

## FRAMPTON REMEMBERS WW1: PROJECT EVALUATION

### 1. Initiation

The project 'Frampton Remembers WW1' came from an initiative by Frampton on Severn Parish Council, who suggested marking the centenary with a permanent reminder of the sacrifices made by Frampton people in 1914-18, and showing how life in the village was changed for ever; the effects of the 'Great War' are still evident today, although not often recognised as such.



After a Task Group had established that there was a good initial level of public response and interest, the Parish Council asked certain experienced individuals to recruit suitable volunteers and set up a project team. This was formed as a 'Not For Profit' organisation, Frampton Remembers World War 1, with a separate constitution and bank account, governed by a volunteer committee and, after the award of an HLF grant, co-ordinated by a part-time Project Officer.

### 2. Project Objectives

The key objectives for this community-led project were established as the development of a permanent educational resource, including documents, photographs, maps, films, recorded interviews, and artefacts. Built into a professionally designed website, this was intended to allow full access at all times, as well as guaranteeing the security of the material for posterity. The material was also to be used for the publication of a book to extend the reach of the project.

The material could only be produced from research into Frampton people, events and village life; this was undertaken by volunteers, the work being planned and co-ordinated by a professional Project Officer to ensure high quality - and timely - outcomes. Research was undertaken into the records at Gloucestershire Archives, Cadbury's archives at Bournville (formerly a major employer in the village), and into the social and Service personnel records reproduced online; in addition, local research with individual families uncovered invaluable papers, photographs, memorabilia and artefacts.

### 3. The Heritage

The project focussed on eight different aspects of heritage which, for the purposes of this evaluation can be brought together under four themed headings:

5391

MILITARY HISTORY SHEET.

1. Service at Home and Abroad (including former service) (to be filled in, when allowed to reckon to)

COUNTRY	FROM	TO	YEARS	DAYS
Home British	4. 2. 15	16. 11. 15		286
France	17. 11. 15	1. 8. 16		232
France	2. 8. 16	31. 12. 17		152
France	1. 1. 17	19. 11. 17		233
France	20. 8. 17	20. 8. 18		269
France	16. 8. 18	30. 5. 19		18
France	31. 5. 19	30. 4. 19		

**The heritage of the servicemen and women** from our village has revealed their experiences during the war, and how it affected their lives, through the medium of several sources. Surviving Service records (example to left) often include a surprising - even intimate - level of detail in respect of injuries and illness, training undertaken, awards for gallantry or professional

competence, disciplinary actions, promotions and operational locations. These were supplemented by letters and postcards sent home (see right), photographs brought home (such as that below, from Mesopotamia) diaries kept, and anecdotes related to their children or grandchildren. We were able to follow some men as they were moved to Gallipoli, the Balkans, or Mesopotamia - and



even the tale of a Christmas cake which was correctly delivered

after travelling through three different theatres of war! There were also sailors of both the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine, for whom the British shore was their front line, and men who did not serve overseas - either through age, debility or special skills they 'did their bit' in Britain - or in Ireland. It was satisfying to note a number of cases where a new soldier was given a role in which he could use the skills of his civilian trade - as a baker, a boatman, or in work with horses; while one tailor put his sewing skills to the repair of the fragile, canvas-skinned aircraft of the Royal Flying Corps.

Two of our soldiers became prisoners of war; in these cases German and Red Cross records provided much interesting information, usefully supplementing the British Army records, of which over 60% were destroyed in a Second World War air raid. We also discovered that three local merchant seamen were serving on a ship in port at Hamburg as war was declared, and were interned (at an old Berlin racecourse) for the duration of the war. Wherever possible, we followed the stories of the servicemen after their return, including their work, their families, their eventual fate, and noting any living descendants.

**The heritage of the families** relates to how they coped with the war. Most felt the desolation of separation from husbands, sons, fathers and/or older brothers; while sailors, and soldiers serving in France, could be given home leave, those in more distant theatres could not. Some, of course, suffered the tragedy of the death of their loved ones, and not always away at war - in some cases, the serviceman had come home, only to die later from the effects of their wounds or disease (like Samuel Pitman, whose photo is on the right), or from the influenza pandemic of 1918-9. Other problems for village life stemmed from the commandeering of the best horses and best quality hay from our farmers (one Frampton soldier serving in France received a consignment of hay which came from a Frampton farm), while food shortages and rationing hit every family - leading many to grow vegetables to help with the war effort, as in this image of the village school's allotment. Nevertheless, families showed their charitable nature



by befriending Belgian refugees whose plight was even worse.

**The heritage of our village** incorporates a range of themes:



The pattern of work changed dramatically with the building of munitions plants at Quedgeley (illustrated left) and at Slimbridge (which claimed the life of one Frampton man engaged in its construction); the replacement of men at war with women, the new gravel workings to support war construction projects, and the establishment of Cadbury's factory - which was primarily used for condensed milk and cheese production in wartime to



maximise the food value available. A milk delivery to the new Cadbury's factory is illustrated at right.

Even the schoolchildren were involved; not only did they raise money to send Christmas presents to soldiers and sailors, but in daily life they grew vegetables in the school garden, picked seasonal fruit such as blackberries, and sometimes had to miss school in order to help at home - or in the fields - when their mothers were working. The children also lost their pupil teacher to the war, when he volunteered for the Army and was later killed in action.



German prisoners of war came to dig gravel, working alongside village men and British soldiers as in this photograph; they were so well accepted that our villagers were sad when four of them died from influenza, and were very disappointed when their bodies were later moved from the churchyard to a war cemetery.

Finally, the death of the lord of Frampton manor in action triggered death duties, causing the sale after the war of several of the Estate's farms and properties; this resulted in the independence of several farms which remain today, as well as that of the Bell Inn and a number of homes.

**The spoken and written heritage** has played a key role not only in bringing the project together, but also in ensuring its longevity for future generations. Firstly the passing on of oral tradition has been achieved through personal interviews with descendants of people who either lived through the war years in our village or served their country. The stories of these people, and indeed of the war itself, have been relayed to the pupils of Lakefield Primary School when they visited our exhibition, and also through talks given by some of our project volunteers.

Without the written heritage carefully preserved either within private family records or publicly available at various repositories, and the countless records microfilmed for research websites, it would have been impossible to ascertain what happened during the Great War. This project has added to that knowledge base by bringing together such records so that a more complete story could be told.

#### 4. Outcomes

Our project has achieved all the objectives that we set, with notable success. These are described below under separate headings relating to People, Community and Heritage, and are followed by further details of our events, exhibitions, website and book.

##### Outcomes for People

Many Frampton people have been inspired to learn more about their heritage; some by volunteering, and many more from our exhibitions, website and book. The project has been conspicuously responsible for raising awareness of what the First World War meant to our ancestors of the time.



As few descendants were able to provide photographs or much information about their WW1-era ancestors, our research engendered much interest - and not a little surprise - when we revealed their stories, especially in relating their ancestors' activities to the wider aspects of the war. A number of people have expressed the intention of building upon the research already undertaken to expand their knowledge of their own families and better inform their younger generations; in several cases, our experienced volunteers have advised and assisted with their first steps. In particular we were able to 're-unite' one visitor with his deceased father, of whom we had produced a life-size cut-out image (photographed on left in front of the plaque which commemorates almost all of the Frampton men who served in WW1), and also to 'introduce' him to his grand-daughter (at right).



Most of our volunteers learned new skills, or improved on existing skills - particularly in the field of genealogical research, but also in website updating, interviewing techniques, and information technology (including the organisation and storage of data).

##### Outcomes for the Community

Our project won strong support - financial, practical assistance, or both - from a number of village organisations, notably the Parish Council, Community Association, Village Society, Women's Institute and the Scouts (some of whom had visited Ypres the previous year). Frampton Youth Football Club also staged a youth match, for which we displayed prints depicting the Frampton and Cadbury's teams of the period from 1912 to the mid-1920s; these images included many of the men who served in the Great War.



A major success was scored with an exhibition day dedicated to the pupils of Lakefield Primary School: following a presentation to the whole school, each class visited in turn, to be welcomed by volunteers in uniform, told a story of one man's experiences during enlistment (see left) and deployment to the Front - being formed up and marched round the hall by a retired officer to add spice to their experience! Following hands-on demonstration of a trench and artillery shell cases, children

were shown the information displays and encouraged to try out contemporary clothing and military equipment, including a telescope, helmet (pictured on right), bugle, whistle and gas hood. The level of interest and engagement shown by the children was most encouraging, and was confirmed by feedback from the Headmaster. The teachers also requested a copy of the presentation which they wished to use in future classes.



During the project, we successfully staged a display stand and WW1-themed arena events at the Frampton Country Fair in both 2015 and 2016. At the former we were honoured by a Royal visit; full details and photographs are provided in the 'Events' section below.

Links to the Cadbury's heritage in the village were recognised in the keen support of Frampton Community Association (who manage Cadbury Hall, which is still supported by the company's successors) and in the village football and cricket clubs.

Finally, the exploration of historical documents, photographs and artefacts of the Clifford family has inspired the creation of a small museum located in the basement of Frampton Court, a Palladian house of considerable interest; the museum is open by arrangement. Although not dedicated to the First World War, it holds the exhibition boards and other material produced during the project and therefore constitutes another facet of our permanent memorial.

### Outcomes for Heritage

Frampton's WW1 heritage will be much better preserved by our identification of a wide range of archival material which has not been readily available - either being kept privately, or requiring extensive and informed searches of publicly accessible records. Our project has highlighted to private owners the value of historic interest in their documents and images, and by taking digital copies has greatly reduced the risk of total loss. New archival material from the project is being deposited in Gloucestershire Archives.

The 'Frampton Remembers WW1' project has explained in considerable detail the key factors that changed for ever life in British cities, towns and villages, resulting in a much better understanding of Frampton's real WW1 heritage and legacy and that of the villages of the Berkeley Vale. Those living within the immediate vicinity of Frampton jointly experienced many of the war-time activities as villages pooled their resources and acted together.

Whilst our work has been focussed on Frampton, the process of placing village events and casualties into the wider context of national events of the time has substantially clarified for many of our visitors and readers the heritage and history of the Great War. Furthermore, having learned from our project, four gentlemen from our village recently completed a cycling tour of many of the WW1 memorials and made a point of visiting those with a Frampton connection.

### Events

Following a pre-project **Memories Day** to test the level of interest in the First World War, we held another in the autumn of 2015, for which we encouraged all families with Frampton connections to come to view the village scrapbooks, a wonderful treasure of photographs, postcards and documents from the early twentieth century onwards revealing the history of our village. Visitors were invited also to bring along any further material - medals, photographs, documents or artefacts - relating to those who served in the First World War or to the village at that time. This allowed project volunteers to scan or photograph the material, and to record anecdotes that had been passed down through the families. These events proved extremely useful, and in following up the leads obtained we found family diaries, postcards from the servicemen and even a book recounting the history of a very interesting working-class village family: all of this information gave us invaluable assistance in our research. One important outcome was that, while relatively few families were able to offer photographs; many men appeared in group photographs - football and cricket teams, scouts and other organisations - which enabled us to produce portraits to accompany their stories.



Research was well under way when the opportunity came to raise awareness of the project at the **2015 Frampton Country Fair**, a major event comprising many exhibitions, displays and trade stands which regularly attracts around 14,000 people. Interest in our stand was enhanced by the kind loan of a water-cooled Vickers machine gun. In addition to many local visitors, we were honoured to have a visit from the Earl of Wessex (photo on left), who showed a keen interest in our aims, and in the progress we had made. We had also arranged a main-ring display involving the release of homing pigeons from a WW1-era Army wagon (seen at right), a period theme supported by the



costumes adopted by representatives of the Royal Logistics Corps taking part in a tent-pegging competition.



Our **Commemoration Weekend** was held as the research phase was drawing to a close. We were keen to present the results of our work to the widest possible audience in Frampton and the neighbouring villages. We therefore mounted an exhibition first in Cadbury Hall (see the photo at left), located at the north end of the village and next to Lakefield Primary School - a venue which also has historical links to the former major employer. In addition to boards



professionally produced with examples of our research, the exhibition included reproduction items of military equipment (for 'hands-on' experience), displays of medals and genuine artefacts, a 'trench' built by the local Scouts (pictured right), and a portrait of each serviceman for whom we had found an image, flanked by a display of poppies knitted by the ladies of Frampton Women's Institute. It has become clear that personal images of the men and women involved, together with their detailed stories, have not only had a considerable impact on family members, but on all our visitors - and on the readers of our book.



After a further day for public viewing at Cadbury Hall, the entire exhibition was transferred to the Village Hall (illustrated to left), more convenient for the south of the village and close to the annual 'Elver-Eating' event (nowadays with artificial 'elvers') being staged on the village green. This proved to be most successful, with considerable numbers attending - some from out of our area - and uniformly excellent comments in our visitors' book. We were also delighted with most satisfactory pre-publication orders for our book.

During the Commemoration Weekend we staged a **World War 1 Walk** to visit the sites of the major new or re-opened activities in the village, including the Cadbury's factory (now mainly used by Shipton Mill), the former PoW camp, the Frampton Court gravel workings, and the remaining evidence of the railway lines that ran both to the mainline railway at Frocester and to the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal at Splatt. Some 20 folk (some pictured on the right) braved a steady drizzle that unfortunately reduced the prospective numbers attending. Afterwards the Women's Institute provided splendid '**WW1**' teas.



The **football match** between Frampton Youth Football Club and Wickwar Wanderers reminded the young participants of the strong connection that our village has with sport, and in particular with football. The children and their parents were able to enjoy looking at many photographs of Frampton teams from the pre- and post-war days.

Following the publication of our book, we held a **Book Launch** in July 2016 in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Wool Barn in Frampton (by kind permission of Mr & Mrs PRH Clifford), primarily to thank the project volunteers, sponsors, other supporters and the descendants of WW1 servicemen, which latter had provided information and other materials for our research. This proved a most successful - and enjoyable - evening at which volunteers and descendants were able to share even more stories and memories. We presented copies of the book to the Headmaster of Lakefield Primary School and to a representative of Gloucestershire Archives in recognition of their support and enthusiasm for the project.

**Frampton Country Fair** was held on 11 September 2016, for which event our stand (shown at right) included the final staging of our WW1 exhibition. Glorious weather encouraged numerous visitors, many of whom provided most complimentary remarks in our visitors' book - and some of whom also bought copies of our book. The tent pegging competition in the



main ring was won by the Royal Logistics Corps in WW1 uniforms, while the commentator explained our project to around 2,000 people watching the competition around the main ring.

### Website

Our website, <http://www.framptonremembersww1.org.uk/>, was built up over many months, becoming fully operational in April 2016, and is rigorously kept up to date with the latest information. It offers the full stories of all the Frampton servicemen - and the three ladies who served as nurses - with portraits wherever these are available; and the picture gallery covers both life in Frampton during and around the First World War, as well as a number of images from the theatres in which our people served. It is also used to report press coverage, to advise our readers of forthcoming events, and indeed to offer our book for sale. It deliberately does not set out to cover village life in detail, as this is exclusively reported in our book.

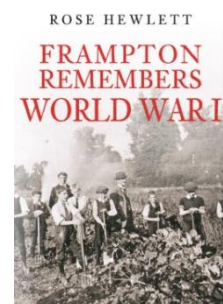
Our website has received a steady level of interest, averaging currently around 25 visitors and some 100 page views per day; this has been achieved through such measures as links from/to other sites, and by a presence on Facebook. Our website has inspired several of its visitors to start their own research, and we have also shared information with a number of other WW1 projects, notably where our servicemen have either been born or worked in other communities, including York (a school memorial) and a Canadian mining company's memorial.



Our most decorated serviceman received his Distinguished Conduct Medal in the field from the King, one of the first to be awarded during the war, and very rare as his name was hand-engraved on its rim (the majority were machine-stamped at the Royal Mint). In January 2017 our website enabled the present owner of this and Battery Sergeant-Major Harry Sutton's other medals (shown left) to contact us. All parties have benefited from this experience by sharing information and piecing together more of this particularly brave man's life.

### Book

Details of our book '**FRAMPTON REMEMBERS WORLD WAR I**' can be found on our website; sales have been very satisfactory and feedback from purchasers has been uniformly excellent, since publication of our website and book, further information, anecdotes and photographs have been offered to supplement earlier material. The publishers, Amberley Publishing, arranged several press releases which have further highlighted the work of our project and our book editor was interviewed about the project on BBC Radio Gloucestershire.



## 5. Value of Contributions

### Volunteers

There can be no doubt that a research-based local project such as this could not have been undertaken without many volunteers, some of which received in house training; others were already competent in their chosen fields. Not only was all of the primary research completed by volunteers, but also the bids for funding, the production of our logo, most photography and imagery work, the military and political inputs to the story narratives, much of the organisation of events and exhibitions, storytelling to the children; inevitably a heavy load also fell on members of the executive committee who were each fully participating in a number of different fields. We were fortunate to be assisted by volunteers with a range of talents from book editing, proof reading, indexing, WW1 military record interpretation, the politics of WW1, genealogy and local history research to name but a few. The total voluntary effort recorded was approximately 6,500 hours. Many hours also went unrecorded, such as those of the Women's Institute in relation to making items for and serving the WW1 teas.

### Professional services

Many professionals gave their services free of charge as volunteers. The size of the project meant that some professional services were also paid for. These are outlined below.

**Project management** - we contracted a professional project manager, on a part-time basis, to provide the planning and co-ordination which proved to be essential for a somewhat disparate team of volunteers,

who brought very different levels of research experience and skills to the project. She proved to be particularly valuable in handling community liaison, media interest, stimulating new ideas and keeping the preparatory work for events and exhibitions to the necessary schedule. Notably, she was also our link to the press, and indeed conducted live interviews on local radio. She was also responsible for raising the profile of the project through social media and website links which generated a great deal of additional interest.

**Website construction** - our Project Officer introduced us to the provider of our website; it has proved to be robust, easy to update, and (relatively) easy to modify to meet small changes in presentation.

**Printing** - most of the exhibition and publicity materials were printed by a local company; we were most impressed by the image quality achieved, especially in view of the low resolution, grain and wear on the 100-year-old original prints.

**Historical narrative** - despite the excellent efforts of our researchers in providing information about life in the village and also 130 servicemen, writing/editing the narrative for the website and book proved to be a greater challenge than anticipated in terms of the skills required to bring everything together in a cohesive, accurate and consistent manner. It therefore became essential, particularly given the agreed timetable with our book publishers and the date of our exhibition weekend, to contract one of our team professionally to ensure the content of the material produced on our website and in the book (hardback with 75,000 words and over 100 images) met the necessary standard. This professional local historian also gave an even greater amount of time free of charge to many aspects of the project.

### **Local funding support**

We were able to raise a satisfactory level of local funding, mainly from a small number of local businesses but with a variety of useful contributions from local organisations and individuals. The Parish Council, Frampton Community Association, Village Society, Women's Institute, Scouts and several other groups provided invaluable support and assistance. It is clear that without effective local communications we could not have generated the commitment of the various parties to provide the different contributions that enabled us to succeed in our project.

### **HLF funding support**

Without the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Frampton Remembers WW1 project would not have been undertaken. Although with hindsight we can perhaps see that it might have been made to work on a very limited scale, at the outset only one team member had any experience of such a project and it is most unlikely that the necessary credibility could have been engendered to raise local funding or to gain the commitment of sufficient volunteers. The HLF has therefore helped hundreds of people to learn about the heritage of their families and of their village, and we are very grateful to have had that opportunity.

### **Feedback**

Visitors to our Commemoration Weekend and stands at Frampton Country Fair were given the opportunity to comment on the exhibitions and the project. We are delighted to have received a wide range of favourable comments covering numerous aspects including: 'Great to hear the children's comments', 'Brilliant to see young people so engaged', 'Set up very well, good for children', 'Wonderful to see the history of the village', 'A very impressive memorial', 'Excellent tribute', 'A wonderful exhibition which reflects the significant work undertaken by the researchers', 'I feel so proud of my village', 'Lots of great information and well presented', 'Thought provoking' and 'A well presented and informative exhibition'.

## **6. Future Activities**

One of our volunteers delivers talks on the project to interested groups. A fundraising talk (in aid of Frampton's Congregational Church) on 11 November about village life during WW1 offered a further opportunity for publicity about the project and was very well attended.

The planned project has been completed and the research results have been delivered in both dynamic form (events and exhibitions) and in permanent form (our website, book and in the Frampton Court museum). This has been achieved within the original planned budget, although some expenditure was reallocated to different headings as the project evolved.

Any further income from book sales will be used to ensure that our website continues to be available beyond the five contracted years required by HLF, both as a source of information and as a repository to

*safeguard original material from loss; we will also keep it up to date with new or corrected information as it becomes available - which of course is not possible in our book.*

*Finally, we have offered Gloucestershire Archives archival material collected during the project - for all of which (other than public domain material) we have obtained the written consent of the relevant parties.*

**February 2017**