

Review of the WW1 Commemorations

Introduction

During the centenary of the First World War, 2016 has represented a special moment for Orkney to reflect and remember those who lost their lives during the conflict. During the course of this year, a wide range of exhibitions and events took place that had a particular emphasis on the war at sea and the great sacrifice made by those who served at sea during WW1 and civil maritime communities. The core of the activity was focussed during a commemorative week between Saturday 28 May and Sunday 5 June, with particular emphasis placed on the Battle of Jutland commemorations, with Orkney hosting the national commemoration.

The Battle of Jutland

The Battle of Jutland was the key naval engagement of the Great War with 99 German and 150 British ships involved between 31 May and 1 June 1916. It remains to this day the largest ever naval battle, with the loss of around 6,000 British and 2,500 German lives. The Battle of Jutland commemorations are one of five key national commemorations during the centenary of the 1914-18 conflict. Orkney, the home of the Grand Fleet during the First World War, was at the heart of the Jutland commemorations. In addition there were smaller-scale events in Plymouth, Portsmouth, Chatham, South Queensferry, Belfast and at sea, over the Jutland Bank.



Pre Service

On Tuesday 31 May 2016 the commemorations were arranged to mark 100 years since the beginning of the battle with a service held in St Magnus Cathedral in the morning followed by a service in the Lyness Naval Cemetery in the afternoon. Prior to the Cathedral service, the Royal Marine Band and the Federal German Naval Band performed a ceremonial March-on from Kirkwall Harbour to the Kirk Green,

with each then playing for around 10 minutes. This was followed by the Kirkwall City Pipe Band playing, before the Royal Marine Band marched-on for a second time, this time with a full 96 man Royal Guard.

St Magnus Cathedral

The service in St Magnus Cathedral was led by Reverend Fraser Macnaughton and the Venerable Ian Wheatley, Chaplain of the Fleet, with contributions from German Military Chaplain Marcus Christ. In attendance at the service were around 200 descendants, 150 local people and 110 dignitaries, service personnel and invited guests. This included the President of the Federal Republic of Germany Joachim Gauck, Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence and the Right Honourable David Cameron MP, Prime Minister. There were a further 288 participants in the service. The service had very strong local connections, providing very familiar content for local people. This included readings by two young local people, the lighting of the candle of remembrance and hope and the musical performances of local artists. The local elements were carefully mixed with a strong naval feel demonstrated throughout the service, with both the Royal Navy and the Federal German Navy providing readings, interlocked with one another to promote peace and reconciliation and the realisation that the same effects of war were felt by people on both sides. At the end of the service, a wreath laying took place at the Orkney War Memorial by the Princess Royal and the German President.

Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery

In the afternoon, a service took place at the Lyness Royal Naval cemetery with 400 people in the congregation, including 160 locals, 100 descendants and 140 dignitaries, service personnel and invited guests. There were a further 280 participants in the service. A group of around 70 VIPs attended both services, but otherwise the congregation at Lyness brought together a different mix of people to those who took part in the Cathedral service. Once again, the service had a local feel due to the involvement of people from the local and wider Orkney community, including North Walls school pupils who laid flowers at the Jutland Graves, pictured below, the Mayfield Singers and the Stromness Royal British Legion Pipe Band. Fittingly for the surroundings, there was a stronger naval feel to this service – led from the Drum Head alter - and once again there was a mixture of British and German speakers to ensure the themes of remembrance, peace and reconciliation were clear.



Public Viewing

Large screens were fitted on Broad Street, one outside the Reel and one outside David Spence, with pedestrian barriers installed to keep the road clear and to divert the gathered crowds to the most suitable spaces. It is estimated that there were 2,000 people on the street to watch the pre-service march-on and playing by the bands. There was also a large screen installed within the main arena at the Pickaquoy Centre, with around 180 people watching the service from there. The BBC broadcast the service from St Magnus Cathedral live on BBC One and was watched live by 800,000 people. The service from Lyness was watched live by 100,000 people on the BBC News Channel and a special round up programme that evening on BBC2 which drew an audience of 1 million people.

Poppies: Weeping Window

Poppies: Weeping Window display was at St Magnus Cathedral between 22 April and 12 June 2016 as part of a UK-wide tour by 14-18 NOW. Orkney was the first location in Scotland to host the artwork, originally seen pouring from a high window to the ground below at the Tower of London as part of the installation *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper. The display helped to set the scene for the key commemorative events and wider cultural programme. The Poppies proved to be a poignant reminder of the loss of life suffered and the public response to the work by local communities and visitors to Orkney was truly exceptional.

The artwork experienced more than 50,000 visits during the 7 week period. In the last week alone over 15,000 people visited the Cathedral, an increase of 3 – 4 times on last year's numbers. 14-18 NOW have indicated that there were a total of 884 articles and broadcast pieces mentioning the poppies in Orkney, the total reach of these articles being 87,231,338 people worldwide.

Nick Jellicoe, the grandson of Admiral of the Fleet during the First World War, Lord Jellicoe, performed a talk on the evening of official opening of the Poppies on Friday 22 April, which attracted around 100 people.

The shared ownership that people in Orkney feel for the Cathedral quickly translated to the poppies and the overriding expression was one of pride in the county hosting the artwork and having their own moment to reflect. The collective team work of individuals and agencies, which has been the principal success of the commemorative period, was highlighted by the 80 volunteers who came together to care for the poppies and engage with people about the poppies artwork. Volunteers have expressed their joy at have been able to play a part, many have made new friends through the process and will now continue to volunteer in the future. In addition, several local businesses created window displays linked to the poppies.



HMS Hampshire

The Orkney Heritage Society started a project in 2015 with the aim of “better remembering” all of those lost when HMS *Hampshire* sank on 5 June 1916 after hitting a mine laid by German Submarine *U-75*. Records from the time stated that around 650 people lost their lives; however research from local historians confirmed that there were in fact 737 people who died, with only 12 survivors. It was decided to build a commemorative wall around the Kitchener Memorial, which would list the names of all of those who lost their lives, as well as the nine crew members of HM Drifter *Laurel Crown* which sank on 22 June 1916 when minesweeping in the same area where HMS *Hampshire* was lost. Orkney Heritage Society raised money towards the raising of the wall and the restoration of the Kitchener Memorial, with the work beginning in September 2015, finishing at the end of May 2016.

Orkney Island Council organised a commemoration service to be held on Sunday 5 June 2016, marking exactly 100 years since the sinking of HMS *Hampshire*, with the new commemorative wall also being officially unveiled. The service was led by Revered David McNeish, with Reverend David Dawson and Reverend Dr Bob Gillies also contributing. The three key themes of the service were the Past, the Present and the Future, with the service focussing on the Armed Forces, remembrance of those who were lost and the impact on the local community. These themes were reflected throughout the service, particularly in the wreath laying sequence and in the readings made by several local community members and cadets. The Royal Navy and Royal Engineers each provided a 4 + 1 guard, with the Royal Navy also providing 2 bugle players. The Stromness Royal British Legion pipe band played to welcome everyone to the site, with the Salvation Army and Kirkwall Town Band playing the music at Marwick Head to accompany the hymns, sung by a choir arranged specifically for the service.

The service began at 20:00 and lasted 45 minutes, culminating at 20:45 with a two-minute silence, signalled at each end by a single gun salute made by HMS *Duncan*, which was sitting over the wreck site of HMS *Hampshire*, whilst MV *Pharos* sat above the wreck site of HM Drifter *Laurel Crown*. At the end of the silence, a lone piper played a lament as he walked down the hill, with the gathered crowd asked to depart down the hill in silence following the piper. All of those remaining were invited to lay a wreath or a poppy cross either at the commemorative wall or at the Kitchener Memorial. It is estimated that around 800 people were at the memorial in total for the service, this included around 100 descendants and relatives of those on-board HMS *Hampshire*.

The service was recorded and broadcast live into the Birsay Hall. This meant that anyone unable to get to the memorial would be able to watch the service as it happened. There were around 100 people in the hall to watch the service. Furthermore, the service was also streamed live across the internet, meaning that it was available to people all across the world – with viewers across 10 different countries, the service had a truly global reach, as shown below. So far the service has had over 5,200 views, including over 3,500 unique views, of which over 2,000 were when the service was live.



The Royal Navy

The Royal Navy provided a huge presence in Orkney between Saturday 28 May and Sunday 5 June, including HMS *Bulwark*, HMS *Duncan* (pictured below) and HMS *Kent* in addition to a further eight P2000, or Archer-class fast patrol boats. This was complemented by the Federal German Naval Ships FGS *Brandenberg* and FGS *Schleswig Holstein*. As a result, there were over 1,000 service personnel stationed in Orkney across the week. The Battle of Jutland commemorations were the Royal Navy's main commemoration of the First World War period. As a result, they used the opportunity for as much public engagement as possible:

- Between Wednesday 1 June and Saturday 4 June, the P2000s were sent to the isles, with Eday, Graemsay, Hoy, Rousay, Sanday, Stronsay and Westray all visited. There were 4 based in Kirkwall and 4 based in Stromness.
- On Wednesday 1 June, the Royal Marine Band and Federal German Naval Band performed a concert at the Pickaquoy Centre. This was a sell out with over 1,100 people attending. Over £3,600 was raised for charity, which will be split between the RNLI and the Royal Naval charity.

- On Wednesday 1 June and Friday 3 June, there were visits made to the ships by 12 separate schools, allowing around 250 pupils the chance to have a tour of the vessels.
- The Royal Marine Visibility team spent a day in each of Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy, they provided a mixture of Personal Training and Team Building , and Leadership exercises to the senior pupils.
- On Thursday 2 June, the Royal Navy Presentation team put on a presentation in the Warehouse building in Stromness to 100 people.
- On Friday 3 June HMS *Duncan* hosted a reception for the people involved in delivering the WW1 Commemorations and those with wider community links to the Navy via youth groups. This provided around 160 people the chance to have a guided tour around HMS *Duncan* and to receive a talk from the Presentation Team.
- A public open day was held on Saturday 4 June, allowing members of the public the chance to have a tour around both HMS *Duncan* and FGS *Brandenberg*, there were over 2,500 people who visited the ships.



Social media

Social media played a big role in highlighting Orkney's WW1 commemorations and the stories and sacrifice of those who served in the war at sea. And it continues to do so.

In a single week, the hashtag #Jutland100 was used in 23,000 tweets by 12,600 users of Twitter. Many thousands of people viewed the many items featuring the Jutland and Hampshire commemorations posted on the BBC Radio Orkney and OIC Updates Facebook pages. A single post on the Department for Media Culture and Sport's Facebook page reached almost 46,000 Facebook users.

Video recordings of local piper Andy Cant performing 'In Remembrance' during the Jutland Commemoration Service at the Cathedral have so far been viewed almost 10,000 times on YouTube.

Another moving performance from the service – Camron Dowell singing Orkney songwriter Ally Windwick’s ‘Lonely Scapa Flow’ – has been viewed more than 17,000 times on the same social media channel (Figures as at 22 August 2016).

Schools engagement

Since August 2015 all schools across Orkney have engaged in the planning of a commemorative project. Some schools chose to focus on a conflict resolution theme whilst others chose to focus on the act of commemoration within their local communities. All pupils aged 3 – 18 across Orkney have engaged in the commemoration. The commemorative education project has been given particular praise by Norman Drummond, Chair of Scotland’s WW100 Commemoration Panel who chose to spend time with education staff and visit Stromness Primary School on two occasions. This gave him the chance to hear about the involvement of pupils and teachers and to see an outstanding performance of their work. The schools work was featured in this year’s Mountbatten Lecture and in The Times.

- The project has been coordinated by members of the Council’s Education Leisure and Housing team.
- Each school has been represented by a class teacher at number of working group meetings.
- This model has facilitated the cascading of ideas and sharing of best practice.
- Over the course of this term and during last term all schools will have implemented their planned projects.
- Pupils have gained a deeper understanding of Orkney’s role during WWI.
- Some pupils will have developed skills and knowledge within conflict resolution.
- Many schools have used WWI and conflict resolution as a foundation for the study of contemporary conflict.
- Pupils have developed a deeper knowledge of Orkney’s historical heritage in relation to WWI and its continued cultural significance.
- Many schools showcased the work they have been doing within their school environments, providing opportunities for family, friends and the wider community to engage.
- A wide selection of work from all schools was brought together and showcased during Orkney’s core commemorative week at the Picky Centre.
- Many schools used the topic as an opportunity to make visits to the summer exhibition at the Orkney Museum, the new display at the Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum, Lyness Naval Cemetery, the Poppies and the Kitchener Memorial.
- The ELH team is thinking carefully about how we ensure that the concept of conflict resolution is a regular topic in our curriculum planning.

Provided below are just a few examples highlighting the work undertaken by pupils across Orkney’s schools:

Glaitness Primary – P6

- Conflict Resolution: Novel study – Listen to the Moon by Michael Morpurgo.

- Use novel to explore issues such as fear, suspicion, forgiveness, war propaganda and effect of war on civilians. Relate to modern day conflicts, terrorism and refugees.
- Outcome: Pupils will have a better understanding of the causes and effects of war.

Westray Junior High School

- Remembrance: Look at poppies – what are they a symbol of?
- Grow a poppy patch and create a quiet thinking and remembering space.
- Create a poppy collage for the wall.
- Outcome: Children will be aware of the need for quiet reflection and remembrance in our lives.

Stromness Primary School

- Orkney's Local Cultural Heritage: Research the stories of Jutland, HMS *Hampshire* and local life in WW1. Create drawings with local artists (Alex Leonard, Britt Marcus). Learn songs from the time. Create a book with the pupil's drawings and stories. Perform 'Archie Dobson's War' – BBC Script. Participate in commemoration events within the school and wider community.
- Outcomes: Children will have a better understanding of Orkney's cultural heritage and place within the First World War.



Museums

The Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum revamped its WW1 display, installing new interpretation with additional focus relating to the Battle of Jutland and the loss of HMS Hampshire. The number of visitors to the museum has spiked this year, with there being 1750 visitors between Monday 30 May and Wednesday 15 June – this compares to around 700 in the same period in 2015. From the comments received

from the visitors and comments in the Visitors' Book, a fair proportion of these visitors are Jutland or Hampshire descendants who couldn't visit during the commemorations, and it is expected that this trend will continue throughout the summer.

The summer exhibition at the Orkney Museum focuses on the War at Sea and Orkney's involvement in it. As with the Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum, the visitor numbers attending the Orkney Museum have spiked recently, with 4,268 people between Monday 30 May and Sunday 12 June, compared to 2,233 in the same period last year.

There have also been other exhibitions related to the WW1 Commemorations, with the Stromness Museum summer exhibition focusing on HMS Hampshire and the death of Lord Kitchener, whilst in Sanday there was an exhibition at the Sanday Heritage Centre which focussed on the B-98 and U-70 wrecks.

Wider Commemorative Programme - Culture Fund

Due to the Battle of Jutland and the HMS Hampshire commemorations taking place, alongside the engagement with the Royal Navy, it was hoped to have a wider programme of WW1 related activity taking place across Orkney. Local groups and organisations were encouraged to apply to a special culture fund for financial support for events which would support of the Jutland and Hampshire commemorations. Four organisations received funding, with a total of £5,000 awarded.

- First up was the Northern Isles Festival Tattoo, this was performed as part of the Orkney Folk Festival on Saturday 28 May in the main arena at the Pickaquoy Centre, with 700 people attending.
- The Birsay Heritage Trust set up an exhibition at the Birsay Hall entitled "Remembering the Hampshire", this was open between Friday 3 June and Monday 6 June and attracted over 600 visitors across the weekend. The Birsay Hall committee served up vintage cream teas for the visitors.
- The Birsay Drama group created a Foy using the funding that they received; this was performed twice on Friday 3 June to around 220 people. On Saturday 4 June the Foy was performed again, with supporting WW1 themed entertainment, there were around 230 people in attendance. The success of the Foy led to it being re-performed as the Johnsmas Foy at the St Magnus International Festival.
- The Sanday Heritage group used their funding to host a weekend of WW1 related activity in relation to the B-98 and U-70 wrecks. This included the showing of the "War at Sea: Scotland's Story" on Friday 3 June to around 75 people, followed by a full day of events on Saturday 4 June, including guided walks and talks to around 100 people. Some pictures of the Sanday events are shown below.



Other Commemorative activity

In addition to the events organised with the support of the special WW1 Culture Fund, there were several other events which took place between Saturday 28 May and Sunday 5 June. These events, as well as the ones supported by the Culture Fund were included in the First World War Commemorative Cultural Programme created by Orkney Islands Council.

- On Monday 30 May, local author and historian Angus Konstam, who has recently written a book about the Battle of Jutland, held a book event and talk at the Orcadian bookshop, with around 70 people in attendance.
- On Monday 30 May, the film “Battle of Coronal and Falkland Islands” was shown in the Gable End Theatre in Hoy. There were around 40 people there to watch it, including around 10 visitors to the island.
- On Tuesday May 31, a special event was held at the Kirkwall Branch of the British Legion Scotland during the Battle of Jutland commemorations. It was attended by more than 160 people. They included more than 50 elderly people from residential care homes, day centres and very sheltered housing units, as well as veterans and service personnel. Two of the Council’s care staff, Senga Taylor and Lynn Drever, came up with the idea. Those attending enjoyed lunch and watched the live coverage of the commemoration events at the Cathedral and Lyness on large-screen televisions. During lunch, a recording of St Andrew’s school children singing a medley of WWI songs was played followed by a sing-along with Gwenda and Stewart Shearer. A range of Orkney businesses provided invaluable help and support in making this such a successful event. In addition, the elderly people present were offered the chance to visit Hatston Pier by bus to see HMS Bulwark, which was stationed there during the Jutland commemorations.
- On Wednesday 1 June, the Archaeology Institute of the University of the Highlands and Islands presented an illustrated talk at the Birsay Hall to around 80

people, titled “Remembering the Hampshire”. This included some footage and pictures from the ROV survey recently undertaken.

- On Thursday 2 June, Angus Konstam performed a talk in aid of the Sea Cadets at the Sailing Club in Kirkwall, supported by Lt. Cdr. Will Edwards-Bannon RN, from HMS Duncan. There were around 80 people in attendance, raising £380 for the Sea Cadets.
- Between Friday 3 June and Sunday 5 June, the Orkney Amateur Radio club broadcast from Marwick Head, making over 4,000 contacts across the weekend.
- On Saturday 4 June at the Birsay Hall, the film “Battle of Coronel and Falkland Islands” was shown, attracting around 70 people.
- On Saturday 4 June a commemorative Concert and Dance was held at the Royal British Legion in Kirkwall, with 116 people attending.
- On Sunday 5 June the service of worship held at St Magnus Cathedral included some content regarding the loss of HMS Hampshire. Within the congregation of 350 people was Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence and several relatives and descendants of those lost on HMS Hampshire.
- On Sunday 12 June, a special “Remembering the Horse” event took place on the Kirk Green outside the St Magnus Cathedral. There were 8 horses involved, with each one representing One Million Horses, Mules and Donkey’s lost by all sides during the First World War. Each horse and handler was dressed in appropriate attire for the time, representing the different roles that they fulfilled.



HMS Hampshire Royal visit

After the Cathedral service on Sunday 5 June, Her Royal Highness and Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence were taken to the Orkney Museum and hosted by the Vice Convenor. They were introduced to a number of Elected Members before being shown the War at Sea exhibition by Tom Muir. They were then introduced to 9 OIC Officers who have been involved with the WW1 Commemorative Programme and 8 Deputy Lord Lieutenants. After this they attended the Birsay Hall, where they met with 15 local community members and 12 members of the Orkney Heritage Society who had been involved with the HMS Hampshire project. They then met the 90 visiting relatives and descendants of those lost on HMS Hampshire, before Dounby Primary school children performed a song. Prior to departing, Her Royal Highness signed the HMS *Hampshire* book of remembrance.

Future commemorations

2017

The “Next of Kin” exhibition will be at the Orkney Museum between February and May.

HMS *Vanguard* sank in Scapa Flow on 9 July 1917, after an explosion with the loss of 843 men.

Edwin Dunning completed the first landing of an aircraft on a ship on 2 August 1917, he subsequently died on 7 August 1917 after a failed attempt to land on a ship.

2018

The loss of HMS *Narborough* and HMS *Opal* at Windwick in South Ronaldsay on 12 January 1918 will be remembered.

Armistice Day will be the key commemorative focus in 2018, marking the centenary of the end of the Great War, on 11 November 2018 at 11am.

2019

The scuttling of the German Fleet on 21 June 1919 provides a unique story for Orkney to tell and to commemorate.

