



Birmingham Medal Society 50th Anniversary Bi-Annual Convention, Knowle Royal British Legion - Saturday 7th June 2014

The Birmingham Medal Society held its 50th Anniversary Convention at the Knowle Royal British Legion Club on Saturday 7th June 2014.

A total of 35 guests enjoyed a day that revolved around all things medallic!

The doors opened at 1000h and after coffee and biscuits guests mingled, viewed the exhibits for the President's Cup and took time to check what Sunset Militaria and Ian Laidler had for sale on their well stocked dealers' tables!

The President Martin Harrison formally opened the meeting at 1045h and welcomed a number of guests who had travelled from Leicester and North Wales, Tom Long, former long standing member of the BMS and Committee member, and finally the VIPs, Air Cdre Graham Pitchfork MBE FRAeS, President of the Orders Medals & Research Society and Triona and Ian Sabell, son and daughter of the late Tony Sabell MBE in whose name the President's Cup was being presented for the first time this year.

Whilst the three judges, Air Cdre Pitchfork, Tony Sturgess and Roger Bragger deliberated over the judging of the five President's Cup exhibits, the first speaker of the day Paul Handford MBE, delivered an excellent Presentation titled *Medals to Gentleman Volunteers 1914*.

A detailed and interesting look at medals awarded to those 'gentlemen' who had volunteered during the early part of WWI to assist at the Front Line as part of the Red Cross and St John. As always Paul gave an enthusiastic and didactic overview that was well received by everyone.



**Winning Exhibit
A Baker in the RNR**

Following a buffet lunch and raffle, the much awaited results of the President Cup were announced by Graham Pitchfork, who said that the marks had been very close and the standard of displays high, however the judges had unanimously agreed that in:

Third Place – The Croix De Guerre

Second Place - Roadster

Winner - A Baker on the Royal Naval Reserve

Terry was presented the President's Cup by Triona and Ian Sabell, and it is worth recalling that new enlarged base to the trophy was provided following the death of Tony and inscribed with his name.

John Scott then took the floor to present the Mike Minton Memorial Research Trophy presented to a member for their detailed and painstaking work in piecing together details of a local War Memorial.

Following lunch Air Cdre Pitchfork, gave a talk titled *Medals to RAF Apprentices* focussing on a chronological sequence of medals belonging to former Apprentices who had gone on to achieve other things within the RAF but also provided an insight into the history of the RAF as it went.

Then followed members and guests 10 minute talks on a variety of subjects, including

- A Warwickshire Lad
- The Cameron Highlanders & Sudan 1884
- Medallic Recollections
- My Great Uncle's Medals
- Power of the Internet
- Not a Barrack Room Soldier (A Tale of Confusion)
- Greater Birmingham

Thus ended another enjoyable day with everyone 'medalled out' by the end of it.

BMS President and Convention Organiser Martin Harrison said *"Another good day which everyone seemed to enjoy. A great opportunity for guests to mire themselves in a hobby which on the surface appears quite limited, but as proved today with our key note speakers, once you drop into the pothole, opens out into a wide, varied and interesting area that enables many things to happen, including detailed research, travelling the country, meeting new people and most importantly remembering the deeds of those who have gone before"*.

For a more detailed report BMS Members can click on the Members Only Page.