

**Third Meeting of the First World War Centenary Historical Interpretation
Working Group**

Friday, 21 March 2014

**Brunel House, Cardiff (video conference link to Welsh Government office,
Aberystwyth)**

Present:

Cardiff:

[St Cyres School Official 1] ([job title redacted] St Cyres School, Penarth)
[Cardiff University Official 1] (Cardiff University)
British Council Official 1] (Chair, British Council)
[Swansea University Official 1] (Swansea University)
[RWF Trust Official 1] Royal Welch Fusiliers Trust
[WFA Official 1] (Chair, Western Front Association, Gwent Branch)
[Welsh Government Official 1] (Welsh Government)

Aberystwyth:

[Aberystwyth University Official 1] (Aberystwyth University)
[NLW Official 1] (National Library of Wales)
[Welsh Government Official 2] (Welsh Government - minutes)

Apologies:

Professor Sir Deian Hopkin (First Minister's Expert Adviser on the First World War)
[HLF Official 1] (Heritage Lottery Fund)
[AC-NMW Official 1] ([job title redacted] National Slate Museum)
[Bangor University Official 1] (Bangor University)
[NLW Official 2] (Retired [job title redacted] – National Library of Wales)
[Aberystwyth University Official 2] (Aberystwyth University)

1. Welcome and minutes of previous meeting

[St Cyres School Official 1] welcomed everyone to the meeting and chaired in DH's absence.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed without amendments.

2. Further developments on the Educational App by [St Cyres School Official 1]

[St Cyres School Official 1] confirmed that funding for the app has been approved by both the Armed Forces Covenant and the Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills, and a decision on the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is expected at the end of the month. [St Cyres School Official 1] informed the group that he had attended a conference at Wellington College, Berkshire, looking at how schools should commemorate the First World War and there was no mention of proposals similar to that of the Welsh app in England, which seems to be focusing on

battlefield tours. [Royal Navy official 1]Wales @ War Project Officer, will be giving a presentation on the app at the Programme Board meeting later this afternoon, and all Historical Interpretation Working Group members are welcome to attend. A release date has yet to be confirmed however the aim is that the app is available for schools to download in January 2015.

In response to a query from [Swansea University Official 1], [St Cyres School Official 1] explained that the app will come with exemplars and templates built in. Schools will be able to upload content to the app without incurring a cost.

3. AHRC Centres

HLF has announced the locations of six coordinating centres to support community engagement activities to connect academic and public histories of the First World War and its legacy. DH has expressed his disappointment that none of the six centres are in Wales. However, the National Library of Wales is in discussions to link with one of these centres in order to involve a Welsh aspect.

4. HLF Projects

[HLF Official 1] was unable to attend the meeting and therefore this agenda item will be revisited at a future meeting.

5. Education Programme, Talk from [NLW Official 1], National Library.

[NLW Official 1], National Library Education Service, gave a presentation on the National Library of Wales' education project. The Library was asked by the Dept for Education and Skills to consider how educational resources could be created using the digitised material from the Library's *The Welsh Experience of the First World War* project (www.cymru1914.org). As a result, the 3rd strand of the education programme (as well as the Wales @ War app and the £1,000 to each secondary school in Wales) is to produce digital resources which will be available on various websites such as People's Collection Wales, Hwb, *Cymru'n Cofio* Wales Remembers 1914-1918, the National Library Education Service's website and Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales' website.

The educational resources created will be split into 11 main categories and will cover Key Stages 2-5 as well as the Welsh Baccalaureate. There will be an obvious focus on history, however the material in development will provide resources across the curriculum. All resources will be bilingual using material sourced from Wales. It will be available in paper, pdf and electronic formats such as ibooks and the new Nearpod interactive platform. Piloting of the formats has been completed with teachers. The project will be completed by 2016, but will cover the period up to and including the Treaty of Versailles.

In terms of the £1,000 for secondary schools project, [St Cyres School Official 1] questioned whether schools will need the £1,000 once the app is available. [WFA Official 1] felt that schools need to be encouraged to think widely, and that arts or drama departments of schools could use the funding on cultural activities relating to the commemoration, such as inviting artists into the school or writing and performing plays.

There was a brief discussion on war literature, and the need to focus on the work of not only the great war poets, but also the lesser known poets among the rank and file, whose work may not have been of the same literary quality, but is no less heartfelt. [NLW Official 1] confirmed that the literature category of the educational resource will look at the poetry of the famous war poets, but also lesser-known poets, and poetry in both Welsh and English.

6. Christmas Truce project

[RWF Trust Official 1] informed the group that he had attended meetings with a delegation from Saxony in Caernarfon and Bodelwyddan. £75,000 funding has been secured for the project and it is now possible to press on with the arrangements. The Saxony delegation has identified the artefacts that they would like to borrow from the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum Trust, and the artefacts will be transported to Germany in July. Meanwhile, the project partners in Saxony are identifying similar material from their own collections that can be added to the exhibition, and they will produce the interpretation panels etc.

The first venue for the exhibition is the Museum Wolkenstein from 2 August to mid October. At the end of the show in Wolkenstein, the exhibition will be transported on to the next agreed venue in a chain. The tour will end in the UK and its first showing in Wales will be in Bodelwyddan Castle between January and March 2015. The dates of the tour are as follows:

Exhibit opens Wolkenstein – 2 August
Opens Plugstreet – 20 October
Opens Armentieres – 26 November
Opens Frelinghien – 13 December
Exhibit delivered to Bodelwyddan – 5 January 2015

It is hoped that the exhibition will move on from Bodelwyddan to Cardiff, and there may be opportunities for the exhibition to travel to other locations in Wales thereafter.

[St Cyres School Official 1] is currently trying to secure funding for digital resources.

7. Historical Conference

[Swansea University Official 1] confirmed that he has received verbal agreement from Swansea University to fund a historical conference in July 2016, with a possible focus on the Centenary of the Battle of Mametz Wood. The conference would include a number of events held in locations across Swansea, not only the university, and that these events would focus on other aspects of the war as well as Mametz Wood. Partnerships would be made with external organisations such as the National Waterfront Museum, and the university has indicated that it intends to publish a book through the University of Wales Press to ensure a legacy from the conference – as well as plans to perhaps film the speakers.

The group discussed the possible timing of the conference, and concerns were raised about holding the conference in July 2016. It was felt that there will be a number of other activities taking place to commemorate Mametz Wood, and July may not be the ideal timing for an academic conference.

It was agreed that further discussion is required on the historical conference, looking not only at the timing and focus of the conference, but also the audience, who should be invited to speak etc.

It was agreed that the historical conference would be a standing agenda item for future meetings of the Historical Interpretation Working Group.

8. Other Business

[RWF Trust Official 1] informed the group that there will be two events to launch separate First World War memorials in Flanders on 26 October 2014. In the morning there will be an unveiling of a memorial to the South Wales Borderers and the Worcestershire Regiment in Gheluvelt, and in the afternoon there will be an unveiling of a memorial to the Royal Welch Fusiliers at Zandvoorde market place.

9. Date of the next meeting

[Welsh Government Official 1] confirmed that the next meeting is likely to be held on 12th June 2014, but CyMAL will be in touch at a later date to confirm the arrangements.