

BACTON

WYVERSTONE

COTTON

# PARISH & COMMUNITY NEWS

Annual Subscription £1.50

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*August 2014  
Commemorating the Centenary  
of the beginning of the Great War*

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cover photo provided by Dick Middleton

This issue of our magazine has been compiled in memory of those who fought, worked and died for us in WWI which began in August 1914

Many thanks to Dick Middleton and Sheila Wright for providing us with articles of interest

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# PARISH NEWS

## **An invitation to everyone in Bacton, Cotton or Wyverstone**

If you have a Picture/Photograph you would like to see on the front cover and can provide a letter on the same theme for page 7 (About 430 - 440 words) please get in touch with us. We are keen to give everyone the chance to get involved and can let you know which months are available in 2014.

**To contact the Parish & Community News**, send a contribution, or for those of you who contribute to the magazine regularly, please e-mail your information to [ajmanley@icloud.com](mailto:ajmanley@icloud.com) by the **15th of the previous month** at the **latest**. You don't need to format it if you are happy to leave it to us.

If you do not have email, please deliver your contributions with a contact phone number to :-

**Parish News Editor**, The Limes, Rectory Road, Bacton, IP14 4LE  
(Next to the Scout Hut)

## **To advertise in the Parish & Community News please contact -**

**Linda Last** on **01449 781772** or [linda.last@talk21.com](mailto:linda.last@talk21.com)

Current rates for 12 issues are:-

**Full A5 Page (or A4 mini-page) - £200, ½ A5 page (or A4 mini-half page) - £115,**

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**If you have an Ad you think could benefit from a re-design we can do this for you for a fee of £7.50**

Free Community advertisements intended to be used as full pages should be readable when reduced to a quarter of an A5 page.

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**August 2014**

Sat 30th	10.00am - 12.30pm	<b>Wyverstone Community Cafe</b> - No cafe on the 2nd of August as we are at Bacton Fayre page 11
Sun 3rd	12.00noon	<b>Summer Lunch</b> - on the Manor Meadow page 22
Mon 4th	7.30pm	<b>Bacton &amp; District W.I.</b> - 'Victorian Felixstowe' - Philip Hadwen page 19
		<b>Horticultural Society - No Meeting</b>
Tues 19th	7.30pm	<b>RBL</b> - Old Newton Sports and Social Club
Mon 11th		<b>RBL Women's Section</b> - Poppy Picnic - Decision pending
Mon 11th	9.30am - 12.00noon	<b>Village Craft Group</b> - in Bacton Village Hall page 18
Tues 12th		<b>Mother's Union</b> - Lunch out at Stonham Barns TBC
		<b>Cotton Community Cafe &amp; Club - None in August</b>

**September 2014**

Tues 9th	2pm - 4pm	<b>Community Circle Club</b> – Cotton Village Hall. A lively Social Club open to all.
Tues 9th	7.30pm	<b>Horticultural Society</b> - Cambridge Colleges and their Gardens - Rodney Tibbs
Sat 20th	10am - 12noon	<b>Community Circle Café</b> - Cotton Village Hall
Tues 23rd	2pm - 4pm	<b>Community Circle Club</b> – Cotton Village Hall. A lively Social Club open to all.
Sat 13th & 27th	10.00am - 12.30pm	<b>Wyverstone Community Cafe</b> page 11



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## From your August Correspondent

### A medal, a Girl and An end

My uncle Bob (Cover Picture) was commissioned in 1917. The army had run out of public school boys to turn into officers, and were now turning to warrant officers and sergeants to fill the gap in junior officers. So in August 1918 second lieutenant Uncle Bob was with his unit in the front line at a little village in the Somme valley, when he and his section took on a German machine gun. In a short and bloody battle, with everyone else dead or wounded, he succeeded in capturing the gun, turning it round, and put it, as he said in his report, "to good use." We know that's what he did, as we have his field service note book for that day. For this action he was awarded the Military Cross.

September and October came and went, and we can only imagine the relief and thankfulness that came with the armistice. Not that much came until the very last minute if you were an American soldier at the front, because fiery General Pershing, the US Army commander in France, wanted to bully the Germans right up to the last minute. Unbelievably he launched an attack on the German line on the morning of 11th November, fully knowing that the negotiations for the armistice were complete. Fortunately no British Generals were quite that stupid.

So the war came to an end, and an army of occupation was planned to move into the Rhineland. My uncle Bob and his brigade made their way slowly across France and Belgium towards Koln. At one point he was billeted with a Belgian family near Liege, a family with a teenage daughter. Everyone in my family denies any connection between Bob and Angele, and it probably was just a step too far for a boy from the back streets of Manchester, but throughout his life, Bob stayed in contact with Angele and her family. Even now, his daughter is still firm friends with Angele's son and grandchildren.

The story doesn't quite end there. When Bob died, his daughter quite properly gave his medals to the Border Regiment Museum in Carlisle, the regiment Bob joined in 1914. So recently, whilst on our way to visit friends in Scotland, we stopped off in Carlisle to see Bob's medals. Within two minutes of asking to see them, the curator was back with the medals shining in his hand. He hadn't had time to clean them: the inevitable deduction being that every medal in the care of the Border Regiment Museum, and there must be hundreds of them if not thousands, was shining.

Dick Middleton

### **If anyone is researching their family in WWI .... the Medal Rolls, formerly held by the Army Medal Office in Droitwich, are available to view for free by the public at the National Archives in Kew.**

The Medal Index Cards are available on microfiche and can be viewed in classification WO 372. Using the references provided on the Medal Index Card for the issue number of each medal, then the Medal Rolls can be viewed according to that number in classification WO 329 to see if there is any further detail for the individual is given in the Rolls. Members of staff at the National Archives will be pleased to assist with any enquiries during a search.

Alternatively the Medal Index Cards are available to search online from the National Archives. However, it is worth noting that the Medal Index Cards were scanned onto microfiche by the National Archives some years ago **in black and white** and only the front of each card was scanned. Some cards did contain information on the reverse side, which may generally relate to next of kin. Medal Index Cards are not available to view before paying for a download.

Awards and citations listed in The London Gazette are available to view at the National Archives.

For further information about the medal records and documents available online and at the National Archives see the WW1 medals section of the National Archives website at:

Website: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) Medal Records

## Part one - Joining Up

Any young English lad in 1914, who had grown up in England, the greatest superpower in the world, must have gone to bed every night shivering with excitement. The papers since the end of June (when that obscure Austro-Hungarian prince had been blown up by a terrorist) had been full of the possibilities of war. Those same papers never held back on reminding all those young lads of their duty: not that they needed reminding. Every last one of them was itching to join up and fight for King and Country.

Most had perhaps hum drum lives. Holidays were limited to one week a year if you were lucky, food was poor and health was worse. Most had experienced the death of siblings, and accident or injury were no strangers. But this war was going to be fun! And exciting!

That was pretty well the backdrop to the Great War for most young men. It was certainly that of my Uncle Bob, who ran away in August 1914 to join the Border Regiment. Whilst he chose to join a county regiment, many joined up with groups of friends to join specially established battalions like the Hull Commercial, the Bradford Pals, the Grimsby Chums or the Artists Rifles.

Bob was from a normal working class family, with a brother and eight sisters. His father was a warehouseman, and Bob was a keen and enthusiastic soldier. He was promoted very quickly to become the sergeant in his battalion's machine gun platoon. The battalion's training schedule was steady if not hard, and his diary is full of entries of "Tea with Beattie," (we never discovered who Beattie was!) and "Dancing" as well as "Route marches" and "Ranges." Bob and his battalion were discovering the delights of travel, if only to Lincolnshire and the Belton House training area. Later, he would venture as far as Aldershot, and on to Liverpool, Egypt and Gallipoli.

But there's nothing like being a young man, living a life of teamwork, living and working with your friends, sharing your food, your beer and your laughter. Imagine these boys, going off to the pub together, with a few pennies in their pockets, chasing the girls, boasting of their newfound status, and swanking (what a lovely word that is!) in their glamorous uniforms.

But that's what it was like for a young man in 1914. Yes, there was death and destruction to come, but there was glory, fun and excitement too. So just for a moment, let's think not of the sadness and the pain that followed, but remember all those glorious boys, joining up so enthusiastically, discovering the delights of life and serving their country so patriotically.

Dick Middleton



## Part two - From Gallipoli to the Western Front

It seems inconceivable to us that the Great War went on for so long. Four years is a very long time, and some soldiers were there, in it, playing a part, from beginning to end. Of course, they weren't in the trenches, the front line, for four years, but they were living with its prospect all that time, with the possibility of being wounded (hurrah for a blighty one!) or even being killed.

My uncle Bob was one of those who joined up in August 1914 and survived. His first taste of action was in Gallipoli. We have his diary for 1915, and in a crabbed and tiny hand, he writes of the difficulties of stopping the guns from freezing, of the Warrant Officer shot by one of our own sentries, of spending the night in a trench with dead Turks. The campaign ended in December 1915 with a momentous and successful silent evacuation, and Bob, like the rest of them, had some R&R in Egypt.

However, back in France, 1916 was creating an insatiable demand for men. In February, the Boche had attacked Verdun, an important French strongpoint, in a local war of attrition. More and more men were thrown into the battle, and to relieve the pressure on Verdun, the British devised an infallible plan to utilise its new conscript army, Kitchener's Army, and Bob was part of that army.

He, like every other soldier arriving in France, went first to the training camp at Etaples. There they were all, regardless of rank, trade or position subjected to a final toughening up before they went into the line. From here, it was by train (in those trucks marked 40 men or 8 horses) and on foot eastwards to prepare for the great battle.

Everything was worked out to a tee. All the conscripts in Kitchener's new army had to do was to walk across no man's land, and occupy the German trenches. Easy. Artillery

fire would wipe out all resistance. It was a plan that couldn't fail. But it did.

The battle of the Somme, launched on 1st July 1916, was the end of romance in the Great War. With 20,000 killed before lunch, this war could no longer be romantic. Volunteers stopped volunteering, the pals battalions were broken up and conscription was introduced.

But how could you survive such horrors, his daughter once asked him. His reply was a touch revealing: "Well it wasn't always like that, and you didn't know what it was like anywhere else." He just loved it all. The excitement, the responsibility, the team, the friends: It certainly beat going to the cotton mill every day.

## Part 3 - Life in the lines

I don't think that when he joined up in August 1914, my uncle Bob had any great expectations of being comfortable. After all, normal life in 1914 for most people didn't include much luxury, so what was Bob's life like in the trenches?

In short, it was either too hot or too cold, and the tea tasted of petrol. Food was carried up to the front line in either a Dixie (if it was stew) or sandbags (if it was bread, cheese etc). Water arrived in petrol tins, hence the taste, and the daily rum ration was in a jar. Sleep was a luxury. Nights were spent on patrols gathering intelligence, fighting patrols, repairing trenches or digging new ones, and maintaining the endless barbed wire. Food and ammunition were carried forward to the front line, and everyone "stood to" for an hour at dawn and dusk. After Stand To, rifles and machine guns were cleaned. Then it was breakfast, perhaps bacon and biscuit, and men could start to get their heads down for a quick kip on the fire step or in one of the funk holes dug out into the enemy side of the trench.

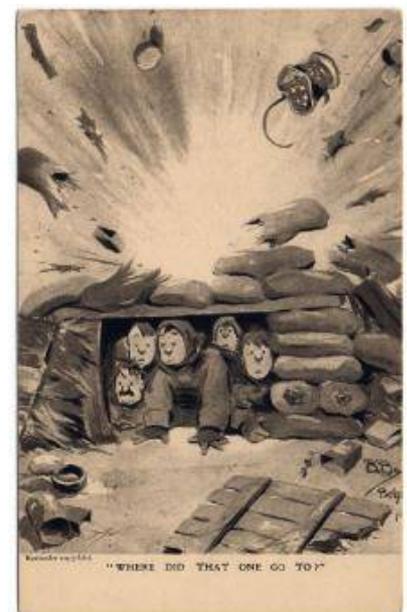
Men would still have to go on fatigues, sentries would be gazing

out over no man's land and the guns would be firing. Snipers were active, and the cry for Stretcher Bearers would go up. Battalions lost, on average, a man a day, thirty men killed a month. Everyone was permanently tired, exhausted.

But back to food. Food is important, but it was dull and boring. Day after day, maconochies stew or bully beef, hard tack biscuit (sort of hard dog biscuits) and maybe a bit of bacon, cheese and if even luckier, bread. Parcels from home, with cakes, butter and chocolate were a welcome addition to the quartermasters fare. Such luxuries were appreciated most when out on rest: four days in the front line, four days in support and four days on rest. Rest might start off with a bath or shower, a good sleep and a feed, but then it was three days of fatigues, carrying up food and ammo, wiring and digging parties and general dogsbody tasks.

But despite all this misery, Tommy Atkins was pretty resilient. I haven't mentioned the rain, the mud, trench feet, going over the top, field punishments, lice, estaminets, parades, and loads of other things, but it was all good fun (and I know that many people find this difficult to understand). Today's soldiers thankfully are still much the same.

Dick Middleton



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### Part four - Remembrance Day

The Royal British Legion was founded in 1921 from a number of ex service associations as a voice for the ex service community. Since then, it has done much to campaign on behalf of ex servicemen and has achieved much on their behalf. Its champions causes unique to veterans, and it scoops up those that have fallen on hard times. So it deserves all the support we can offer it. The Poppy Appeal is its major fundraising effort, but we should remember what those two

days, 11th November and Remembrance Sunday are for: to remember members of the armed forces who have died in the line of duty.

We share the day with almost all Commonwealth countries, with the unique exception of New Zealand. Kiwis fought alongside Australian troops throughout the Great War, in Gallipoli and in France. In 1919 and 1920, they too marked Remembrance Day on 11th November, but in 1921,

the ship carrying the paper poppies to be used failed to arrive in time for 11th November. The Returned Servicemen's Association decided to distribute them on the next appropriate day, which happened to be Anzac Day, 25th April. And that's what they have done ever since.

But why should we think of those soldiers, sailors and airmen? The answer is of course that because of these young men and women who died in the line of duty, we and many others across the world can live in a free and democratic country. When young men and women join our armed forces, they do so knowing that they may have to fight and that they may lose their lives. In return, we must look after the injured and those war widows and children that are left behind. That is the covenant that defines the relationship between the armed forces and the country.

So when that list of names of local people from Bacton, Cotton and Wyverstone who died in the two world wars is read out in our churches on Remembrance Sunday, it isn't just those who we should remember. We should think too of the young men and women who died in the line of duty in India, in Malaya, in Borneo, Cyprus, Palestine, Egypt, Northern Ireland, Iraq, Afghanistan, on the high seas, in countless minor conflicts across the world. I think too that we should remember all those who died in the Cold War: whilst few were killed by enemy action, all who died did so in the line of duty.

It's Tommy this, and Tommy that, and Tommy go away, but it's Thank You Mr Atkins, when the bands begin to play. )

Dick Middleton

**Wyverstone Community Cafe & Local Produce Market - 2014**

A local enterprise that benefits the community  
Saturdays fortnightly 10.00am - 12.30pm at Wyverstone Village Hall

**AUGUST 30th**

**(No cafe on 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug – we are at Bacton Fayre)**

**September 13th & 27th**

**Kettle's Calling**



**Where....**The Community Room, St Mary's Bacton

**When?....**2pm - 4pm

**AUGUST 11th (NO Kettle's Calling on Bank Holiday Monday 25th)**  
September

**Who?.....** Everyone is welcome - Free! (though donations always welcome!)

Why not come along for tea, toast, cakes and savouries? Why not bring a friend

For more details, please ring - Linda Last: 781772, Janice Shea: 781263

**Please let us know if you would like a lift.**

**Community Circle Club** - We are a social group and we meet at Cotton Village Hall on the second and fourth Tuesdays of most months from 2pm until 4pm. (NB: No meetings during August, and just one meeting in December.)

So why not come along? You choose – board games, darts, table tennis, plus a collection of books and DVDs to swap. And there's *always* friendly, lively conversation! Coffee or tea, biscuits (and sometimes cake) are available.

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Drawing by Rhini Kemp

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HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Class 114

Description Onions

Exhibitor's Name and Address K. Miles

10 Church View Wyverstone

Gardener (if any) Mr. N.R. Smith N.R. SMITH



**SECOND PRIZE**

BACTON & WYVERSTONE  
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Class 115

Description 3 Pairs of roots

Exhibitor's Name and Address K. Miles

10, Church View Wyverstone

Gardener (if any) - Mr. Smith N.R. SMITH

1958 1958

Ken Miles



## Reader's Letters

Re Ann Kent's letter regarding the Bacton Fair.

I was born in Bacton in 1945. Perhaps most people in Bacton don't know that the Bacton Fayre(?) was originally known as Bacton and Wyverstone Show so we might ask ourselves why, when and by whom the name was changed? Other long-standing residents of the village might know the answer to that question. In 1958 boys and girls from Bacton School put vegetables and needlecraft into the show and this was at Red House Farm. Burt Stock's Fair used to attend the show and from here the fair went to Finningham Railway Tavern Field every year.

Ken Miles



**Left to Right -**

Stanley Rice Roger Hales Jane Hagger Ken Miles Graham Tapp Michael Sheldrake





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**Jumble Sale**

on Saturday 16 August  
 at Bacton Village Hall at 2pm

*in aid of Royal British Legion  
 and Women's Section Royal British Legion.*



## JUST GARDENING

If you have a shed or greenhouse keep them clean and tidy. You can see what you have in stock it's easier to get to everything and you don't accumulate unwanted rubbish.

I've cut all the dead leaves and stems from my Bearded Iris's also I've cut back all the old leaves from my Heleborus Christmas Rose, this cleans up around the base of the plant and gives the new growth the opportunity to grow for the new approaching season.

Dead heading of my roses is a daily requirement at this time of the year. My lawn is looking very nice and green at the moment. To keep your lawn in prime condition you should be mowing at least twice a week. Try and prevent the lawn from being cut to short and make sure all the grass cutting are collected.

I think this year is going to be a good year for fruit. My apple tree "Discovery" is full of small apples which will produce a good supply. I have a " Russet" apple tree and this tree has a good amount of fruit on the branches. My "Damson" tree is full of little green fruit. Last year wasn't very good for Damson fruit but the year before I had enough fruit to make 14lbs of Damson Jam. Damsons are one of the fruit's that lend themselves to make very good jam. It easy to set the jam during the making process, it's a good colour, keeps well and taste very nice.

Continue pruning your hedges. Prune any rambler roses you have and cut out any spent rose heads.

You can start thinking about preparing beds for planting out bulbs. Plant out some stocks for early blooming.

Continue to sow lettuce seeds for a succession crop. Continue to feed your main crop tomato plants on a frequent basis. They should have been stopped by now at about four of five trusses if they're planted outside. More if they are planted in a greenhouse.

My "Pelargoniums" have produced a very good display of colour this year. Again, when the flowers have gone past their best remove them, this promotes better flower growth.

Happy Gardening **Norman Parcell**



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### CENTENARY OF THE OUTBREAK OF THE 1914-18 WAR

What was life like for Suffolk villagers caught up in this nightmare of War?

Families all over Suffolk said farewell to their menfolk, off to fight for King and Country. Patriotism was strong but the results were devastating everywhere.

The examples below come from residents of a typical village, Drinkstone near Bury St. Edmunds. In 1914, the village population numbered 433 souls. Forty-one men and boys enlisted during those first months. Fifteen would never return, but that was not the whole story. Others died soon after returning home, from wounds or the effect of gas. These are a few individual stories for us to ponder.

#### From Walter Rose, born March 1914 –

‘My father Philip Rose was in the 4<sup>th</sup> Suffolks. He was going up the front towards the Somme, with a drug full of ammunition, pulled by five mules. He got mortared. All the mules were killed, and Dad got his left arm all smashed up with shrapnel. They wanted to take his arm off but he refused. The arm was all withered up and bent after that, but he could still use it a bit. He was discharged, and he came home and went back on the land, driving horses. He still used to win ploughing matches.’

#### From Nell Cocksedge, born December 1919 –

‘My father Paul Blake was a horseman at Occold. They took his horses for the War, and he said ‘they’ve took my horses so I might as well go too!’ He joined up in 1916. The men were dying like flies, so he soon got promoted. He used to tell us how he went down into a cellar and found some Germans there playing the piano! And he managed to take them all prisoner. He was wounded leading a party of bombs down an enemy trench, but worse than that, was when he was gassed. When he came home to mother and us six children, he was always ill and he went into Addenbrookes Hospital. After he died we had to move into a tumbledown thatched cottage

because the good brick cottage was needed for the next horseman. Mother got about two shillings and sixpence a week for each of us from the government. She went stone-picking in the fields and we’d all go and help her. My father wouldn’t let her work on the land when he was alive.’

#### From Sheila Sparkes, born 1941 –

‘My great-grandparents Alfred and Sarah Harvey had four children – Olive, Mildred, Alfred and Frank. Alfred went up to Yorkshire looking for work, and he joined the Yorkshire Regiment. He died in the Somme. Frank joined the Suffolk Regiment in 1914 and suffered head injuries from shrapnel. He survived the War but died a few years later from his injuries. So sad - both sons lost.’

#### From Keith Sturgeon, born 1942 –

‘My grandparents Horace and Mary Levett lived in Rattlesden, where Horace had an upholstery business. In March 1918 Horace died in the Battle of the Somme, the same month that his eighth child Ruby (my mother) was born. So my granddad never saw his youngest child.

Gran had a letter from her husband’s comrades saying Horace was shot in the back of the neck and died quickly without suffering. The men made a pact to send letters like this to their friends’ widows to comfort them (whether or not it was true).

Gran had to move to a tiny cottage in Drinkstone with her eight children.

Granddad was one of 14,000 British casualties who died on the Somme between March and August 1918 and who have no known grave. The name Horace Abram Levett is on a Memorial at Pozieres Cemetery near the northern French coast.’

In 2014, we remember and thank these men and women for their sacrifices.

WE SHALL  
REMEMBER THEM.

Sheila Wright

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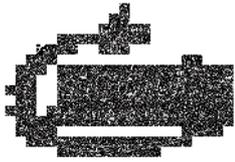
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## 1<sup>st</sup> BACTON SCOUT GROUP

**Mrs Karen Hall-Price -**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Bacton Scout Group Secretary**  
 1 Canham's Farm Cottages,  
 Cow Green, Bacton IP14 4HH  
**Tel. 01449 780332 / 07812 105228**  
 karenyvonnehall@aol.com

**Bacton Flower Festival (Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August).** We will be hosting the BBQ and refreshments for this event this year and again are looking for your support on the day.

**Recycling Bins** - Please remember to use our recycling bins at the Scout HQ – This also raises funds for the group and is much easier than transporting your bottles and clothes to the Stowmarket recycling centre / bins.

If anyone would like their son or daughter to join a section, please don't hesitate to contact the Group Secretary.

**Beaver Scouts** (6yrs – 8yrs) meet every Monday (term time) 6.15pm – 7.30pm

**Cub Scouts** (8yrs – 10 ½ yrs) meet every Friday (term time) 6.15pm – 7.45pm

**Scouts** (10 ½ yrs – 14yrs) meet every Friday (term time) 8pm – 9.30pm

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If you or your daughter would like to know more about joining visit -  
[www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested) or call **0800 1 69 59 01**

We meet on Wednesdays in Bacton Village Hall during Term Time.

**Rainbows** (5-7 years) 5.30 – 6.30pm

**Brownies** (7-10 years) 5.45 – 7.15pm

**Guides** (10-14 years) 7.30 – 9.00pm





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**Call Matthew Jolly on 01449 782022 \* M 07903 018046**

## VILLAGE CRAFT GROUP



Our next get together will be on

**Monday August 11th**

**9.30am - 12.00pm at Bacton Village Hall**

There is a small charge towards the hire of the hall, but this includes your tea/coffee and biscuit.

All are welcome to come and join us.

We bring our own projects and help/advice is on hand if required.

Further details from Noelle Curwen

**Tel: 01449 781013**

**E necurwen@btinternet.com**

## BACTON ART CLUB

Would you like to join a friendly group for painting and drawing on a Wednesday evening? We have room for two more to join us in the Community Room at St.

Mary's. Although the group is not tutored, we do invite an artist along to some of our sessions to help us along. All abilities welcome.

If you are interested, phone Ann Kent on  
01449 781607.

## COTTON VPA (Vegetable & Produce Association)

No meeting in August, but our **Annual VPA Show** is in Cotton village hall on **6th September**,

We would love some new entries this year, give it a try! It is all good old fashioned fun and very friendly competition.

More details from Chris Marston 781567



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[www.clairebisset.com](http://www.clairebisset.com)



## BACTON & DISTRICT W.I.

Our last meeting which took place on Monday July 7th took an unusual turn.

Terry Plumber came to advise us on 'How to avoid being a Statistic' and it turned out to be a very

'hands on' experience. We who arrived early to set up had to put up an extra four long tables around the room and on these tables Terry set up 4 road layouts. He then produced toy vehicles and set them up on the road layouts to replicate actual Traffic Incidents which had taken place.

Terry began his talk by asking what percentage of drivers can be classed as 'Good Drivers'. We were optimistic until Terry shattered our illusions by asking how many of us had read the latest edition of the Highway Code at which point it became obvious that things were worse than we thought! We were then asked to form groups and were sent around the room to discuss the set ups and give our opinions as to how they could have been avoided and who was to blame. The room was abuzz as some very lively discussions took place and fortunately we all managed to 'avoid becoming a statistic' by coming to



blows. This was, after all, the W.I.! When we'd had ample time to give our opinions Terry took over again and pointed out how we were all wrong. Not really, I think we made a very good fist of spotting hazards and figuring who was to blame. In most cases it was more than one person and in some cases everyone involved could have done something to avoid disaster. When we got in our cars to leave the hall and go home we were all extremely aware of potential hazards and other road users and were almost reluctant to pull away. However I am sure we have all soon fallen back into our old familiar habits, but maybe we will all remain just that little bit more aware.

Mavis Burston was the only person to enter our monthly competition which was a maximum of 200 words entitled 'My Lucky Escape'. She gave a graphic description of how, in her youth, she slipped down between the platform and the train whilst preparing to board a train to go to work. This did indeed sound like a very 'Lucky Escape' and was, therefore a worthy winner.

Our next meeting will be on August 4th and will be about 'Victorian Felixstowe. As ever Visitors are welcome for £3 for a maximum of three sessions.

On August 2nd we will be at the Bacton Fayre as usual and will be selling Cakes and Produce, so we hope to see you there!

Helmingham Hall Plant Heritage  
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# AUTUMN PLANT FAIR

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## **TIMELINE for WWI**

1914	June 28th	Francis Ferdinand assassinated at Sarajevo
	July 28th	Austria declared war on Serbia
	August 3rd	Germany declared war on France and invaded Belgium. Germany had to implement the Schlieffen Plan.
	August 4th	Britain declared war on Germany
	October 18th	First Battle of Ypres
1915	February 19th	Britain bombarded Turkish forts in the Dardanelles
	April 25th	Allied troops landed in Gallipoli
	May 7th	The "Lusitania" was sunk by a German U-boat
	December 19th	The Allies started the evacuation of Gallipoli
1916	January 27th	Conscription introduced in Britain
	July 1st	Start of the Battle of the Somme
	September 15th	First use en masse of tanks at the Somme
	December 7th	Lloyd George becomes British Prime Minister
1917	April 6th	USA declared war on Germany
1918	March 29th	Marshall Foch was appointed Allied Commander on the Western Front
	October 4th	Germany asked the Allies for an Armistice
	NOVEMBER 11th	Germany signed an armistice with the Allies – the official date of the end of World War One

## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION

Members met on a rare warm evening in July for the Garden Meeting at Squirrel's Hall, Wattisfield. As always when we visit, the gardens were immaculate and we were welcomed by Ian Dryden proffering a tray of drinks.

There was a bit of business including organising the manning of the Lucky Dip Stall at Bacton Fayre and it was decided also to continue collecting 2p coins by asking the public to help us, so please save your 2p coins to donate to the Women's Section 2p Challenge. There will be a pot on the Lucky Dip Stall.

5 games were enjoyed which were -

**Guess how many cones in the Trailer** won by Ann Askew, Darts won by Zandra Taylor,

**Hoopla** won by Ann Gipson,

**Bowls** jointly won by Beryl Ellis and Helen Mead

**Guess the Weight of the Cabbage** jointly won by Janet Crissell and Barbara Burrows.

A sumptuous tea was enjoyed by the 19 ladies present which had been prepared by Peggy Dryden and which soon diminished.

A large draw was run by Joyce Griggs and Ann Askew.

Peggy, Ian, daughter Ann and son-in-law John were all thanked for organising a very lovely evening which the ladies all thoroughly enjoyed, by Chairman Sandra Welham. Peggy was presented with a pot plant in gratitude.

### PLEASE NOTE:-

#### RBL Meetings.

Bacton & District branch have decided to change the day and dates for all future meetings, they will now be held on the third Tuesday of each month (see Dates for your Diary) for date, they will still be held at the same venue, i.e. Old Newton Sports and Social Club and at the same time, 7.30pm.

## HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The summer evening outing was to Green Farmhouse, Shelland which is the very pretty cottage home of Miss Rosemary Roe.

As the address suggests, the property is on the edge of a large green which is only one of five privately owned greens in the country.

It had always been Rosemary's ambition to live in the property and a photo of the then very dilapidated property was shown to the members. Her wish came true and after moving in in 1980, the garden was created from what was 8-9 foot high brambles and rotten apple trees.

After retiring from teaching in 1994, Rosemary took a garden design course and as she is also a flower arranger, she made sure the garden included some good shrubs.

Members strolled around admiring all the lovely planting around the pond, stumpery, wild flower garden and beds brimming with a variety of leaf shapes and colour.

The garden is now open under the National Garden Scheme.

A cuppa and some delicious cakes were then enjoyed in the cosy cottage and Rosemary kindly judged the buttonhole competition.

1. Maureen Chambers. 2. Diane Gladders. 3. John Gladders.

Chairman Diane Gladders thanked Rosemary for allowing us to see all the delightful plants and for the lovely refreshments.

Rosemary said "It is my garden as I like it and I hope you liked it too", which we certainly did.

**The outing to Sandringham Flower Show on 30th July leaves Bacton Village Hall at 9 am.**



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St Mary's Church Bacton

# Summer Luncheon 2014

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**Sunday  
3rd August  
12.00noon**  
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Tickets from Rosy Black 01449 781506





A warm July afternoon saw members from the various 'Friends' Committees in the benefice relaxing under the trees in The Rectory garden, invited to Tea by the Reverent Liz Varley as a 'thank you' for all their hard work over the year.

Liz had the brilliant idea of supporting the local Action Medical Research team and presented each guest on arrival with one of the charity's boxed Cream Teas. Not only was Liz supporting a good cause but it meant she had more time to circulate and chat. The tea and conversation flowed as everyone tucked in to their delicious scones, butter, jam and 'proper' clotted cream.

It was a very relaxed and civilized event without a cloud in the sky - the sun was definitely shining on the righteous. On behalf of all present I would like to thank Liz for her hospitality. (On a personal level, did I enjoy my cream tea? Sadly not, since I had been up at the crack of dawn helping to pack 800 of them. But I was in the minority of one!)

Anon.

**COTTON  
PARISH COUNCIL**  
Colin Hall



Please accept my apologies for missing last month's deadline, no excuses I just forgot.

At the Parish Council AGM held on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2014 Councillor Couldridge was re-elected as Chairman of the Council and Councillor Wenban as Vice-Chairman. Reports from County/District Councillor Stringer and village organizations were presented to the meeting these can be viewed on the village web-site.

An ordinary Parish Council meeting followed where it was reported that progress is being made with a neighbouring parish over the purchase of a Vehicle Activate Sign . A discussion will be held with MSDC Councillor Stringer over financial arrangements. Councillor Gibbs said that he will be reviewing the Community Emergency Plan shortly, now that other local villages have completed or started their own. He will liaise with the Parish Clerk.

At a meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July a planning application for an extension at Kirby Cottage, Brook House Road was supported by the Council. It was reported that MSDC had refused an application for the old Gospel Hall and approved an application for Church Farm. The next meeting is due to be held on the 30<sup>th</sup> July a report of this meeting will appear in the next issue ( I hope ! )

Village web-site:  
[www.cotton.onesuffolk.net](http://www.cotton.onesuffolk.net)

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## WYVERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

John Bean



### Wyverstone council met on May 30th

The arrangements for updating street lights continue. It is regretted some are now out but the new contract is not yet completed.

The request for new signs on Badwell road has been repeated.

Church Hill T Junction should be repaired within the next month.

Thanks to Terry Axton for repairing FP Sign near old chapel.

Discussion took place with Town Estate trustees regarding allotment requirements in the village and a survey will be conducted along with people's opinion on restarting neighbourhood watch.

The enforcement officer is looking into camping site in Potash Lane.

It was decided not to renew the S.A.L.C. Subscription.

The Internal audit has been approved and external audit sent to auditors.

It was with much regret that damage to the Community Café signs had taken place; if this continues the police will be involved.

Phil Wade is taking on responsibility for neighbourhood watch.

Speedwatch checks will continue to be made.

**Next meeting Sept.1st at 7p.m.**

## BACTON PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Jane Brookman



### The Parish Council met on 7 and 14 July 2014.

#### Planning Application

Coppings Farm, The Street, Bacton. Change of use from paddocks to create vehicular access. The Parish Council supported this application.

#### Police Report

There have been no crimes committed since the end of April, this compares with four crimes for the same period last year.

#### Bacton Sign

Cllr Wigglesworth has refurbished the Bacton sign at the Broad Road/Pound Hill junction.

### Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer

It was not possible to appoint to this post from the recent recruitment process, so the Parish Council is very pleased Jane Brookman will continue in post until the end of September 2014. If you think you may be interested please contact Jane for an informal discussion ahead of the vacancy being re-advertised in early September.

### 1837 Tithe Map for Bacton

Mrs Rose Graham the History Recorder for Bacton requested funding to cover the cost of repairs to the photographic copy of the Tithe Map. Mrs Graham has used the map on a regular basis for 22 years as did her predecessor, Mr Bill Standard. It is an invaluable source of information for local and family historians. The Parish Council was pleased to support this request to preserve this important document.

### Vacancies for Parish Councillors

There are currently vacancies on the Parish Council and current members would like to co-opt new members to join them.

- Are you over 18?
- Do you live within three miles of Bacton or work in Bacton?
- Are you on the Electoral Roll?
- Are you interested in helping to improve the quality of life in your community?
- Do you want to be involved in making important decisions in your community?

If you can answer yes to these questions then being a Bacton Parish Councillor may be for you.

For an informal discussion or further details please contact Jane the Parish Clerk on 01359 230897 or email [bactonparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:bactonparishclerk@gmail.com).

Applications should be made in writing to the Clerk giving brief details of why you would be an ideal Parish Councillor by Friday 5 September 2014.

### Next Meeting:

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 15 September 2014 at 7.30 in the Village Hall, Bacton. The agenda will be posted on the three notice boards in the village and will also be available on the Parish Council website

<http://bacton.onesuffolk.net/>.



RIDE AND STRIDE BIKE RIDE AND WALK

**13th September 2014**  
**9.00am - 5.00pm**

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## Bacton Fayre Fun Dog Show

**on Saturday 2nd August**  
*now inside the Fayre showground*

**All Classes just £1 to enter**

Cutest Puppy, Handsomest Dog, Prettiest Bitch, Waggiest Tail,  
Smartest Golden Oldie, Best Rescue, Most Adorable Eyes,  
Pedigree - Best Sporting, Best Non-sporting,  
and of course Best Sausage Catcher!

*to be judged by Mr Ian Kennedy*

**Rosettes for 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in all classes**

Special rosettes **Best Puppy, Best Veteran, Best Pedigree**

**Special prize for Best in Show**

*All proceeds in aid of Bacton Village Hall*

For more details contact **Bernard Coxhead**  
1 Elm Way, Bacton IP14 4NX – 01449 782927  
[bactondogshow@doglovers.co.uk](mailto:bactondogshow@doglovers.co.uk)

<http://www.facebook.com/bactondogshow>

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**SAVE Meat**  
and **Wheat** for  
our **SOLDIERS** and  
**ALLIES**



## A Word from the Rectory

Dear Everyone

I know this issue is much concerned with the commemoration of World War One, and we shall be remembering the events of 1914 in all our churches on August 3rd, particularly at the Wyverstone 6.30 p.m. informal Praise in the Community service.

In Bacton we have also been remembering our lovely friend John Gooderham, who besides serving for fifty years as treasurer of Bacton Church Council played a huge part in the life of the Bacton community. He fought gallantly against cancer and never let it stop him from being himself – none of us will ever forget his gentleness and slightly mischievous chuckle. His family had the brilliant idea of timing his Memorial Service for Monday August 4<sup>th</sup>, so that the marquee which hosts the Flower Show on August 2<sup>nd</sup> and the Parish Luncheon on August 3<sup>rd</sup> will also be available for John's reception. I'm just sad that I shall miss it, because I'm booked on a train to the South of France with an unchangeable ticket, but I know Barbara Bilston will as always do a wonderful job of leading the service.

Meanwhile in Wyverstone the news has just come in that Jim Arnold has also reached the end of his earthly journey. Whatever the truth of the difficult circumstances around his leaving the village, Jim made his own important contribution to the Wyverstone community and a lot of people will remember him with affection. His ending was peaceful and without pain, and he is safe now where all is understood and all harm can find healing.

As I write this, I'm just back from my annual stint as a Festival Pastor at Latitude. The sun shone, the mud was hardly in evidence and I had a wonderful time strolling around the site in my raspberry pink HiViz waistcoat, giving people lovehearts, telling them where to find the toilets, helping them put their tents up and encouraging them to visit Pastor Base for the cheapest and friendliest tea and coffee venue on the site. One young lass was in distress because her friend had lost a black jacket with her car keys in the pocket, and their camping gear was all locked in the car. We asked her if she'd like us to pray about it and she said yes, so we prayed earnestly that God would help these young people to find the keys and not let their festival be spoilt. We also rang our Prayer Base but they didn't answer, so we wandered off among the tents chatting to people. Presently the Prayer Base rang us back, so Tony my Pastor partner explained the problem we wanted them to pray about – and a young man nearby said "A black jacket?" He dived into his tent and came out with the jacket, and looking in the pocket found the car keys...

May I ask for your prayers for all the young people who will be going on camps and festivals this summer, that they may have a good and safe time, and even maybe an encounter with God?

I hope you too will enjoy a relaxing August, whether you're taking off for somewhere exotic or simply enjoying the Suffolk summer right here.

Yours with love,

Liz Varley.

**THE BENEFICE OF BACTON  
WITH WYVERSTONE, COTTON, OLD NEWTON AND WICKHAM SKEITH  
Rector - Rev Dr Liz Varley 781108**

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(Priest with permission to officiate  
in the Diocese)

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Mr Ray Bartrum 781526

**Joint PCC Secretary -**

Mrs Pat Hall and Mr Mike Hall 782004

**PCC Treasurer -** Mr Brian Manley 781595

**Bell Ringer -** Mr Winston Girling 674425

**ST ANDREW'S COTTON**

**Church Warden & PCC Secretary**

Mr Mervyn Walker 780272

**PCC Treasurer -** Mrs Jane deBeer 781594

**PCC Secretary -** VACANCY

**ST GEORGE'S WYVERSTONE**

**Church Warden** Mr James Black 781913

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**Lay Readers -**

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Mrs Sheila Wright 766392

Mrs Helen Matter 01473 298504

**Elders -**

Mr Peter Paine 767897

Mrs Janice Shea 781263

Mrs Jean Willoughby 766621

**Rural Dean of Stowmarket -**

Rev Canon Barbara Bilston 781253

**Methodist Ministers**

Rev Stephen Yelland 612619

Deacon Hilary Smith - 781845

**Catholic Parish of Our Lady Stowmarket**

Fr David Finegan 612946

**CHURCH OF ENGLAND SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE**

**August 2014**

During August we like to share our worship across the benefice. We have one service each Sunday morning, beginning at 10 a.m. and finishing with refreshments and fellowship. Do come and join in!

**Sun. August 3<sup>rd</sup> (SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY)**

10.00 a.m.	Benefice Communion	Old Newton	Rev. Liz Varley
3.00 p.m.	Evensong	Gipping	Rev. Liz Varley
6.30 p.m.	Praise in the Community	Wyverstone	Wyverstone Team

**Sun. August 10<sup>th</sup> (EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY)**

10.00 a.m. Benefice Communion Cotton Rev. Jan Fowler  
Preacher: Sheila Wright

**Sun. August 17<sup>th</sup> (NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY)**

10.00 a.m. Benefice Communion Wickham Skeith Rev. Liz Varley

**Sun. August 24<sup>th</sup> (TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY)**

10.00 a.m. Benefice Communion Wyverstone Rev. Liz Varley  
Preacher: Mrs. Julie Sore

**Sun. August 31<sup>st</sup> (ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY)**

10.00 a.m. Benefice Communion Wyverstone Rev. Carl Melville

**COTTON  
METHODIST  
CHURCH 2014**

**All services at  
10.30a.m. unless  
stated otherwise -  
A warm welcome  
awaits everyone.**

**August**

**3rd -** Rev Vaughan  
Tong,  
with Holy  
Communion

**10th -** Service with  
local arrangement

**17th -** Service led by  
Mr B Clow

**24th -** Service led by  
Rev. Jack Bingham

**31st -** Service led by  
Mr V Humm



**CATHOLIC PARISH OF OUR LADY, STOWMARKET**

**Parish Priest:** Father David Finegan,  
The Presbytery, 29 Lockington Road, Stowmarket IP14 1BQ  
Tel: **01449-612946** E-mail: [ourlady.stowmarket@btinternet.com](mailto:ourlady.stowmarket@btinternet.com)

**MASS TIMES:**

**Saturdays (First Mass of Sunday):**

St Mary's C of E Church, Woolpit IP30 9QG - 6.00 pm

**Sundays:**

Our Lady's, Stricklands Road, Stowmarket IP14 1AW - 8.30 am & 10.15 am

**Holy Days:**

Our Lady's, Stricklands Road, Stowmarket - 8.00am, 10.00am and 7.30 pm

**Weekday services** in the Parish are advertised at the front of Our Lady's Church, in the weekly Newsletter and on the Parish Website

[www.ourladys-stowmarket.co.uk](http://www.ourladys-stowmarket.co.uk)

**CENTENARY OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

To commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, we will be celebrating a Requiem Mass in Our Lady's Church, Stowmarket, at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 5th August. The Mass will be offered for the War Dead and in particular for all those who came from the towns and villages of our parish and we will also be praying for all their descendants and families. **Father David Finegan**

**ST. ANDREWS'S CHURCH COTTON 2014**

**CLEANING ROTA**

**August**

**1st** - Wedding on **2nd** - all cleaners please **8th** - Diane Dickinson & Chris Marston

**22nd** - Wedding on **23rd** - all cleaners please

Church flowers - Joyce Vincent

Please swap with someone else on the rota or let me know if any of these dates are not convenient

**Chris Marston. 781567**

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**01449 710437**

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[www.forgechurch.com](http://www.forgechurch.com)

**Stowmarket Deanery Pilgrimage**

On Saturday August 16<sup>th</sup> the churches round here are celebrating the hundredth birthday of our Diocese with an amazing Walking Pilgrimage.

Group 1 will start off at 11.30 with a short act of worship in Wickham Skeith Church, then walk to Cotton in time for a short act of worship at St. Andrew's at 12.45. In Cotton they will be joined by Group 2, who start from Wyverstone at 11.30, then worship at Bacton at 12 noon before going on to Cotton. After a picnic lunch, they all go on together to Gipping for worship at 2 p.m., where they will be joined by Group 3 from Mendlesham. The three groups go on to Old Newton for worship at 14.45, then meet up with the rest of the Deanery at Stowupland in time for a united Pilgrimage Service at 3.30 p.m.

The other three groups are:

Group 4, meeting at 12 noon at Wetherden, 12.30 at Haughley, 2 p.m. at Stowmarket before going on to Stowupland.

Group 5, meeting at Little Finborough at noon, Combs at 1.45 p.m. and then going on to Stowupland.

Group 6 has four start points, all at noon: Buxhall, Shelland, Great Finborough and Harleston. They meet up at 12.45 at Onehouse before going on to join with Group 4 at Stowmarket and on to Stowupland.

People who don't feel up to walking so far are encouraged to join the worship by car, bicycle, skateboard, on horseback, or simply to go to their local church and wish the pilgrims well.

More details from **Stowmarket Parish Office at 01449-774652.**

## The Christmas Truce

Once the fighting of the First Battle of Ypres died down in November 1914, British units that had been holding the Ypres Salient were relieved by French ones.

The British force in France now consisted of the shattered units of the regular army, most of which had been all but destroyed at Ypres and which were in the process of being rebuilt by receiving new drafts, with the welcome addition of two Divisions making up the Indian Corps and some units of the Territorial Force.

The static and dull nature of trench warfare and the close proximity of the enemy (which meant that they could be heard, and their breakfast cooking smelled, although rarely seen) caused many men to be curious about the men they were facing. They were certainly facing the same conditions of wet and cold, and in a strange way a mutual respect developed.

There were occasional shouted conversations between trenches, and the odd instance of exchange of goods, although to be too adventurous was foolhardy for men were continually lost to sniper fire.



### Build up to the truce

Under strong French pressure to take the initiative, the army was ordered into a series of small piecemeal attacks that proved to be very costly. Cut down by rifle and machine gun fire and unable to enter enemy trenches, the attacking units left many casualties lying in no man's land and on the enemy barbed wire defences.

### 15th December 1914

II Corps HQ [General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien] issued an instruction to commanders of all Divisions: "It is during this period that the

greatest danger to the morale of troops exists. Experience of this and of every other war proves undoubtedly that troops in trenches in close proximity to the enemy slide very easily, if permitted to do so, into a "live and let live" theory of life...officers and men sink into a military lethargy from which it is difficult to arouse them when the moment for great sacrifices again arises...the attitude of our troops can be readily understood and to a certain extent commands sympathy...such an attitude is however most dangerous for it discourages initiative in commanders and destroys the offensive spirit in all ranks...the Corps Commander therefore directs Divisional Commanders to impress on subordinate commanders the absolute necessity of encouraging offensive spirit...friendly intercourse with the enemy, unofficial armistices, however tempting and amusing they may be, are absolutely prohibited"

### *The early weeks of December 1914*

Tremendous volumes of mail and gifts for the troops were sent from homes in the United Kingdom and Germany. King George V sent a Christmas card to every soldier, sailor and nurse; the Princess Mary fund despatched a gift box to every serving soldier.

### *20th December 1914*

Local truce on the front of 22nd Brigade; Germans begin by taking in British wounded from no man's land. There is some contact: according to Lt G. Heinekey of 2nd Queen's, it lasted all morning. Lt Henry Bower, 1st South Staffordshire and at least one soldier of the 2nd Queen's were killed by rifle fire from neighbouring units while assisting with the wounded. A similar activity took place on the front of 20th Brigade.

### *23rd December 1914*

A German soldier, Karl Aldag, reports that both sides had been heard singing hymns in the trenches. German troops coming into the lines bring Christmas trees. Some men begin to place them on the parapets of the fire trenches. Local truce on the front of 23rd Brigade.

**24th December 1914 Christmas Eve**

The weather changes to a hard frost. This makes trench conditions a little more bearable. 98 British soldiers die on this day, many are victims of sniper fire. A German aeroplane drops a bomb on Dover: the first air raid in British history. During the afternoon and early evening, British infantry are astonished to see many Christmas trees with candles and paper lanterns, on enemy parapets. There is much singing of carols, hymns and popular songs, and a gradual exchange of communication and even meetings in some areas. Many of these meetings are to arrange collection of bodies. In other places, firing continues. Battalion officers are uncertain how to react; in general they maintain precautions. The night brings a clear, still air with a hard frost.

**25th December 1914 Christmas Day**

Units behind the lines attend church services and have in most cases arranged Christmas dinners which are taken in barns and shattered buildings. In the front lines, the fraternisation of Christmas Eve is continued throughout the day; not all units know about it, and it is not universal but is widespread over at least half of the British front. Many bodies that have been lying out in no man's land are buried, some in joint burials. Many men record the strange and wonderful events;

many men exchange tokens or addresses with German soldiers, many of whom speak English. 81 British soldiers die on this day; a few die in areas that are otherwise peaceful and with fraternisation going on, victims of alert snipers. In other areas, there is considerable activity: 2nd Grenadier Guards suffer losses in a day of heavy fighting. As night fell, things grew quiet as men fell back to their trenches to take whatever Christmas meal that had been provided for them.

**26th December 1914 Boxing Day**

Some snow. In some areas, the friendly spirit was resumed. Gradually however, officers and men on both sides began to resume normal trench caution. The atmosphere in general remained relaxed as Brigade and Battalion officers took a pragmatic view of events. The chance was taken to carry out work that would otherwise have been hazardous. By now, however, news of the truce was reaching higher commands. General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien requested particulars of those units and officers who took part, with a view to disciplinary action. In the event, no action was taken against any unit or officer. 62 British soldiers die on this day.

<http://www.1914-1918.net>



St Mary's Church Bacton

## Candlelight Vigil

Monday August 4th 2014 10 – 11 pm

to remember August 4th 1914  
the night when the lights went out all over Europe

Led by Revd Canon Barbara Bilston

*Come to remember for a few minutes, or stay for the whole time,  
as you wish*

## LETTER HOME FROM SEAMAN JOHN PEET, SENT 1918

John Preston Peet, born 1860, was maternal grandfather of Ron Wright of Wickham Skeith. John was skipper of a herring drifter working from the Mersey. He, his boat and his crew, were 'commandeered' and sent to the Mediterranean on War Service.

*(Get the big atlas out and and follow my wanderings)*  
Chanek Kaleh, Dardanelles 29/11/18

My dear Mur,

Just a brief summary of places visited since last I saw you. Well, we left Falmouth on 16<sup>th</sup> February together with 15 other drifters. Quite a respectable fleet of us and all good little ships. Blowing a strong wind ahead and plenty of sea, we reached Ushant on the morning of 17<sup>th</sup> and at once took on the Bay of Biscay. There was an enormous westerly sea rolling in from the Atlantic, but the wind fortunately was moderating. We looked very small specks on the great rollers, and it was only when riding the seas that we got a glimpse of each other for when in the hollows not even the masts of our nearest neighbour could be seen. However we ploughed merrily on through, and on the second day the wind moderated nicely.

Tuesday we sighted Cape Finisterre, which as its name implies, our forefathers considered to be the most western point of Europe – 'The End of the Land'.

We passed south along the Spanish shore; past Corunna, famous as a scene of battle, and the burial of the great general who conducted the famous retreat and fought the battle 'General Moore'. Then along the Portuguese shores past Oporto and the mouth of the river Douro, on to Cape Roca, which is the most western point of Europe; and then as we were beginning to want coals etc. we went up the beautiful river Tago to Lisbon, our first port of call, where we arrived on February 20<sup>th</sup>. It was a lovely day, the sun shining gloriously and quite warm, in fact as warm as a May day at home, and the great Portuguese capital with its white buildings looked splendid.

We had a fine view of Cintra up high on the hills and crowned by what was the Royal Palace. I had a few hours ashore there and sent you a wire announcing

our safe arrival so far; but unfortunately 2 men of the Division lost their lives there, and it rather cast a gloom on what otherwise had so far been a pleasant voyage.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> we left Lisbon for Gibraltar, past Cape St. Vincent and Cadiz, where in good Queen Bess's days Drake singed the king of Spain's beard; and on past Cape Trafalgar and the Bay of that name where Nelson fought his last fight; through the 'Pillars of Hercules' on to Gibraltar, where we arrived on 24<sup>th</sup>.

I wrote you from there and on the 26<sup>th</sup> all hands were inoculated for the first dose. The rock of Gibraltar looks well from the Straits and is finely situated and has good Quays and Harbours, but of course it is all Service – Army of Navy. There is one good street runs right through the town, and there did not seem to be any scarcity of anything; you could buy fine oranges for 3d a dozen, and we did too.

On 28<sup>th</sup> we left Gibraltar to continue our journey and on the evening of 2<sup>nd</sup> March we passed in sight of Algiers which is also famous in our Naval Annals, and which at no distant date was famous for its piratical population. They seem to have lost this propensity however, and the Germans have acquired it, only more so.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> we had a look into Bona Bay but did not stay here for coal, but decided to get on with our job, and on 5<sup>th</sup> arrived in Bizerta in Tunis which we decided to honour with our presence and patronage. Of course Tunis is French, and there were plenty of Frenchmen about, but the natives were the more interesting to me. On the 6<sup>th</sup> we went further up the lake to Ferryville where we coaled etc.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> we were off the island of Sicily, along the north side of which our route lay, past Palermo and Patti. Then on between Scylla and Charibdis through the beautiful Straits of Messina, the scene of the terrible earthquake some years ago; but bless you, the town might have been standing there undisturbed for years!

.....Cont page 33

So on, round the toe of Italy into the Gulf of Taranto and to the town of Taranto. This was our base port, with magnificent harbours capable of sheltering a great number of vessels; in fact to say 'large enough to hold the British Fleet' only conveys a poor idea of the sheltered harbours of Taranto. We were a week or two in the dockyard undergoing refit and being got ready for our work of Submarine Straafing in the Adriatic and elsewhere. Then when ready we went to Gallipoli, a town some short distance from Cape Marie di Leucca, which cape when passed introduces you to the Adriatic. Our work while at sea was principally between this Cape and Otranto, right across the Adriatic to Corfu and the Albanian shore.

I have stood on the steps of the Kaiser's Palace at Corfu – of course without his personal invitation, nor do I think he presented it very cheerfully to the Allies as a hospital, which however they turned it into (How dare they!)

We had many good times on the merry hunt for the Subs and as we were fitted with all the latest and up-to-date appliances, the poor devils in them had some sorry times.

We only returned to Taranto once every six weeks, so the islands and bays in the Adriatic saw us a good deal. They were very interesting, and fruit abounded in them all, both good and cheap. The heat throughout the summer months was something to remember! From 6<sup>th</sup> March until 5<sup>th</sup> October I did not see a drop of rain – only once during a very violent thunderstorm. However the dews at night were very heavy and were the cause of much sickness, as malaria etc.

We visited many places in the Adriatic including Marie de Leucca, Port Castro, Otranto, Brindisi and Port Palermo, and all along the island of Corfu. We swept a convoy from Valona to Durrazzo just when the Austrians evacuated the latter place and the Italians moved in. We rather expected seeing things hum on this occasion for when we started we were not aware that

a change of ownership had taken place. However perhaps it was better as it was!

Well, at last on 23<sup>rd</sup> October we got orders at Taranto to store up and sail for Mudros, our base on the island of Lemnos. So now I am bound for Biblical lands and places that St. Paul saw. Soon we were entering the Gulf of Ithaca, and on 29<sup>th</sup> passed close by Patras, the second city of Greece; then Lepanto, and over the ruins of cities now buried deep under the waters of the Gulf of Corinth. We passed Parnassus, and the site of the ancient temple of Delphi; and that night I stood and walked for a couple of hours in old Corinth. On the morning of 30<sup>th</sup> we sailed again and went through the Corinth Canal, and on to Piraeus, the port for glorious Athens.

We had a splendid view of the Acropolis as we approached, and the famous hill bearing the name of the historic building. We had an hour or two in the city, but had not time to see much as we had to coal and water and sail in the early morning.

On 31<sup>st</sup> we sailed past the islands of Thermia, Zia, Andro, Skyro and Strati, to Lemnos where we arrived at 2.30pm. This is the British Naval Base, and has been all along for operations against the Dardanelles, and the Turks and Bulgars.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November I went ashore for a stroll and visited the Church on the site of where Paul preached to the inhabitants of Lemnos. On 5<sup>th</sup> we proceeded to the island of Imbros for orders; we did not know as yet what stunt we were going on. On our way to Imbros we got a fine view of Mount Athos, the finest mountain in Greece, and we passed the bay in which the Monitor 'Kaplan' was sunk by the 'Goeben' in one of her raids. All that can be seen of the 'Kaplan' is her tripod masts and her fighting top above the water, looking for all the world like a lighthouse standing in the Bay. We could look across to the Turkish shore and plainly see Surla Bay, the graveyard of Anzac, and the scene of their heroic deeds – 'What memories!'

.....Cont page 35

### Mobile Library -

#### Cotton -

Church.....  
11.50-12.10  
Methodist Church.....  
12.15-12.30

#### Bacton -

Pound Hill.....1.40 -  
2.30  
The Bull.....2.35 -  
2.50

#### Wyverstone -

Church.....2.55 -  
3.15

#### Dates in 2014 -

27<sup>th</sup> August,  
24<sup>th</sup> September,  
22<sup>nd</sup> October,  
19<sup>th</sup> November  
17<sup>th</sup> December.

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For a volunteering pack or for more information please contact Home-Start Mid Suffolk, email [maria@homestartmidsuffolk.org.uk](mailto:maria@homestartmidsuffolk.org.uk) or [www.home-startmidsuffolk.org.uk](http://www.home-startmidsuffolk.org.uk)

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We arrived at Kaphalo where Sir Ian Hamilton had his headquarters on Imbros, and where he could look across to the Turkish shore; he was also in range of their great guns. On 6<sup>th</sup> we knew our work – ‘Proceed without delay across to the Dardanelles and start sweeping and mine-sinking from Cape Helles, which is the entrance, to the narrows’.

We started right away and were one of the first vessels up the Dardanelles following the first pair of light draught sweepers, to sink mines that they swept up – and they kept us busy! The place was simply paved with them from side to side, all the way up from Cape Helles to the narrows. We never had one minute till dark that there were not mines in sight, it was a miracle that no ship was blown up during the first 2 days. After that the mines got thinner.

Well, we got up to Kilid Bahr and Chanek, the two towns and forts that commence the narrows, and for 4 days we were at this work. Then on 10<sup>th</sup> we went across to Kaphalo and brought Troops of the R.M.A. and R.M.L.I. across to Khilid Bahr, and on 12<sup>th</sup> we were again carrying Troops and stores to Chanak and Khilid Bahr. On the afternoon of this day the Allies’ Fleets passed up the Dardanelles, with all the Troops ashore and all the men afloat standing to attention.

You would get the news of it in the papers by the morning of 13<sup>th</sup> and doubtless there would be much cheering done for the Fleets; but I wonder, did anyone whisper that some of His Majesty’s Drifters, Trawlers etc. had been sweeping and sinking, and landing Troops to take charge of the Forts, making a clear channel so that they might pass safely through, for 6 or 7 days before the warships came up? I don’t suppose they did! Anyhow, the Poldhu never mentioned it. But we had the satisfaction of knowing that they got through without mishap, though a Trawling Sweeper was blown up the day after with nearly all her crew, and a yacht later. These are all the accidents so far.

We were transporting food for the Troops till 25<sup>th</sup> when we got orders to proceed to Dedeagach in

Bulgaria to bring a party of Transport Officers to Chanak. We got back with them on 27<sup>th</sup>, and on 28<sup>th</sup> coaled and watered, and now as I write this we are anchored at Chanak, loaded with foodstuffs for the Troops at Gallipoli, where we start at dawn, so I will not get this letter away till we get back again

Well, now you have a rough idea of where we have been. Of course there are many places I have not mentioned, such as Patmos, Mitylini, Khio, Syra, Cos, and other islands of the Grecian Archipelago, of which anon.

Needless to say, I have picked up some interesting souvenirs, all got on the job by myself, so there is no doubt about them – not bought, but genuine spoils of war. I was on the famous ‘River Clyde’ at Cape Helles, and the French warship ‘Massena’ which lies sunk near her. I believe they are going to try and float the ‘River Clyde’ off again. I have a piece of her steel plate that was driven clean out by shell fire. I have a few Turkish hand lanterns and globe lanterns from deserted homes, shell cases from the Forts, a Turkish bugle, a bayonet, German and Bulgar buttons, invitation cards to a ball in 1895 issued by Emil Pasha, Governor of the Dardanelles at that time, printed in French and Turkish; Turkish instruction books for Artillery and Infantry Drill, and a host of things of one sort or another. Unless I come home in the ship I shall never be able to get them home which would be a pity, for they are all of great interest.

Well my dear, I will conclude this time, with love to all from Dad.

Address – H.M.D.  
‘Girl Kathleen’ c/o H.M.S. ‘Europa’,  
c/o G.P.O. London.

This letter and the article on page 18 are from Sheila Wright and are taken from her books on local / family history - **Drinkstone School, Drinkstone Revisited, Coming Through and One Family's War**. Each can be purchased at £8 a copy and Sheila can deliver locally. **Tel. 01449 766392**

## Chernobyl Children’s Lifeline:



Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July and the children are due to arrive on 6<sup>th</sup> July and yet we still have no sign of their visas despite having applied for them 6 weeks in advance. Finally, at 4.30 we hear the Visas have arrived in Minsk and so the visit is now definitely on. No, this was not the fault of the Belarusian Government but of our own Government! In the interest of “Uniformity” all Visas will now be issued from Moscow. So, the children travel to Minsk to submit the paperwork which is dealt with by a Private Company and sent to Moscow. The new systems which have been installed at great expense either do not work properly or just cannot cope. The excess applications are being sent to....Sheffield!! and then sent on the return journey. Passports are being lost, mislaid or just delayed for ridiculous lengths of time. All these changes are of course being made to (supposedly) save money. This is only a brief overview, there are more problems that I cannot go into here.

On a more positive note.....I thought you might like to see this excerpt from a letter recently received from the Psychologist at the Childrens Cancer Hospital in Minsk.

We’ve got good news; the boy Kiril he is cured of his relapse and he went home. He’s got a very bad and difficult illness. The Doctors are afraid that he will have another relapse but we hope that everything will be ok. This family have a very difficult life story, his mum was brought up in an orphanage and when Kiril was getting his treatment for the first time she was very shy and she was even too shy to ask the doctor to make sure she understood the information about her child’s health.

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Now, as you have seen when you were here, she socializes well ,even with not very familiar people, she is grateful for kindness that people show to her son and to her and now even as a keepsake to remember all the good people who helped them during the treatment she can even ask to have a photograph taken with them to keep as a memory.

She has developed very much since the beginning.

Slava , 9 years old, you have seen him before, he came back to the hospital because of a relapse, after the operation he was frightened to sit up and was very much into himself, so I gave him the engraving art that you brought as a reward from the operation , I told him that when he would be able to sit he could scratch for himself a beautiful picture . He was laying very sad with a withdrawn attitude and his eyes sparkled with interest. When I came to see him after two hours he was sitting up and with interest he was being very artistic and while he was doing it he didn't say anything was bothering him, he was smiling all the time. It is very important that you can switch a child from pain and fear and switch him into the artistic mode, thank you.

And one more case, a girl Lera, she was very sad about the fact that she will lose her hair but when I offered her to choose a beautiful head scarf from those that you bought she has chosen one and she has stopped crying and then next day without tears she gave permission to shave

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her head and still it is very important for children to have choice even if limited, if you do not have the choice to cut the hair or not then let it be the choice of choosing a headscarf which she can wear after the haircut so you will know in advance what the look will be like after the haircut and in this way gain some kind of freedom. By the way this girl is getting treatment and she is doing well. And of course soft toys, the ones left after your visit, we make children happy at their

birthdays and after very hurtful surgeries, big thanks to you and all of your friends very much for your work and your important help for our children

With love Elena

## World War One: The many battles faced by WWI's nurses



Nurses and volunteers on both sides faced constant danger

**Nursing in World War One was exhausting, often dangerous work and the women who volunteered experienced the horror of war firsthand, some paying the ultimate price. But their story is surrounded by myth and their full contribution often goes unrecognised, writes Shirley Williams.**

In his much-admired book published in 1975, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, the American literary critic and historian, Paul Fussell, wrote about the pervasive myths and legends of WW1, so powerful they became indistinguishable from fact in many minds. Surprisingly, Fussell hardly mentioned nurses. There is no reference to Edith Cavell, let alone Florence Nightingale.

Yet the myth of the gentle young nurse, often a voluntary and untrained VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment), in her starched and spotless white uniform, was universally admired. It echoed centuries of stories from King Arthur and the Round Table to Shakespeare's *Henry V*, where rough but brave warriors encountered graceful young women who cared for them.

*Epitaph On My Days in Hospital: I found in you a holy place apart, Sublime endurance, God in man revealed, Where mending broken bodies slowly healed, My broken heart*

Her personal experience combined with her talent for writing made compelling prose. Because of a few other women writers who had been wartime nurses as well as herself, the legend of the VAD came to dominate nursing history. But despite their accounts, often what was written was neither wholly accurate nor wholly fair. Acceptance of nurses as equal contributors with doctors on the front line is still to fully arrive.

Young men and women in 1914, like their parents, expected the war to be short. Music hall songs were patriotic and optimistic. Women were expected to wait at home patiently or, if they were from working-class homes, to join munitions factories. "Keep the home fires burning," they were abjured. "Though your boys are far away, they will soon come home." Had they been injured, however, there would have been very few nurses to look after them.

The main trained corps of military nurses was the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS). It was founded in 1902 at the time of the Boer war and in 1914 was less than 300 strong. At the end of the war four years later it numbered over 10,000 nurses. In addition several other organisations formed earlier in the century had the nursing of members of the armed services as their main purpose - for instance, the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry launched in 1907.

Vera Brittain wanted to honour those lost in WW1. Apart from them there were thousands of untrained women working as midwives or nurses in civilian life, but they had little or no experience of working with soldier patients and their status in society was little better than that of domestic servants. Because the British Army was so resolutely opposed to all female military nurses except the QAIMNS, early volunteers from Britain were obliged to serve instead with the French and Belgian forces. Many of these early volunteers were from aristocratic families and their servants. Powerful women who ran large families and large estates were well versed in management and saw no great

problems in managing a military hospital instead. Their confidence in their own abilities was impressive.

The most famous of these women was the Duchess of Sutherland, nicknamed Meddlesome Millie. Soon after war was declared she and other grand ladies like her took doctors and nurses to France and Belgium, organising their own transport and equipment to set up hospitals and casualty clearing stations.

Whatever bureaucratic obstacles were put in their way, the huge and bloody tide of casualties by the spring of 1915 simply swept them away. Even the British Army's top brass yielded to the combined pressures of need and confident commitment.



Britain's all-female run WW1 military hospital

At this stage of the war women began to be invited to serve in a range of capacities, of which nursing was one. Thousands of young women from middle-class homes with little experience of domestic work, not much relevant education and total ignorance of male bodies, volunteered and found themselves pitched into military hospitals.

They were not, in most cases, warmly welcomed. Professional nurses, battling for some kind of recognition and for proper



Vera Brittain wanted to honour those lost in WW1

training, feared this large invasion of unqualified volunteers would undermine their efforts. Poorly paid VADs were used mainly as domestic labour, cleaning floors, changing bed linen, swilling out bedpans, but were rarely allowed until later in the war to change dressings or administer drugs.

The image and the conspicuous Red Cross uniforms were romantic but the work itself exhausting, unending and sometimes disgusting. Relations between professional nurses and the volunteer assistants were constrained by rigid and unbending discipline. Contracts for VADs could be withdrawn even for slight breaches of the rules.

The climate of hospital life was harsh but many VADs, including my mother, also had to cope with strained relations with their parents and other older relatives. The home front in WW1 was very remote from the fronts where the battles were fought.

## The Role of women in WWI



This was a time for women to prove they were more than just handmaidens, madonnas, and patriotic mothers. During World War One, the range of roles open to women was immense: they manned factories, invested in war bonds, harvested crops, and cared for troops on leave.

They also enlisted in the armed forces.

In World War One, approximately 80,000 women served in the three British women's forces as non-combatants. However, British women lobbied to be allowed to have rifle training and bear arms for home defence. In this area, they had little success within the established (male) home defence forces.

Early in World War Two, the Local Defence Volunteers or LDV (the predecessors of the Home Guard) employed women's talents in training men to shoot while refusing to admit female members. Nevertheless, numerous women's organisations sprang up to meet the need for a combat-ready Home Front.

The Women's Defence Relief Corps was set up with the powerful backing of Lord Kitchener and Lord Roberts

(president of the Women's Rifle Associations). This corps consisted of two divisions: the Civil Section which aimed to substitute women for men in employment in order to free men for military service, and the 'Semi-Military or good-citizen section' in which women actively recruited for the armed forces, underwent training in drill, marching, signalling and scouting, and were instructed in the use of arms. Each member of the latter section was exhorted to defend not only herself, but also 'those dear to her'. Of course, for many more women, their duty was perceived as persuading men that dishonour was worse than death, and then buckling on men's psychological (if not military) armour. As the writer Virginia Woolf put it in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), women served as magnifying mirrors 'reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size. Without that power... the glories of all our wars would be unknown.' Such mirrors, she continued, 'are essential to all violent and heroic action'.

Although women were near the front lines, working as nurses, they were rarely engaged in fighting themselves. This is not surprising - in modern times, the large-scale arming of women has only taken place during revolutions and invasions. Britain was not invaded. Thus, women were not systematically taught to defend themselves or their country. Despite their relative absence from the killing fields, however, modern technology was diminishing the distance between the shell-holes and suburbia at an accelerated rate. Britain was bombed during World War One, causing 1,414 deaths. Although 60 times more civilians were killed during the bombing raids of World War Two, at the time it was an immense trauma for women, particularly in London and the South East. Even more traumatic was the painful process of readjusting to the return of loved ones from the battlefields. Hundred of thousands of men returned from the war injured in some way. Women bore a large part of the burden of caring for these men. Even worse, women lost their fathers, husbands, lovers, brothers, and sons. For these women, life would never be the same.

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## Women at war

We always think of the boys who went off to war, who joined up in their hundreds of thousands, but what of their sisters? Most of the working class girls, the unmarried ones of course, drifted into the munitions industry. Munitions wasn't just making bombs and shells of course: it included all manner of light and heavy industry. The newly emerging aircraft construction companies, such as Avro, Sopwith and Vickers, were too pleased to employ experienced seamstresses from the clothing world.

As a transferable skill, the ability to sew a seam was equally useful in dressmaking or making the fabric covering for the wings of an aeroplane.

The pay in munitions was good, and if the working conditions were far from ideal, it was a good job and it helped the war effort, even if you did get called a canary. A more attractive option, particularly for girls from the growing middle class, was that of nursing. Nearly all were unpaid volunteers known as VADs, named after the Voluntary Aid Detachments to which they belonged. Living under the protection of autocratic and demanding dictators, alias Matron or Sister, these girls provided the thousands of wounded young men with the care and attention that they needed. Probably most had never been exposed to such horrors, but they coped with the stresses remarkably well.

They worked in hospitals in France, they staffed those country house hospitals in England and they looked after the wounded as they were evacuated by train, by ambulance or by hospital ship. The ambulances may well have been driven by girls too. More fortunate girls whose fathers could afford those still-new-fangled cars had learned to drive, a skill much in demand. They too worked mostly as volunteers, driving in conditions well beyond the expectation of their upbringing. Such organisations as the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, still in existence today, sprang up to provide the framework for their skills ambition and work. Finally, we have to remember those who stayed at home, particularly the married women, who looked after their families, cooked, cleaned and for the first time, managed their own finances and provided the stability on which families survived. They worked and they sewed, they baked and they knitted. They licked their pencils and wrote to their men at the front, daily or even more often. They sent cakes and clothes, tobacco and treats to their loved ones. They provided the love that sustained the men in the trenches, their men at the front. The Great War is called the first Total War, the first war to envelope and involve entire populations. And it did.

Dick Middleton

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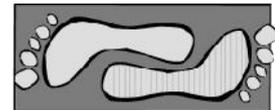
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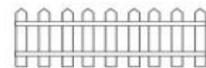
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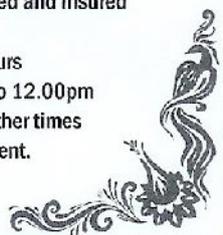
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