



Honouring Great Paxton's 1st and 2nd World War Heroes

and commemorating 100 years since the end of the First World War.



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Thank you all for coming to The Bell on the 17th January. It was a very enthusiastic group of about 12 people, in fact so enthusiastic that it was all a bit chaotic!

However, after introductions all round we heard from Roy whose existing research forms part of what is already known about the soldiers on our War Memorial. He gave us a quick rundown of the First World War battles and spoke about our soldiers in order of the date they were killed.

Then those people who wished to be Custodians of a Soldier chose the Name they wanted to be responsible for. Not all present wanted to take a soldier, as they wished to research the wounded survivor who previously lived in their house (Andy), or already had a family member to investigate (Ivan). Ivan has also taken the lead in researching the aircrew who died in the Second World War when the Lancaster crashed.

Of the eleven Names, six have been claimed leaving five more to be adopted by Custodians. Please get in touch with either Andy Cowham or Jacqueline Wieczorek if you are interested in doing some research either online from home or using the resources at the Library. Don't worry if you have never done this sort of investigation before, I'm sure there will be people to give you suggestions and help. For starters we will give you the research already done.

We would also like people to investigate the other young men who returned alive. Can we find out the names of all who went? We also know some houses in London Lane were built for returning soldiers wounded in the war but as yet nothing more. Who were they, where did they come from, what are their stories?

Other people have said they will help in the arrangements to commemorate Remembrance Sunday in November. All kinds of tasks will be available as we start planning.

As well as the formal Service at our Holy Trinity Church in the morning, it is suggested there is an event at The Bell for lunch and later in the day. We would also like a parade of the youngsters in village groups to go from the Green to the Church as used to be held. We would like the soldiers that are to be remembered to be seen by many and it is suggested that we create a combined memorial display on the Green at the top of Church Lane for a few weeks around November 11th. Ideas are needed and plans need to be made and if money is required, grants and donations applied for. November is not far away and will come very quickly.

We hope we can also put something outside the houses where we know a soldier lived. We know that Lionel Cane, the son of the Vicar Reverend Cane, lived in the Vicarage which is now Paxton Place and Major Edmund Cardell lived at Petherwin. Maybe some of the new research will tell us where the other young men lived, and maybe the location can be identified even if the actual building has gone. As most of the Village was along what is now the High Street there will have been many changes in a hundred years.

It was suggested that the names of the Lancaster crew are read out on Remembrance Sunday since although they didn't live in Great Paxton, their memory needs to become part of our village history. A physical memorial has been suggested somewhere in the village, and maybe a plaque in the church as well. This will need funding and probably planning permission, as well as design and commissioning etc. It's not strictly part of 2018, but that's not a reason to delay.

We discussed holding separate meetings from the local history group but it was decided to combine the groups as it's all Village History and of interest to all of us. We might even be able to make a booklet of what is discovered, so it is not lost again.

Therefore the next meeting will be at The Bell on Wednesday 21st February at 7.30, followed by Wednesday 14th March. As the research by Custodians is already underway we need to discuss and decide what we are going to do for the displays and for November 11th and get that organised. So please put your thinking caps on and bring lots of ideas to the meeting.

Please tell others what we are doing and encourage them to join us. There were over 20 names commenting on Andy's initial Facebook post on the village community page so it would be good to get these people involved as well.

We now have a dedicated Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2016657235240761/>

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Where we can post our researches, ask questions, and encourage each other.

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