

JOURNEY'S END

NEWSLETTER

1918
2018



ISSUE 1:

SEPT/OCT 2017

Preparing for 2018

With the help of a £7,300 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Gwent Branch of the Western Front Association is making preparations to ensure that the centenary of 1918 armistice is fully commemorated in Newport through a series of events during 2018.

To commemorate Annie Brewer, possibly the most highly decorated nurse of the First World War, a plaque will be unveiled on her former home in West Street Newport. (Date to be arranged.)

The work of St Woolos Hospital as a major war hospital between 1915 and 1919 will be marked in cooperation with Aneurin Bevan Health Board through the placing of a special plaque outside the hospital and a photograph of the 1918 staff inside.

With the help of Gwent Archives we will be holding public training sessions in using original documents to find out more about the Great War in Gwent.

Guided walks will take place up Stow Hill to identify buildings of significance to the Great War, while tours of St Woolos Cemetery in Risca Road will tell the stories of some of the 170 victims of the conflict who are buried there.

On Friday November 9th, three local primary schools will be giving presentations at St Woolos Cathedral in front of an audience of parents. The presentations will deal with various aspects of Newport in the Great War. Saturday 10 November will be 'public day' at the cathedral with stalls, music, talks, re-enactors and other activities. If you belong to an

organisation or an individual with a particular interest in the Great War and would like a stall at the event or would like to participate in any other way, we would love to hear from you.

Steel Remembered

Steel Remembered is a collaborative project led by Linc Cymru, the organisation behind the restoration of Newport's Lysaght Institute. The project seeks to uncover the real-life stories of Lysaght's Orb steel workers who went to war in 1914-1918 - those who came back and those who are commemorated by the Orb Steel Works War Memorial. Through a combination of special events, workshops and outreach programmes, the project team, which includes the local community, is providing opportunities for people of all ages to take an active part in the research, learn new skills and create a digital archive that can be shared across the world.

Many of the employees of the Orb works served in the forces during both world wars and in 1924 the works commemorated 121 of those from the First World War with a plaque which was mounted on a specially built memorial within the works' grounds. After the Second World War a further plaque was added. Since then, plaques commemorating those from the 1914-18 conflict from the Lysaght's factory in Wolverhampton and those from Newport-based Stewarts and Lloyds from 1939-45, were placed at the works too.

For more details see steelremembered.org.



Follow us on Facebook: Journey's End and www.gwentwfa.org.uk

To include your name on our circulation list for further newsletters, email Pete Strong, Chair Gwent WFA at strong@btinternet.com

100 Years Ago: Gwent In September/October 1917

By the autumn of 1917, with the 3rd Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) continuing without a clear result and German submarine warfare bringing about food shortages, the government was trying to rally the population through a series of meetings explaining its war aims.

In October Thomas MacNamara, Radical Liberal MP and Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, addressed a meeting at Pontypool, receiving a mixed reception. According to The Times "a strong body of pacifists, whom he described as 'an ungrateful lot'," gave him a difficult time, greeting the end of his speech with a rendition of 'The Red Flag'. But "in response to a call from Dr Macnamara the majority of the audience joined in the National Anthem and drowned all opposition, afterwards giving hearty cheers for Sir Douglas Haig and the soldiers."

In another War Aims meeting, this time at Crumlin, William Brace M.P., a local leader of the miners' union, assured his audience that it was "not a capitalists' war... but a people's war for individual and collective liberties".

A meeting at the Metropole Theatre in Abertillery, addressed by William Brace and W.T. Davies, editor of the Western Mail, turned into another confrontation. The arrival of the speakers was accompanied by applause but also by considerable booing. When a speaker stated that the war was about the liberty of nations, there were calls from the floor of "What about Ireland?". The meeting, which often threatened to spill over into violence, ended in uproar, again with one section of the audience singing 'The Red Flag' and others responding with God Save the King.



'arf a Mo Kaiser"
by Bert Thomas

Western Front Association Gwent Branch

We meet on the 4th Wednesday of alternate months at the Constitutional Club, Park Road, Abergavenny NP7 5TR. Unless otherwise stated, meetings begin at 7.30.

Visitors welcome.

Wednesday 27th September 7.30

Constitutional Club Abergavenny NP7 5TR.

Guns at Passchendaele. Speaker: Peter Hart (Imperial War Museum).

Wednesday 22nd November 7.30

Constitutional Club Abergavenny NP7 5TR.

Chepstow Shipbuilding in the Great War. Speaker: Dr Naylor Firth.