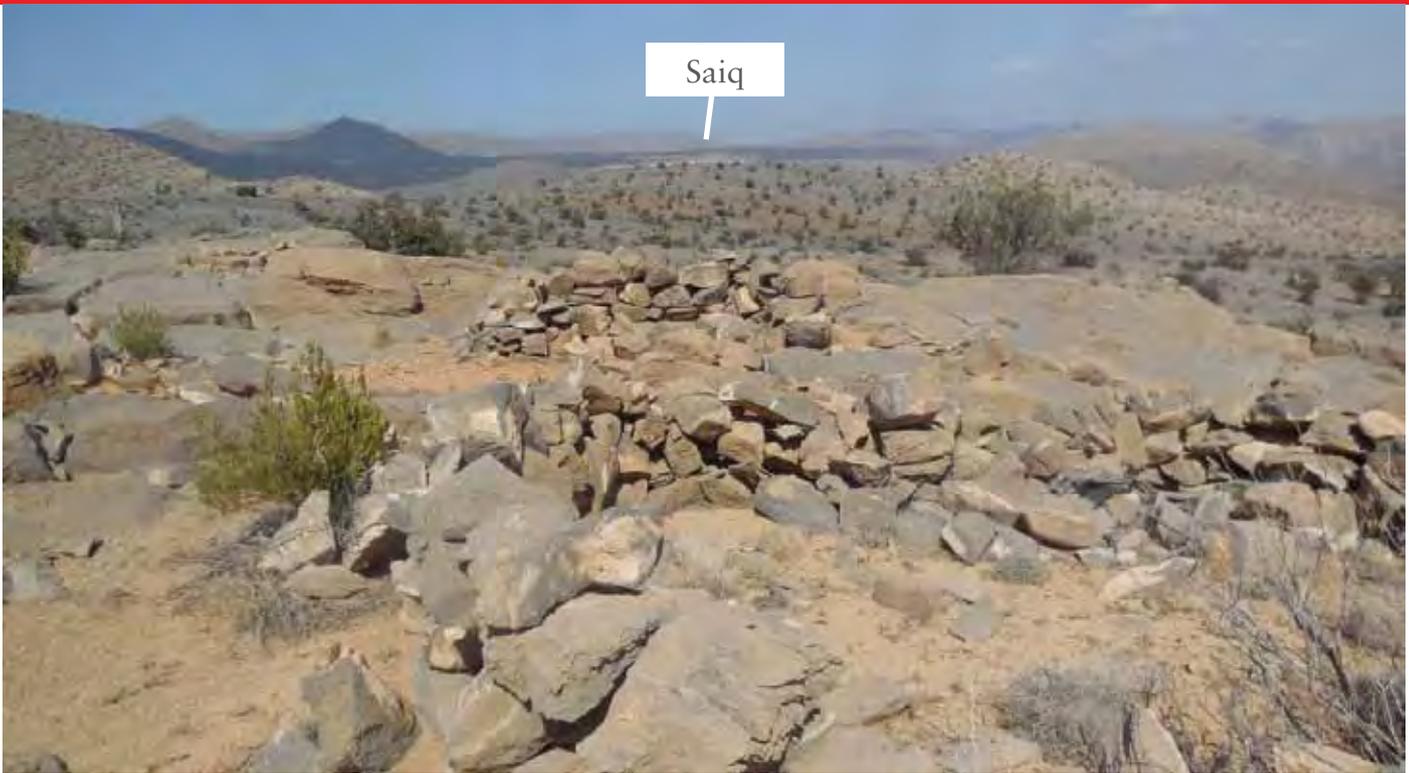
rights in Oman in exchange for the protection of the Royal Navy. Oman was a trading nation that suffered at the hands of pirates, the Royal Navy helped eradicate this problem! This close relationship remained over the years and became crucial on the discovery of oil.

In 1952, Saudi Arabia had invaded parts of Abu Dhabi and also Muscat – the last thing Britain wanted was a confrontation with Saudi Arabia. This left Britain in a slightly awkward position but she would honour the treaty of friendship with the Omanis and provide

Waddi Bani Habib



¹ Many thanks to Graeme Cooper and son, Ben, Col (Retd) Ian Buttenshaw and references from the Secret Operations of the SAS – Mike Ryan



them with Military Assistance. Military Advisors were sent in at first, although partially successful, but then the Sultan took this matter in his own hands and deployed his limited army around the towns. In 1957, an open rebellion developed, led by the Imam Ghalib bin Ali of Oman and his brother Talib supported by Sheikh Suleiman bin Hamyar (referred to the SAS as Freeman, Hardy and Willis)! The Sultan spent no time in requesting emergency military assistance.

Two Squadrons of SAS, A & D Sqn were discreetly sent along with numerous other units to work alongside the Sultan's Trucial Oman Scouts. A large-scale military operation was out of the question and a low-key approach had to be maintained.

Freeman, Hardy and Willis, along with their supporters, were all located on top of the 10,000ft high Jebel Akhdar mountain (approx. 70 miles southwest of Muscat). The main stronghold was considered to be the plateau of Saiq, although many caves to the north and south of the area were also utilized. Any possible route onto the plateau was heavily guarded.

In November, 1958, D Sqn arrived from Malaya and were deployed almost immediately. 16 & 17 Troop were sent up the northern side of the 7000ft Jebel Akhdar Mountain and 18 & 19 Troop from the south via Tanuf. There were not many routes to the top of the 10,000ft mountain. After several contacts with the Enemy, it soon became apparent that backup was required in the form of another Sqn of SAS. A Sqn arrived in January 1958 and after a short training period, replaced D Sqn in the North. The enemy to the north were disposed of; a Troop from A Sqn remained in the north whilst the rest of A and D Sqn mounted an

assault from the south to clear the plateau.

Within 10 weeks, the enemy had been cleared and the SAS had lost only 3 men.

On the 1st April we all drove down to the Jebel Akhdar from Dubai. Quite a lengthy journey as prior to entry to Oman you have to officially leave UAE. This can take up to two hours+ just to get through 100m of tarmac!

After 6 hours of driving and the time at the border control, we arrived on the Jebel. The first night was to be spent in a 5* star hotel followed by two nights camping. The SAS battles took place some three hours of walking away from roads and can only be accessed on foot (or helicopter).

We all off-loaded our bags into the rooms and then immediately went for dinner. Lovely hotel, excellent views over the mountains and first class service. We retired to our rooms after a quick dinner and prepared for the next days' walk to the Objectives of Beercan, Causeway and Colin.

When I woke up, bizarrely enough, the first thing I checked was for the passports. All our family passports were missing. My immediate thought was Assignment 5!! We checked the car but I knew exactly where I kept the passports, in my day sack – and they were gone. Okay, don't panic Mr Mainwaring. I approached the hotel manager and told him that our passports had been stolen from the room, could he kindly approach his staff and get them back. I told him that he had until 5pm to get them back or I would go to the Police.

We didn't want to abandon the tour there and then and so continued with the tour to the south of the area. The walk started at Wadi Bani Habib, a village that was



bombed by RAF Shackletons during the war.

Most of this 500 year+ village remains intact although the photograph would suggest otherwise. The walking was generally good, albeit a little warm at 32°C. All the group had a minimum of three litres of water each and a packed lunch.

After several water stops and three hours of walking, we arrived at Objective Beercan. Both A and D Sqn had to walk up onto the plateau, with full kit and stacks of ammo, from the south not far from Kamah. Their walk up the mountain had to be carried out at night in order to gain the element of surprise and not be spotted by the various En OPs that were covering any potential routes.

They started at approximately 8pm and routed via Objectives Vincent, Pyramid, Causeway and Beercan, summiting just as it started to get light. Unfortunately, two soldiers were killed by a sniper close to Vincent. The sniper was believed to have fired from the cave highlighted.

The Sangars of A and D Sqn are still present to this day along with ammo boxes, shells and shrapnel. It is nice to see that none of this archeological evidence has been removed from the battlefield. The SAS consolidated on Objective Beercan as they feared an assault from the enemy located on the plateau.

After a short period both Squadrons' moved North West along the ridge to Objective Colin. This latter Objective gave a perfect view of the Saiq plateau and gave the SAS a perfect platform to observe the enemy. The plan was for the SAS to approach Saiq from the southwest bypassing the village of Bani Habib and then drive the enemy out of Saiq.

Objective Colin is located just over 1000m to the

northwest of Beercan and is marginally higher at 6500ft high. The sangars here are perfectly preserved along with hexi cookers, empty tins of food and plenty of ammo boxes. From here the SAS received a resupply by parachute of weapons, food and equipment. The Imam saw this from the village of Saiq and assumed it was a full-scale airborne assault and so withdrew all his forces off the mountain and escaped.

We arrived back at the Hotel by 5pm and I approached the hotel manager for news on our passports. It was not good.

I knew exactly what to do as I had passed Assignment 5, Problems on Tour, this was going to be quite straight forward.....

I went to the police station to report the theft, the hotel manager kindly agreeing to coming with me as an interpreter. I made the report to the Omani police officer with the hotel manager relaying all my words in Arabic. I was asked to sign a statement – all in Arabic of course.

The next call was to the British Embassy in Muscat to report the theft and gain the necessary paperwork to aid our travel back to the UAE. We were all required to go to Muscat the next day in order to collect our Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs). I returned to the hotel and briefed the group. For my family, the tour was over.

We all drove to Muscat in the morning, arriving there at midday. On arrival at the Embassy we were asked if we had our new passport photos and photocopies of our old passports with us. I did not know what an ETD consisted of! So off we

went into the city of Muscat in search of a photo booth. Two hours later we returned to the Embassy and gave them our new passport photos along with copies of our passports. Our police statement had to be translated. I was horrified to read a completely different version of events that the Hotel Manager relayed to the police officer! Apparently, we lost our passports on a walk! The next little piece of news knocked us sideways. The UAE did not accept the ETD and therefore, we all had to return to UK to get new passports.

We were then given our new ETDs, a one way passport that would get us back to UK, but first we needed an exit visa from Oman. We were given rough directions to the Immigration Office of the Oman Police HQ only to find that they had closed for the weekend (Thursday and Friday in Oman). The British Embassy were now closed for the weekend too with no one on duty for telephone queries. Only in matters of life and death will calls be received via an office in London, for passport and visa queries, please call on Saturday!

We were all now stuck in Oman till Saturday during holiday season. Being a good Guide and Dad, I could see that morale was beginning to suffer a little and so booked the family into a hotel for the next three nights. I did consider heading back to the Jebel but think I would have ended up on Radio Silence!

On the Saturday, we went to the Immigration Department and after a little bouncing around from offices; we ended up seeing the Director of Passports and Immigration. We explained our predicament and he informed us that we could not go anywhere for the next three days as it is standard procedure to advertise the theft in the local press for three days

prior to the visa being issued.

Yet another little gem the Embassy did not inform us about. The Director could see the team 'bottom lip quiver' and took pity on us. With his personal assistance, we were eventually 'deported' out of Oman that night. Due to the poor weather in Qatar, we missed our flight connection and spent a further 7 hours in nice comfortable plastic chairs in Doha. Eventually we arrived back in UK on Sunday afternoon.

For lost/stolen passports the turnaround is seven days and not the 24 hour premium service that we all quote. That means you have to book an appointment with the passport office as quickly as possible! Our passports did arrive within 24 hours of the appointment though but this cannot be guaranteed. Now that we had our passports we were keen to get back to Dubai. The next problem we encountered was that we had return flights to Oman and we would then have problems crossing the local border when we drove back to Dubai. These flights had to be thrown away. In order to get to Dubai with a standard UK passport, it is necessary to have a return flight. The airlines will turn passengers away at the airport if you do not have a valid return ticket (a UAE rule). So more flights were purchased.

On arrival in Dubai, some two weeks later, our passports were confiscated (is this legal?) until I produced individual police reports from Dubai for each passport. We now have to complete all the residency visa process again as lost/stolen visas are replaced with new visas (medicals etc).

This whole process so far has cost us over £8000 in hotels, passports, flights, hire cars and reports.

Adam Williams

WHAT ADVICE/TIPS CAN I OFFER YOU ALL?

- Losing your passport can be one of the most miserable experiences of your life – guard it at all times. We dropped our guard for 45 mins when we left our bags in a locked hotel room.
- It is very much worth taking a photocopy of all the groups' passports and if you can, take two spare passport photos. The delay in us getting our photos cost us three days of hotels/ food.
- An ETD costs £100 each
- Be aware that in some countries, local rules apply – such as the three day advertising in the press.
- The moment you lose your passport, ring the passport office in UK (do you have the number?) and book an appointment. It can take up to a week just to get an appointment.
- Forms LS01 (Lost/Stolen Forms), can be completed at the passport office.
- Remain focused and calm, much easier said than done in very stressful circumstances
- Ensure the rest of the group are looked after, one mishap should not spoil the tour
- My UAE visa debit card did not work in Oman, do you have alternate ways of paying for things?
- Passport theft is on the rise. The pages are used to baulk up fake passports and the chips are used for identity theft.
- In Oman alone, over 20,000 (yes, you read that right) passports were stolen in 2012.
- Without risk of sounding bitter, do not rely on the British Embassy to help.

Above all is, keep smiling – it's all been an education!

Adam Williams – Badge No 56

War memorials in the UK and how you can help conserve them

Article by Frances Moreton,
Director War Memorials Trust

War memorials are a touchstone to our past. They are a source of information on those who served and fell in conflict as well as being a place of reflection and remembrance. As we approach the centenary of World War I they will become a focal point for events and commemorations. But are our war memorials, which often disappear into the background landscape of our daily lives, in a fit condition to be focal points and are we doing enough to conserve these memorials and the names recorded upon them?

War Memorials Trust is the charity working to protect and conserve war memorials in the United Kingdom. The Trust wants to help communities look after their war memorials. Interest is growing in our war memorial heritage with the approaching centenary and the charity seeks to encourage people to prepare their memorials not just for the forthcoming events but many years ahead.

The Trust was established in 1997 following concerns about the neglect and vandalism of war memorials. There was a lack of information for people concerned about the condition of war memorials and War Memorials Trust has evolved to provide support of all kinds. Unlike the Commonwealth War Graves sites both overseas and in the UK, which receive financial support from the governments of the Commonwealth, local war memorials rely on the community to maintain them. War memorials have traditionally been erected following local donations with a committee or group often leading the decisions about location and design. Sometimes a local landowner or business leader donated land whilst craftsmen gave time and labour to help.

Often little thought was given to 'ownership'. Who in the early 1920s could have imagined a time when repairing or tending the memorial might be subject to 'budget' constraints? This is one of the biggest challenges which faces communities and subsequently the War Memorials Trust. Sometimes there is paperwork indicating who is responsible, or a formal transfer has been undertaken. It may take time hunting in local archives to uncover where some can be found but for others the information just does not exist. The War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act passed 18th July 1923 allows local authorities to take on responsibility to maintain war memorials but it does not oblige them to. Sometimes it would be relevant for

them to do so but when memorials are in schools, churches or workplaces is it the responsibility of the Local Authority to step in? The most vulnerable war memorials therefore are often those without 'owners'.

Those without 'owners' can be those in most need of assistance having been left to deteriorate as no one takes responsibility. However, no one is exactly sure on statistics around the condition of war memorials and for that reason War Memorials Trust has launched, with the support of English Heritage, War Memorials Online at: www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk. This website allows anyone to contribute information about their local war memorial and seeks to generate a greater understanding of war memorial condition as we approach the centenary. To date the condition reports on the site suggest 8% of war memorials in the UK may be in 'Poor' or 'Very bad' condition so we are starting to understand the situation better but there is a long way to go. Anyone with access to a computer, tablet or smartphone can get involved sharing location, photographs and condition details to help improve our understanding so please do contribute. We are not just interested in those war memorials with problems but also want to celebrate those communities who do a good job as an example to others.

With a conservative estimate of the number of war memorials in the UK at around 100,000 that 8% that need attention represent around 8,000 war memorials or more. This is a big challenge. War Memorials Trust runs grant programmes which can assist the repair and conservation of war memorials. Anyone interested in a grant is encouraged to complete a 'Grants Pre-application form' available from the Trust's website, www.warmemorials.org, where there are also comprehensive details of eligibility for the programmes and advice for applicants on the grant

process. An improved understanding of potential demand for repair and conservation grants will help the Trust identify the resources required to assist projects in the next few years. The value of grants can vary enormously as two recent projects supported by the charity demonstrate:

Chacewater war memorial consists of a rough-hewn Celtic style wheel cross on a square plinth, constructed in granite. It stands in the churchyard of St Pauls Church in Chacewater, Cornwall. In 2012, War Memorials Trust offered a grant of £200 under the Small Grants Scheme for cleaning of the memorial using non-metallic bristle brushes and water and the re-painting of the inscription using black enamel paint. The memorial was erected in 1920 and was paid for by public subscription.

The inscription on the memorial reads:

**In
honoured memory
of those
who made the
supreme sacrifice
in the
Great War
1914 – 1918**

He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.



Chacewater war memorial . Photo: Chacewater Parish Council

At the other end of the scale the Coombe Hill war memorial to the 158 Buckinghamshire men who fell in second Boer war (1899-1902) is located on the summit of Coombe Hill, close to Chequers. It was erected in 1904 and is constructed from grey Aberdeen Granite. Designed by Whitehead and Sons of Kennington Oval, London the memorial stands at 64 feet high. It is Grade II listed. The memorial takes the form of an obelisk with a four tiered pedestal and square base with moulded cornice. At each corner of the base are projections with a short pillar supporting a ball. Surmounting the tapering obelisk is a gilded flaming urn. The main inscription is on the north face and above this are two crossed bronze flags and the county arms.

In 2010 an application was made for funding towards a project to re-point and clean the memorial, repair of the bronze flags and replacement of the ferrous fixings, stone repairs and re-gilding of the flame. The project also included the replacement of the inscription panel with a new granite one. The plaque on the memorial was a replacement following the theft of the original bronze plaque in the 1970s. Following consideration of the project by the grants panel an offer of £20,000 was made towards a project cost of just over £92,000. Upon completion of the works the total project costs had reduced and therefore the final grant payment was for £15,455 which was paid in 2013. This reduction was due to some elements of the work not being required.

The main inscription reads:

**'This memorial
was erected by public subscription raised under a
resolution
proposed by the Lord Lieutenant and unanimously passed
by the Magistrates of the County of Buckingham
in quarter sessions assembled in honour of the men of
Bucks who
at the empires call laid down their lives during the war in
South Africa
1899-1902
Dulce et decorum est pro patria morti'**

As the Coombe Hill project highlights war memorial theft is not a new issue. A story of vandalism to the Black Watch Boer War memorial on The Mound in Edinburgh in 1911 reinforces that. However, war memorial metal theft has received a lot of attention in recent years which sometimes seems to suggest it is a new phenomenon. Metal plaques, sculptures and even fittings have been removed or attempted removal has resulted in damage. War Memorials Trust has helped communities with grants to repair such damage and has also launched In Memoriam 2014 with the SmartWater Foundation. This

Continued overleaf



Coombe war memorial. Photo: Buckinghamshire County Council

project is making SmartWater available free of charge to war memorial custodians at www.inmemoriam2014.org to help them protect their war memorials and deter theft. The crime prevention fluid will not only make memorials uniquely identifiable, it also offers robust traceability should a theft occur and massively increases the chance of detection and subsequent arrest. If you are aware of local war memorials which could benefit please talk to the owner or custodian of the memorial and see if they have applied yet.

If you are not sure who the custodian is then consider likely options. If the memorial is in the church ask the church authorities, if it is in a public place the local council and if in a building the owners of that building. You can have a look on War Memorials Online as we have a custodian information section on the Protection tab. Alternatively you could approach the War Memorials Officer at your local authority. In 2010, War Memorials Trust launched a campaign to identify a single point of contact at every local authority. Over 60% have now responded and we are gradually adding details to our website at www.warmemorials.org/wmo.

War Memorials Trust is not just concerned with today's custodians however. There is little point in supporting communities with grants and advice now if there will not be people continuing this work in future. For that reason the charity has an educational remit run by a dedicated



Coombe war memorial. Photo: Buckinghamshire County Council

Learning Officer. They provide the resources for our website focussed on supporting young people engage with war memorials at www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org. On this site resources are provided for schools and youth groups around war memorials and you are very welcome to use these if you find them of value. The charity hopes these resources can be used to help young people develop an understanding of war memorials and how and why to care for them.

As a charity War Memorials Trust relies on voluntary contributions to undertake its work. We welcome new members to our ranks for an annual subscription of £20 or a life membership of £100 (increasing to £150 in January 2014). Many of our members also act as Regional Volunteers, our 'eyes and ears' around the country, keeping an eye on memorials in their area, monitoring condition and responding to office requests for help. Full details about the charity, joining, donating or volunteering can be found at www.warmemorials.org, by emailing info@warmemorials.org or calling 0300 123 0764.

For further information on War Memorials Online visit www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk or email info@warmemorialsonline.org.uk.

For further information on War Memorials Trust visit www.warmemorials.org, telephone 0300 123 0764 or email info@warmemorials.org.

A POSTSCRIPT TO THE ONLY ANZIO VC - 60 YEARS ON

The story of Major William Sidney's Victoria Cross action at Anzio with the 5th Battalion of the Grenadier Guards is well known. The events that took place in the Carrocetto ravine on the night of 7 – 8 February 1944 are famous for several reasons. Firstly, despite 4 months bitter close quarter fighting, it was the only VC awarded for an action in the Anzio beachhead. This despite the award of more than thirty Medals of Honor (sic) to American forces, who had similar numbers to the British involved in the battle and despite casualties of 57 000 (all sides) in a beachhead that never exceeded 10 by 17 miles. Secondly the family connections of the man concerned; he was a direct descendant of the 16th century hero of Zutphen; Sir Philip Sidney and his father in law was Lord Gort VC. Thirdly Sidney's succession to the title of Viscount De L'Isle and Dudley and distinguished post war career as Secretary of State for Air in the 1950s and Governor General of Australia in the 1960s. The details of the desperate last stand in the ravine are therefore well known to many Sidney, like Horatius holding the bridge against the enemies rush, hurling grenades and defiance at the Germans with little more than himself between the enemy and the Via Anziate just behind him. Its severance would have cut off most of the 1st Infantry Division and possibly spelt the end of the beachhead.

The Regimental History and the famous painting of the action both record the two unnamed Guardsmen who lay behind Sidney priming grenades for him and handing them up to him to be thrown. Indeed one of them was killed and Sidney suffered his first wound as a result of the premature explosion of one of these grenades. I had always thought it strange that history did not record the identity of the surviving grenade – priming Guardsman in such a well known VC action. Until now

In March 2004 the Sherwood Foresters organised a trip to Anzio for veterans who had fought there and wanted to revisit the battlefields in the 60th anniversary year. Five of the veterans who went were Foresters who had fought at Anzio with the Regiment's own 2nd or 14th Battalions. The other two veterans were men who lived in Nottinghamshire but had never been Foresters. One was a Northamptonshire Regiment soldier and the other was 85 year old Arthur Wright.



**Major William Sidney
OC Support Company
5th Bn Grenadier Guards**

**Awarded Victoria Cross for his actions in the
Carrocetto Ravine.
7 – 8 February 1944
The only Beachhead VC**

He was an ex Assault Pioneer in the 5th Battalion of the Grenadier Guards from Sandiacre in Nottingham. The rest of the group were family and friends of the veterans including Arthur Wright's son.

The group, led by me; Major John Cotterill, a serving member of the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment, included a reporter from the Nottingham Evening Post and the Sherwood Foresters Regimental Archivist. We flew from Stansted to Rome and drove, in three locally hired minibuses, to a small hotel in Anzio town. On the evening of our arrival we visited the Anzio Beachhead Museum, the grounds of which the Sherwood Foresters Memorial stands.

The next day we drove north up the Via Anziate to visit Campoleone Station where the 2nd Foresters lost 500 men in a few hours in a fruitless attempt to break out of the beachhead on 31 January 1944. After that we retraced our steps towards Anzio and debussed near a huge supermarket surrounded by industrial wasteland. A scramble down a rubbish strewn bank took us down into all that is left of the Carrocetto Ravine. After I had set the scene Arthur Wright stepped forward and told the group what he remembered of the action that had taken place there on the night of 7 – 8 February 1944 in a low but distinct voice. His son listened in amazement.

He said that, as an Assault Pioneer, he had been in position in the bottom of the ravine with the 5th

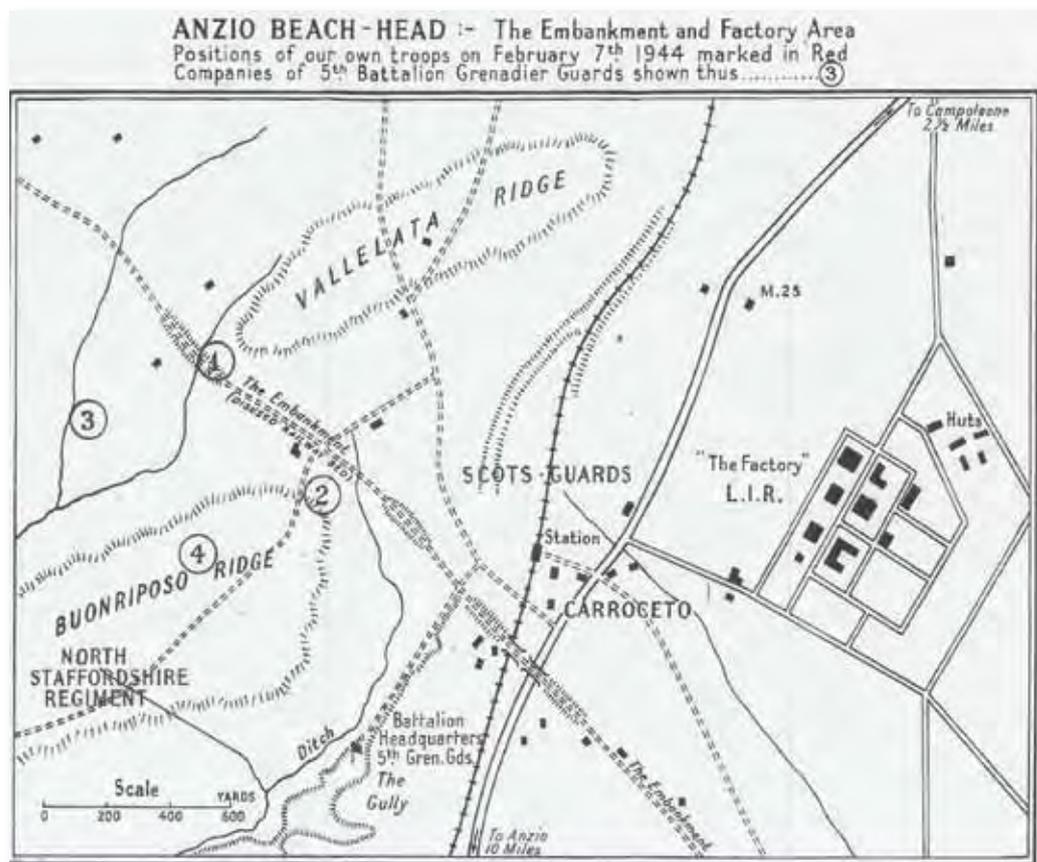
Continued overleaf

Grenadier's Battalion Headquarters as the forward companies were overrun one by one by the Germans. As the enemy reached them he moved to the lip of the ravine and, along with Major Sidney's servant, lay in the scrub priming grenades and handing them up to Major Sidney to be thrown. As he recounts the story, Sidney was first wounded not by a British 36 grenade but by a German stick grenade. Arthur Wright brought his rifle up to his waist and shot the German who was in the act of throwing the grenade that killed Sidney's servant and wounded Sidney. He said that this was the only German that he shot in the whole course of the war because his normal job was to lay and clear mines.

He then put down his rifle in order to pick up the wounded Sidney and carry him down into the cave in the ravine that was being used as an improvised Regimental Aid Post.

As Sidney was laid down to have his wounds dressed he asked Wright what his name was. Wright was not in Sidney's company (Support Company) so he did not recognise him. Sidney was known as a firm disciplinarian and Wright was terrified that he would charge him for having abandoned his rifle. He therefore avoided giving his name and said "I'm just a Guardsman in the Pioneers, Sir". Sidney's reputation as something of a martinet is illustrated

*Acting Major W Sidney VC, Gren Gds, Anzio.
Copyright: David Rowlands, www.davidrowlands.co.uk*



by the comment of one of his Guardsmen on hearing of his Victoria Cross; "Well if he gave the Germans the same hell that he gave us - he deserved it!"

The identity of one of the two grenade primers in the famous painting has perhaps now been established. Arthur Wright's address has been passed to the Curator of the Guards Museum so that the Nottingham branch of the Grenadier Guards Regimental Association can establish contact with him.

The rest of the four day Anzio trip contained similar moving recollections of veterans as they visited hard fought over scenes including the Buonriposa Ridge, the Flyover, the "Boot" wadi and the Padiglioni Woods. In addition four cemeteries were visited; the American one in Nettuno, the German one at Pomezia and the British ones in Anzio town and north up the Via Anziante where over 3000 British dead lie. For the members of the group who had not fought there it was a privilege to accompany the veterans and hear their stories. The "banter" in the minibuses soon took us all back to 1944. The Anzio Municipality, prompted by Alfredo Rinaldo, the moving spirit behind the Anzio Museum, were thoughtful enough to present 60th Anniversary medals and certificates to the seven veterans at a reception in the museum.

Arthur Wright's story, particularly believable to anyone who has served and understands something of military discipline, has filled in one of the blanks in Grenadier history 60 years on.

John Cotterill



LAST POST FOR THE TOY SOLDIER GENERAL

Donald Featherstone 1918 - 2013

By *Chris Scott*

*Donald Featherstone
with Ian Knight*



Donald Featherstone the most world's famous armchair general and grandfather of British Wargaming, died aged 95 in Southampton hospital recently. This multi-talented man played many parts in a packed and varied life, including being a semi-professional cyclist, a soldier, a popular author, military historian and battlefield explorer. He had also been walking battlefields for over 60 years, becoming a major force behind turning a clandestine hobby into a worldwide pastime with an associated major industry, and an international convention scene all over the world. He was truly an international figure.

Don Featherstone was born in London in March 1918 and who would have predicted that when aged 8, his dad gave him a box of Britain's soldiers that it was set him on course that changed lives all over the world. He played an active part in WW2 in the illustrious 8th Army in North Africa and Italy – he drove a scout car and did reces and ammo runs, and once escaped death when a mortar shell burst above a vineyard in which he was camped. Pieces of shrapnel embedded in the ground under his arm and between his legs. His wartime experiences were dotted with wine, women and exploits featuring his arch nemesis Sgt. Major 'Bull' Pasker, and they entertained us in the early hours in my tent on battlefields all over Europe. With another life-long friend Roger Snell, Don and I walked over 200 battlefields of 21 wars spread over 7 centuries in 11 countries and 3 continents, often camping where the armies slept before battle.

After the war Don became the physiotherapist with Southampton FC – a team he watched from the dugout, the stands and the Chairman's box for half a century. He even bought a house next to the ground, and Joy, Don's indulgent wife, allowed him to convert a spare back bedroom of this Victorian mansion into a wargames room; possibly the first in England.

Don was the first Honorary Member of the Guild of Battlefield Guides alongside David Chandler, and although he didn't attend many functions – he didn't like leaving his home – he frequently asked me how the Guild was doing and about several of the 'older' members. I once asked him why he had no other formal recognition of his success here. He modestly replied, "I'm not very well known in England." This from a man who is quoted in academic quarters, has been the dinner guest of several British Chiefs of Staff and has been called a friend of Colin Powell. Not bad for a tankie NCO.

Don Featherstone was also a great personal friend whom I knew for nearly 50 years. When my father died when I was 18 Don became a male role model in so many areas especially in his questing nature and tireless energy. Always a schemer and a doer Don was continually coming up with ideas to create things, visit places or set up events. He was the power-house behind so many battlefield rethinks and wargaming innovations in his day. Although an expert in Victoria's Colonial Wars, his interests stretch from Ancient Egypt to World War II. He even dragged me around WWI sites – a feat only emulated once by one Graeme Cooper!

Two great tragedies blighted his life. The first was the death of his son Peter, a policeman commended for bravery who was killed in a motorcycle accident. The second was the loss of his wife Joy whom he never failed to talk about whenever I called on him. Advancing age didn't deal kindly with Don, his eyesight became poor and so did his hearing and his famous running legs that had him running round the New Forest in his 70s eventually gave out. He could be grumpy at times but if you can't speak your mind in your 90s when can you? He still ran the Wessex Military Society at the Southampton Yacht Club and the Wessex Military Dining Club at the Park Hotel. He went out weekly for a beer with erstwhile camping companion Roger and his wife Jill, and was, until near the end, a member of Southampton Rotary in which he served as a proactive and industrious Events Secretary. Over his closing years he gradually reduced his collection of figures and his array of wargaming impedimenta, and offered his wargaming and research material for sale, as well as much of his library of military books. Some of this he donated to Guild members and I made it available at Bovington.

When I emailed friends to pass on the sad news of Don's passing I received quite a selection of comments by return and I offer a few here which might strike a chord with many readers: "He was a huge, incalculable influence on my life." "He undoubtedly changed my life enormously." On the web I picked this up this summary of my friend, apparently from Moscow, "Gentleman, patriot, scholar, legend." Of his achievements Don said, "Oh if I'd not done it, somebody else would have come along." If that is the case, I'd proffer a slightly altered line from 'Evita' – "No-one else could have done it like he did!" Those of us who knew him well, knew the stature of the man and the immense debt wargaming owes Don Featherstone but "Even Don gets to roll a double zero one day."

Originally published in *The Wyvern's Tale*, the newsletter of The Wyvern Military Dining Club. It tells the story of a commercial battlefield tour to the sites of Marlborough's victories from the clients' viewpoint.

WOT WE DID ON ARE HOLIDAYS

by ERIC

On are holidays Andy and Chris and Phil and me went on a coach trip to Belgium to visit the battlefields fought on by Marlboro and the Frogs. It woz nice. Andy and Chris and me went on a coach to London. We had a fried breakfast near the coach station. It woz nice. We met Phil talking to some bloke who had latched onto him but he soon got shot of him. There weren't many on the coach when it left London but loads got on at Dover. The bloke in charge woz an ex-lootenant kernel in the marines and every time we got on and off the bus he kept on shouting Plan B! Why he had his wife with him was a mistry unless it was to help shout Plan B cos she shouted it as well and neither of them told us wot Plan A woz.

We had a lovely meal on the ferry, it woz very nice. When we got to France we got back on the bus, got shouted at for Plan B and went to a place called Ooh -innit-ard. This other bloke stood out the front of us and started talking with this lootenant bloke and they decided they knew where we woz and told us about this battle fought here. They kept pointing into lots of mist and saying where churches were and to imagine we could see them. We looked at the mist. It was grey. Then the coach drove round a bit but nobody said anything about the battle. Then we went to a farm and looked at a mound in the back yard which woz where a castle had been a long time ago. The man said we should imagine it. This was where the cavalry had been fighting after hooking something, but the moat didn't look deep enough to have much in it but I spect it did in them days. Then we got back into the bus, got shouted Plan B at and went to the hotel. It woz very nice.

The next day we had to go into a room and listen to this bloke from Birmingham talk for two hours or more about how they fought in them days. The seats were hard. When he started saying some rubbish about no medical services Phil told him to shut up coz Eric, was in the room. And he did, which woz a good thing 'coz we were late leaving on the

bus to go to Turn-hay but nobody told us why we woz going there. When we got there we drove round the town a lot and saw the Railway Station five times. It woz nice. Then we drove off coz the man said we couldn't go where he wanted to go and he didn't know how to get there anyway.

So we went to a place called Leel but they didn't tell us why. When we got there we woz met by a nice French lady who tried to tell us all about this place called Lassitadel. That woz nice but the lootenant kernel kept butting in and got us all mixed up. We walked all round inside this big fort and saw lots of things, but we weren't told why we woz there or what Marlboro did there. We then went back on the bus, got

“So we went to a place called Leel but they didn't tell us why....”

shouted at and went to the hotel. Chris said we should get off the bus before the hotel as he wanted to show us something, but the man wouldn't let us. We walked back from the hotel where Chris showed us monuments to First World War stuff which ain't like him but woz interesting and he told us all about them. Nobody else seemed to know they woz there. Chris didn't shout Plan B at us. We wanted to go in the hotel bar but they shut it at 7.00 coz Belgian bar staff have home lifes.

Breakfast woz nice and we got on the bus and went to a place called Rammylees. There was a battle there. We got out off the bus where this bloke from Birmingham was going to tell us all about the battle when we saw he had a magazine

article that Chris had written tucked under his arm so we took a photo of him to prove it. He was in the wrong place anyway. Then we got back on the bus, got shouted at and went to another part of the battlefield and someone asked where the town of Offus woz. The lootenant kernel said that it got destroyed in the battle and did not exist any more. Chris said wots that over there then! And it woz Offus. So they gave up and asked Chris to talk about the battle. The man butted in and pointed out offensive Belgian farms and showed one wot the French held. He said it woz was like the Hoogeemont during the battle with lots of fighting and dying and stuff. Chris said he'd not heard of it so we went in and Andy said he didn't care about the dogs as he could run faster than Chris. We asked when it woz built and they brought out a big picture which said the farm was built in 1777, so how could it have been a Hoogeemont for the French in 1706 if it wasn't there? That was pants. I kept looking at the dogs. They dribbled a lot.

Then we met a lady whose father had written a little book about the battle. The man from Birmingham borrowed it I spect his borrowing woz like my cousin's and she'll have the devil's own job to get it back. Phil said she should have sold it to him fior lots of money. Andy said something about future plaging isum. Then we went to another place called Namer. There is a big castle at Namer but they woz not going to take us up there but show us it from a boat on the river so we said bugger that for a lark and walked off by ourselves. I said we should not blame the lootenant kernel coz marines will always find an excuse to play with water.

Chris and Andy and Phil and Eric walked up the side of this big hill and had a good look at this fortress, seeing glasses, javelins, scarfs, counters of scarfs and fings and had a nice meal at the café at the top. Why aint school chicken done in cream and mushrooms? Andy wanted to see other bits of the castle down tunnels and stuff and ride on the little train coz he's been an engineer but Phil said we had to get back to the coach otherwise it wouldn't be Plan B and nobody would know what to do. To get out we walked back down looking at where William got in but had to go back up to get down to meet the people from the boat and were told we could have had another hour in the castle coz the lootenant kernel had changed his mind so Phil said some words his dad uses when he does woodwork and we went and had a beer before getting back on the bus and going back to the hotel. In Namer we all looked in a super model shop which was closed coz it was France and millions of people wanted to buy stuff; Eric

thought the Belgian hotel bar woz in France coz it was always closing when millions of people wanted to buy beer.

While we are talking of buying beer, the coach driver stopped at this garage because he said he wanted to buy petrol. Phil said it was just like all the other places which didn't have anything to do with battles that the driver had stopped at but Andy said it wozn't as you couldn't buy beer at those – he said this while he was loading a big basket full of bottles of different brands from the petrol shop who had more shelves of Belgian beer than British petrol shops have shirts and pullovers and things like only your mum would buy and magazines in plastic wrappers that only your dad would buy but your mum would say he should not buy. We had to wait a long time at that garage because of all the people on the coach making a big queue buying beer. Eric said we wouldn't have had to wait so long if the hotel bar had been open more often. Chris didn't

“ Then we went and looked at the battlefield of Malplakay but the bloke from Birmingham got it wrong again... ”

laff because he don't like Belgian beer and said he would have preferred to have seen a battlefield. You can't please everyone.

The next day Chris was happier because we went to another battlefield called Malplakay and looked at a museum about Malplakey but it weren't in Malplakay but in Bavay but it woz super. Then we went and looked at the battlefield of Malplakay but the bloke from Birmingham got it wrong again and Chris and Andy told him that the Dutch had arrived from a different direction than wot he said and he said oh yes.

Eric was then asked to talk about the sick and wounded coz this bloke didn't know anything. Chris woz asked to place a wreath on the monument and we stood in silence which woz good. The lootenant kernel's wife told Chris they normally had a celebrity or a dead relative do this but he was the next best thing. Phil said sharing a room with him would have been quieter if he had been.

Then we got back on the bus got shouted at and went to Calay after we had stopped at this other place for a pee. It had walls all round it and a big ditch with water innit but we couldn't visit them because of not being Plan B. We got back onto the boat and had a nice meal in the restaurant. We got back to Swindon at 10 o'clock coz we managed to get an earlier coach from London coz the man in charge of that coach didn't know anything about having to be Plan B and he knew where Swindon woz and how to get there.

That woz our holiday in France and Belgium, it woz nice.

GUILD PARTNERS

ANGLIA TOURS



Jo Hook Anglia Guide & badged member of the Guild working with a school group in Lijssenthoek CWGC Cemetery



The Guild has recently introduced the Guild Partner Scheme. This Scheme offers selected Partners the opportunity to create closer links with the Guild as it continues to grow. One of the first companies to join is Anglia Tours. Anglia Tours was founded, as Anglia Battlefield Tours, by Colonel Alain Chissel and his wife Anita, out of a desire to offer schools the highest possible quality guided tours available. Having taken their first tour of 70 students to the Somme in November 1997, they have since taken tens of thousands more to, amongst many other places, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Italy and the USA. Alain takes up the story...

We have built up an enviable reputation for providing bespoke tours for the military. Ranging from a handful of 'boys' in a mini-bus to the 3* General and his staff, we are equally comfortable with both. We also have a particular flair for catering for special interest groups which range from Parents' Associations to Charities and from Family groups to Livery Companies.

In all, during 2012-13, over 300 groups comprising more than 15,000 people chose to travel with Anglia, making us the largest independent, history based, schools tour operator in the United Kingdom.

Key to the successful development of the company has been our Guides' selection and training programme. Many of you will have come across guides at work who, whilst their knowledge may not be in doubt, cannot engage with

their group. Those who rely on simple repetition of facts and figures without caring if their audience is interested and who make no effort to bring the battlefield 'to life'. Anglia is different.

For us it is not simply a matter of subject knowledge, it is about having the ability to communicate this knowledge in a way that engages the listener. Since the Company was formed we have been committed to ensuring that all who travel with us, wherever that may be, enjoy a truly memorable educational experience. As a satisfied teacher once so aptly put it to, "ignite a spark of wonder and enthusiasm for history that will stay with them forever". So for Anglia, identifying the right person is vital. Subject knowledge can be gained by those who want to learn. Charisma, the ability to 'tell stories' and to really care about what you deliver is something innate.

For this reason we recruit our guides from a range of backgrounds. Many are ex-military, some come from a teaching background and the others from a range of professions. The one thing all have in common is a passion for what we do. Having identified the right person our 'in-house' training programme, developed over a number of years, ensures those we select are able to communicate specific core information whilst retaining their personal approach.

Anglia's approach means we have been at the forefront of raising the standard of battlefield guiding. The first stirrings of the Guild, which we have supported since it was formed in 2003, took place at an Anglia AGM. Indeed not only are many of our guides Guild members but seven of them were amongst 'The Dozen who raised The Guild'. Consequently as a company we have played a fundamental role in establishing the Guild's ethos and setting its direction.

The quality of the experience Anglia provides has been acknowledged by the School Travel Forum, of which we are an Assured Member. We are also holders of the prestigious Learning Outside the Classroom Quality badge. Whilst these are valued endorsements, they are ones which no reputable Schools Tour Operator should be without. What sets Anglia, and in particular our plans for the forthcoming Centenary of the First World War, apart are the unique partnerships we have forged with key organisations.

This summer we were delighted to be able to announce that Anglia Tours has been chosen as the Western Front Association Education's preferred provider for UK

Schools' WW1 Battlefield Tours. This unique endorsement of Anglia's approach, which we are extremely proud of, should not only help increase the exposure of the WFA within UK schools but also raise the profile of the excellent work they do.

We have also agreed a key partnership with The National Archives (TNA). In conjunction with TNA's Education Team, Anglia will be offering an exclusive Student Research Programme. This includes sessions led by experienced Education Officers providing hands-on guidance to researching as well as access to a range of document collections. The programme has been designed specifically to support students as they pursue original research in preparation for their visit to the Western Front.

Both partnerships will enable Anglia to play an active role in 'Creating a Legacy' so that this and subsequent generations never forget the sacrifice made.

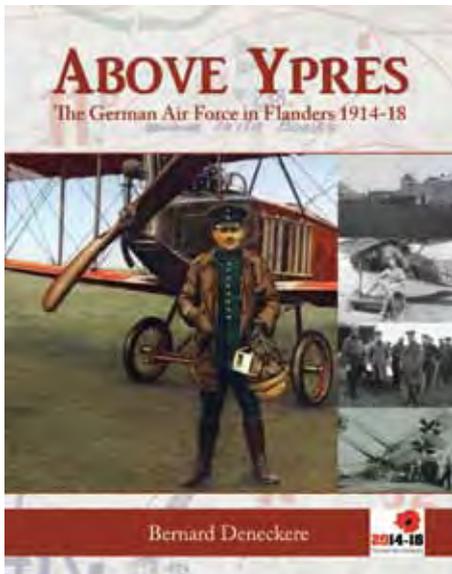
A lot has happened since 1997. Anglia was formed at a time when guided battlefield tours, particularly for schools, were a rarity. A time when most Tour Operators saw no benefit in offering this level of service to their customers. How times have changed !

Now there is an increasing desire across the industry to recruit battlefield guides perhaps in an attempt to match the standard Anglia has set. For such operators the decision to employ guides is purely commercial. For us it remains the desire to offer the highest possible quality guided tours available or to put it more eloquently, to "ignite a spark of wonder and enthusiasm".

Alain Chissel MD Anglia Tours and one of 'The Dozen who raised The Guild' working with a group in the Bayernwald trenches



BOOK REVIEWS



ABOVE YPRES

The German Air Force in Flanders 1914-18

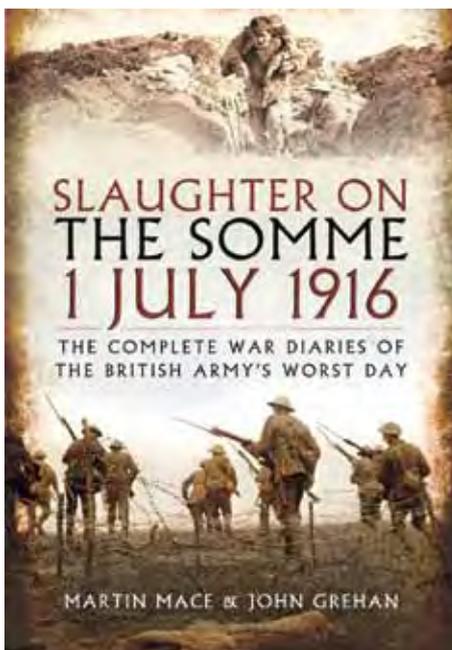
By Bernard Deneckere

This is a welcome addition to the recent stream of books that look at the battles and campaigns of the First World War from the German perspective. Understanding the view from the other side of the hill is of course critical to Historians and Battlefield Guides alike. In this case we are looking from the other side of the cloud. This book is a chronological account of the development of the German Air Force, its Naval counterpart and their collective contribution to the air war over the Ypres Salient. It contains a number of previously unpublished photographs, useful maps and some intriguing technical data on German aircraft development. The author has certainly dug deep into German archives and produced an extremely useful book. The contents are a refreshing change from the wealth of source material that already exists on air aces and their achievements. Well worth a read if you want to understand both sides of the air war over the Ypres Salient and its impact on the battle below.

Published by Firestep Press

UK RRP £25.99

Hardback pp 164



SLAUGHTER ON THE SOMME 1 JULY 1916

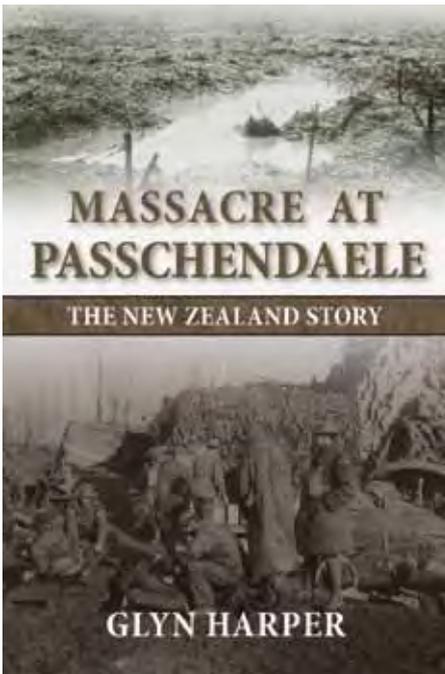
The Complete War Diaries Of The British Army's Worst Day

By Martin Mace & John Grehan

The opening day of the Battle of the Somme remains an emotive, and heavily documented subject area. The momentous events of the 1st July 1916 continue to capture the imagination, and every year thousands from all over the world visit the battlefields of Haig's ill-fated offensive. The story of the blooding of Kitchener's Army has generated hundreds of books over recent years. In spite of the multitude of Somme related books in existence, this new book will be an extremely useful addition to any Battlefield Guide's Somme library. The authors have collated all of the war diaries and reports related to what is still regarded by many as the blackest day in British Army History. They have then succeeded in linking this treasure trove of information with a well-written and informative narrative. However, there is one minor critique - The photographs are good, but I would have liked to see more maps. In spite of this, this is still a valuable reference book that will be of use to any Military Historian or Battlefield Guide.

Published by Pen & Sword Ltd

RRP £25.00



MASSACRE AT PASSCHENDAELE

The New Zealand Story

By Glyn Harper

The New Zealand Division was one of the most capable formations in the British Army order of battle during the First World War. That said, its story is consistently overshadowed by accounts of the more numerous but smaller Australian Divisions that made up the Anzac Corps. This excellent book highlights the events surrounding the New Zealanders successful attack on the Broodseinde Ridge and the terrible disaster that befell the division during the first battle of Passchendaele. The author has produced what can only be described as an authoritative account of the campaign as seen from both inside and outside the NZ Division. The narrative is well balanced, using a mix of primary source material, maps, photographs and hard data. The overall result is a concise stand-alone source that will be of use to armchair historians, and battlefield walkers alike - I will certainly be taking it along on future Anzac tours.

Published by Firestep Books

UK RRP £14.95

Paperback pp 208

BATTLEguides: DENNIS WEATHERALL



Dennis at the grave of Morant and Hancock of the Bushveldt Carbineers.



Dennis as a Guide at Elands River Battle Site.

10 Questions:

Name: MIKE JARMAIN

Age: 45

Nationality: BRITISH

Home Location: ABERYSTWYTH

Tour Company: do you work for/Sole Trader: Just starting out professionally – currently Anglia Tours.

Validating: Yes/No/Intending? – YES



In each edition of Despatches we will be introducing a Member of the Guild. In this edition it is Mike Jarmain a recent new member.

1. How long have you been interested in battlefields and what was it that initially attracted your interest?

From my earliest days, I've always been interested in the Army and military history. In particular, it was listening to my grandfather talk about his experiences in NW Europe in WWII. For a young man, it was captivating stuff and putting that human face on a battle remains the drive behind my interest.

2. Have any experiences stood out?

Talking with veterans – they are always fascinating. Also, some of the entries in the Visitor's Book can sometimes reveal heartbreaking stories. Once I read, "Dad, finally found you after 51 years." That brought a big lump to my throat.

3. What do you enjoy the most about battlefield guiding?

Making the battle a human experience. It's incredibly rewarding to see other people engaged and moved by the story you've told and to have an appreciation of just some of the people who were there.

4. What is your favourite stand location or battlefield and why?

Isandlwana. I found it an incredibly atmospheric and haunting place, the piles of white stones marking the locations of such desperate, frantic fighting. The battlefield was so little changed since 1879 that it was impossible not to be completely immersed in the events of that terrible day.

5. Which battlefield would you like to visit in the future?

It's a very long list but where Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce gave his moving speech after being finally defeated remains an ambition, as do the battles of Wellington in Spain and Portugal.

6. What have you enjoyed the most about being a member of the Guild?

I think it's being around people who have the same interests as myself. I haven't been in that long but I have found it a very welcoming and supportive environment.

7. If there was a fire and you could only save one battlefield related book or prop, what would you save and why?

My grandfather's letter that he wrote before being launched into battle near Caen. In it, he describes finding the body of his best friend, a moment he would remember forever.

8. What type of group do you think is the most challenging to lead on a tour?

Every group has its challenges but in general school groups. I think you really have to be on top of your game to keep them focused and also enjoying, if that's the right word, the whole experience

9. What's the best tip, story or nugget of information you have been given by a fellow battlefield guide?

Tip – be careful about declaring false grenades and de-activated weapons to police or customs. One member of the Guild told me about how his props, and especially his fake grenades and de-activated rifle, caused complete chaos and heavy delays to Eurostar. The French police just couldn't understand why anyone would have such things, closed the terminal down whilst the bomb squad did their thing and took him away 'for an interview without coffee'.

10. What is the funniest or most dramatic thing that you have seen on tour?

A vehicle nearly caught fire once. Smoke was suddenly visible coming out of the engine compartment and everybody threw themselves out of the vehicle. It was a very close call.

Events for 2014

The events list is being added to on a regular basis. Listed below are the events for 2014 which have been agreed so far. See each new edition of Despatches or the Guild website for the updated list.

22nd February 2014, Surrey

'Prelude to War' – a one day event to be held at the Royal Logistics Corps Museum, the Princess Royal Barracks Deepcut Surrey.

21st - 23rd March, Norwich

The weekend will be based around Norwich and will include validations, a Blitz walk of Norwich, a visit to Norwich Castle and a possible visit to military museum

8 August 2014, London

Badged Guides Dinner

NEW members:

New members that have joined the Guild since November 2012 until the date of publication:

John Knight

James Porter

Peter Fensome

Bill George

Allan Wood

Gregor Davey

Derek Armitage

Mike Jarmain

Ian Coyne

Robert Bunten

Roberto Piccione

Gary Donaldson

Ian Wilson

Robin Burrows-Ellis

Patrick Aldred

Andy Gale

James Tanner

Chris Murphy

Dennis Vincent

James Benn

John Chapman

Christopher Wesley

Chris Baker

Will Davies

Chris Lawrence

Ashley Clark

Martin Featherstone

Robert Collin

Keith Dolan

Steve Garnett

Moray Treadwell

Stuart Baxter

Lee Giles

Luke Carroll

Stuart Bartrop

David Thomson