

NOVEMBER 2020

# GOOD NEWS SPECIAL

WEST LANCASHIRE METHODIST CIRCUIT



## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Clearly, there will be no remembrance Sunday services in churches this weekend as the whole nation goes into lockdown for at least a month.

But that does not stop individuals or churches marking the occasion in some way. Good News has collated some stories from a local perspective.

We would like to hear more stories from you, about remembrance in the past and what it means to you and how you might mark it this year.

Send them to me, Stephen Foster at [stephenfoster533@btinternet.com](mailto:stephenfoster533@btinternet.com) including any photos you may have.

God bless.

### PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as we grieve for those who have sacrificed their lives in so many wars, we thank you for the greatest sacrifice of all - your Son Jesus.

Help us to live in the power of the resurrection today and every day,

Amen.



Remembrance display on the front door of Emmanuel Methodist/United Reformed Church. Ormskirk



# A SEARCH FOR A RESTING PLACE

My mother was born in 1914 and never really knew her Father, George, as he was killed, like so many others, in the Great War. Mum thought that her Father had been killed at Passchendaele (3rd battle of Ypres) which took place in 1917. All she knew was that there was no marked grave.



In 2003, Miriam, the boys and I visited Ypres in Belgium and I spent a considerable time looking through some of the 54606 names inscribed on the Menin Gate commemorating those who fell but whose remains were not recovered. I could not find George.

As time passed, I tried other ways. Many of the British Army records were destroyed by bombing during World War 2 and I drew a blank. I even searched the records of those shot at dawn for desertion. No George. In 2017, I tried a new approach and searched the Probate Records, and finally found George. Probate was granted in 1919 and recorded his death as 21st March 1918 and his unit as the 2nd/7th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers.

It became apparent that I had been looking in the wrong year and the wrong country!

21st March 1918 was the launch date of the great German offensive with reinforcements from the Russian Front. 2nd/7th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers were in a quarry by the small village of Templeux le Guerard, a few miles west of St Quentin in France.

In fog the Lancashires were surrounded by the advancing Germans who mortared their position for several hours. George was amongst the many casualties.

Miriam and I visited Templeux le Guerard on 21st March 2018 – exactly 100 years since that attack. We also visited the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Memorial at Pozieres, where George's name is inscribed, along with those of many of his comrades. On that 100th anniversary there was a flower and a note left by another name. It read that his parents never locked their back door in case their son came home.



I had found my Grandfather, my regret is that I was twenty years too late to tell my Mother.

Malcolm Roxburgh



# “THE POSITIVE POPPY”

A few weeks ago my Aunty, Margaret Iddon, messaged me to say she had an idea...

“How about designing a poppy to display in people’s windows to raise money for Holmes Methodist Chapel and The Royal British Legion?” I thought it was a “blooming” fabulous idea and began working on the design straight away. I wanted to add a modern twist to the well-known, red flower symbol yet keeping its simplicity and powerfulness.

After a few hours of trial and errors with colours and shapes the final piece was complete. Ta-dah! We sent out the design and idea;

“Pop a poppy in your window as a symbol of Remembrance and to signify we are all connected” to family, friends and chapel members with a positive outcome.

I then posted the design on social media to see if anyone was interested and again we had a fantastic response. We have sold over 100 poppy prints so far and raised over £250 for Holmes Chapel and The Royal British Legion.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us and look forward to seeing all the bright, positive and poignant poppies in windows, in the build up to Remembrance Day.

Hayley Fisher





## IN FLANDERS FIELD

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

BY JOHN MCCRAE



# PRISONER OF WAR: TONY FRIEDRICH

Barbara Meynell, senior steward at Holmes, recalls how former German enemies, then prisoners of war, were welcomed into the bosom of local families and became part of the local community.

Tony Friedrich was only 18 when he was taken prisoner by the allied troops in Italy. He was first taken to America where he wasn't treated very well. I don't know when he came to Holmes from a camp near Wigan, but I know he came to work for Jim Melling and family.

They had a market garden and Betty and Jenny helped. Tony's home was in a village in Bavaria. Holmes would have been so different. Walter Ascroft and Tony became great friends.

Walter had been on a Royal Navy mine sweeper in the Mediterranean. So they had been on opposite sides, but it didn't stop their friendship. Tony lived on the premises. I'm not sure if he lived in one of the bungalows or in a cabin that was fitted out for him.

I don't know how Tony came to attend the chapel and became part of the family. The Melling family were very much involved in the life of Holmes chapel. It was there that he met Brenda Hunter and they were married. The couple had a house in Mere Brow and a small plot of land, which they cultivated and built greenhouses. They had two children, Kathryn and Ivor. As a family they would go over to Germany to see Tony's family. Brenda soon learned to speak German as did the children.

Tony was very much involved in chapel and attended the men's class on Sunday afternoons. He later became senior steward. He was a very friendly man and took his role seriously. He always made the preachers welcome and feel at home. Whatever he did, he did it well. He was well loved by all the chapel and the community.



German Prisoners of War pick swedes in a field near their PoW camp, somewhere in Britain. (Imperial War Museum)



# PRISONER OF WAR: PAUL DIENHART

Paul Dienhart came to grandad Hunter's farm as a prisoner of war. When he first arrived he couldn't speak English and no one could speak German. The first thing he did was to get a book to help him.

My auntie, who was my dad's sister, lived at the farm with Uncle Jim Seddon and her cousin Ada Ascroft. Auntie would tell me that Paul would sit at night at the kitchen table with his book learning in English. He was determined to master the language. It must have been hard as my grandad's workers all spoke broad Lancashire. At first they would have to use their hands to show Paul what they had to do.

Paul didn't want to sleep in the house, so they did a cabin up for him with a stove in it for heat. He had all his meals in the farm house. He didn't go to chapel. I remember that I was only little and was very frightened of him at first. But later if I was at auntie's for Sunday dinner I would always go and see Paul in his cabin before going to Sunday school.

Paul became part of the family and became a very good help on the farm. It was in the early 1950s when Paul went back to Germany. He lived in Piersport on the Mosel River. He did very well for himself. He married and had a family. He had a large house with vineyards and later deer on some of his land.

He never forgot his time at Jackson's farm. He always sent Christmas cards and messages via Brenda Friedrich. I think that it was Ada who kept in touch. She had a soft spot for Paul. Later it was my job to keep in touch at Christmas with the family news. He always wanted to know how the Hunter family were.



A farmer talks to German Prisoners of War who are working for him on his farm near to the PoW camp, somewhere in Britain. The PoWs are wearing rubber 'sleeves' over their boots, to protect their legs and feet from the mud. (Imperial War Museum)





## REMEMBER ME

Remember me  
Duty called and I went to war  
Though I'd never fired a gun before  
I paid the price for your new day  
As all my dreams were blown away

Remember me  
We all stood true as whistles blew  
And faced the shell and stench of Hell  
Now battle's done, there is no sound  
Our bones decay beneath the ground  
We cannot see, or smell, or hear  
There is no death, or hope or fear

Remember me  
Once we, like you, would laugh and talk  
And run and walk and do the things that you all do  
But now we lie in rows so neat  
Beneath the soil, beneath your feet

Remember me  
In mud and gore and the blood of war  
We fought and fell and move no more  
Remember me, I am not dead  
I'm just a voice within your head.

Harry Riley



# MAWDESLEY REMEMBRANCE GARDEN

The folk at Mawdesley Methodist Church decided they were going to do something positive to mark Remembrance Sunday. Because of the position of the church, which is slap bang in the centre of the village, they decided to create a Remembrance garden in the grounds of, the church.

Large, red metal poppies were bought and a memorial cross and were all planted together in the garden. A perfect place for walkers, cyclists and motorists to stop for a while and remember all those who had fallen in service of their country.

A photo was also placed on the Mawdesley Facebook page.





# MY UNCLE IAN

Some of the items I had decided to save prior to having to clear out my Dad's old house before its sale, due to his move into care, were the beloved collection of old 78s which had belonged to my Uncle Ian.

I had always planned to record them onto a digital card and found the first lockdown the ideal opportunity to start. I even bought a new sound system that would play 78s.

I hadn't looked at them properly, as they total over 300, but one that David spotted appeared very different from the others. It was a silver metal colour as opposed to the usual hard black resin and that only one side was recorded. In the middle was a faded old label marked Ian and friends. It was a version of Am forever blowing bubbles.

So we played it and although it was a bit scratchy it was pretty good considering it's probably well over 70 years old. What was extraordinary and moving was how lovely my Uncle's voice sounded. He must have only been about 20 at the time and his voice was mature and clear and he sounded happy.

You may wonder why I am sharing this story. Well I never knew my Uncle Ian. In fact my Dad never even met him.

He was my Mum's older brother and he died doing his national service in Malaysia, in August 1951, at the age of 21. During that country's wars for Independence.

My Mum only found out many years later the circumstances of his death. In fact my Nana, his Mum, died never knowing how he was killed. A former regiment colleague met with my Mum in the late 1990s and told her that Uncle Ian had been leading a patrol out in the bush and was killed by a sniper. He died instantly and they carried his body back to their post.

He is buried in a graveyard out in Penang and his name is on the wall at the Staffordshire Arboretum.

As a family we are very proud of my Uncle and what he achieved in his short life. We never met but what has moved me greatly is that we have found his voice all these years later and what a beautiful voice it is.

Jane Allen (Mawdesley Methodist)



Aerial view of Staffordshire Arboretum.  
(Wikipedia)



# THE METHODIST PRAYER HANDBOOK

I am writing to recommend to you the Methodist Prayer Handbook which is published each year.

The theme for 2020-2021 is "The Earth is the LORD'S".

Prayers are submitted from throughout the world and make interesting reading.

There are prayers for different occasions and on each day of the month the focus is on a different country overseas and a different District in the UK. The lectionary readings for the year are also included.

I have especially appreciated the prayers on the 16 of the month which were for Sri Lanka. I found it very powerful for me and being to be able to tell Methodists there that many people in the UK were praying for them on that day each month was a great joy.

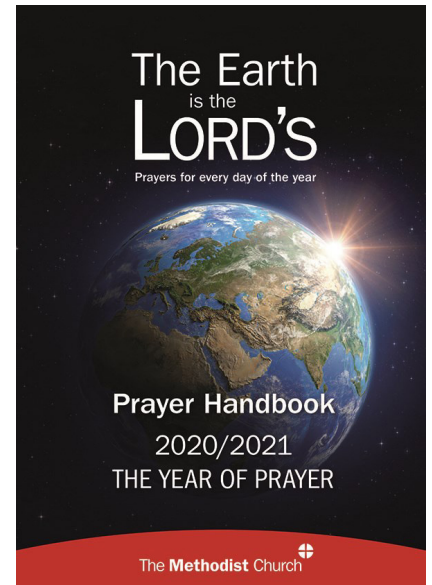
In the current year one of the students at the college where I worked had a prayer printed and in the new handbook, I think a prayer written by the college Principal will be included.

Aside of the personal interest I find the prayers meaningful and often powerful.

The cost for the coming Methodist year is £4.50. and can be ordered by contacting Miriam Roxburgh, phone 01695 422013. Please contact her by 30 November.

I do hope you will consider ordering a copy this year!


Anne Baldwin





Revd Stephen Foster


Revd Sue Guenault

Jayne Chard  
Lancashire West  
Methodist Circuit Office

 01704 893281

 07468 518260

 01257 404742

 [stephenfoster533@btinternet.com](mailto:stephenfoster533@btinternet.com)

 [sue.guenault@methodist.org.uk](mailto:sue.guenault@methodist.org.uk)

 [office@lancashirewest.org.uk](mailto:office@lancashirewest.org.uk)

