

# THE WAR GRAVES PHOTOGRAPHIC PROJECT



In Association with the CWGC



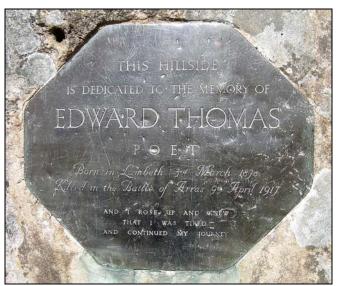


# News from the Front line

Spring 2010

Last week we were walking on the South Downs in the warm Spring sunshine which now feels like a lifetime ago as I sit here on a very wintry Good Friday morning. I do hope that Spring has not come and gone!

As always I keep a camera to hand, which was fortunate as we came across a memorial to the Great War Poet, Edward Thomas. The memorial is massive boulder perched high on a hill, overlooking the downs, with a bronze plaque commemorating him. The location was one of his favourite views when he lived in the village of Steep, near Petersfield. The inscription includes the line of one his poems 'And I rose up and knew I was tired and I continued my journey'. The words felt quite appropriate for those that rest here whilst taking in the scenery as we did that sunny morning after a long walk. Today brings a sense of reality because Thomas died on the opening day of the Battle of Arras on 9th April 1917. On that day snow was falling in Arras and the weather outside my window at the moment reminds me of some of the hardships that the troops must have gone through, even though Spring may have been in the air. Thomas now lies in Agny Military Cemetery in France, the anniversary of his death being only one week away.



'And I rose up and knew I was tired and continued my journey'

The winter months are normally quiet for TWGPP, allowing us to get on top of things, but there has been no stopping of the input of photographs from around the world. As an attachment to this Newsletter you will see an account of David Milborrow's epic journey through Libya and Egypt where he managed to complete all the CWGC cemeteries and a re-shoot of El Alamein Memorial. The new batch from El Alamein are uploading to site as I write, on the PC beside me, so by the time you read this they should all be on with just the other forces images (Germans, Greeks and Italians) to rename.

Above and beyond David's phenomenal contribution we have continued to get many images in from around the globe. These include completing Hong Kong, a Yokohama revisit, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Cyprus, several sites in South Africa, Israel and many more from mainland Europe. With personal trips planned for Italy and Tunisia these areas should be well documented by the Summer.

Now that we have approximately 1.5 million images there is not an awful lot to do so revisits to update the archive will be the 'order of the day'; those that are interested in helping in this way should contact me and I'll see what we have to do or point you in the direction of one of the other Co-ords.

Enjoy the Spring!

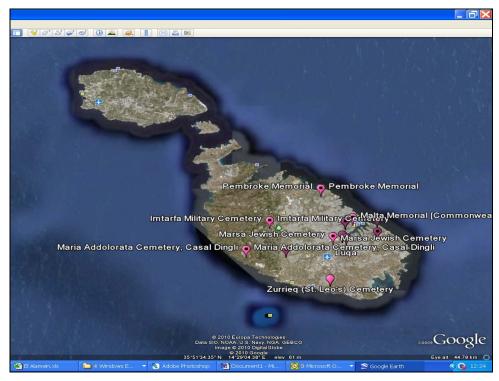
### Steve

### Where in the world ?- Dave Ruddlesden

Obtained photos of your relative's grave and the cemetery from TWGPP but want to know just where he is buried? On holiday and want to have a quiet moment remembering those who paid the ultimate sacrifice? Moved area and want to see which local sites may need to be photographed? Working away from home and a keen volunteer, eager to help TWGPP towards achieving its aim?

<u>www.cwgc.org</u> provides a comprehensive list of cemeteries but no searchable clues as to their location. <u>www.twgpp.org</u> can also help with locating nations and nationalities but once over the 1,000 limit data is no longer available. So there has been really no comprehensive location guide for our many war graves abroad and in the UK – until now.

Based on his limited experiences travelling solo in Northern Italy, Dave Ruddlesden has been extending his compilation of CWGC war cemeteries AND individual war graves in civil cemeteries. Two main tools in this electronic age are being used: Google Earth .kml and .kmz files for planning or research purposes and .csv files to load into most satellite navigation systems. The initial Italian listing (45 sites) has been extended to cover all of Italy (103 sites) and was then followed by Germany (47 sites) as a basis for dedicated trips to help complete TWGPP's coverage. The Italian office had coincidentally started putting coordinates on the web pages covering some of the cemeteries for which they are responsible and have been provided with the full listing.



French and Belgian lists already exist on the Google Earth Hacks site but their accuracy has yet to be checked, they appear to cover just the main CWGC cemeteries and they do not contain links to the appropriate TWGPP webpage nor do they contain any detail to help locate individual graves when "out on the road". The next step, following a business trip to San Diego and Marian's article on New York was to compile a USA (473 sites). This listing particularly poignant with the many early American volunteers serving with the Canadian forces, in both wars.

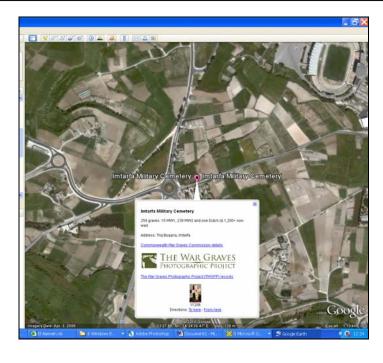
Malta Cemeteries on Google Earth

The Canadian CWGC office staff were very helpful in tracing the two sites which just could not be positively identified, there being four St Mary's in Pittsburgh! The hand drawn cemetery record sheets kept and updated on each visit are historic documents in themselves.

After starting on the Mediterranean area to complement Italy and completing Albania (Google for Drovia Sykes...), Algeria, Gibraltar, Greece, Malta etc (alphabetically) a list of OS Grid References (12,200+ sites!) came to hand for the UK & NI. Consequently, the emphasis has shifted once more (if you have no plan you can't change it) and this has been used as a basis for similar mapping exercises for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Rutland, Hertfordshire, Hampshire (as at mid February) as Dave slowly spreads the coverage out from his home and work areas.

Compilation is partly automatic from a suitable and simple list of CWGC names and calculated decimal latitude and longitude coordinates. However, it is iterative in that checking the links work to the right CWGC webpage (for Bedford Cemetery!) or that the TWGPP search can be narrowed down (try Christchurch Cemetery, meaning Hampshire) is needed for each and every place marker. And then, because of the inaccuracies with grid references on 1:50,000 maps (however did we ever hike anywhere?), repositioning the marker to the lych gate or main entrance from a nearby field or housing estate or from across a busy railway line or motorway is always helpful...

Examples of the resulting Google Earth displays have been uploaded as screen shots into the Gallery. These show a typical country presentation (Germany), a region (Hertfordshire), a place marker for an Italian civil cemetery, a place marker for a German CWGC cemetery and a place marker for an English cemetery, showing the level of detail chosen. Displayed in this article are the overall plot plan for Malta and a close up of Imfarta Military cemetery with the detail shown .It is intended to use the location data in three ways: firstly to provide downloadable files of each country (split into county (UK) or region (USA) to avoid overloading your computer system, secondly to provide matching .csv files for your satnay and thirdly to link into each individual record so that - in particular for the relative the exact location of the cemetery can be identified and viewed using Google Maps which, as most will be aware, offers map and satellite views.



This will be very much a progressive exercise. Contributions of locations by country from established Google Earth / geomapping experts and beginners (like Dave) will be most welcome. Since Northern France and Belgium are already well covered by the specialist and traditional Michelin [paper] maps whilst <a href="https://www.auscem.au">www.auscem.au</a> provides a fantastic mapping capability for all Australian cemeteries these are likely to be last on the list. Notwithstanding this, it is felt that it will offer a very valuable and complementing service which, even when/if every CWGC webpage has coordinates appended, will help armchair explorers and volunteers and relatives on the road alike. And in these economic and environmental conscious times, it expends no petrol in carrying out the work and should save petrol if actually travelling!

By Steve - We have discussed a new page on the TWGPP with the web designers who are working towards providing this function. However, it is not intended for this to be the definitive list of cemeteries completed for TWGPP as the updating would take a phenomenal amount of time. We are hoping to have the page live with links to Google earth by the time the next Newsletter hits the streets.

### France updates - Derek Mountjoy

Derek is now is a position, with most of France now complete, to conduct a major upload of images for the country to the site. This process can be quite time consuming especially when many thousands are being loaded up. To that end 'Notices' will be placed on the home page when the default images are being downloaded and the photographic image being uploaded as this may mean a gap in the archive whilst this process is taking place. Derek will start with the smaller departments first before moving on to the likes of Somme and Pas de Calais.



Those of you that have been following the developments at Fromelles via the CWGC www.cwgc.org/fromelles/blog link now be aware that 75 of the casualties have now been identified and their names will be removed from 'Missing' memorials at VC Corner, and Villers-Bretonneux Memorial. More burials and further identification will continue to take place up to the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2010 when the final ones will take place. Derek will add Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Military Cemetery, to our database and once we have the new photographs these will be displayed on site along with the many other Australians being remembered. remember them all on ANZAC Day this year, 25<sup>th</sup> April

### **United Services**

Good to see that members of the armed forces have been helping out recently with Yemen being completed by staff of the Defence attaché based out there. RAF crew in Cyprus managed to get access into the 'Buffer zone' in Cyprus to complete Waynes Keep cemetery and in Japan the Canadian Defence attaché has completed all those we had missing in Yokohama. In Africa, Defence staff are helping to gather in some of the many sites dotted around that continent. If there is anyone reading this in Iraq we could do with the memorial at Basra (now in the desert) being completed even if the panels are not that great.



Sgt Tracey Woonton and her team at Waynes Keep Cemetery, Cyprus

## Liberator VY241 - Bill Overy

At 09:00 Pacific Time on Friday 1st June 1945 the crew of Liberator VY241 were preparing to take off on a navigational training exercise from RCAF Base, Abbotsford, British Columbia. They were part of No.50 Operational Training Unit and following their passing out, were to be assigned to join the Royal Air Force "Tiger Force" in the Pacific Theatre. This "Tiger Force" was to launch a massive effort by the Allies to defeat Japan.

Flying Officer Hill was the Captain and Pilot Officer Gilbert E. E. Long was the second pilot. Sergeant Graham Murray was the navigator; Sergeants William T. Swatton and David R. Lansans were the WAG (Wireless Air Gunners). Air Bomber Sergeant James L. G. Hammond and the aircraft's air gunners Sergeants William P. Drummond, Stanley Aldridge, John R. Dale, Isaac Gibbons and Albert E Broadbent made up the eleven-man crew.

After take off Sgt William Swatton advised Abbotsford Tower he was setting his course and requested permission to change frequency. This was granted and he was heard contacting the DF operator by RCAF Boundary Bay but another aircraft on the same frequency smeared the message. Nothing further was heard from the crew of Liberator VY241.

Because of dense low clouds it was 16th June 1945 before the wreckage was sighted. The hazardous climb to the wreckage site took until the 20 June when it was confirmed as the missing Liberator.

On 25th June the party returned to the site accompanied by Flight Lieutenant Gilbert an Anglican Padre. The bodies were removed from the wreck and placed in a common grave at an altitude of 6,600 feet. A wooden cross was erected bearing the names of the airmen and wild mountain flowers were collected and planted over the grave.



Ottawa Memorial where the men are now commemorated

The crash site lay undisturbed for 37 years and was subject to the usual snow falls and land slides that gradually moved the wreckage lower on the slopes.

In October 1982 the well-known aviation author Chris Weicht first heard of the crash site. As the Officer Commanding of the Air Cadet Squadron in Abbotsford he and an instructor from the Air Cadets decided to investigate the site, following the creek now known as Airplane Creek as their guide.

They discovered that nothing was left of the site; the weather and rock slides had moved large parts of the aircraft including two engines down to the 4000ft level.

Chris decided that it would be a worthwhile project for the Air Cadets to construct a monument to the deceased airmen.

On July 11th 1983 a monument was constructed on an island in Airplane Creek on a site clear of the avalanche path that had destroyed the last memorial. A complete Engine was mounted in a vertical position and its base encased in 200 pounds of cement that had been carried to the site by the cadets. Local stone and other wreckage was placed around the monument. A stainless steel plaque had been fabricated and was mounted at the monument's base listing the airmen's names and details of the tragedy.

Alpine plants were again gathered and placed about the monument. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm was read and a cadet Sergeant played the last post on a mouth organ.

The Cadets of 861 Abbotsford Squadron make a trek to the location each year in remembrance of the loss of the 11 Royal Air Force Airmen who were in many cases not very much older than the Air Cadets who annually honour their passing.

This account was taken from the book "Trans Canada Airway" Volume Four written by Chris Weicht. It was this same Chris who organized the second memorial.

# SS Merioneath - Jim Pedersen

Can anyone shed any light on the following? A small Bible in my possession has a front paper which reads: This Bible is Presented to *T W Pedersen* by a Friend interested in the Ship *Merioneth Lpool* with the request that he will read [the rest of the text is damaged except for the final words ...blessed be his soul]. The Bible was one issued by The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1899: it's difficult to tell whether the front paper (bookplate) is an original part of the bible or was pasted in afterwards. T W Pedersen was my grandfather who died on the Somme in 1916, aged 34. Both his name and that of the ship were hand written, presumably by him. Could the ship Merioneth have been the one he sailed on to France?

I asked at a few of the military stands at the Who Do You Think You Are show but without much success. Any information would be appreciated. Jim Pedersen <a href="mailto:jim@twgpp.org">jim@twgpp.org</a>

# **Onwards to completing Belgium**

In order to complete the region around Ypres and Poperinghe for all nationalities, Vernon, Terry and Steve had a flying visit with a planned itinerary of 63 cemeteries as well as a re-shoot of Tyne Cot and Dunkirk Memorials in time for this year's anniversary.

As usual the weather was a predominant factor but luckily Rudy Van Kerckhoven was on hand to help out and arranged to meet us in Nine Elms Cemetery which was the first complete site we had to do with 1610 graves. Although helping the project from the outset it was the first time we had met Rudy who, being ex Belgian Navy, was able to bolster 'Senior Service' participation over the two ex army guys Vernon and Terry. Having been rained off 'The Huts' by late Friday afternoon the team made their way to the accommodation at *Varlet Farm* where a welcome cup of tea and apple pie was served up by Charlotte. www.varletfarm.com

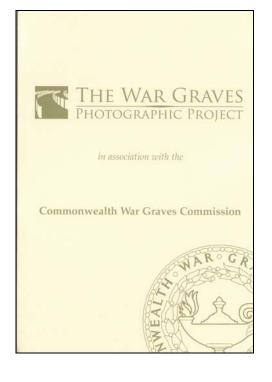
Saturday morning was very grey and damp but we set off at first light for Tyne Cot which was just down the road then spent the rest of the day dodging cyclists in between criss crossing the road to the French border at Ploegsteert. By the time we got to Wulverghem-Lindenhoek Road Military Cemetery (1010) energy was on the wane and with drizzle in the air we departed for our second night this time staying in B&B Hortensia in Ypres. As this was the first visit for Vernon we were at the Menin Gate in time for the last post and as the bells chimed at 20:00 what appeared to sound like an artillery barrage opened up as the bugles sounded. Vernon was impressed until he realised that the artillery barrage was in fact thunder as the clouds opened up. The timing though could not have been more precise.

During the return journey we completed Divisional Collecting post in the rain and all the other nationalities in Lijssenthoek before moving up to France to re shoot Dunkirk Memorial and the cemetery.

Given the fact that many of the cemeteries that we had visited to pick up those that we had missed before had been re engraved we did the lot as a re visit so totals for the weekend were in the region of 7500.



Vernon , Terry and Rudy



# New dispatch envelopes

After recent meetings at CWGC HQ at Maidenhead, TWGPP took away a box of presentational envelopes to determine if recipients of hard copy images preferred a more formal delivery of photographs.

Feedback was all positive so on completion of a trial run the CWGC have kindly provided newly designed photo-pockets displaying both of our logos to emphasis the 'Joint Operations'. These have now been delivered and will be utilised for those requesting hard copies of photographs.

# Arandora Star: a long-forgotten tragedy off the Irish Coast - Michael McRitchie

Shortly after finishing photographing the 575 casualties in Belfast City Cemetery (report, Summer 2009 Newsletter) I had a call from Alan Davis of Newcastle, who contacted me via the Project. Could I go to Rathlin Island off the North Antrim coast and photograph the grave of Giuseppe Capella? Why not, I replied, I can try my shiny new travel pass on the ferry. But what's this all about?

Until then I had never heard of a ship called the *Arandora Star*. Its story would take me to Donegal and Mayo in the west of Ireland, to the Italian communities in England, Scotland and south Wales, and finally to the mountain village of Bardi in Tuscany, where our story begins.

In the 60 years between 1880 and 1940 some 150,000 Italians emigrated to Britain. Many were from the mountainous regions of northern Italy such as Tuscany, where the peasant economy could not support them. Despite their agricultural traditions these industrious people set up a catering industry all of their own.

In South Wales their cafes became known as bracchis, after one of the first families to go there from Bardi. Their temperance cafes were a welcome alternative to the pubs for many working families all over Britain, and the Italians became a much loved part of the communities they served. All this would be changed with the outbreak of World War Two.

By June 1940 Norway, France and the Low Countries had fallen. Britain had been lucky to get its army home from Dunkirk, and now stood alone against Nazi Germany



At sea the U-boats were strangling the lifeline to America. More than 60 ships were sunk in June alone. On June 10 Italy declared war on Britain, and began bombing the British island of Malta the following day...In this desperate and chaotic situation all enemy nationals were arrested and interned, even though some of their sons were serving in the British Army. With starvation a real possibility, the government ordered that these internees be shipped to Canada. On July 1 the former cruise liner Arandora Star left Liverpool with a crew of 200, carrying 1200 German and Italian prisoners, guarded by 200 soldiers.

At about 8.30 next morning, 75 miles northwest of Ireland, she was torpedoed by U-47. The Arandora Star sank in half an hour. There were not enough lifeboats to begin with, and two were destroyed in the explosion. That afternoon many were rescued by a Canadian destroyer which answered the ship's distress call. But more than 800 of the 1600 men aboard lost their lives. Of the 446 Italians who perished, one in nine came from South Wales. For weeks the bodies of Italians, Germans, the British seamen and the Army guards were washed ashore along 600 miles of coastline from the Western Isles of Scotland to Co. Mayo on the west coast of Ireland.

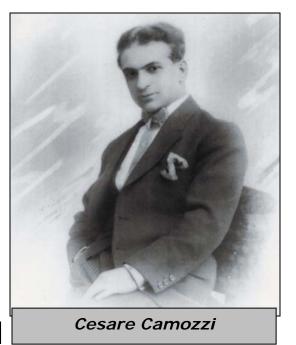
Perhaps because so many terrible events were to follow, the Arandora Star was soon forgotten except by its grieving, bereft families. Indeed a book on the disaster was called *Una Tragedia Dimenticata*. A forgotten tragedy.

So it was in Ireland, even though it remains one of the worst disasters off the Irish coasts. I was intrigued by the story, and wondered if there could be any references in the newspapers of the time and I was amazed at the detail in the 1940 reports. Forgotten for decades and unknown to the Italians both here and in Italy, here was the story of Ireland's sad legacy from the Arandora Star.

The Western People newspaper reported that on July 30 1940, exactly four weeks after the sinking, one of their reporters had identified the body of Giovanni Marenghi of Bardi on a sandy beach on the remote Erris peninsula in Co. Mayo. Signor Marenghi was 43, he had owned a cafe in Pontypridd, and he was identified by a membership card from the Pontypridd Bowling Club and a food ration book. The Marenghi family was able to have his body returned and in Feb 1941 he was laid to rest in Pontypridd Cemetery.

On the same day, over 100 miles north in Donegal, the body of Ernesto Moruzzi was found on a beach near Dungloe, and the body of Luigi Paretti was washed onto Tory Island off the north Donegal coast. Signor Moruzzi was 61 and had emigrated from Bardi. He had owned a cafe in Neath, where his family still lives.

**Cesare Camozzi** and Giuseppe Ferdenzi were among those buried in Co. Donegal. Their grandchildren knew where they lay, but from the 1940 inquest reports I was able to tell them how and where they had been found and identified.



For most of the Italian families all over Britain, and their kinsfolk back in Italy, the wait would be a long one, and many would never find out what happened.

In early August a north-westerly gale brought a terrible harvest to the Irish coast. One hundred dead bodies in sea off Iniskea, read the headline in the Western People. They were believed to have come from the Arandora Star, but few could be recovered due to the ferocity of the storm. Near Annagh Head, local youths waded into the raging surf with ropes to bring the bodies ashore. Among them was Private William Chick of the Dorsetshire Regiment. The Western People reported that onlookers were reduced to tears when they found a photograph of a girl, perhaps sister or sweetheart, tucked inside his pay book, which showed that he was only 19. He was buried in Kilcommon Erris cemetery, with three of his comrades.

On August 17 the Donegal Vindicator reported that nine bodies from the Arandora Star had been recovered along the coast. Some were those of soldiers, some were unidentified Italians, some could not be identified at all.

On August 24 the Donegal Democrat reported that the body of a soldier was washed up on a beach; the body of an unidentified seaman and a lifeboat from the Arandora Star were washed up on an island, two unidentified bodies were buried on an island where they were found, and by the evening the shores of Loughros Bay on the western coast were strewn with wreckage..

In those days the west coast was a very isolated Irish speaking area reached by gravel roads normally used by donkey carts. Only a few professional people like doctors had cars, and petrol was rationed. Very few people had telephones. So it was difficult to assemble the coroner, his staff and a twelve-man jury for so many inquests along 200 miles of this wild coastline. As the scale of the disaster unfolded, it was agreed that local doctors could authorise the interment of war victims.

By late August there were so many bodies that the councils had to re-open old graveyards, some of which had not been used since the Irish famine almost 100 years before, and there was real concern about the cost of dealing with so many casualties. The Donegal Board of Health was told that 33 bodies had been washed ashore during the previous week, and that funeral expenses had been paid by Board officers out of their own pockets.

In County Mayo there was one body for every kilometer along the Erris coastline, and the Board of Health became very concerned at the cost of so many funerals with coffins costing £2.10 shillings each. That's around £350 in today's money. And these were the poorest areas in Ireland.



The grave of Private Chick and others from Arandora Star

More than 90 of the Army guards also drowned. Many were from the Devonshire Regiment which had escaped from Dunkirk, and inquests were told that some still had French coins in their pockets.

A dozen soldiers were identified through their Army identity discs, but the civilians had only a few papers which seldom survived five weeks in the ocean. I noticed that the newspaper reports stated the cemetery in which both soldiers and the many unidentified bodies were buried. When I checked the cemetery burial registers, they named the soldiers, who all have CWGC headstones, but there is no reference to other casualties. Where were all these graves?

Gradually I realised that the grassy spaces around the headstones were graves of the unknown victims. On Rathlin Island Giuseppe Capella, who had been a waiter in the Savoy Hotel in London, is listed in the burial register; but I was lucky to find a 1940 coastguard record which noted that another body found on the same day, August 10, was buried alongside him. Sure enough, there is a grassy space beside the Capella grave.

Finally my theory was confirmed by Eugene Forde of Easkey near Sligo. He is now 84, and as a teenager he had watched as the bodies of several Italians were recovered from the rocky shoreline near his home. They were buried alongside a soldier, Private Owen Mitchell, and the whole village attended the funerals. But the burial register refers only to the soldier.

My wife and I took our videocam to Rathlin. Like most islands it's not the easiest place to get to and we thought the Capella family might like to see something of the journey and the little churchyard where their grandfather is buried. Then we decided to spend a week visiting the lonely cemeteries around the wild Atlantic coasts of Donegal and Mayo.

One thing leads to another ... after a couple of years we ended up with a 40-minute documentary which has been viewed by thousands of people on Youtube, bringing us emails from all over the world. Then we had a crash course in Italian so we could produce an Italian version which we presented to the people of Bardi when we at last visited the region we had read so much about.

On the 70th anniversary of the Arandora Star disaster, the Welsh Italians dedicated a memorial in St. David's Cathedral to 54 of their relatives who were drowned. It's been our privilege to meet many of the families.

The Irish people did incredibly well in the face of this awful tragedy but we shall never know the identities of most victims or the exact location of their graves. Had it not been for that phone call passed on via the Project, Ireland's unknown Italians might have been forgotten forever.

### Should have stayed in Oz and Dangerous sports

The photo on the right was submitted by Peter Waters in Australia who volunteered to help photograph the 700 graves in the large cemetery at Rookwood. He found this 'additional' family memorial and noted that Lieutenant Eric D Bell, who had been awarded the Military Medal in WW1, did not have such a prolonged retirement having moved to Papua New Guinea from his home in Australia. Fortunately his memorial does not give too much detail apart from having been killed by Cannibals!





On the left is the grave Major Henry Martin Sandbach, Royal Artillery. Who died at Aden on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1895 from wounds received Lion Hunting in Somaliland whilst attempting to rescue his Shakari!

# Who Do You Think You Are -2010

The last week in February saw TWGPP once again, attending the 'Who Do You Think You Are' event at Olympia having been invited to join the CWGC team on their stand in the Military Section.

With new displays and leaflets provided by the design department of CWGC and a larger display area we were able to man two laptops and have access to the archive which proved most useful with the amount of enquiries



Like last year, the event was well attended by those researching their family history, many of whom were not aware their relations had died or even where buried. With two teams of three manning the display the 'Combined Ops' of CWGC and TWGPP worked in unison to determine where men buried and within minutes the enquirer was able to view a particular grave or memorial. Fortunately for those on the stand other TWGPP volunteers were attending the event and were able to help out to enable a coffee break. With very nearly 1.5 million images in the archive this year's event saw far more requests being fulfilled than last year so many went away happy although the emotion at seeing the grave was too much for some but we were prepared this year with a box of tissues handy!

Other exhibitors including that of the Western Front Association, Poppy Travel, and the National Army Museum all helped keeping each other busy as researchers were pointed to other areas of information or means to travel to see the cemeteries.

It was felt that the three day event was a major success for all parties and our thanks go to the CWGC for inviting us again this year. For a short clip of the event please go to <a href="http://vimeo.com/9884868">http://vimeo.com/9884868</a>

### Eiganes Cemetery, Stavangar, Norway



Heroes of Telemark

Ion Drew and Marie Smith-Solbakken of the University of Stavanger, together with Hans-Jørgen Wallin Weihe and Helge Sognli of Maihaugen Museum, Lillehammer, are working on a book about the Commonwealth war graves Stavangar (Eiganes) Cemetery, Norway. Ion has recently submitted the pictures of these graves to TWGPP mentioning that the 44 graves in Eiganes represent the whole period of the war in occupied Norway. Roughly half of the graves are of men involved in the ill-fated Operation Freshman in 1942 November which unsuccessful attempt to destroy the Heavy Water plant in Vemork, Telemark. These were the real 'Heroes of Telemark'

Many of the others are airmen from two bombers that crashed in the district and reflect the different commonwealth countries involved in this theatre of war. The book emphasises the personal aspect: who were these men, what was their mission, how did they die and, finally, what was it like for their loved ones to cope with their loss? There is also a strong emphasis on how the men have since been remembered and honoured.

### Points from the Post

Thanks, for your prompt response and the obvious care and respect for the fallen reflected in the photographs, which are unexpectedly beautiful and quite moving. I won't be the first, I'm sure, to commend you and the other volunteers for this important work, but please accept and pass along my family's deep gratitude to all those involved. Iain MacGregor

Thank you again. I am having a hard time finding the words to thank you and all of the other volunteers. You have made today very special for me and my family. Ian H. Miller

Thank you so much. I really can't express what this photo will mean to my Nan. This is actually amazing and I'm lost for words (which makes a change!!) Again, thank you so much for this. Kind Regards Amy

Our family had not known that my uncle had his own grave until a couple of months ago and it was only by chance that having tried to find someone in France who might take a photo for us that I received information from the CWGC about your project. As a young boy when visiting France in the 60's with my parents we toured many areas just looking for a plaque recording his name but there were so many E. Robson names. I am filled with many emotions seeing your photographs tonight. My mother who now lives with me is 88 and I can only imagine how she will feel when I show them to her tomorrow (she is now in bed asleep). You and your colleagues have obviously given so generously of your time to make it possible for people like us to see these graves and plaques and I can only thank you so much for doing this invaluable work. I hope to make a visit to the grave at some time in the future but my mother is now too old to travel and your photos will mean so much to her. Thanks again Owen Sayers.

I, have just received, the photograph, of ,my great uncle Harold Kimbers memorial and a photograph of the cemetary. Thank you, this has been of great comfort to my family, to have a picture of his last resting place yours sincerely John Kimber

I would like to thank this project and the people involved. I have just received a picture of the grave of a William Edger Hanley. This was for his daughter who is now 93 years old and was three years old when her father died, she did not know anything about him her mother died when she was quite young. So had no one to tell her about her parents. I must say she is so pleased with seeing this picture that she felt close to her father. Once again a big thank you to you all. Mrs D Ives

Good morning - just a note to let you know that the photos of my Uncle Len Collins grave-site arrived in the post, safe and sound. Thank you so very much - there are no words. You are providing a wonderful service. Diane Holmes, Niagara on the Lake, ON, Canada

Thank you so much. This is absolutely fantastic. I have just emailed his two nieces, both elderly ladies now. They are overjoyed, overwhelmed. Your work is awesome. Regards, Adam Luscombe

I would just like to express my thanks to you and all those concerned in taking these wonderful photographs and making them available to us. I found it very moving to see them. Best wishes, Jill

Just a quick note to say thanks again for sending this through, I forwarded the photograph to my father (he was two when his father, whose grave this is, died) and he was very moved. He had never seen the grave stone. I am glad that you are making an effort to catalogue this information, it still means a lot to many, many people. Regards, Brook

Words, simply fail and thank you seems so little! It was so emotional for my dad and I to receive your e-mail this morning - I remember my dad always saying that his grandmother was always so sad that she never got to "say goodbye" finally to her son, or even have the luxury of flowers for his grave. Thank you so much again, I know that the fallen would hold you and your team in high regard for preserving their memory and I am reminded of the words of In Flanders Fields - this is actually printed on all our Canadian \$5 bill which is lovely. Denise Taylor

I would like you to know that today I have received the pictures of Lucien Ratelle's grave and the cemetery where it is located. I am totally delighted and will forward them to my aunt Carmen who was his fiancée at the time. I would like to thank you, and any other individuals who was involved in this research. Since I was a child I have always been curious to learn what had happened to my aunt's fiancé who had died at war. Perhaps the reason that led me to investigate about Mr. Ratelle is that when I was a teenager aunt Carmen passed on to me a heart locket that held their pictures. I found their story dramatic and terribly romantic. Fate as it often does has led me to TWGPP which enabled me to find closure for my aunt and for myself as well. Again, thanking you kindly for your generosity and devotion to such an important cause. My warmest regards, Lucie Thibault-Ahmad and her aunt Carmen.