

**Meeting of the Birmingham Medal Society held at The Selly Park Tavern, Birmingham.**  
**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2016.**

A well attended meeting with 18 members and two guests.

Apologies received from Paul and Su Handford, John Scott, Roy painter, Mick Brown, Chris Burns and Christopher Hill.

The President opened the meeting and explained that last months gathering at the Garden House had not gone well with too much noise and poor service with the meals beforehand. The Manager had subsequently effectively cancelled the ongoing agreement to use their facilities, and as such we had been left with having to find alternative accommodation for meetings at short notice, hence assembling at this location.

He explained this is a temporary arrangement as it costs £75.00 per meeting which is not sustainable. Dave Seeney has made enquiries and has located the Holiday inn at Bromsgrove as a possible location to meet. It seems the meeting room may be free so long as meals are taken beforehand. It was agreed that the September meeting would be held there to view the location, check costs and make an informed decision on where to meet in future.

Treasurer reiterated it would not be possible to sustain a £75.00 payment per month unless there was a dramatic increase in subscriptions. Members agreed to meet at Bromsgrove in September, and if it was unfeasible, then to return to Selly Park Tavern to see if a better deal could be reached.

The President then introduced the topic for the evening Members Own, Mini Lecturettes and Recent Acquisitions.

**Chris Davis**

Showed group and power point presentation to Sgt James or Joseph Smellie, Smallie, Smaller or Smillie! 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 90<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry No 2921. Distinguished Conduct Medal, Crimea Medal 'Sebastopol' India Mutiny 'Defence of Lucknow', Legion D'Honneur & Turkish Crimean medals. Chris gave a summary of the siege of Sebastopol and went into detail explaining the various discrepancies in the naming on the medals and on various research he had uncovered. There was paperwork with the group and a photograph of Smellie. He explained the story as to how he had found the Legion D'Honneur in the London Gazette and that the DCM had been personally awarded by Queen Victoria. Smellie was born in 1833, enlisted in 1852 and died aged just 29.

**Mick Atkinson**

A welcome return as Mick had not been able to attend meetings for some time. He explained he had had recently sold his entire collection of modern medals, but had intended to start again but did not have a theme. Last year he was asked to do a talk at the OMRS Convention on Waterloo and this gave him the idea of collecting Waterloo medals. He set himself a project acquiring seven medals during the next seven years, but produced the following from a bag – which he had acquired in just a few months!

1. Cpl of Horse James Allen – who had been in the Charge of the Heavy Brigade.
2. Trooper Charles Burgess of the Scots Grays injured at Waterloo. He also had a small portrait of Burgess and a lock of his hair and a bible sent to him by someone in Australia.
3. Trumpeter Robert Reid 2<sup>nd</sup> Lifeguards

He also showed a small figurine of Napoleon that he had been given by Dave Seeney for Christmas which lent itself well to his new collection. As Mick correctly stated the three medals had actually ceased to be medals and could now be considered historical artefacts.

**Chris Newton**

Displayed a group of Imperial German awards to a Florian Troster - Jnf Reservist Koblenz. Together with an amount of paperwork, including medal certification and a photograph of the recipient. The medals were the Verdun Cross, Eastern Front Cross, General Regimental Cross, WWI

Commemorative Medal, Hungarian & Austrian medals. The first four being private purchase and later to be replaced with the German Cross of Honour. Chris went into detail giving a brief biography of Troster and it was agreed it is unusual to find so much biographical detail for a group of unnamed foreign awards.

### **Paul Murray**

Showed two groups 'Men of Worksop'. Both in the Notts & Derby Regiment.

The first was a 1914-15 Star Trio to Frank Shone and Paul has located paperwork on this man. He was born in Whitwell in 1893. Paul ran through his biography and disclosed that Frank worked for his father as a labourer aged just 13, served during WWI and received gunshot wounds to his ankles. He was discharged in 1917 and later became a miner and died aged 80 in 1973.

The second group to Frank Court Veasey were a Military Cross, Military Medal 14-15 Star trio, the only MC / MM to Worksop. Frank was born in 1890 in Chelsea and enlisted in 1910 serving in 298 Royal Garrison Artillery. He was commissioned on 17 Sep and awarded the MC in September 1918. Paul had located his service and research papers. Frank died of pneumonia following a gas attack in the trenches on 25 Oct 1918.

### **Dave Seeney**

Dave showed some badges he had recently acquired. a Long Range Desert Group in silver and with Egyptian Hallmarks pre 1947. He also showed an Indian Parachute badge in silver and a Vickers Armstrong ARP badge in silver. Dave also proudly showed his Nijmjan March Medal with his 17<sup>th</sup> clasp.

### **Chris Newton**

Chris displayed a second group of Imperial German awards to Leo Boltor an Under Officer. Once again there was much paperwork and photographs of the recipient. He had enlisted on 14 Oct 1910 in the Ersatz Reserve and the group included the Iron Cross 2<sup>nd</sup> Class.

### **Martin Harrison**

Showed a recent acquisition to Major George Perry Royal Engineers & Royal Signals. The group consisted of an MBE, 1914-18 BWM, Victory Medal, India General Service Medal 'North West Frontier 1931', 1939-45 Star, Africa Star '1<sup>st</sup> Army', Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 'MiD', Coronation Medal 1953, Army Long Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal and the Efficiency Decoration & clasp both dated 1950. Martin explained George had been MiD twice in 1940 for Italy. With the group had come photographs of George and certification for the MBE, MiDs and Coronation Medal. Additionally the previous owner had already sent for the service records which confirm all the medals and gave much detail about George's career. Martin explained he would be trawling ancestry & London Gazette in an effort to piece George's biography together.

### **Ken Weston**

Ken had bought several interesting and unusual groups for display but talked briefly on four of them. A single British War Medal to Charles Boon RNVT who served at the Submarine Detecting Research Establishment. The story of this department appeared in a book called *Hush* published by Mills & Boon who were more widely known for their romantic novels, and Charles was the Boon of Mills & Boon. Ken also produced a book, the biography of Bill Tidy and showed the medal awarded to his father 6810 C W E Tidy Leading Seaman RNR. Bill's father had served in combined Op's during WWII. The third group was an interesting set to Mr Whitcomb a dentist of the Taranaki regiment New Zealand. There was much paperwork and research with this group. Lastly he showed a British Empire Medal awarded to Madelaine Hon Mrs Balfour who has been in charge of the distribution of Red Cross parcels during WWII.

The President closed the meeting at 2145h and all agreed it had been an interesting and enlightening evening.