



November 2012

The Wyvern

The newsletter of the Wessex Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

As 2012 comes to an end it seems a good time to take stock of what has been achieved in the region in the past 12 months. Members events have included visits to Old Wardour Castle and Basing House, and a successful English Civil War study afternoon in Guildford's 17th century Abbot's Hospital. We have actively opposed the proposed construction of a solar farm overlooking the ECW battlefield of Langport, begun working with the Cheriton Battlefield Project while our friends at Westonzoyland opened an excellent display about the Battle of Sedgemoor in their parish church. It's also satisfying that membership has continued to rise despite the fact some of our major recruiting activities were disrupted by one of the wettest summers on record. Having said that, the fact remains that the Trust is still short of the numbers it needs to secure its financial future and to enable it to respond to threats and make the most of opportunities. We are therefore asking our members each to recruit just one member and, with Christmas coming, membership could be an ideal gift! You can join people up online, download a form from the Trust website or contact Julian Humphrys and he'll send you one.

Walks round Alton

On 13th December 1643, during the English Civil War, the Hampshire town of Alton found itself thrust into the forefront of national events when it was the scene of a daring night attack by a Roundhead army. One of the newly-formed region's first



Alton Church

events was a guided walk around the scene and, to mark the anniversary of the battle, the Trust is running two more events in conjunction with Alton Museums.

On Thursday 13th and Saturday 15th December Julian Humphrys will give a brief introduction to the battle in Alton's Allen Gallery, before leading a short walk in and around the nearby St Lawrence Church to enable participants to explore the very spots where the fighting took place. Both sessions will end with a chance to visit the Curtis Museum which houses a small display about the battle.

Timings: Thursday 13th December 1.00pm to 2.30pm. Saturday 15th December 11.00am to 12.30pm

Both events start at the Allen Gallery, Church Street, Alton GU34 2BW

Tickets: £5.00 (£3.00 for Battlefields Trust members. Phone 07930 432444 or email heritagetours@hotmail.co.uk)

AGM 15 December 2012

The Regional AGM of the Wessex Region of the Battlefields Trust will be held before the second of the Alton events in the Allen Gallery at 10.30am on Saturday 15th December. This will be a good opportunity to hear news of developments in the region and to briefly discuss future activities before the Alton event starts... and the Gallery serves coffee! We'll be putting together a team to help spread the word about the Trust, recruit members and organise events. If you'd like to get involved please don't hesitate to get in touch. If you can't make the AGM but have any ideas or suggestions please drop us a line on development.officer@battlefieldstrust.com.



Flodden

Annual Conference 5-8 April 2013

The 2013 Conference of the Battlefields Trust will be hosted by the Trust's North East and Borders Region and will be based at St Aidan's College, Durham University. Events will include a field trip to Northumberland to visit the battlefields of Homildon Hill and Flodden (which will be commemorating its 500th anniversary), lectures, walks and talks, a conference dinner and a number of 'fringe' events before and after the conference. The conference will be open to members and (on payment of a small surcharge) non-

members and it will be possible either to book accommodation for the whole event or to attend parts of the conference.

The programme of events tries to reconcile the desire to make the most of a visit to the North East with the different budgets and time that members can dedicate to the conference. There is therefore a core Saturday – Sunday featuring some of the highlights and, for those with more time, a programme of visits on the Friday and Monday.

Further details and a booking form are available on the Trust's website and will be included in the forthcoming issue of the Trust magazine. If anyone is looking for a lift to the conference or is driving and has spaces in their car please let us know

Magna Carta 800

June 2015 will see the 800th anniversary of when King John was confronted by a group of rebel barons at Runnymede and forced to agree to 'Magna Carta'.

The Trust is represented on the Magna Carta 800 Committee and is delighted to learn that there are now serious plans to build an interpretation centre at Runnymede. However whilst the political, legal and constitutional implications of Magna Carta are widely known, it is recognised that the military aspects are often forgotten - but the period 1215-17 saw extensive campaigning throughout the kingdom. We are working with Magna Carta 800 to put this right and are offering to help any community owning a battlefield, siege site or other action commemorate its part in the events. (Our region includes Salisbury cathedral, which houses one of the four surviving copies of Magna Carta, King John's stronghold at Corfe and Odiham castle which was the site of a dramatic siege.)

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