



FRIENDS

IWM FRIENDS

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New Friends,

VOTE TO DISSOLVE THE FRIENDS OF THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

I wrote to you at the end of August last year regarding ongoing discussions with the Museum, primarily through John Brown, the Museum's Executive Director of Commercial Services and Operations, whose responsibilities include bringing the new IWM Membership scheme to fruition. Subsequently, I heralded the transition opportunities in a foreword to the final copy of Despatches and, on the 17th January, John Brown spoke in more detail at the Friends' AGM and answered Friends' questions about IWM's new Membership scheme. At that meeting I was fortunate to be formally elected as Chairman, the resolution to allow postal voting was also carried with a large majority in favour and Claire Owen, in her annual report, outlined the main findings of the Friends' Survey. I believe that our approach has been to listen, reflect Friends' views in ongoing discussions with IWM and position ourselves to take a democratic decision; 85% of you had already said Yes to postal voting, prior to the AGM.

The previous vote on the transition to the IWM Membership Scheme did not achieve the two-thirds majority required under our constitution; 64 of those present voted in favour, 54 voted against. As we didn't have postal voting, those who were unable to get to London were unable to have their say about the future; only a small percentage of members' opinions were reflected. Now we can ask you all. It will come as no surprise to those who were at the AGM, that I want to strongly recommend to Friends the dissolution of the Society and transition to IWM's new Membership Scheme. I want to say something of what leads me to that recommendation.

Our primary objectives, as set out in the Constitution, are **"to advance the education of the public by rendering support to Imperial war Museums (IWM), to publicise the work of IWM and to augment the funds of IWM."** It is this support of the Museum that has been at the heart of our activity and I believe must remain centre stage for all true Friends of the Museum as it embarks on its new membership scheme. The survey revealed why many became friends: In response to the question - There are a number of benefits that come with being a Friend of IWM ; which are most important to you....? Friends answered:

- Supporting IWM financially was "very important" to 57% of members
- Free entry to CWR/HMS Belfast was "very important" to 50% of members
- Free entry to IWM London charging exhibitions was "very important" to 47% of members
- Being part of an "exclusive group" was "not important" to 62% of members

Again, the principal motivation for becoming a Friend:

- Free entry to London charging exhibitions -18%
- Free entry to Churchill War Rooms and HMS Belfast -16%
- Free entry to IWM Duxford -15%
- Supporting IWM financially -15%

At the heart of Friends' motivation is support and entry. The generous transition offer maintains all this, arguably improves on it and it will be Imperial War Museum's task to demonstrate that in the future. I believe they are off to a

starting point. Life Members are being offered a special status within the new IWM Membership Scheme as Honorary Life Members with benefits that mirror those of the proposed IWM Premium Membership. The offer to all members to transfer to become Premium Members is similarly attractive with broadly comparable rates and enhanced benefits.

In November 2014 the Friends of the Imperial War Museum raised a huge £250,000 for the *Your Country Needs You* Campaign. The “*Your Country Needs You*” section of the new First World War galleries explored Lord Kitchener’s recruitment campaign and the contribution of those who stayed at home to support the war effort. The donation was the largest grant that IWM Friends has given the museum in its history.

As an IWM member your membership subscription will go directly towards funding more incredible projects; IWM is currently in the second phase of Transforming IWM London, a £33.5million project which will see new Second World War Galleries, The Holocaust Galleries and a digitally-enabled learning suite set across two levels of the museum opening in 2020. The new galleries will see IWM become the first museum in the world to physically and intellectually present the Holocaust narrative within the context of the Second World War. To date, IWM has successfully secured 47.6 per cent of the funding required to realise this vision. I am sure that we all want to remain part of these visionary developments and to continue to enjoy exciting members’ events such as these:

Dunkirk: The Story behind the Major Motion Picture

IWM London, Thursday 15 March

Joshua Levine, the author of *Dunkirk: The History behind the Major Motion Picture* joins us at IWM London to discuss his role as historical advisor on *Dunkirk*.

Free entry for IWM Premium Members

Further details to be announced soon

‘Valour in the Air’

IWM Duxford, Wednesday 21 February 18.30-20.30

Join the Friends of Duxford for a special presentation from author Steve Bridgewater on the members of British and Commonwealth air crew who have been awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery. The talk features artwork specially commissioned for Steve’s recent book *Valour in the Air*.

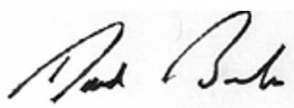
Adult £15, Junior £5

I strongly believe that we have taken the right steps to listen to members, worked with the Museum to achieve the best possible deal for transition to membership and we should now dissolve the Society in an orderly way by Autumn 2018, transfer the assets and liabilities to the Museum and look forward to a new phase in support of IWM. We will do this in accordance with the rules and regulations and administered by the Charity Commission. When we are ready we will reflect on the history of the Society and its immense contribution to the Museum at an appropriate farewell social event, while looking forward to the next chapter to be written in members’ support to the acclaimed institution that is IWM.

There will be some sadness, some opportunity for reflection on our predecessors’ achievements but also a glimpse into an exciting future. Your vote to dissolve the Society and transfer the assets of the Friends to IWM will enable the achievements and spirit of the Friends to continue in the new IWM Membership scheme. The museum needs YOU and your support to make future development and exciting projects a reality.

Yours Sincerely,

David Burden



Major General (Retired)