

**Notes of the Birmingham Medal society Meeting held at The Garden House  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015**

Following the Annual General Meeting the newly appointed President Philip Wilson welcomed everyone to the meeting, and said he was looking forward to his three years as President, and trusted he would be able to maintain the standard of all the former Presidents.

Apologies were received from Roy Painter, Mick Atkinson, Chris Davies & Paul Murray.

The President ran through some local notes of interest and then began the main meeting for the evening Recent Acquisitions.

Philip then presented certificates the winners of the President's Cup:

Third Place – Miniature SAS

Second Place – Prime Minister to Prime Minister

Winner – Of Mills and Mines

*(See Members Page for more specific details)*

**Chris Newton** – produced an interesting Royal Marine group to Marine Frederick Thomas Descombe. The group comprised 1939-45, Atlantic, Africa, Italy Stars, War Medal 1939-45, RN LS&GC. As well as 1931 silver sports medal 1<sup>st</sup> place Marine Cutter and a 1938 Tug of War Medal, and a commemorative medal issued to Frederick following the Chilean earthquake of 24 Jan 39 around the town of Concepcion.

Frederick had attended together with the crews of HMS Ajax & Exeter. He had subsequently been involved in the Battle of the River Plate during which Exeter was damaged. Chris had obtained a detailed history of Frederick's service and sadly Frederick was killed in action aboard HMS Carlisle when she was attacked by Stukas in October 1943 in the Aegean Sea. Frederick is commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

**Tony Sturgess** – Tony made a rare, but nevertheless welcome talk on an India General Service Medal with clasp North West Frontier. The medal had been acquired by Tony two years ago and was awarded to George Arthur Dunk, No 2781. George was born in 1830 in Kent and served in the 39<sup>th</sup> Foot, 16<sup>th</sup> Foot, 87<sup>th</sup> Foot, 5<sup>th</sup> Bengal Regiment and 20<sup>th</sup> Hussars. He served in India and saw service during the Indian /Mutiny. Fredrick is also entitled to the Meritorious Service Medal that Tony does not have. He was discharged in 1870, died in Glasgow and married twice.

Two years to the day Tony explained he acquired an identical medal awarded to the same man from abroad, the only difference being the service number was transposed 2871. Tony was adamant that both were genuine and that one may have at some time been returned to the Medal Office due to the incorrect number and subsequently cleared out and sold.

**Paul Handford** – Paul produced a superb oil painting he had recently completed of a French WWI Soldier wearing the Croix De Guerre. Everyone agreed the painting as superb and Paul a man of many hidden talents!



**Paul Handford's excellent oil painting**

**Martin Harrison** – produced two groups. The first to Bombardier Ralph Scarrott and comprising the 1939-45, France & Germany Stars, Defence & War Medal 1939-45 and Efficiency Medal 'Territorial'. Martin explained it was as such an unusual group but he had been attracted to it because of the amount of paperwork that came with the group. However even though on the surface it appeared a common mix of medals, he had gone through his collection to find he did not have this particular combination! Plenty of the WW II combination with Efficiency Decorations, ERDs, Efficiency Medals and A N Other but not this simple combination of five.



**Bombardier Ralph Scarrott's Medals**

Secondly Martin produced a group of three medals Defence & War Medals and a Cadet Forces Medal with 1<sup>st</sup> clasp to a Lt Col Raymond Beale, who had been OC of St Bartholomew's College CCF. Interestingly as Martin had begun to dig deeper he had found Beale's obituary on the internet and surprisingly he had also been Mayor of Newark in 1991, long serving Liberal Democrat District & County Councillor, coincidentally fitting into Martin's other collecting theme – Mayors. Ray Beale had only died in March 2014 aged 91, and surprisingly his Daughter Inga Beale is currently the Chief Executive of Lloyds of London, the first female to be appointed in this role in its 325 year history!

Following the formalities the President summarised and closed the meeting allowing the members to view the recent acquisitions and President's Cup entries.