

# 1918-2018

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS ON

---

# JOURNEY'S END



### GWENT WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER No 2 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018

The armistice centenary year is now upon us and our lottery funded 'Journey's End' project is going into full swing with a series of events during 2018 to ensure that the centenary is fully commemorated in and around Newport.

Guided tours of the First World War war graves in St Woolos Cemetery, Newport, will take place on the second Wednesday of each month until October. Meet at the Bassaleg Road entrance at 10.00.

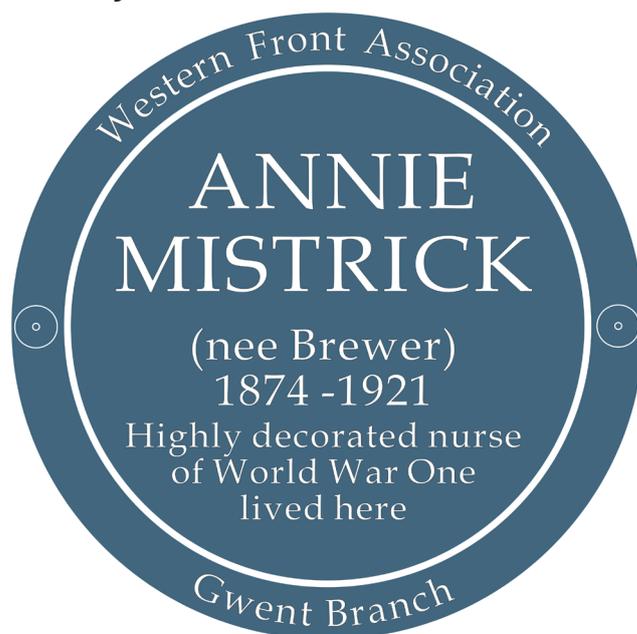
On 30 January there will be a ceremony at West Street Newport to unveil a plaque in honour of Annie Mistrick (nee Brewer) who's work with the French forces made her possibly the most highly decorated nurse of the First World War.

Preparations are underway for two workshops at Gwent Archives at Ebbw Vale which will allow participants to use a range of sources to find out more about the Great War in Gwent. The first, planned for Wednesday 21 February, will explore the archives of Newport Rugby Club, particularly letters sent by club members who had joined the forces. The second workshop, due to be held on Wednesday 16 May, will look at a range of lesser known sources. Both events will be free but booking, through Gwent Archives, will be essential. Details will be posted on the Gwent Archives website ([www.gwentarchives.gov](http://www.gwentarchives.gov)).

On 6 July there will be a ceremony at St Woolos Hospital to unveil a plaque commemorating its work as a major military hospital during the war. An information leaflet will be available in the building and a staff photograph from 1918 will be placed in reception.

On Friday 9 November, three local primary schools will be giving presentations at St Woolos Cathedral in front of an audience of parents.

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 are 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.



**Follow us on Facebook: Journey's End and [www.gwentwfa.org.uk](http://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](mailto:strong@btinternet.com)**

# WFA AT THE SENEDD

At the invitation of our friends from the 'Steel Remembered' project, Gwent Branch of the Western Front Association will be setting up a stall at the Senedd on Tuesday 16 January. The stall will give us the opportunity to highlight the various activities that form part of our 'Journey's End' project.

'Steel Remembered' seeks to uncover the stories of Lysaght's Orb steel workers who went to war in 1914-1918 and of their families.

During the day 'Steel Remembered' will be showcasing its work with the local community and schools. School children from Newport and Cardiff will be attending along with re-enactors and Newport U3A choir, which will be singing a song specially written for the project.

For more details see [steelremembered.org](http://steelremembered.org).

## 100 YEARS AGO GWENT IN JAN/FEB 1918

Although 1918 was to bring an end to the Great War, at the start of the year there were few obvious signs that this would happen. While there were high hopes that the arrival of US troops would turn the tide, the withdrawal of Russia from the war meant that the Germans were preparing a massive new offensive in the west.

Meanwhile, in Gwent the food situation was becoming increasingly serious as the German U-boat campaign continued to bite. The local press reported that food queues were 'a daily sight', often forming even before dawn. Even the introduction of local rationing schemes did not immediately solve the problem. On 26 January the queue that formed in Newport when the Local Food Committee began the distribution of margarine was reported to contain over 13,000 people.

Shopkeepers in the Valleys complained that it was becoming dangerous as 'hooligans' raided shops for food. In Abertillery, a shopkeeper pulled out a revolver when a crowd burst into his shop. He was knocked to the floor and beaten.

The industrial unrest which had been a feature of previous years became even more widespread. In January Newport was hit by a strike of municipal workers. The park keepers, gravediggers, roadmen, transporter bridge men and market porters ceased work following the council's refusal to abide by a wage increase awarded by an arbitration tribunal.

In February, there was outrage locally and nationally when the hospital ship Glenart Castle was sunk by a U-boat in the Bristol Channel just a few hours after leaving Newport.

## WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION GWENT BRANCH 2018

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

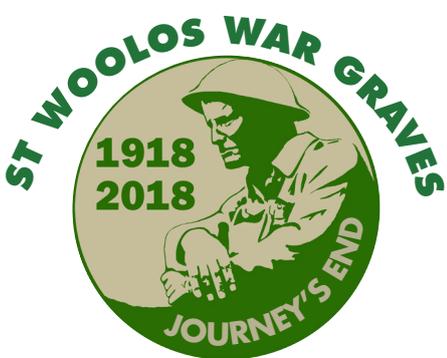
**Wednesday 2 January: Women in the Great War.** Speaker: Caroline Fairclough (Welsh Women's Network).

**Wednesday 28 March: Germany and Austria after the War.** Speaker: Susan Pearson.

**Wednesday 23 May: The Russian Front.** Speaker: Phil Tomaselli.

**Wednesday 25 July: Members evening.**

**Wednesday 26 September: The Welsh Metropolitan War Hospital, Cardiff.** Speaker: Dr Ian Beech.



**FREE MONTHLY TOURS**  
January to October 2018  
10 am, 2nd Wednesday each month  
Meet at main gate Bassaleg Road