

## Looking ahead, the First World War Centenary in 2016

2016 will see the centenary of the Easter Rising in Ireland (24 – 29 April 1916), the Battle of Jutland (31 May – 1 June) and the Battle of the Somme (1 July – 17 November). Throughout 2016, the First World War Centenary Partnership, a network of over 3,500 cultural organisations from across the world will present a collective programme of events, exhibitions, and performances to mark these landmark anniversaries.

**Diane Lees, Director-General of Imperial War Museums said:** "The First World War Centenary Partnership Programme continues to grow with new groups joining from around the world to mark the centenary in their communities in a way that is meaningful to them.

"The level of activity and events organised by members of the partnership shows that the First World War Centenary continues to resonate with a large amount of people across the world. It may be because of a personal or a family connection, the effects of war on their hometown, or how it changed society. This huge and continually growing programme shows that we are all connected to the First World War and that many people want to remember and learn about its impact."

Full details of the First World War Centenary Partnership, led by IWM, can be found at [www.1914.org](http://www.1914.org)

### Easter Rising

The **National Museum of Ireland** is opening [Proclaiming a Republic: The 1916 Rising](#) a major exhibition to mark the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising. The exhibition explores the ideas, movements and personalities of early 20th century Ireland and the dramatic events of the Easter Week and its impact on Irish citizens. The story is told using items representing the stories of civilians, rebels and leaders and over 15,000 objects, including the flag of the Irish Republic, the 1916 Proclamation and many personal objects on display for the first time. The free exhibition opens **3 March 2016**.

The mythology surrounding the Easter Rising will be explored in a new exhibition at the **National Museum of Northern Ireland**. [Remembering 1916; Your Stories](#) focuses on community stories of the Easter Rising as well as other events of 1916 globally. Using uniforms and many objects on display for the first time, the exhibition also focuses on commemoration of 1916 anniversaries and the legacy of these events. Opens on **25 March 2016** at the **Ulster Museum, Belfast**. Entry is free.

### Battle of Jutland

To commemorate the centenary of the Battle of Jutland the **National Museum of the Royal Navy**, in partnership with IWM will open a new major exhibition - [36 Hours: Jutland 1916, The Battle that won the War](#) (opens **May 2016**, £10 adults, £5 children). It will feature objects including guns from British and German ships, battle ensigns stained with smoke and the personal effects of the men and women involved. **HMS Caroline**, the last surviving ship from the Battle of Jutland, currently moored in Belfast, will open to visitors having been restored thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

**Seafarers UK** have organised [\*\*The Jutland Concert\*\*](#), a concert to mark the centenary of the Battle. Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* will be accompanied by Britten's *Four Sea Interludes*. The concert is organised by the London Concert Choir on behalf of Seafarers UK and takes place at the **Barbican Centre, London (7.30pm on 15 June 2016)**. Ticket prices range from £12 - £35).

The **Orkney Heritage Society** is commemorating the [\*\*centenary of the sinking of HMS Hampshire\*\*](#) which took place in June 1916. HMS *Hampshire* sank near Orkney after hitting a mine killing more than 730 men including Lord Kitchener. The society is restoring Orkney's Kitchener Memorial and creating a commemorative wall inscribed with the names of the men who died in the sinking of HMS *Hampshire*. The memorial will be officially unveiled on the evening of **5 June 2016** at the **Kitchener Memorial, Birsay, Orkney** (free).

## Battle of Somme

A series of events organised by the government are taking place throughout the UK to mark the [\*\*Battle of the Somme centenary\*\*](#). A **national vigil** will take place at **Westminster Abbey** at the Grave of the Unknown Warrior. Memorials will also be held at the **Scottish National War Memorial** in Edinburgh Castle, the **Welsh National War Memorial** in Cardiff, and at **Clandeboye and Helen's Tower County Down** in Northern Ireland (booking necessary, free).

**IWM London** will be open for an overnight programme of events on **30 June**, and **The Royal British Legion and Commonwealth War Graves Commission** will host a daily Remembrance ceremony at **Thiepval** to mark the 141 days of battle.

In the 100th anniversary year of the release of the original blockbuster, *The Battle of the Somme*, **IWM London** will launch an immersive exhibition, [\*\*Real to Reel: A Century of War Movies\*\*](#) which will explore how film-makers have found inspiration in the compelling personal stories and gripping real events from wars of the past century. The exhibition includes original items and personal testimony from IWM's collections, as well as props, scripts, set designs and recollections from people behind the camera. The exhibition opens on **30 June 2016**; tickets cost £10 for adults, £7 for concessions and £5 for children under 15.

## Other Events and Exhibitions

To mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, a new exhibition at the **Science Museum, Wounded: Conflict, Casualties and Care**, will explore the huge medical and human impact of wounding during the First World War, when new weapons resulted in injuries of unprecedented scale and severity. The exhibition will illustrate the remarkable medical responses and innovations of the war through the Science Museum's extensive First World War medical collections and the personal stories of the wounded and those who cared for them. Beyond the battlefields, the exhibition will also focus on the longer-term impact of the war on the millions who were left physically and mentally affected, and show how the medical lessons learnt still have relevance today (**From 29 June 2016**, free).

The **Museum in the Park in Stroud, Gloucestershire** presents a new exhibition [\*\*Stroud in the First World War: The World at War\*\*](#) (from **1 January 2016**, free) which tells the stories of those who fought from the local area, including volunteers, men who were conscripted and the two local VC winners Captain Bennett and Captain Butler.

The **Friends Ambulance Unit** (FAU) was established by Quakers at the start of the war and worked as an unarmed ambulance convoy staffed mostly by men of Quaker faith. Discover more about their extraordinary role, from setting up hospital ships to ambulance trains during the war in this talk by Dr Rebecca Wynter – [\*\*Keeping the Peace: Working Relationships and the Friends\*\*](#) (**14 January 2016**, free). The talk will also explore how FAU

members coped with the conflict of conscientious objection and fears of being a non-combatant. The talk takes place at the **Town Hall, Ypres**.

Over 14,000 merchant seafarers died over the course of the First World War. For their sacrifice King George V decreed that they should be known as the Merchant Navy from 1928. In honour of [Merchant Navy Day](#), the **Merchant Navy Association** is hosting a multi-faith service at the **Merchant Navy Memorial, London** to commemorate the lives of members of the Merchant navy who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars (**4 September 2016**, free).

Men from British Columbia enthusiastically enlisted to help the war effort. 55,570 British Columbians served in the 620,000-strong Canadian Expeditionary Force. The **Royal BC Museum in Canada** is hosting an exhibition, [British Columbia Remembers: The Great War](#) (**Until 1 September 2019**, free), which features video montages of British Columbian recruits training, drilling and marching before departing for the war in Europe, and letters written by troops, including one recording of the first use of tanks in the war.

During the First World War although Sweden was officially a neutral state, the Swedish Navy did engage in action in the Baltic Sea and more than 800 Swedish sailors lost their lives during the conflict. The **Museum of Kivik in Sweden** is hosting the [Exhibition of the War: Europe and Sweden](#) (**Until 30 November 2019**, €5 per person) which investigates the impact of the war on Swedish society.

## Last chance to see...

Perhaps best known for drawing Winnie the Pooh, EH Shepard also worked as a war artist. In [EH Shepard: An Illustrator's War](#) (**Until 24 January 2016**, free) the **House of Illustration** records EH Shepard's wartime illustration, looking at his experiences as a commercial cartoonist who regularly sent work back from the trenches for *Punch* and other publications.

The First World War brought together service personnel from different countries and backgrounds, people used slang words to help describe their experiences. The [Spot the Slang Trail](#) at the **Royal Air Force Museum Cosford** invites families to learn the meanings of some of these First World War slang terms (**Until 31 January 2016**, £1).

**Bassetlaw Museum's** [Trent to Trenches: Get well soon](#) looks at those who were wounded in the trenches and at those who treated them. The exhibition displays photographs, objects and documents from the museum's collection. The display recognises and remembers the men and women of Bassetlaw and their wartime experience, (**Until 30 January 2016**, free)

- Ends -

### For further information and images please contact:

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## Images:



© IWM (Q 65408) Battle of the Somme. An infantry attack on the Somme



© IWM (Q 1071) The Battle of Thiepval. An exhausted soldier asleep in a front line trench at Thiepval, September 1916 – Battle of the Somme



© IWM (Q 65406) Battle of the Somme. An infantry attack on the Somme



IWM (Q114833) HMS WARSPITE and MALAYA seen from HMS VALIANT at 2 pm on 31 May 1916 during the battle of Jutland – Battle of Jutland



© IWM (Q 90445) British troops man a street barricade in Dublin during the Easter Rising, April 1916

## Notes to editors

### Context to the First World War Centenary Partnership

IWM established the First World War Centenary Partnership in 2010 to encourage a programme of activities and events to mark the centenary, developed at grass roots levels. The founding ambition for the Partnership was that its members would collectively organise and present a vibrant, diverse and far-reaching programme to reflect how people want to remember, commemorate and debate the conflict in their own communities, in a way that is meaningful for them.

### IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique Collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches attract over 2 million visitors each year. [IWM London](#), our flagship branch, marks the Centenary of the First World War with new permanent First World War Galleries and a new Atrium with iconic large object displays. Our other branches are [IWM North](#), housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; [IWM Duxford](#), a world-renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; [Churchill War Rooms](#), housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser [HMS Belfast](#).

#### **About the First World War Centenary**

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the First World War, a landmark anniversary for Britain and the world. IWM is marking the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year programme of cultural activities across the world. For more information visit [www.1914.org](http://www.1914.org).

