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COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
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.....
ANNUAL REPORT
2021 - 2022
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Principal Offices

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**THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION**
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PRESIDENT

HRH The Duke of Kent
KG GCMG GCVO ADC (P)

CHAIRMAN

The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP

VICE CHAIRMAN

Lt Gen Sir Bill Rollo KCB CBE

MEMBERS

**The High Commissioner for
Canada**

His Excellency
The Hon Ralph Goodale PC

Air Marshal David Walker
CB CBE AFC

Dame Judith Mayhew Jonas
DBE

**The High Commissioner for
The Republic of South Africa**

His Excellency
Jeremiah Nyamane Mamabolo

Mr Vasuki Shastry

Dame Diana Johnson MP DBE

**The Acting High Commissioner
for Australia**

Ms Lynette Wood

Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP

Vice Admiral Peter Hudson
CB CBE

**The High Commissioner
for India**

His Excellency
Mr Vikram K. Doraiswami

Sir Tim Hitchens KCVO CMG

Ms Keryn James

**The Acting High Commissioner
for New Zealand**

Ms Shannon Austin

**COMMONWEALTH WAR
GRAVES FOUNDATION
TRUSTEES**

Chair

Dame Judith Mayhew Jonas
DBE

Maj Gen Alastair Bruce OBE
VR KStJ

The Rt Hon Kevan Jones MP

Sir Adrian Montague CBE

Captain Jay Singh-Sohal

Mr Julian Evans

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Director General Mrs Claire Horton CBE
Director of Operations Mr Barry Murphy
Director of External Relations Ms Liz Woodfield
General Counsel Mr Vincent Collins
Interim Director of Human Resources
Ms Caroline Roberts

Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Mr Ian Hill
**Director of Global Strategy and Commonwealth
Relations** Mr Iain Lower CB

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HIGHLIGHTS
2021-2022
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A SELECTION OF HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR'S NUMEROUS
ACHIEVEMENTS CELEBRATED IN THIS REPORT.



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**EDUCATION,
ENGAGEMENT
AND OUTREACH**
Raising awareness
of our work



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OUR PEOPLE
Recognising
excellence and
commitment

.....
**FOREWORD BY THE VICE CHAIRMAN
LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR BILL ROLLO KCB CBE**
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As I write, July 2021 seems a distant past and it is already difficult to remember just how much Covid, at its most severe, restricted our operations. In part this is the reaction of a merciful memory. In part this reflects the admirable way the Commission's staff has worked through these restrictions, delivering a full works programme including a comprehensive restoration of Thiepval, and maintained standards through a range of difficult climactic challenges. It has been heartening to be able to recommence a targeted programme of visits around the world to see their work on the ground, rather than through a mobile lens, and to thank our staff face to face.

In terms of leadership, our Chairman has remained the Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP, the UK's Secretary of State for Defence. However, there has been a significant turnover in the representatives of our

member governments. The Hon George Brandis QC, Mrs Gaitri Issac Kumar, Mr Bede Corry, and Ms Nomatamba Tembo, respectively the High Commissioners for Australia, India, New Zealand, and South Africa, have departed. We have benefitted greatly from their wise counsel, and look forward to welcoming their replacements to the Commission. In the meantime we are very grateful for the ongoing support of the High Commissions.

We were delighted to welcome our President, HRH The Duke of Kent, to the reinterment of nine soldiers (eight from the Northumberland Fusiliers and one unknown), discovered by chance during road work, at CWGC's cemetery at Tyne Cot in November. The fact that eight of the nine had been positively identified reflects the very close cooperation between the Belgian authorities, the UK MoD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC)

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Vice Chairman Sir Bill Rollo KCB CBE visiting a memorial for the crew of the 'MacRobert's Reply' bomber at Middelbart Søndre Cemetery, Denmark, in May
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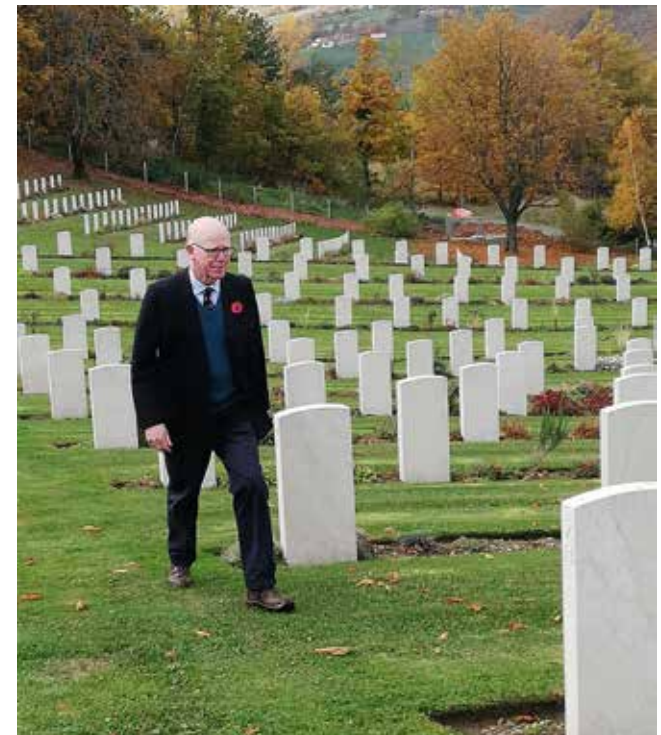
WE WERE ALSO PRIVILEGED, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE LOCAL FRENCH AUTHORITIES, TO HOST A VISIT BY HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL TO OUR CEMETERY AT ETAPLES.

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and the Commission as well as the ongoing nature of our work. We anticipate that, in addition to the recent average recovery of 40-50 soldiers per year, several hundred additional burials may be found over the next few years as the Seine-Nord Europe Canal is constructed across the battlefields of the First World War.

We were also privileged, in conjunction with the local French authorities, to host a visit by HRH The Princess Royal to our cemetery at Etaples, to mark the centenary of the King's Pilgrimage in 1922 when King George V toured the Commission's work in France and Belgium after the First World War. The King's words at the time, "I have many times asked myself whether there can be more potent advocates of peace upon the Earth through the years to come, than this massed multitude of silent witnesses to the desolation of war" continue to resonate today.

Looking forwards, the Commission has a full programme. The Strategy Review aims to look out twenty years, incorporate fully both Sustainability and our Non-Commemoration work, and to chart a course which will enable the Commission to continue to develop and improve its work in a flexible and resilient way through the many challenges ahead. We have much to look forward to. ■



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Top: Vice Chairman visiting Castiglione South African Cemetery in Italy, November 2021
Bottom: Vice Chairman attends the burial of nine soldiers of the First World War at Tyne Cot Cemetery with CWGC President, HRH The Duke of Kent and Director General Claire Horton CBE
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INTRODUCTION FROM DIRECTOR GENERAL
CLAIRE HORTON CBE
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IT HAS BEEN INSPIRING TO MEET OUR
TEAMS FACE TO FACE, TO WITNESS THE
DILIGENCE WITH WHICH THEY WORK
AND TO BETTER APPRECIATE THE
ISSUES THEY OVERCOME TO MAINTAIN
OUR SITES SO BEAUTIFULLY.

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It is a great pleasure to introduce this annual report of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's activities from 2021 to 2022.

It is my great pleasure to present the 2022 annual report for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It showcases just some of our year's achievements, and the continuing dedicated work of our teams all over the world, through the challenges of a changing environmental and political landscape.

This year it has been a privilege to be able to visit our global staff and sites in person, which I had looked forward to since starting in the role of Director General. It is something that under regular circumstances I would have started last year but was necessarily delayed by Covid-19. It has been inspiring to meet our teams face to face, to see first-hand the diligence with which they work, and to better appreciate the issues they overcome to maintain our sites so beautifully. The excellence of two of our colleagues in particular has been recognised beyond our organisation and their achievements are included in this report.

Our core purpose is to commemorate in perpetuity and, as well as the ongoing care of our sites and monuments, manage

events such as rededications, reburials and ceremonial visits which often make our work particularly visible.

2022 marked 100 years since the King's Pilgrimage, a journey undertaken by King George V to visit the battlefields and pay his personal respects at several Commission war cemeteries and memorials. To mark the anniversary of the Pilgrimage we welcomed HRH The Princess Royal, accompanied by Sir Tim Lawrence, former Vice Chairman of the CWGC, to Etaples Military Cemetery as she followed in her great-grandfather's footsteps, demonstrating the enduring impact that commemoration still has.

In November 2021, I was honoured to attend the reburial at Tyne Cot of nine soldiers of the First World War, a very affecting event and my first service as Director General. It is also just one of the many services and commemorations that have been able to take place since late last year.

Our larger scale projects also demonstrate our commitment and the challenges of maintaining our historic sites,

and in these pages you will read of progress at the Thiepval Memorial, the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial and the extension of the Loos British Cemetery. Following the findings of the Special Committee into historical cases of non-commemoration, I have been keenly following the accomplishments of the Non-Commemorated Project in its first year. It has been a priority for the CWGC to strive to ensure that all those who served with Commonwealth forces are honoured. Significant research and engagement work has been undertaken and excellent progress has been made towards a new memorial in Cape Town. A separate and detailed report was published in April providing more insights and demonstrating our commitment to non-commemoration work - this can be found on our website, in addition to a summary of progress within the pages of this Annual Report.

A particular focus of this year for me has been spent with an eye to the future, developing a new long-term strategy and accompanying values for the organisation, consulting with our Commissioners, staff, volunteers, external partners and stakeholders - work that is ongoing. I am thrilled too that we have developed and implemented the CWGC's Sustainability Strategy, playing our part towards a cleaner,

greener world. Within this report are details of how we are developing ways of working to embed sustainability into our core processes.

Finally, our charitable Foundation, the CWGF, continues to develop. The new Speakers and Tour Guides Programme, funded since April by The MacRobert Trust, is growing; Eyes On, Hands On, the programme which facilitates monitoring and caring for our numerous graves in the UK, is well supported by our growing number of volunteers and their invaluable contributions; the return of the Guides (formerly Interns) to France and Belgium to carry out their good work, and an outdoor concert held very successfully are great signs for a positive future.

I hope you enjoy reading about our work and that you are encouraged to support us, whether it's by joining our Foundation as a member, learning more about us on our website or coming along to one of our many public engagement events.

We are committed to ensuring that the memory of all the Commonwealth men and women who died in the two world wars lives on. Our work continues.■

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 : Director General Claire Horton CBE with HRH The Princess
 : Royal at Etaples Military Cemetery in May to commemorate
 : 100 years since The King's Pilgrimage
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.....
THE ANNUAL REPORT
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Welcome to this annual report of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's activities from 2021 to 2022. The aim of this report is to highlight some of the key operations of the Commission and to demonstrate how we fulfil our enduring pledge to commemorate the fallen of the two world wars. This report provides an insight into the scope and impact of the work we undertake, and of the teams and people that make it all possible. We are immensely proud of all our people and our collective achievements. We hope you enjoy reading about our progress and feel inspired to support our work.



OUR
PROMISE

AN UPDATE ON THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE INTO HISTORICAL
INEQUALITIES OF COMMEMORATION

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In December 2019, the Commission appointed a Special Committee of independent experts and community representatives to analyse the historical actions of the Commission within a global context to identify and, wherever possible, correct any gaps in commemoration. Its report made clear that in parts of Africa, the Middle East and India after the First World War, some individuals were not commemorated by name on a memorial or at their grave as we would expect. The Commission of today retains an enduring conviction that the promises we made to those we were set up to serve at our inception, remain binding, and it was without hesitation that we therefore reaffirmed our promise to them.

Since the Special Committee's report was published in April 2021, we have taken significant steps to address the issues identified, and our dedicated project team, supported by a formal five-year programme of works and an injection of resources, is making considerable progress.■

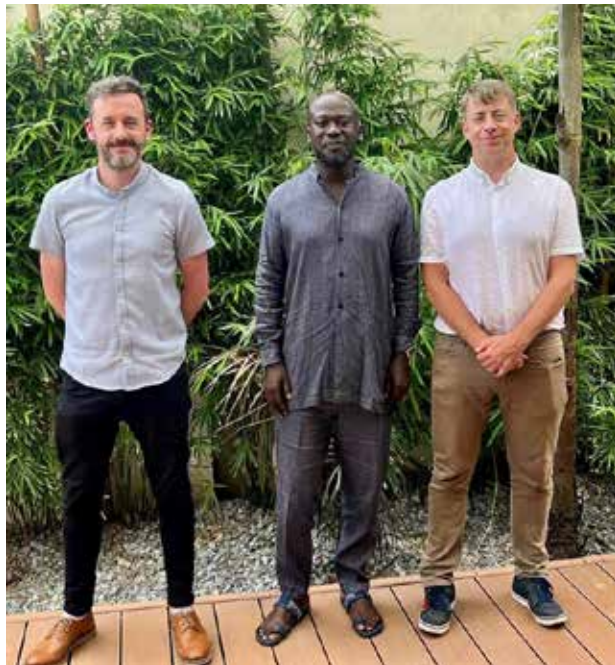


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Director General Claire Horton CBE is shown the Arab Rifles Memorial in Kwale, during a visit to Kenya with Director of Operations Barry Murphy

OUR PROMISE

OUR SUPPORT FOR FURTHER RESEARCH MAY YIELD UP TO 10,000 NAMES OF PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN AND UNCOMMEMORATED INDIAN ARMY WAR DEAD.



Sir David Adjaye OBE with David MacDonald of the non-commemoration project and Director of Operations Barry Murphy



During a visit to Kenya, Director General Claire Horton CBE and Director of Operations Barry Murphy visit the site of an abandoned African grave in Kwale, March 2022

CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS THE SEARCH FOR NAMES

It was recognised at an early stage that the Commission's solutions to the issues identified, and the direction of the wider project, would largely depend upon the search for names – thus it was, and remains a top priority. Hundreds of man-days in archives in the UK and internationally – most notably Nairobi where the support of Kenya's National Archives staff has been key – has identified 6,760 names of individuals not previously recorded. Our commemorations team are processing these finds for inclusion in our records.

Although the pace of discoveries slowed in the second half of this year, there remain several exciting possibilities within Kenya, Tanzania, India and Egypt. A partnership with Dr Gavin Rand and Amandeep Madra OBE, through the auspices of the United Kingdom Punjab Heritage Association, is just one avenue that may yield results. They have discovered the "Punjab Registers" – an important collection of contemporary records, recently digitised – that offers new insights into the scale and distribution of Indian Army casualties. Our support

for further research may yield up to 10,000 names of previously unknown and uncommemorated Indian army war dead. In addition, we plan to work together on several community-based outreach projects.

It is also worth noting that we are increasing our efforts, and developing the appropriate methodologies, in the search for abandoned burials and grave sites. A recent conference in East Africa, involving participants from across the region as well as Europe and our own Head of Recovery, Dr Stephan Naji, made significant progress in determining where we might focus our search, how we might scientifically confirm such locations, and what forms of commemoration might be possible and culturally appropriate. We have been clear from the outset the forms of commemoration will be influenced by local views and advice.

Much work remains to be done, but what is certain is that we will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to find and commemorate those individuals who were forgotten more than a century ago. ■

OUR
PROMISE

THE CAPE TOWN MEMORIAL PROJECT
A NEW MEMORIAL FOR A NEW CENTURY

Once names are found, our focus turns to the appropriate form of commemoration for these individuals. In South Africa, we took major steps to realising a new memorial in Cape Town that will, for the first time, memorialise more than 1,600 black South Africans who died while serving with military labour units in Africa during the First World War. These names were uncovered by volunteer researchers with the 'In From the Cold' project and verified by our commemorations team.

Working with the South African government at national and regional level, and supported by a passionate team of

local experts, we have completed all the preliminary rounds of public participation required to realise a project of this nature. The design for the new memorial was managed through a competition that attracted 56 entries from architects and architectural practices across South Africa.

The successful design will be announced on 1 September by newly appointed CWGC Artistic Advisor Sir David Adjaye OBE, who chaired the judging panel following his appointment in July. The new memorial will be set in the Cape Town Company's Garden, and we remain on target to commence construction in 2023. ■



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: Sir David Adjaye OBE RA, CWGC Artistic Advisor for the
: Cape Town Memorial Project © Chris Schwagga
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THE DESIGN FOR THE NEW MEMORIAL WAS MANAGED THROUGH A COMPETITION THAT ATTRACTED 56 ENTRIES FROM ARCHITECTS AND ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICES ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA.

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: Launch guests with Architect & Competition Administrator Paul Kotze
: (centre) and CWGC project advisor Tiaan Meyer (second from right)
.....



OUR PROMISE



Schoolchildren and teachers visit the CWGC's exhibition at the National Museum and see the Book of Remembrance

SUDANESE VISIT

Word of the Commission's Non-Commemorations work prompted a visit by a high-level military and diplomatic delegation from Sudan to our headquarters in Maidenhead in July. Among the topics discussed was the issue of commemoration by physical memorial of more than 700 Sudanese who died while serving alongside British forces during the Second World War. In the post-war period, it proved impossible for the Commission to commemorate these men in Khartoum (although the names were always in our records), but we are now hopeful that a site for a memorial may be forthcoming.

A formal visit to Sudan later this year will clarify the details for a potential new memorial and further discussions will take place around education and research opportunities. ■



Dr George Hay (far left) and Peter Francis (far right), of the non-commemoration project, welcomed a delegation from the government of Sudan to CWGC's headquarters

SIERRA LEONE

In June, the Commission launched the community engagement element of a project in Sierra Leone to begin the process of commemorating more than 900 men of the Sierra Leone Carrier Corps.

The launch, in the form of a small exhibition and official handing over of a book of names of the dead, was held at the National Museum in Freetown. It was supported by a nationwide social media and radio campaign, to uncover community links to the world wars and the views of the government and populace as to the form and location of any commemorative structure. The campaign proved hugely popular, with the social media posts generating almost 300 comments and 30,000 plus engagements, many of which hint at personal stories the team are keen to follow up.

The exhibition has also been really well received by local schools, so much so that several special resources were delivered to enhance their learning activities. ■

Visitors see the Book of Remembrance containing the names of more than 900 previously uncommemorated Sierra Leonean First World War dead, at a special event at the National Museum in Freetown, Sierra Leone

THE ROAD AHEAD

The past year has seen a significant period of change and progress for the Commission. We don't yet have all the answers to the challenges we face, but we have a dedicated and passionate team, and the resources to support them. We have an engaged public and a supportive network of partners around the globe committed to helping us with our aims, including our diverse advisory panel comprised of subject matter experts with whom we have met to test our thinking and solutions. All of this is backed by our member governments and Commissioners.

There may be a long and challenging road ahead, but it is a journey we embrace as we seek to live up to that commitment enshrined in stone at CWGC sites the world over – Their Name Liveth For Evermore. ■



SUSTAINABILITY

CWGC is perhaps uniquely placed to monitor the global effects of our changing climate and to finding and delivering environmentally sound solutions. The Commission is committed to becoming sustainable organisation, with a focus on the following areas:

- Combating climate change
- Protecting biodiversity
- Promoting a circular economy

We aim to achieve these goals by constantly reviewing and refining how we work and by trialling promising new ways to help reduce our impact on the environment. This may mean some changes to how our cemeteries and memorials look but we remain committed to caring for our cemeteries and memorials worldwide.



Compost Farm Master, Bart Storme monitors the compost farm at Bedford House Cemetery, Belgium

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SUSTAINABILITY
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WE WILL BE CONSTANTLY
LOOKING TO IMPROVE OUR
ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE,
AND THIS IS A LONG-TERM
COMMITMENT.
.....

TAKING ACTION TO PROTECT OUR PLANET

We launched our Environmental Sustainability Plan in February 2022, outlining our strategy and commitment to a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2050.

In this plan, we have defined our sustainability objectives; including the enhancement and improvement of biodiversity across our sites through reduced use of pesticides, using planting to encourage pollination and insect life, as well as being more tolerant of weeds in our

lawns; measuring the water that we use for irrigation of our sites and taking steps to use more plantings that are tolerant of drought; investing in low emission fleets to reduce our impact when travelling to sites, and transitioning to renewable energy suppliers.

We will be constantly looking to improve our environmental performance, and this is a long-term commitment.■

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Log piles, compost and dead hedges teem with life. The team at Brookwood Military Cemetery, UK, have created this deadwood hedge, a habitat for insects, beetles and small mammals



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SUSTAINABILITY
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GOING GREEN –
WE ARE CONTINUOUSLY LOOKING AT AND FINDING NEW METHODS
TO REDUCE AND LIMIT OUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT, WHILST
INCREASING THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF OUR OPERATIONS.
.....

SMALL STEPS ON THE ROAD TO SUSTAINABLE WORKING

There are many ways we are becoming greener in our day-to-day operations. These are just some examples.

Following years of research, we will now be keeping headstones clean with enzyme-based products at some of our sites around the world rather than chemicals. We are on the road to greener driving too, with the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at our France and Belgium offices and we are working with manufacturers on the development of battery powered tools for use in our sites, like lawnmowers and edgers.

Sometimes simple ideas can achieve real environmental benefits. In France, where we purchase tens of thousands of plants per annum, we have replaced plastic pots with biodegradable netting. The netting still protects the plant's roots but allows for it to be inserted straight into the soil, while saving on the use and recycling of as many as 70,000 unwanted plastic plant pots a year. We are also growing more plants in our nurseries, reducing demand from external suppliers and "plant miles".

In Hong Kong, the conservation of water is a priority for us and the team has added split water meters at their base site at Stanley War Cemetery, resulting in better monitoring of water consumption.

In Indonesia the team has also been busy, replacing several large compost bins which had deteriorated. The bins supply 57,000 litres of compost each month and their replacement enables more effective use of this vital product. ■



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*Compost tea machine at Bedford House Cemetery, Belgium,
with Compost Farm Master Bart Storme*



.....
*One of our first electric vehicles and charging
point at our Beaurains office, France*

SUSTAINABILITY

WREATHS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Visit any of our sites around the world and you will find tributes left on the graves of the fallen.

Whilst we encourage this tradition, the wreaths themselves may contain materials that cannot be easily recycled. In response, we have introduced an environmentally friendly alternative.

We are currently trialling the sale of biodegradable wreaths in our Information Centre in Ieper, Belgium. The wreath itself is handmade from woven fresh willow that grows on the former battlefields of the region. When the wreaths begin to fade, they will be collected by our teams and will eventually become compost to help nourish the soil at one of the local cemeteries. ■



The biodegradable wreaths were designed by local florist IeperPlant and are produced in Ieper



Brookwood Military Cemetery's new bug hotel, built to provide natural habitat for insects to hide away and nest

PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY

When you think of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission you wouldn't think of hotels, but we are making them – bug hotels, that is!

We're actively looking to promote biodiversity in our sites around the world and this means supporting or encouraging selected species of wildlife through projects such as nesting boxes, wildflower areas and habitat structures – such as the bug hotels which we've installed at Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery in Yorkshire, Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey, and Bedford House Cemetery in Belgium.

Bug hotels let helpful pollinators and other insects have a place of their own, supporting ecosystems, providing food for birds and other animals, and to help spread spores and seeds from plants, all of which helps to promote biodiversity. ■

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OUR
GLOBAL
OPERATIONS
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For over 100 years we have been devoted to maintaining our cemeteries and memorials across the globe; with the skills, teams, and determination to sustainably conserve our historic estate. Read on to learn more about our global operations projects, how we're reducing our impact on the environment and increasing our sustainability, working with partners around the world.



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*Thiepval Memorial,
France, at night*

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OUR
GLOBAL
OPERATIONS
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WE ARE ONLY THE CURRENT CUSTODIANS OF OUR HISTORIC ESTATE. TO ENSURE LONGEVITY, OUR CONSERVATION-LED APPROACH TO THE MAINTENANCE OF OUR CEMETERIES AND MEMORIALS ENSURES WE RESPECT THE DECISIONS OF THE PAST, WHILE EFFECTIVELY PRESERVING OUR SITES FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

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LOOS BRITISH CEMETERY EXTENSION

In France, with the discovery of more sets of remains than ever before, we find ourselves with limited space in which to rebury the dead, which is why one of the most exciting projects of recent years is the extension of Loos British Cemetery. This new extension, the first new cemetery we have built since Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Cemetery in 2010, will provide a fitting final resting place for those soldiers recently recovered following extensive building work nearby.

We fully expect that the pace of discoveries of remains will continue, and that by working hand in hand with construction projects and local authorities, many more may be found in the future. Our investment in this area of our work will ensure each soldier is given the best possible chance of identification, and even if that is not possible, that they are laid to rest with the dignity and honour their sacrifice deserves.

Working with a local landscape architect, project plans are being finalised. The design blends the formal existing cemetery with the more natural surrounds, while retaining the look and feel of our sites in the area. We expect to unveil this new extension in 2024. ■



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A Canadian soldier plays the Last Post by the Stone of Remembrance at Loos British Cemetery, France, during a burial ceremony for four Canadian soldiers of the First World War
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OUR
GLOBAL
OPERATIONS



The horticulture team undertaking the renovations at Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery

MAINTENANCE WORKS SUCH AS THESE MEAN THAT OUR SITES REMAIN ACCESSIBLE TO ALL AND CONTINUE TO BE A FITTING TRIBUTE TO THE FALLEN.

MAINTAINING OUR HISTORIC ESTATE

One of the largest projects we have undertaken in recent years has been the multi-stage renovation of Thiepval Memorial. After 15 months of works, the final stage was completed in July this year. Few of our memorials presented a greater challenge, but through the skill and dedication of our staff, we are proud to see this memorial returned to its former glory.

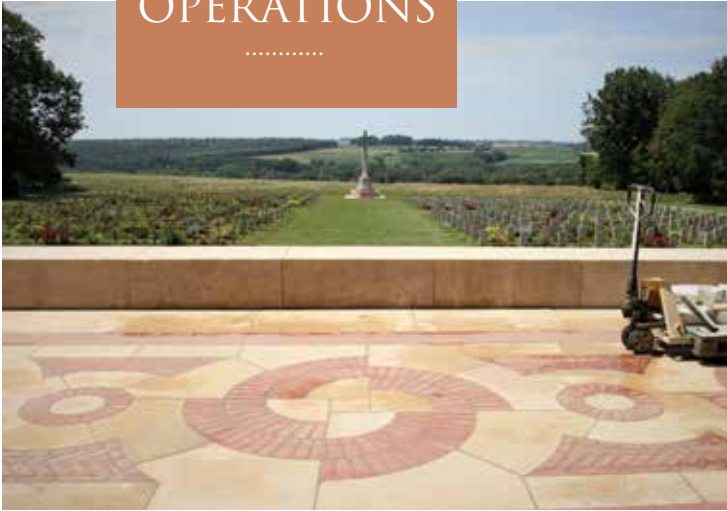
Important works have also taken place at the entrance to Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery in the Netherlands, providing both practical and aesthetic improvements. This work was necessary for horticultural issues around the entrance buildings and Polish graves, whose shaded location and high visitor footfall had led to the turf and border plants not thriving.

In the UK, the second phase of maintenance works to the Brookwood 1939-1945 Memorial have been carried out. The first phase looked at the drainage and was completed during 2021. The second phase consisted of maintenance of the memorial itself and included cleaning, replacing broken paving stones, repointing around the memorial, refurbishing the ceiling areas and undertaking repairs to the surrounding stonework. This work was completed in April. Our work maintains a conservation-based approach, and wherever possible materials used were like-for-like with the original fabric of the memorial.

Maintenance works such as these mean that our sites remain accessible to all and continue to be a fitting tribute to the fallen. ■

Caring for the stone panels of the Thiepval Memorial, France, as part of the restoration works

OUR
GLOBAL
OPERATIONS



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 Top Left: Looking across the cemetery from the restored Thiepval Memorial terrace
 Top Right: Significant terrace repairs were made as part of the renovation of Thiepval Memorial
 Bottom Left: Cleaning the Brookwood 1939-1945 Memorial, UK, earlier this year
 Inside Left: The drainage works cut through the centre of the Brookwood 1939-45 Memorial
 Bottom Centre: Repointing work underway at the Brookwood 1939-1945 Memorial
 Bottom Right: The Brookwood 1939-1945 Memorial restored following maintenance works



Hedge Row Cemetery,
Belgium



OUR
GLOBAL
OPERATIONS

EVERY NAME UPON A
HEADSTONE OR MEMORIAL IS
AN INDIVIDUAL REMEMBERED,
A STORY TOLD. THEREFORE,
WE ARE ALWAYS WORKING
HARD TO ENSURE THAT OUR
MEMORIALS ARE KEPT UP
TO DATE AND THAT OUR
HEADSTONES AND MARKERS
ARE LEGIBLE.



A CHALLENGING PROJECT IN CAMEROON

In 2019 the British High Commission in Cameroon were approached by the Limoug-Liho local authorities about three graves near the village, thought to be of Commonwealth servicemen from the First World War. Located in mountainous jungle terrain, the remote site was more than a challenge to get to.

A search of our archives revealed a complicated trail of correspondence concluding with our decision to leave the graves undisturbed; however, following the report it has now been decided to start the change of commemoration process. Work began in May, and in a race against the start of the rainy season, was successfully completed the following month. Although the site is remote, it is now more accessible and can be properly maintained going forward. ■

LIVESTREAM TRAINING

For a global organisation such as ours, training can sometimes prove to be a challenge, so sharing skills effectively throughout a worldwide network of teams is imperative.



This year, our Estates Team implemented a new and more environmentally friendly process for the renovation of CWGC bronze plaque grave markers. Amongst the 341,000 commemorations in the Commission's Africa & Asia Area, there are seven sites in India and Bangladesh with over 6,000 bronze plaque grave markers and many require renovation. To train our team in India, the first ever CWGC livestream training session was trialled. The session was filmed and broadcast from Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey, whilst the team in India watched from Gauhati War Cemetery in Assam.

The training was a big success and the team have since been busy implementing the new technique to progress the bronze plaque renovations at Gauhati. The team are on-track to have all the markers renovated before the end of 2022. ■

Left: New headstones at Limoug, Cameroon, a challenging location but completed ahead of the rainy season
Top Right: Livestream bronze renovation training for the team at Gauhati War Cemetery, India, delivered by the team at Brookwood Military Cemetery, UK

OUR
GLOBAL
OPERATIONS

IN THE SAME WAY THAT OUR WORK IS OFTEN RELIANT UPON SUPPORT FROM PARTNERS AROUND THE WORLD, OUR VALUED EXPERTISE IS ALSO FREQUENTLY SOUGHT AFTER, AND IT IS WILLINGLY GIVEN.

OUR VALUED EXPERTISE

Our primary work to maintain our many graves and memorials keeps our teams more than busy. However, the Commission is often approached to provide support and expertise on other projects. This work is coordinated by our Agency Services department and is often varied and challenging.

Since 2018, we have been working with our partners at Veteran Affairs Canada (VAC) to undertake urgently needed repairs to almost 18,000 veterans' grave markers across Canada. Four years after this project began, we are happy to report that we are on-target to preserve these headstones for the future. In addition, our team in Canada have taken the opportunity to complete the inspection of all VAC markers in the Province of Ontario, visiting nearly 2,000 cemeteries and inspecting over 68,000 markers.

In 2020, we regained access to Ma'Asker Al Raschid RAF Cemetery in Iraq. Working on behalf of the British Ministry of Defence, we commenced construction work to restore the cemetery, which was completed ready for a Remembrance Day service in 2021. We will now maintain this cemetery for the future, and a contracted watchman is in place.

Projects such as these demonstrate how we build our partnerships with groups, organisations and governments around the globe. We are proud that our expertise is so highly valued and sought after. ■

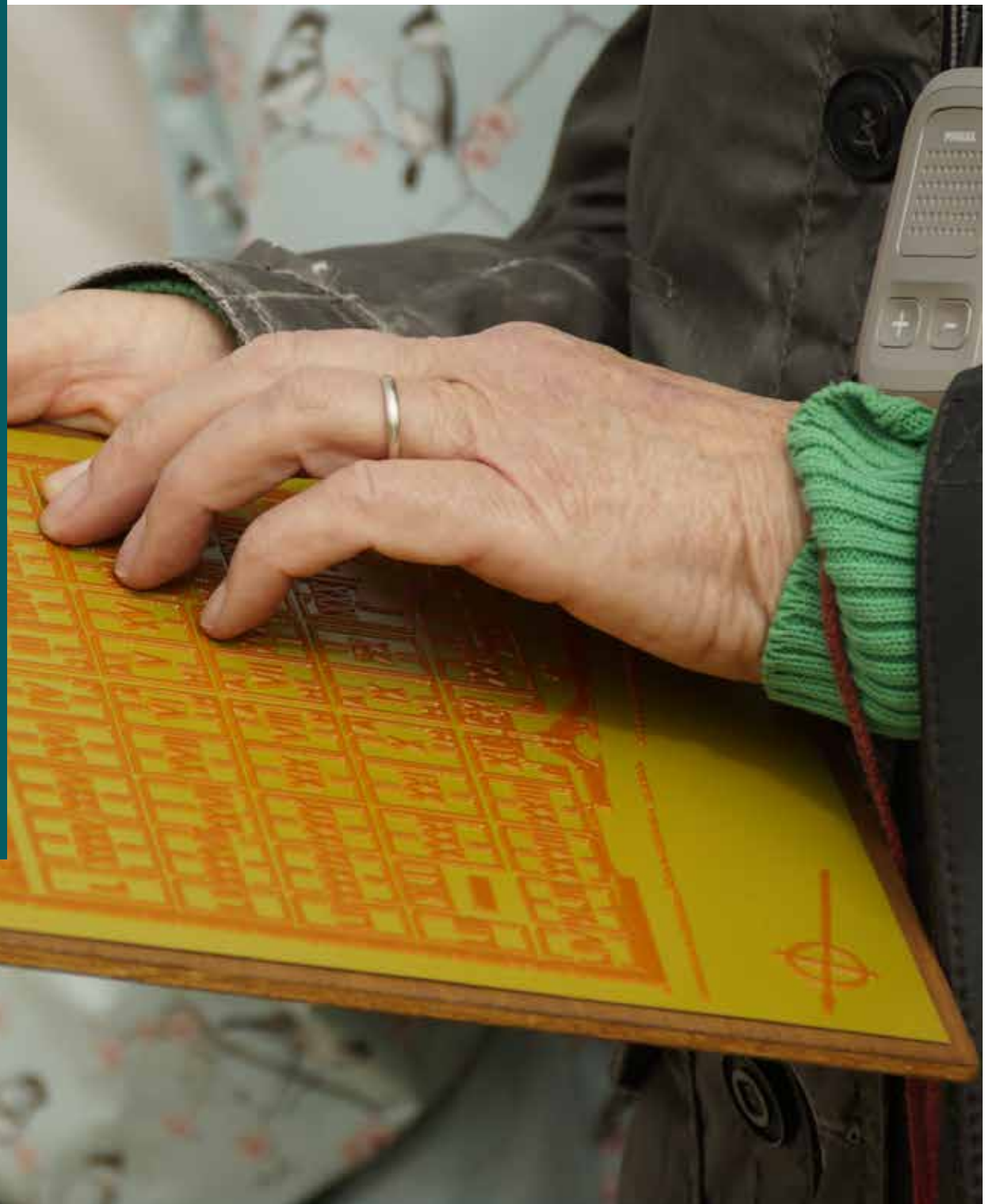


Top & Bottom Left: In Iraq, challenges to access at Al Raschid RAF Cemetery in Iraq were resolved, allowing for work to commence with clearance and boundary wall construction
Right: The CWGC's agency work on behalf of Veteran's Affairs Canada (VAC) addresses significant repairs required on grave markers across the country. One such example is this grave marker for George R Jaggard at Hamilton Cemetery in Ontario

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EDUCATION,
ENGAGEMENT
AND OUTREACH
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Our Global Operations teams work hard to ensure that our sites of remembrance are maintained, remaining accessible to future generations. However, it is through education, engagement and outreach that we and remembrance remain relevant to the public.

The tools of the digital age enable us to keep a connection with our audiences, wherever they may be. Building a volunteer network is key to enabling us to engage the next generation with global programmes and projects. All of this ensures that the stories of those we commemorate will live on.



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EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

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ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY TIMES

This year we undertook our second annual War Graves Week, expanding our activities and building on the successes of the previous year, with Commission events taking place across the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Malta.

Our theme this year was 'Ordinary People, Extraordinary Times', and gave the public the opportunity to explore the stories of those commemorated by the Commission, comparing them to modern day industry counterparts, offering a unique personal perspective for audiences to relate to.

Across Europe, more than 1,300 visitors came to our sites during the week, with public engagement teams and staff working hard to organise and promote the various talks and events. War Graves Week

generated considerable media coverage, with promotion via BBC television and radio stations, numerous regional newspapers and media outlets across Europe. There was strong support from celebrities too, such as former SAS soldier and bestselling author, Andy McNab.

Across the UK we had over 200 events, including 33 pop-up stands in high streets up and down the country, whilst in Europe we expanded our relationships with local volunteer and education groups, helping drive engagement and spread awareness. The volunteering teams also performed above and beyond, with volunteer numbers increased by 13% against last year. We hope to build upon all these successes for War Graves Week 2023. ■

WHILE WE WORK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO RAISE AWARENESS, SPECIAL OCCASIONS HELP TO KEEP US IN THE PUBLIC MINDSET; WHICH IS WHY EVENTS SUCH AS OUR OWN WAR GRAVES WEEK GIVE US A PLATFORM TO DEFINE HOW WE INTERACT WITH AND ENGAGE OUR AUDIENCES.

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Top Left: War Graves Week visitors on a guided tour at Imtarfa War Cemetery, Malta
Top Right: The web app invited viewers to consider the stories of some of those the CWGC commemorates through the roles they undertook in the world wars
Bottom Right: A high street pop-up in High Wycombe during War Graves Week 2022

EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

WITH MORE THAN 3 MILLION VIDEO VIEWS,
900,000 SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTIONS AND
HUNDREDS OF TEACHERS ENGAGED.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION WINS

We strive for innovation and excellence in our work, but it is especially rewarding when this is recognised.

During 2022, the awareness campaign for our inaugural War Graves Week (WGW) in 2021 scooped up some prestigious awards. We won the Best Use of Digital (UK) Award at the Museum and Heritage Awards and were nominated for a Webby Award in the Best Use of Online Media. We were also delighted to pick up three awards for WGW 2021 in December last year, netting gold in the Best User Experience and Best Use of Unaddressed Print categories as well as silver in the Best Data Storytelling category at the Data & Marketing Association Awards. ■



The CWGC team was thrilled to collect the Best Use of Digital (UK) Award at the Museum and Heritage Awards in London

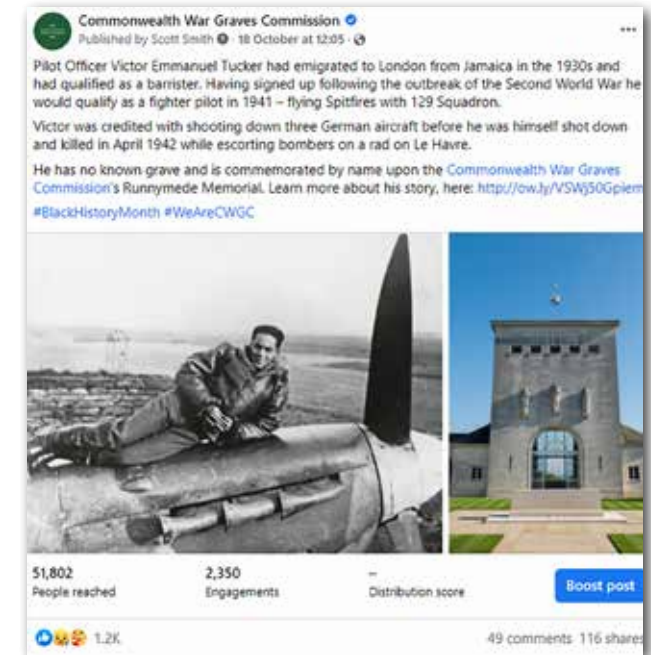
As well as boosting the team, these awards have encouraged us to continue innovating in our use of digital technology to connect with a wider and younger audience.

MAKING OUR MARK WITH MEDIA

We have seen some encouraging success through social media. With more than 3 million video views, 900,000 social media interactions and hundreds of teachers engaged, 2021's Remembrance campaign really made its mark.

The aim of the campaign was to encourage members of the public to tell us what remembrance is to them using the #Remembranceis hashtag, and we had some extremely positive engagement. The hashtag was used 2,600 times on Twitter alone, and across all our media channels proved very popular.

To support Black History Month, a blog was created and hosted on the Commission website which highlighted specific stories. This content



proved to be of high interest to our social media following – with one casualty case study drawing in over 1,000 reactions on Facebook.

From late summer 2022, press articles in the UK, France and Belgium helped to promote the volunteer-led tours and open days taking place across our sites. Earlier this year, UK regional media reported on our tours marking International Women's Day and Commonwealth Day. Numerous news media and BBC radio stations also reported on our Spotlight Awards winners – volunteers who have made an outstanding contribution in their work for the Commission.

Top: The story of Pilot Officer Victor Emmanuel Tucker was just one of those told to mark Black History Month in October 2021
Right: The CWGC volunteer Spotlight awards were initiated to shine a light on and celebrate these dedicated individuals and teams who do so much for the organisation

EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

In July, the Commission's Head of Recovery Unit, Dr Stephan Naji, was interviewed for the ITV programme 'Long Lost History: The Unknown soldier', on the recovery of First World War soldiers before they were reburied at Tyne Cot in November 2021; and at 5,000 media mentions over the year, we have maintained good audience presence throughout.

With campaigns successfully run for Heritage Days, marking anniversaries and events on our social channels such as the King's Pilgrimage and the Platinum Jubilee this year, all our promotional campaigns and communications efforts continue to garner very positive engagement with the public. ■

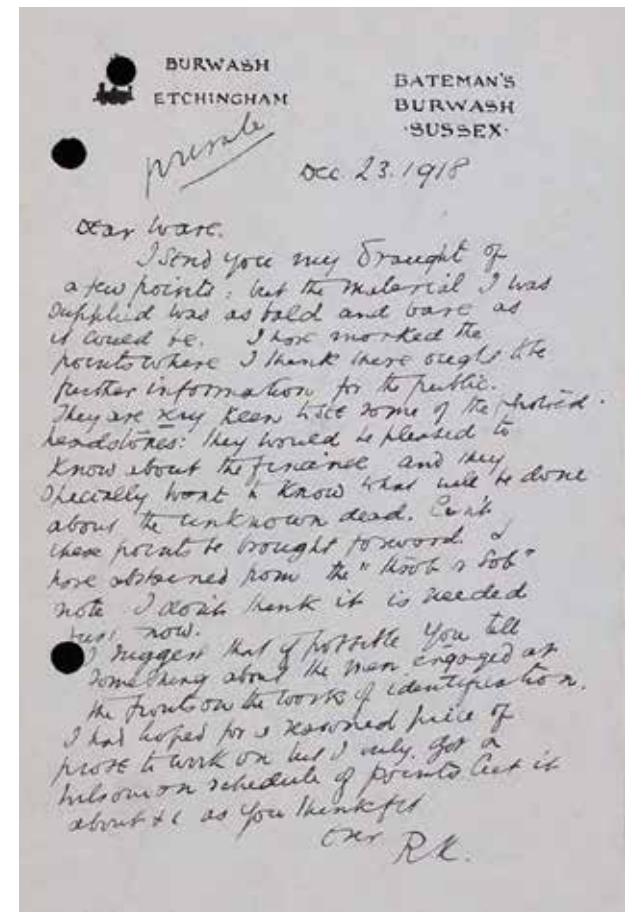


INS AND OUTS OF ARCHIVING

The aim of the CWGC archive is to collect, manage and preserve materials which document the history of our organisation, the individuals we commemorate, the cemeteries and memorials we maintain, and to make such records accessible to the public. It is an important and precious repository containing over 10,000 items from the Commission's unique heritage.

In March we were delighted to receive Accredited Archive Service status from the National Archives. This award demonstrates how our archive service has met clearly defined national standards set for the care and provision of access to our archived items and collections.

In July, we began our large-scale digitisation project and it is making great strides. A core of 2,000 records has been selected for digitisation. Once the project is complete, these historic items will be available via our online catalogue, offering increased access to internal and external users. Digitisation will enable us to store physical material off-site in dedicated storage facilities, so these pieces of history will enjoy better long-term preservation. ■



One of the core items digitised, a letter from Rudyard Kipling, literary advisor to the IWGC (as it was then), to Sir Fabian Ware, founder of the Commission

IN MARCH WE WERE
DELIGHTED TO RECEIVE
ACCREDITED ARCHIVE SERVICE
STATUS FROM THE NATIONAL
ARCHIVES.

.....
EDUCATION,
ENGAGEMENT
AND OUTREACH
.....

THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER,
WE DELIVERED 90 TOURS IN
38 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS
TO OVER 1,300 PEOPLE.
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ENGAGING THE PUBLIC

We aim to actively engage new audiences and find innovative ways to involve communities with our work, which is why our public engagement and education outreach has continued to grow and expand this year.

We have developed new education materials to support site visits in Kenya, Tanzania and Sierra Leone, as well as creating a new research guide for those looking at African casualties. Strong links are also being developed with the Armed Forces Multicultural Network, with plans to expand into wider community engagement. For South Asian Heritage Month, events were hosted in the UK at Tower Hill and Runnymede Memorials in partnership with Believe in Me CIC and Arts Asia.

Across Britain we took part in Heritage Open Days, with similar events taking place in France and Belgium. We hosted visually impaired visitors at Tyne Cot Cemetery who joined a specially designed sensory experience tour which helped them make the most of their visit. Throughout September, we delivered 90 tours in 38 different locations to over 1,300 people. We have attended events in Scotland and England as part of the Falklands40 commemorations and supported Armed Forces Day events. The Commission was well represented at the seven-day long Chalke Valley History Festival, where we engaged with more than 1,900 visitors during the week, including more than 400 school children.



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Top: The CWGC participated in South Asian Heritage Month 2021 with the 'Indians at Sea' tour at Tower Hill Memorial, London
Bottom: Visitors arrive at Tyne Cot Cemetery, Belgium, for a tactile exploration of the site as part of Heritage Open Days 2021

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**EDUCATION,
 ENGAGEMENT
 AND OUTREACH**



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 Top & Bottom Right: The engagement team participated in the Chalke Valley History Festival, a great opportunity to engage with hundreds of people of all ages

A formal education and engagement strategy was instigated this year. As well as the development of classroom resources, the strategy includes site visit resources and heritage trails for locations globally, engagement and volunteering opportunities for young people, and various educational guides. It also includes the expansion of the youth engagement projects, trialled with over 3,000 RAF Air Cadets.

Through education and outreach, voluntary activity, arts and heritage projects, local research and partnership working, we're working hard to increase local awareness of our sites and memorials all around the world, and to tell the stories of those we commemorate. ■



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 Top Left: RAF Air Cadets hold a service at Scopwick Church Burial Ground, Lincolnshire, as part of an engagement project with the CWGC
 Top Centre: Volunteers lead many of our tours, such as this one at Brookwood Military Cemetery

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EDUCATION,
ENGAGEMENT
AND OUTREACH
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A HELPING HAND

The Commission family has grown considerably over recent years, by almost 25% this year alone, with hundreds of dedicated, passionate, and skilled volunteers joining our ranks.

Easing of restrictions meant our Eyes On, Hands On programme was able to resume fully. Around 80% of all UK sites are now under the watchful supervision of close to 2,000 expertly trained volunteers. Their impact has been significant, with close to 100,000 war graves inspected, and more than 13,000 carefully cleaned. The programme was

set up with a generous grant from Annington Homes which came to an end in March, and we are hugely grateful for their support.

Our volunteer speaker programme has expanded significantly with new funding from The MacRobert Trust, which has allowed us to recruit and train Volunteer Guides as well as to provide 270 tours at cemeteries all over the UK. Many hundreds of talks have been delivered both virtually and in-person by over 200 trained volunteers, with uniformly positive feedback from across the UK. ■

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: Top Left: Volunteer Guides undertake their own research to lead tours, such as Ewan, one of our Spotlight Award recipients, at Stratford-upon-Avon Cemetery
: Centre & Right: An Eyes On Hands On team of volunteers at Hornchurch Cemetery
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EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

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THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES FOUNDATION (CWGF)

The Commission's charitable arm continued to grow this year, with increases in membership as well as wider fundraising. Two virtual walks along the Western Front and in Normandy helped raise over £30,000 for the Foundation as participants from all over the Commonwealth walked hundreds of kilometres in their local area, tracking their progress on a digital map, including virtual visits to CWGC cemeteries and memorials enroute.

Elsewhere we were delighted that our Interns, now named Guides, were able to return to Europe for the first time since 2019. The Guides welcome visitors to

two of our most well-known sites; the Thiepval Memorial in France, and Tyne Cot Cemetery, Belgium. They provide tours throughout the day and help visitors with research and recommendations of other sites to visit. This year also saw us employing local country guides for the very first time to work alongside our UK recruits, offering a French and English language service to visitors.

As part of War Graves Week in May, the Foundation held 'An Evening at Brookwood', where we welcomed nearly 400 families, history lovers, and CWGF supporters to Brookwood Military Cemetery. Themed around

commemoration, on the agenda was an amazing programme of music from local and national performers, as well as military vehicles, stalls to explore, and some tasty refreshments. We look forward to this becoming an annual event.

We always welcome new members and with some exciting plans in development for the coming year we look forward to engaging many more people – especially the young – with the work of the Commission.■



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Left: The Guides receive training from Simon Bendry, Head of Education and Engagement, at Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery, France, and other sites in the region to prepare for welcoming visitors to Thiepval Memorial and The Experience. Right: As part of War Graves Week, the Foundation held 'An Evening at Brookwood', an evening of music, tours and discovery



COMMEMORATIONS

THE HUMAN REMINDER

The Commemorations Team supports our member nations to rebury and rededicate personnel previously thought lost to the battlefields. Our specialist Case Officers and Anthropologists deliver a professional service for the recovery of remains, investigative casework, data and record management and policy application.

Dr Stephan Naji heads the Anthropology Team and Recovery Unit in France. They have recovered 59 sets of remains in France this year, and worked with partners on cases recovered in Belgium, Germany, and the

Netherlands. Sharing professional expertise is an important element of our work. At Pimprez, the Unit worked with French anthropologists from the ONACVG to recover the remains of five French soldiers.

At a site at Neuve-Chappelle a local archaeology team joined our Recovery Unit in the excavation of 12 British soldiers – found with them was a bugle, which was a unique artefact for the Commission. Partnerships such as these will be key to the success of recoveries along the route of the new Canal Seine-Nord, which is being coordinated by the CWGC Recovery Unit on behalf of all Commonwealth, German, and French governments.

The team's work also includes maintaining the accuracy and integrity of our vast casualty database (over 1.7m records), allowing headstones to be engraved correctly and consistently, and ensuring the public and

dedicated researchers can find details of those we commemorate. We continue to update our records and investigate new cases, some very complex, of those fallen Commonwealth personnel who may be eligible for commemoration. Work is ongoing to locate and mark their graves or add them to the appropriate memorial.

From the recovery of remains, to identification, commemoration, reburial, and rededication, we accompany the casualties of the First and Second World Wars on their final journey. These are journeys we're proud to make alongside their families and military comrades, ensuring they are at rest, appropriately commemorated and always remembered.■

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers at the burial service for two Unknown Soldiers at New Irish Farm Cemetery, Belgium



OUR PEOPLE

MUCH OF OUR WORK ACROSS THE ISLAND IS MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO MARK'S PASSION AND DEDICATION.

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE AND COMMITMENT

Our work is only possible because of the hundreds of dedicated and talented people around the world who make up the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Their expertise and commitment in all their many roles is clear to see at the sites they lovingly care for and the work they undertake to ensure the sacrifices of those we commemorate are never forgotten.

In 2021, Perumal Venkatraman, the Head Gardener at the CWGC's Madras War Cemetery, was awarded an Honorary British Empire Medal (BEM) in recognition of 30 years dedicated service. On 1 June this year, Perumal was invited to the British High Commission in Chennai to receive his medal from Deputy High Commissioner Mr Oliver Ballhatchet MBE. The following month, whilst on a tour of sites in India,



Top: Mark Fitzgerald, Technical Supervisor in Malta, received an Honorary MBE this year for services to Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Bottom: Perumal Venkatraman receiving his Honorary BEM in Chennai from HE Oliver Ballhatchet MBE

Director General Claire Horton was delighted to meet Perumal to congratulate him in person on receiving the prestigious award.

In Malta our Technical Supervisor, Mark Fitzgerald, has been honoured with an MBE for services to Commonwealth war graves. Mark, who has been at the Commission since 1993, was recognised for his work across our Malta sites, where he has been technical supervisor since August 2009. Much of our work across the island is made possible thanks to Mark's passion and dedication, and all his colleagues speak very highly of his work ethic and enthusiasm. Mark received his award at a ceremony at the British High Commission in Malta in January this year. ■



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LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

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We are proud that our cemeteries and memorials give the friends and families of all those who fell during the wars, the public and future generations, a special place to pay their respects and remember their sacrifice.

Many of these places require increasing levels of care from our conservation teams while we also have a duty to ensure our sites remain well visited.

To realise this, we have created information centres, volunteering opportunities, education programmes and resources, tours and events, all designed to educate, engage and to inspire generations to come.

For the next hundred years, and beyond, we will continue to honour our war dead – building upon our history and traditions while always striving for innovation and excellence in all that we do.

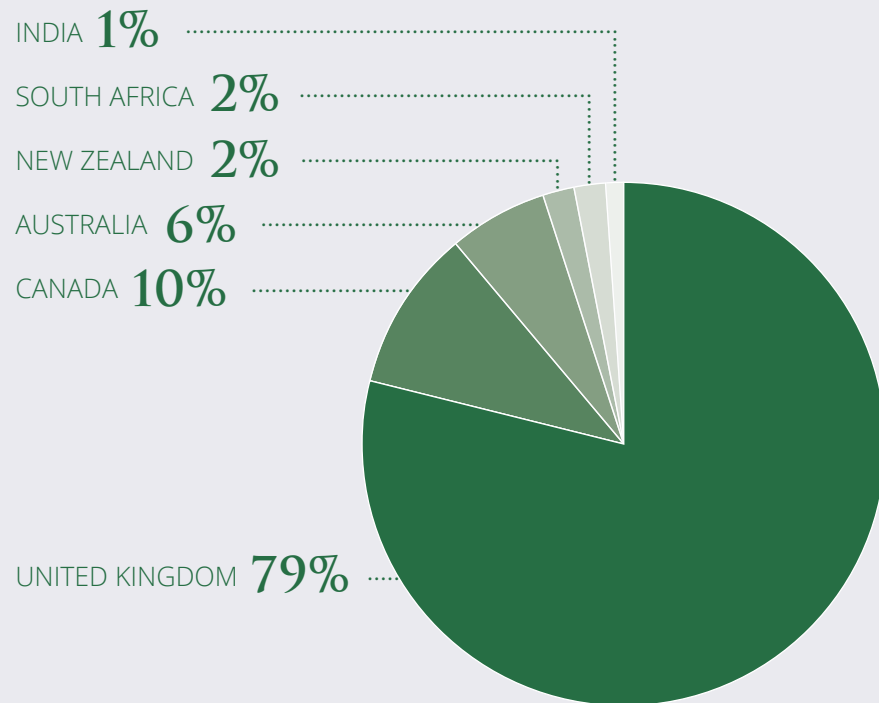


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*Maple Copse Cemetery,
Belgium*

CWGC FINANCIAL SUMMARY

£74.8M

TOTAL CONSOLIDATED INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 2022



PERCENTAGES OF CONTRIBUTIONS
BEING MADE BY
PARTNER GOVERNMENTS

£74 million was spent during the year in ensuring the 1.7 million war dead are commemorated in accordance with the obligations set out in the Commission's Royal Charter. The money is spent ensuring that these cemeteries and memorials are maintained 'in fit provision'. Our member Commonwealth countries contribute to the funding of the Commission in proportion to their respective number of graves.

The Commission's income for the year ended March 2022 was £74.8 million, which was in line with the reported income for 2021 (£74.5m). Member government contributions comprised £66.2 million (89%) of this.

The Commission spent in line with expectations during the year with less impact and restrictions arising from COVID-19 on its operations than in the previous year: this resulted in a year-on-year increase of 5% in its consolidated expenditures to £74.4 million.

The financial outcome for the year, before pension scheme adjustments, was therefore almost breakeven with a small surplus of £0.4m.

The Commission's consolidated balance sheet position reports an improved net deficit position of £5.4m. This deficit is a result of the pension scheme, which has an accounting deficit of £27.6m which is an in-year decrease of £6.6m. A long-term funding plan has been agreed by the Commission with the pension scheme trustees to fund the pension scheme's agreed actuarial deficit.

Our full accounts are available on the website at www.cwgc.org

OUR COMMITMENT

BREAKDOWN OF NUMBERS OF WAR DEAD BY FORCES

Nationality	1914–1918 War		1939–1945 War		Both Wars		Overall
	Identified Burials	Memorials	Identified Burials	Memorials	Identified Burials	Memorials	Casualty count
Australian	39,134	23,196	28,604	12,092	67,738	35,288	103,026
Canadian	45,609	19,394	37,321	8,067	82,930	27,461	110,391
Indian	8,238	65,692	18,228	68,798	26,466	134,490	160,956
New Zealand	11,774	6,296	9,040	2,886	20,814	9,182	29,996
South African	6,775	4,813	10,058	1,856	16,833	6,669	23,502
United Kingdom	481,586	410,075	245,066	138,832	726,652	548,907	1,275,559
Total	593,116	529,466	348,317	232,531	941,433	761,997	1,703,430 *

* As a result of our investigations into historical cases of non-commemoration, this figure is likely to change

There are 217,682 unidentified graves of the First and Second World War in CWGC care, including 4,184 of non-Commonwealth casualties.

The names of 68,111 civilians of the Commonwealth, whose deaths were due to enemy action in the Second World War, are commemorated in the Civilian War Dead Roll of Honour, held at Westminster Abbey, UK.

The CWGC also cares for the graves of non-Commonwealth casualties from the First and Second World Wars on behalf of their governments. In addition, we maintain the graves of service casualties from other conflicts on an agency basis for the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence.

Figures will vary on a daily basis as individuals are accepted for commemoration as war casualties, as human remains are recovered from the former battlefields for burial in a newly created CWGC grave; existing graves are identified; and as casualties who have been named have their official point of commemoration moved from a Memorial to the Missing to the headstone marking their grave. Numbers may not be directly comparable i.e. some counts are for each individual, whilst others represent more than one individual. For example, a collective grave may be counted as a single grave but are the resting place of multiple individuals.

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If you would like to get in touch with the CWGC, please visit www.cwgc.org/contact-us.

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COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
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FRONT COVER IMAGE:

Portland Stone panel installation at Thiepval, France

WITH THANKS FOR IMAGES

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission would like to thank all those who have contributed to the production of this annual report with information and/or images. Your help is greatly appreciated. Please note that some of the images used in this publication were taken before Covid-19 and therefore do not show the current social distancing advice being followed.

www.cwgc.org

