

First World War Centenary: City of London commemorative events

The National Commemoration of the War

1. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is the lead Government department for the commemorations. The Imperial War Museum (which will reopen in July 2014) is leading the First World War Centenary Partnership, a network of local, regional, national and international cultural and educational organisations. Activities will fall into 3 main categories: remembrance, youth and education. The role of women and the Commonwealth are key themes.
2. The start of the War will be marked by a Church Service at Glasgow Cathedral, the focus being on the Commonwealth contribution to the War. A vigil will take place at Westminster Abbey and will be replicated in other Churches across the country. The other key dates around which activity will be focused are April 2015 (the Gallipoli Campaign); May 2016 (Battle of Jutland) and July 2016 (Battle of the Somme); July 2017 (Battle of Passchendaele); and Armistice Day 1918. National commemorative projects include paving stones for Victoria Cross recipients, restoration of War memorials, trips from all state schools to First World War battlefields, digitisation of War diaries and a very large number of cultural events.

City of London events

Lord Mayor

3. The Lord Mayor will attend the Commonwealth Service on 4th August at Glasgow Cathedral, followed by a wreath-laying, to mark the start of the War.
4. The London Historical Society is organising a week-long battlefield tour to Ypres in August this year. The Lord Mayor and Sheriffs will attend the weekend ceremonies, including a wreath-laying ceremony on 30th August. The Society will be inviting its members, including Members and Liverymen, to join the tour.
5. The Lord Mayor's overseas visits may also provide an opportunity to attend commemorations that coincide with the visits.

Guildhall

6. Professor Jeremy Black will give a lecture on 21st July at Guildhall looking at the effect of the outbreak of the War on people in London. Professor Black, who is the Professor of History at the University of Exeter, is a widely-known and stimulating lecturer. The lecture will serve to profile the exhibition being mounted by the London Metropolitan Archives "Emergency! 1914" described below. The talk, which will be in the Old Library, will be followed by a reception, at which selected artefacts will be displayed.

Royal Hospital Chelsea

7. There will be a March to the Royal Hospital Chelsea by the London Regiment and uniformed youth organisations (including the Cadet forces and Scout Association) on 28th June 2014 to honour the contributions of the London Reserve forces to the War. This will be the first national event and all London Borough Mayors and Leaders will be invited. The City is contributing to the cost of a reception to follow a drumhead service in the grounds of the Royal Hospital. Contributions to the project (which also includes the preparation of an on-line inventory of regiments in London in 1914) are also being sought from the boroughs.

Guildhall Library

8. An exhibition entitled *From Beef Tea to Battleships: Personal Stories from the First World War* will run from 4th August to 12th November. This will focus on personal stories, and use iconic items such as medals, letters and other personal effects to bring those stories to life.
9. An exhibition of contemporary war photography, *The Remembrance Image Project*, will run concurrently. On display will be images from photographer Simon Gregor, taken of sites associated with the conflict at the anniversary of when they saw action. An accompanying afternoon talk and photography workshop based on this project will also take place.
10. Working with an installation artist, there will be an installation of poppies in the exhibition space. Details are still to be confirmed, but it is envisaged that appeal poppies from the Royal British Legion will be used, with visitors able to take poppies from the installation in return for a donation to the Royal British Legion.
11. There will be a programme of accompanying afternoon and evening events. These will include poetry readings, an exhibition launch, lectures (with speakers from organisations such as the British Postal Museum and Archive and the Bank of England) and a workshop.

Keats House

12. Keats House hosted an afternoon poetry event *The Great War Remembered* on 10th May. This commemorated the centenary of the outbreak of the War. A second event *War Poetry from Home* will take place on 9th August. This event will feature war poetry written by poets not involved in combat and will also focus on women who have had to face the loss in war of loved ones. Keats House is also planning a joint event with Poet in the City for the autumn of 2014.

Guildhall Art Gallery

13. There will be a 'painting in focus' programme starting in July 2014 until at least December 2014 looking in detail at individual works in the Gallery's

collections with a WW1 theme, beginning with 'Recruiting at the Guildhall' by Fred Roe.

14. Items from the LMA collections will be displayed in the new City of London Heritage Gallery at times during the commemoration period.
15. The Gallery is working with the City of London Festival on a joint event for the 2014 Festival, possibly a performance of WW1 songs and/or a spoken word event inspired by Lord Wakefield's speech at the Guildhall recruitment.

Barbican

16. The Barbican, with Create London, is commissioning Historypin to deliver a major digital archiving and community engagement project called "Barking and Dagenham: A 100 year retrospective". The Barbican will work with local people and local and national organisations to create an on-line archive focusing on the centenary of WW1. The project will be presented publicly in September 2014.
17. The Barbican is also staging the following (all are Barbican promotions except where noted):

Music

Folk, poetry and live video staging event on 18th September in the Hall.

LSO concert on 2nd November with world premiere of new work by Sally Beamish, a setting for poetry by Andrew Motion (promoted by LSO).

Theatre

English National Ballet - [Lest We Forget](#): Dance inspired by the centenary of the Great War (2nd – 12th April 2014) (promoted by ENB).

The Forbidden Zone, a new live multimedia production by Director Katie Mitchell that looks at the War through the personal experiences of key characters. This will be presented at the Salzburg Festival in summer 2014. The film element could potentially be streamed live at the Barbican. It is intended that the actual production will take place at the Barbican in 2016.

Another possible project is a collaboration with the National Theatre of Hungary and Prague on a play directed by Robert Wilson called "2014".

Cinema

3 silent films with live music. These may include “The Battle of the Somme” and similar German and French films. Possible Guildhall commission for music for one film (autumn 2014).

Barbican and Community Libraries

18. The annual Cityread across London in April 2014 focused on two books set during the First World War: Louisa Young’s ‘My dear I wanted to tell you’ (for adults) and Michael Morpurgo’s ‘Private Peaceful’ (for children). The programme included talks, a playreading, poetry readings and guided walks around the Square Mile. Book groups at Shoe Lane, Artizan Street and London Metropolitan Archives were involved as well as the Barbican Library. Throughout the month Barbican Library customers were offered the opportunity to research family history and connections with the Great War in one-to-one guided sessions using the library’s genealogy databases.
19. The Barbican Library will host an exhibition from 5th November to 31st December 2014 in the Music Library with the Royal Fusiliers, probably focusing on diaries and letters.

The Museum of London

20. The Museum of London has a First World War programme which in 2014 will include:
 - 4th April – 28th September: ‘From the photographs of Christina Broom’ a selection of images will be exhibited in the Foyer from the newly acquired collection of over 2000 images focusing on her work as a photographer of troops in London during the First World War.
 - 4th April – ongoing: a selection of First World War posters from the Museum’s collections will be added to the galleries at the Museum of London Docklands.
 - 5th April: the Museum of London Docklands hosted a Cityread family day, with a focus on two books about the First World War.
 - 4th August: the Museum will commemorate the outbreak of War with the addition of new material to their Collections Online resource, drawing on their First World War collections. There will be further phased releases during the course of the centenary.
21. Other plans for 2014 include three short films for YouTube, crowdsourcing activities linked to some of the Museum’s First World War collections, the start of a project to map First World War sites across London, and genealogical research following some of the individuals who worked at the London Museum or Guildhall Museum.
22. Further events are planned up to 2018. The Museum’s primary focus in 2015 will be a major public archaeology excavation of a First World War site in London and there will also be a display or exhibition to mark the anniversary

of the first Zeppelin raid on London on 31st May 1915. The Museum intends to commemorate the February 2018 anniversary of the Representation of the People Act of 1918, which granted partial suffrage to women.

Gresham College

23. Gresham College is planning a series of lectures on World War I titled "How Britain entered the War". Starting in autumn 2014, the series is being developed in conjunction with King's College London, Cambridge University and Christopher Clarke, author of "The Sleepwalkers: How Europe went to War in 1914".
24. Before then they have provided two lectures connected to this subject. On 10th March, in a lecture on "The First World War: Disease, the Only Victor", Professor Francis Cox discussed the conditions necessary for starting epidemics and the spread of diseases not only during the War but also in its aftermath. On 27th May, in a lecture called "Britain and 1914", Professor Vernon Bogdanor analysed whether criticisms of the Government for failing to avert the War are justified in the light of modern historical research.

London Metropolitan Archives

25. LMA has a large amount of information on WW1 within its collections, including those of the former London County Council (LCC). The collections are particularly strong on local government and businesses and their collective responses to the War, although LMA also has material on families and individuals.
26. LMA has already produced three guides to WW1 sources, available [online](#). Second editions will be produced in the first half of 2014 which will include further research which was undertaken in 2013.
27. LMA will host an exhibition called "Emergency! 1914" from 19th May to 25th September 2014, supported in part by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The exhibition will explore the civic response to the First World War, revealing immediate civilian reactions to the War and focusing on the LCC Special Emergency Committee which met first on 11th August 1914. The Committee received weekly reports on matters such as unemployment and distress in inner London, and morale generally in London in summer/autumn 1914. Proposals include a real-time Twitter feed for August-December 2014, a blog and online galleries as part of the exhibition. LMA will recruit volunteers from London higher and further education institutions to investigate the archives. Training will be provided in document analysis, creative writing and digitisation processes.
28. LMA is applying for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to create an Online map of London. This would be an access point for digitised content from a range of archives, including re-created audio. Stories would be derived from content linked to a particular place, for example, somewhere which was bombed. London borough archive services are being invited to work with LMA as partners. Over half of the 32 boroughs have already expressed an interest

in taking part. LMA are also in discussions with the RAF Museum at Hendon and (at another point in the spectrum) the Peace Pledge Union may join the application too.

29. LMA is planning an exhibition in 2015-16 on the air raids on London during the First World War. In addition, the LMA may later on provide a commemorative project based on the LCC's Record of War Service publication, which details the approximately 10,000 LCC employees who served in the War, including those who were killed. The records of other London organisations, including businesses, would also be used.

St Paul's Cathedral

30. A Sunday Eucharist Service will be held on 3rd August 2014 at 6.00 p.m. to commemorate the start of the War. There may also be a Service for the HAC later in 2014. The Cathedral will be displaying from August onwards a WW1 altar frontal made by wounded soldiers.

Temple Church

31. The Church will hold a Choral Evensong on Monday 28th July to commemorate the start of the War (this is the date on which War was declared between Austria and Serbia). A Choral Matins Service will take place on Sunday 9th November, followed by an evening of words and music on 11th November. It may stage an exhibition in the Chancel from October to December 2014.

City Schools

32. The City Academies are planning various commemorative activities. At the City of London Academy Islington there will be special assemblies from 3rd - 10th November and a whole Academy assembly on 11th November, the Combined Cadet Force will be likely to feature in the borough's Remembrance events, as they did in 2013, and an application has been made for Combined Education Charity funding to take students in Year 10 to First World War battlefields in July.
33. Plans are also being developed by the independent schools. Each school is taking a party of school pupils to the battlefields. The City of London School will be holding presentations at a school assembly, and mounting a display about the War, including about the pupils who fought and died in the War. Highlights of the City of London Freemen's School programme will include all Year 10 students going to the Ypres Salient, an evening debate concerning the origins of the conflict and Britain's role in it, a discussion with international school partners about German and French commemorations, an evening event to discuss the memories of former soldiers interviewed in the 1970s, a musical performance and an investigation into conscientious objection as a reaction to the conflict. The City of London Girls' School will also be holding special assemblies, film screenings and speakers visits, a memorial board about former pupils and relations who served in the War, and visits to the Imperial War Museum.

34. There is also a plan by the Livery Schools Link to stage an art project linking a number of schools (including potentially the City Academies) with Livery Companies who had an involvement in WW1, culminating in an art exhibition in January 2015. Funding is being sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a pilot project involving one school and the Pattenmakers in Autumn 2014 with a view to developing the project with a further 11 schools and Livery Companies over the next 2 or 3 years. The full project is likely to be launched at the beginning of 2015, and there are initial plans for a final exhibition in 2018.

Tower of London

35. Plans to 'plant' 888,246 ceramic poppies in the moat at the Tower of London have been announced. The poppies – one for each British and Commonwealth fatality during the First World War – will be unveiled on 5th August 2014. This will be part of the Historic Royal Palaces' programme to mark the centenary. During the First World War the Tower's moat was used to swear in over 1,600 men who had enlisted by the end of August 1914 at the recruitment station in the City. They formed the 10th Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, the so-called 'stock brokers battalion', who fought for the duration of the War. A programme of events will accompany the installation which will remain until 11 am on 11 November 2014. They will then be sold individually to the public, to raise money for six armed forces charities.

Bank of England

36. From 21st July 2014 to the end of the year, the Bank of England Museum will stage a temporary exhibition looking at the impact the War had on the economy, and its effects on the Bank of England and its staff.

Lights out event

37. This is a Government-backed project as part of which everyone in the country will be encouraged on 4th August 2014 to turn out all lights between 10pm and 11pm, the hour of the declaration of War, except for a single candle. There will be a candlelight service in Westminster Abbey during the hour. Steps are being taken to ensure that there is full City participation by both residential and business owners, and in particular to arrange for iconic buildings in the City to be involved.