



May 2013

Encounter

The newsletter of the Mercia Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

With the battlefield walking season well and truly upon us, Mercia Region has hopefully provided an interesting and varied set of events to cater for every taste. This summer you can explore the heritage of conflict with the region from the 13th century to the Civil War. Elsewhere there are developments at Northampton, where the Trust continues to work to protect the battlefield and preserve its archaeology in the face of development threats and at Edgehill where funding for interpretation work has been awarded.

Events

On a bitterly cold Sunday at the end of March with a thick layer of snow and a biting wind, a group of nine hardy souls braved the elements to walk the battlefield at **Stow-on-the-Wold (1646)**. The battlefield took on a completely different character in the snow (see photo) and one of the questions asked was whether the conditions were as bad in 1646; the answer was certainly not! On 27 April, in much better conditions, Tony Spicer led two walks in one day. Firstly, at **Upton (1651)** were a group of around 25 heard about the fight there which allowed the parliamentarians to take the crossing of the river Severn before advancing along the west bank to attack the Scottish royalist army at Worcester in September 1651. They saw the site of the old bridge and the famous 'peppercot' church which was there at the time and hosts a small display about the action. In the afternoon Tony led a smaller group around the battlefield at **Ripple (1643)**, where in April 1643 Sir William Waller's parliamentary army was badly mauled by the royalists under Prince Maurice.

Northampton (1460)

At Northampton the conservation management plan for the battlefield commissioned by the borough council is nearing completion and a public meeting

about it was held in Northampton on 13 May. In parallel, a planning application has been received for development of the Avon Cosmetic-Nunn Mills site which is just outside the northern part of the registered battlefield area. The Trust has been monitoring proposals for this land for the last three years and has responded to the planning application, disagreeing with judgements within the heritage impact assessment part of the application concerning the importance and nature of potential battlefield archaeology on the site. In particular the Trust has highlighted the lack of discussion about the possibility of grave-pits in the area given the Lancastrian rout may have crossed the proposed development site. The Trust has also said that planning decisions should be taken on the basis of the conservation management plan.



The snowy walk at Stow

Edgehill (1642)

In the last issue of *Encounter* I reported on efforts to create an information point for the Edgehill battlefield in St Peter's Church, Radway, on the edge of the registered battlefield. This joint project between the local history society and the Church of England has recently been awarded a £71,800 grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund to provide, amongst other things, interpretative information about the battle to be displayed in the church, which holds a memorial to Captain Kingsmill, a royalist officer killed during the fighting. David

Beaumont, the Trust's representative at Edgehill is closely involved in the project and the Trust's Development Officer, Julian Humphrys, and the Mercia Region have offered assistance.

Naseby (1645)

Following the Naseby Battlefield Project's decision to postpone seeking funding for a proposed multi-million pound battlefield visitors' centre, the Trust's Development Officer has been working with the project and the Church of England to investigate whether a scheme similar to the one at Radway church for Edgehill might be viable at Naseby church. Discussions are still at an early stage, but initial reactions have been positive and offer a different route to a Naseby battlefield centre.

Getting Involved with the Trust

I am sometimes asked how members can get involved in the Trust's work. Aside from creating or getting involved with a local battlefield group or a Trust Region there are a number of things members can do:

- tell someone about the work of the Battlefields Trust and encourage them to join to help it promote battlefield heritage.
- research a battlefield not on the Battlefields Trust Resource Centre website and tell the Trust about it. This can start a dialogue about information on the battle being put on the website. (For more details contact mercia@battlefieldstrust.com)
- Lead a walk or offer to provide a talk on a battlefield you know (for further details contact harvey.watson@tiscali.co.uk)
- Help the Trust check whether non-registered battlefields appear on the Historical Environment Register. In some cases this can be done though the Heritage Gateway website (<http://bit.ly/10ftElu>) but in others this will require a visit to the relevant county town to view the Register. (For further details contact me at the Mercia email above)
- Take part in an annual battlefield survey to help understand change on battlefields and support English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' work. (For further details contact me at the Mercia email)
- If you are interested in joining or creating a battlefield group, please contact development.officer@battlefieldstrust.com.

Simon Marsh

Battlefield Trust Events

Forthcoming Mercia events for your diary as follows. More details at <http://bit.ly/faZwkI>.

Thursday 6 June and 4 July, Tewkesbury (1471). Tewkesbury Battlefield Society walk. Meet 7.30pm, at the Abbey gate in the Crescent, (Junction of Church Street and Gander Lane, GL20 5PD). Contact Steve Goodchild on 01684 294939.

Saturday 8 June 2013, Edgehill (1642). Simon Marsh will lead a 2.5 hour walk. Meet Castle Inn (OX15 6DJ) at 2:30pm. Contact Simon for more details.

Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 June 2013, Naseby (1645). A weekend of re-enactment events and talks at Naseby Village Hall and playing fields, (post code NN6 6DP), 11am-4pm. Entrance £10 per car.

Sunday 30 June 2013, Cropredy Bridge (1644). The walk itself will start at 1:00pm from outside the Brasenose Arms pub (OX17 1PW). Pre-Booking essential. To reserve a place please contact: miles.deverson@battlefieldstrust.com

Saturday 6 July 2013, Northampton (1460). Mike Ingram will provide a talk about (11am) and walk around (2pm) the battlefield. Meet Delapre Abbey, Northampton. On 10 July a commemoration event will also be held at Delapre at 6:30pm.

Sunday 7 July, Nibley Green (1470). Meet 11am outside St Martins Church, Nibley, Gloucestershire (GL11 6DJ). Wessex region is also walking Lansdown (1643) - a short drive away from Nibley - in the afternoon. Contact Julian Humphrys on 07930-432444.

Saturday 3 August 2013 Evesham (1265). Annual Simon de Montfort Society wreath laying ceremony followed by battlefield walk led by Tony Spicer. Meet 10:30am in Abbey Park, Evesham (in town centre near marketplace). Contact Tony at (a.spicer@btinternet.com or 01684-572925)

Sunday 24 August 2013, Worcester (1651). Tony Spicer will lead a walk across the eastern parts of the battlefield. Contact Tony for time and meeting place.