



Remembering Fromelles

EASTBOURNE COLLEGE THEATRE
SATURDAY, 7TH AUGUST 2010

Paul Cobb, Julie Summers, Kate Brady, Nicholas J. Saunders

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Remembering Fromelles

Welcome

Tommies Guides Military Booksellers & Publishers brings you a unique series of presentations entitled *Remembering Fromelles*.

Following the official commemorative ceremony that took place on July 19th some 94 years after the battle, marking the blackest day in the history of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), we are now honoured to be able to bring you detailed information on the history and development of the project concerning the battle, the discovery of the mass graves and the new Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Cemetery.

Our guest speakers have all amassed a wealth of experience and knowledge with this particular project and area of archaeology in particular, and I very much hope you find the presentations and information that they will share with you today of interest.

We are also pleased to be able to support two very worthwhile charitable organisations whilst running this event;



Combat Stress, who have seen the number of ex-Service men and women seeking help for treatment relating to psychological injuries rise by 72% since 2005 - and **SSAFA**, who for over 100 years have helped the men, women and the families of those who serve in our Armed Forces and those who used to serve - even if it was only for a single day. With our current operational deployments I am sure you will agree are vital organisations for the welfare of our Service personnel and their dependents.



Thank you for supporting this event and I wish you a very enjoyable day.

Yours sincerely,

Ryan Gearing
Tommies Guides Military Booksellers & Publishers



Remembering Fromelles

Programme

Eastbourne College Theatre

12.30pm Doors Open

Foyer & Casson Gallery - Exhibits & Refreshments

Information & displays from University of Bristol, CWGC, Combat Stress, SSAFA, War Memorials Trust, Western Front Association (Sussex).

College Lecture Theatre - The Talks & Exhibits, including Book Sales

1.00-1.10pm Introduction and Chair by Dr Nicholas Saunders

1.10-2.00pm Session 1 – The Battle of Fromelles
Paul Cobb

2.00-2.50pm Session 2 - Remembering Fromelles
Julie Summers

2.50-3.20pm Tea & Refreshments in the Casson Gallery

3.20-3.30pm Introduction, Re-cap and Chair by Julie Summers

3.30-4.20pm Session 3 – The Archaeology & Finds
Kate Brady

4.20-5.10pm Session 4 – 20th Century Conflict Archaeology,
Nicholas J. Saunders

5.10-5.40pm Q&A's - all participants - Chair by Dr Nicholas Saunders

5.40pm Close & opportunity for any book signings



Remembering Fromelles

The Speakers

The Battle of Fromelles, Paul Cobb

At Fromelles in July 1916 two divisions – one British and one Australian – both newly arrived in France – went into action for the first time. Their task was to prevent the Germans from moving troops to the Somme where a major British offensive was in progress, but the attack on 19/20 July was a disaster with nearly 7,000 casualties in a matter of hours.



This talk explores this battle, which for many epitomises the futility of the Great War. In those few hours many heroic deeds were done but the battle caused a souring of Anglo-Australian relations and truly was a baptism of fire for these British and Australian troops. We conclude with the recent discovery of the mass graves at Pheasant Wood and how the project came into being.

Paul Cobb is a keen historian, who has spent ten years researching the battle and the men who fought in it, through the archives of the Imperial War Museum, the National Archives and the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. He published a revised edition of *Fromelles 1916* in 2010. Paul lives in Lechlade, Gloucestershire.


Remembering Fromelles, Julie Summers

A fascinating overview of the project to rebury 250 Australian and British servicemen first buried by the Germans after the Battle of Fromelles in 1916.

This session discusses the story of the discovery of the mass graves, the archaeology behind the excavations, the question of identification and the process of reburial and cemetery construction undertaken during the course of 2009 and 2010.



The purpose of the whole undertaking has been to give these men the dignity in death they were denied for nearly a century but which, in keeping with the Commission's own founding beliefs, they so richly deserve.



The talk covers the establishment of the Commission in 1917 and explains how burials were carried out during and in the immediate aftermath of the Great War, looking at the differences and similarities between 1920 and 2010.

Julie Summers was born near Liverpool and grew up first on the Wirral and then in Cheshire. She is an established author and historian whose previous works include *Remembered, A History of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission* and *British and Commonwealth War Cemeteries*.

The Archaeology & Finds, Kate Brady

In this presentation we will learn from Kate Brady, the Team's Finds Specialist about the set up of the archaeological and forensic labs on the dig, the background of the other team members who made up this unique project, the methods of excavation, facts about the graves and how the individuals were arranged within them. We will also hear about the artefacts that were found with the soldiers buried at Pheasant Wood, how they provide a unique insight not only into the era of the Great War but also into the lives of the individual soldiers who died at Fromelles.



Oxford Archaeology was founded in 1973 and is the one of the largest independent archaeology and heritage practices in Europe, with nearly 400 specialist staff and permanent offices in Oxford, Lancaster, Cambridge, Caen and Montpellier. Kate has worked for OA since 2002 on a vast range of projects and is now a Project Officer and Research Specialist in the Post-excavation department specialising in Medieval and Post-medieval archaeology

Kate Brady gained her BA in 2000 from UCL and immediately began work for the Museum of London Archaeological Service (MoLAS), where she spent two years working on Roman and Medieval urban sites in central London. This included working on the huge medieval cemetery site of Spitalfields and excavating just outside the Roman Fort near the Guildhall.

Outside of work Kate is a photographer and has had work included in an exhibition at the Tate Gallery in London.



20th Century Conflict Archaeology, Dr Nicholas J. Saunders

First World War trenches on the Western Front, the shrapnel collecting habits of Second World War children, prisoner-of-war and internment camps, 3-D artworks produced by Vietnam veterans, the wearing of war medals, the heritage of the Cold War, the material effects of ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, the 2003 devastation of Iraq's peerless archaeology, and the 9/11 destruction of New York's World Trade Centre and the subsequent 'war on terror' are all manifestations of 20th century conflict.



We are presented with a new view on archaeology and why this branch of the subject is important and how it has grown in popularity over the last decade especially on the Western Front.

Dr Nicholas Saunders is the course organiser for MA Historical Archaeology, MA 20th-Century Conflict Archaeology, and MA Archaeology for Screen Media at Bristol University. Previous publications include; *Killing Time: Archaeology & the First World War*, *Images of Conflict: Military Aerial Photography & Archaeology* and *Trench Art: Materialities & Memories of War*.

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Remembering Fromelles

The organisers wish to thank the following for their support in making this event possible.

Eastbourne College
Paul Cobb
Julie Summers
Kate Brady
Dr Nicholas Saunders
Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Carol Harrison Catering
Combat Stress
SSAFA
War Memorials Trust
Army Museums Ogilby Trust
The Guild Of Battlefield Guides
Western Front Association (Sussex Branch)



For the Fallen

*They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*