



Summer 2011

Engagement

The newsletter of the London & South-East Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

As many of you will have heard, a few weeks ago we received the sad news that the Trust's President, Professor Richard Holmes, had died at the end of April. He was much respected by his academic colleagues and equally well known to the wider public both through his numerous books and through his frequent appearances on television where he managed to bring military history alive to a wider audience through such programmes as his popular 'War walks'. Richard's genial, self deprecating style ensured he was liked by all who met him. He was a firm advocate of the need to walk battlefields in order to understand the ground where the action was fought. Richard was a superb ambassador for the Trust and gave his time freely. His knowledge, expertise and sage advice will be sorely missed.

Recent events.

During the Spring the London South-East Region successfully spanned the ages with our regular visits to the Wars of the Roses battlefields of Barnet and St Albans, we also tried something new with visits to sites connected with the aerial onslaught on Britain during the Second World War. In May Laurence Burrige led a walk around the City and told the story of the raids on London during May 1941. On the 4th of June we held a Battle of Britain Study Day. In the morning we had a fascinating visit to Number 11 Group Control Room, now carefully preserved in the Battle of Britain Bunker, at what was formerly RAF Uxbridge. In the afternoon we visited the RAF museum at Hendon and looked at examples of both German and British aircraft which took part in the battle. Following the success of the study day we are hoping to make this an annual event with future visits to the Sector

Control Room at RAF Northolt and the HQ Fighter Command at Bentley Priory.



Number 11 Group Control Room, carefully preserved in the Battle of Britain Bunker at RAF Uxbridge.

Volunteers Needed!

Every Summer the Battlefields Trust always tries to have a stand at the numerous heritage and historic re-enactment events taking place in various parts of the country. However, in order to attend all of these events we need volunteers who are willing to man our stand, explain the work of the Trust to members of the public, sign up potential new members, and liaise with other heritage organizations. People who have helped man the stand in the past have always found it an interesting and stimulating experience. If you are interested in participating contact Julian on 07930 432444 or email:

development.officer@battlefieldstrust.co.uk

London & South-East Region Events

Please note that unless otherwise stated most LSE events are free to Battlefields Trust members, however, a charge of £5 per head will normally be levied on non-members. Forthcoming London & South East events for your diary include:

Sunday 14 August, Siege of Rochester Castle 1215 and Battle of the Medway AD43. We will be walking around the ruins of Rochester Castle, scene of one of the hardest fought sieges in Medieval history, and subject of the recent film 'Ironclad'. In 1215 King John reneged on his promise to abide by the terms of the recently agreed Magna Carta and with an army of mercenaries tried to crush the rebel barons. Their epic stand at Rochester changed the course of English history. Please note that the castle is owned by English Heritage, and EH members will be entitled to free entry into the castle, while non-members will be charged £5.00. Meet at the Castle entrance at 11 am. After lunch Harvey Watson will be leading a tour around the possible site of the Battle of Medway AD43 when an invading Roman army won one of the most decisive battles in British History.

Thursday 8th September to Sunday 11th September 2011, Flanders Battlefield Conference. Join the Battlefields Trust for a long weekend in 'the cockpit of Europe', looking at a number of crucial battlefields in European history. We will be staying in a hotel at Lo-Reninge half way between Dunkirk and Ypres. Look on the Battlefields website for a full programme of events, alternatively ring Poppy Travel on 01622 716729.

Thursday 15 September, Meeting of the London & South-East Region. In the basement bar of 'Truckles' wine bar, Pied Bull Yard, off Bury Place, Bloomsbury, (opposite the British Museum). From 6pm onwards. The current programme and ongoing projects will be discussed. All members are welcome.



A Spitfire in 1944 D-Day markings at RAF Uxbridge.

Sunday 2nd October 2011, IInd Battle of Newbury 1644. Chris Scott will be leading a walk around the site of this major Civil War battlefield. Meet at The Five Bells pub, Lambourn Road, Belmont, Woodspeen, Newbury, RG20 8BN, at 11am for coffee and an introductory talk from Chris. After the walk we will be returning to the pub for lunch.

Saturday 12th November 2011, London during World War One 1914-18. Most people have heard of the Blitz of 1940/41, but it is often forgotten that strategic bombing began in the First World War and between 1914 and 1918 there were over a 100 German air raids on Britain, first using Zeppelin airships and later Gotha heavy bombers. Chris Everett will be leading a walk from Holborn to the Embankment looking at the first great air assault on London. The walk is approximately 2.5 miles long and will take 2 – 2.5 hours. Meet at 11am at Holborn Station. We will finish on the Embankment near the Circle Line. For further details contact Chris on 07775 701 833.

For further information on these events please contact Harvey Watson on 01296 708975 or harvey.watson@tiscali.co.uk