



September 2011

Encounter

The newsletter of the Mercia Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

Summer tends to bring out those who enjoy walking our historic battlefields and the events the Trust has run over the summer have been well supported. Interest in a particular battle site is often limited to local people, unless it is a well known one such as Bosworth or Marston Moor. It is therefore encouraging that Trust members participating in walks over the summer have travelled some distance to learn about battles in our region. If you have not participated in a Trust run battlefield walk yet then I would encourage you do so; walks are usually free to members (non-members are charged £5) and there is no substitute for seeing the ground over which an action took place to gain a better understanding of a battle. This edition of *Encounter* provides updates on the Trust's campaign to save Edgcote battlefield from high speed rail, developments at Naseby and some disappointing news from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) on the proposed Stow battlefield project.

Events

On a wet 12 June new viewing platforms and information boards were opened at **Naseby (1645)** on the western side of the battlefield in the vicinity of the Sulby Hedges. Those attending the ceremony included Lord Naseby, the Director-General of the Royal Armouries, Lieutenant-General Jonathon Riley, and Colonel Robert Hammond's Regiment of Foote from the Sealed Knot. A group of around 15 also braved the inclement conditions and enjoyed a walk across areas of the battlefield normally closed to the public led by John Kliene. On 24 July the Medieval Siege Society led a walk across the 1469 battlefield at **Edgcote** which is threatened

by the proposed HS2 rail link project. The walk culminated at Trafford Bridge with a short but moving service to commemorate the fallen from the battle. The 7 August walk at **Cropredy Bridge (1644)** ran into some difficulties when the walk leader,



Sulby Hedges Viewing Platform at Naseby

Harvey Watson, was involved in a car accident on the way to the battlefield. Fortunately Harvey was unhurt and Simon Marsh was able to step in at short notice to lead the walk. A group of about 20 explored Slat Mill and the southern part of the battlefield where William Waller attacked the rear of the King's army.

Edgcote (1469)

In late July, the English Heritage (EH) Battlefield Panel considered the Trust's application to have Edgcote registered as a battlefield, in light of the proposed HS2 rail link and its impact on the landscape of the battle. Further work needs to be done by EH and a decision on registration is expected in September. July also saw the Trust launch its postcard campaign asking the Department for Transport to re-consider the HS2 route in the vicinity of the battlefield. If you have not yet posted the

postcard to the Secretary of State for Transport contained in the last edition of 'Battlefield' magazine, I urge you to do so.

Stow (1646)

The bid submitted to the HLF by the Trust and Stow and District Civic Society to carry out a survey of the Stow battlefield site and associated learning, interpretation and participation activities has been turned down. The bid was rejected because it did not offer sufficient value for money for the level of learning and participatory activities compared to the high level of grant requested. HLF has indicated it would consider a bid re-application which offered better value for money. The level of local interest and support in this project has been most encouraging. The aim now is to maintain this interest, re-examine the bid in light of the HLF comments and explore other funding options.

Naseby (1645)

On 20 July, Daventry District Council Planning Committee met to consider the application for outline permission to build a 'Living History' Visitor Centre to the south of the registered battlefield as part of the Naseby Project. Despite the planning officer recommending that the application be turned down due to its impact on the battlefield setting and because green field development was contrary to planning policy, it was approved. The importance of the battle was recognised by all speakers and the contribution to the economic and heritage well-being of the county and the country was cited as a basis for setting aside the planning officer's view. Work will now start on the detailed planning of the building, its content and addressing the issue of the 36 acre site pledged to the charity by a small group of supporters. The raising of funds to discharge their loans and transfer control of the land to the Project is an immediate priority. As part of this fundraising, the Project is encouraging members of the public to own a share of this area. For more information see:

www.naseby.com/pdf/howtohelp_ownashare.pdf

Mercia Region AGM

The Mercia Region AGM will take place at the Castle Inn, Edgehill, OX15 6DJ at 2pm on 30 October 2011. Some of the regional officers have undertaken their roles for a number of years now and would be happy to give other members an opportunity to organise activity in Mercia. The commitment is not particularly onerous and support would be provided to new committee members. If anyone is interested in being nominated to fill a portfolio then I would be happy to discuss what is involved. I can be contacted via the details at the foot of this newsletter.

Battlefield Trust Events

Forthcoming Mercia events for your diary include:

Sunday 25 September 2011, First Battle of Newbury (1643)

Walk led by author Chris Scott to raise funds for an interpretation project at Newbury. Meet at the Gun Inn, Andover Rd, Newbury RG14 6NE at 2.00pm. Adults £10.00 (BT members £7.00) Children free. Contact Julian Humphrys (07930-432444) for further details.

Sunday 2 October 2011, Second Battle of Newbury (1644)

Meet at The Five Bells pub, Lambourn Road, Belmont, Woodspeen, RG20 8BN, at 11am for coffee and an introductory talk from Chris Scott. Returning to the pub for lunch. Contact Harvey Watson on 01296-708975.

Sunday 30 October 2011, Edgehill (1642)

Simon Marsh will lead a walk over the first major battle of the English Civil War. Meet 10am Castle Inn, Edgehill OX15 6DJ, returning to the pub for lunch. Contact Simon on 01844-274112

Sunday 30 October 2011, Mercia Region Annual General Meeting

The Mercia Region AGM will take place at 2pm at the Castle Inn, Edgehill OX15 6DJ. It will follow the walk of Edgehill earlier that day

Simon Marsh