



## CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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### Welcome

I recently received the sad news from his son Phil, that one of our first members and branch supporters, Michael Curme, passed away after a long fight with Parkinson's Disease. Michael was a longtime supporter of the WFA and attended local meetings for as long as he was able to do so.

Michael left several items pertaining to the Great War asking that they should be sold with all proceeds going to the Langley House Trust whose mission is "to work with those who are at risk of offending or have offended, establishing positive foundations so that they can lead crime-free lives and become contributors to society. This means safer communities, fewer victims and restored lives". Michael was a prison visitor and a strong supporter of the charity.

Two of the items that may be of particular interest to members are the wonderful books *Leaving all that was dear: Cheltenham and the Great War* by J Devereux and G Sacker, and *Held in Honour: Cheltenham and the Second World*

*War* by G Sacker. These books are much sought after and so Phil has priced them at £120 for the pair. If you are interested in buying them, please contact Phil directly by email: [phil.curme@me.com](mailto:phil.curme@me.com)

There is a talk entitled *WW1 POW Camps in Gloucestershire* by Dr Colin Chapman on Thursday 17 March at 7.45pm at Tewkesbury Methodist Church, The Cross, High Street, Tewkesbury GL20 5BB. This is a Tewkesbury Historical Society event and tickets are £4 for visitors and £2.50 for members.

This year's ANZAC Parade at Leighterton will take place on Sunday 24 April. The parade will muster at 2.15pm, with inspection at 2.35pm and then the service at 3pm.

An exhibition opens on 12 May at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard giving an opportunity to experience *36 Hours: Jutland 1916, The Battle That Won The War*. Full details are on their website: [www.historicdockyard.co.uk](http://www.historicdockyard.co.uk)

**Peter**

### Future meetings

**Tuesday, 12 April 2016**  
*Slimbridge Remembers*  
Den Bannister  
**National Star College at 7:30pm**



A Heritage Lottery Fund grant and parish funds were awarded to Slimbridge Local History Society to enable them to research the stories behind the names on the Slimbridge War Memorial. Their work has resulted in an excellent book *Slimbridge Remembers* which contains in-depth stories for each name recorded on the memorial: the book was given to each household in the parish.

**Tuesday, 10 May 2016**  
*Sea Power - Jutland 1916*  
Mike Shaw  
**National Star College at 7:30pm**

The Battle of Jutland was the culmination of the Dreadnought Arms Race and was the only encounter in which the war could have been lost in a single engagement.

The battle was fought to a messy conclusion on the afternoon of 31 May 1916.



**HMS Defence and Warrior, 31 May 1916**  
by W L Wyllie

## 7379 Sapper Charles Spencer Jones 4<sup>th</sup> Siege Company, Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers

Charles Spencer Jones was born in 1888 in Cardiff but came to live at Steam Mills near Cinderford in about 1894. He worked with his father Thomas as iron founders at Teague and Chew, Heywood Engine Works, Steam Mills, an engineering company that specialised in the manufacture of water pumps and steam equipment.

He attested to the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers on 14 December 1914 and was posted to the 4<sup>th</sup> Siege Company. He declared that he had previous militia service having served five years with the 1<sup>st</sup> Monmouthshire Rifle Volunteer Company.



He landed in France on 19 May 1915 and was killed in action in Flanders on 31 March 1916, aged 28 years.



He was buried at Voormezele Enclosures No 1 and 2, near Ypres and is remembered locally

on the War Memorial in Holy Trinity Church, Drybrook.  
**Eric Nicholls**

### WFA Conferences

Two new WFA Anniversary Conferences have just been announced. The places are available on a first come, first served basis.

**Saturday 4 June:** *The Somme and Beyond* (Fifth President's Conference) at the Tally Ho Conference Centre, Birmingham B5 7RN from 10am to 4.45pm; doors open at 9.15am.

The programme for the day is:

- The Brusilov Offensive* - Nik Cornish
- The Most Brutal of Days: The Assault of Thiepval, 1 July 1916* - Michael Stedman
- A Hard-won Success: The 18<sup>th</sup> (Eastern) Division at Thiepval, September 1916* - Professor Peter Simkins
- The Irish Soldier in 1916* - Lar Joye
- Beyond the Verdun Ossuary: French Army command and combat perspectives in 1916* - Professor Martin Alexander

After the conference there is the option of a dinner from 6.15pm to 8pm at the cost of £19.50 per head.

**Saturday 9 July:** *Perspectives on the Somme* at Manor Academy, Millfield Lane, Nether Poppleton, York YO26 6AP from 10am to 4.45pm; doors open at 9.15am.

The programme is:

- Reflections on 1<sup>st</sup> July* - Professor John Bourne
- BEF Artillery on the Somme and the lessons learned* - Geoff Spring
- British Intelligence on the Western Front in 1916* - Dr Jim Beach
- Rawlinson on the Somme* - Professor Gary Sheffield
- The Somme of the parts: The BEF experience on the Somme, 1916-1918* - Rob Thompson

The cost is £30 per conference or £50 for both. Price includes buffet lunch plus tea/coffee on arrival and during the morning/afternoon breaks and there is free parking at both venues. Please visit the WFA website for more information and booking details:  
[www.westernfrontassociation.com](http://www.westernfrontassociation.com)

#### Contact details



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#### Branch Website

[www.cgwfa.org.uk](http://www.cgwfa.org.uk)

***"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today."***