

Meeting of the Birmingham Medal Society – Garden House Thursday 3rd April 2014

The President Martin Harrison opened the meeting which followed the Annual General Meeting.

He advised we had a new member, Ken Weston, who had joined from looking at the BMS web site.

Following research questions the President reminded members about the BMS 50th Anniversary meal on Friday 6 Jun at the Garden House and the Convention at Knowle on 7 Jun 14.

The Secretary circulated a list for members to make suggestions for topics in 2014-15. The details will be finalised at the next committee meeting.

The President also confirmed that Air Cdre Graham Pitchfork had agreed to undertake the Drummond Lecture on Thursday 4 Sep 14 the subject will be **The RAF in Iraq 1915-2011**

The next meeting is Thursday 1 May 2014 and the subject for the evening is **The 20th Century Visited** by Martin Harrison.

The business part over, the meeting moved onto the evening's topic **Recent Acquisitions**.

NOTE: This is the first production of meeting notes to be placed onto the web site; some fine grain detail of the medals displayed such as names, regiments have not been noted. This will be corrected for future reports as the monthly reporting process is fine tuned.

Martin Harrison

Martin displayed two groups, the first to Colonel Alan Vincent Gandar-Dower, A Serving Officer of St John, 1914-18 British War & Victory Medal, Defence & War Medal 1939-45, Coronation Medal 1953 and the Efficiency Decoration 'Territorial'. The recipient had been an MP during WWII and ongoing research was in hand. A V Gandar-Dower also has his own brief entry on Wikipedia.

The second group to Major Sydney Alfred Blackman was Defence & War Medal 1939-45, General Service Medal 'Malaya', Army Long Service & Good Conduct Medal Geo V, Meritorious Service Medal, Efficiency Decoration 'Territorial'. Again Martin was continuing research into this man who had served in the RAOC.

John Scott

John Displayed a 1914-18 British War Medal to an Officer Steward in the RNAS. The recipient had served in HMS President II at Crystal Palace and an interesting debate followed on how the RN qualified for the BWM whereas a lot of Army personnel did not if they were not away from their place of residence.

Reg Cook

Reg produced a wealth of paperwork he had recovered from a deceased relative's house in the name of Hayward. Letters, photographs and Army pay book containing details of the award of the War Medal 1939-45. The man also served in Palestine post war and Reg enquired if he could apply for the GSM.

John Barker

John produced two interesting medals to different recipients. The Canadian Decoration to Wg Cdr Cuffner, with an extra bar, and Gp Capt Bray. John had acquired service details that had sadly been 'redacted' from a contact in Canada and had established the missing WWII medals both were entitled to. He intends replacing these medals.

Chris Burns

Chris produced a book **All Hell Let Loose** by Max Hastings. He commended it to members as it had given him a new perspective on certain aspects of WWII. He had also found reference to an incident in the book that had happened in Burma during which his father had been injured.

Paul Murray

Paul produced The British South Africa Company Medal, no clasp. A beautiful medal and a 'sleeper' as Paul discovered the recipient had been wounded during a skirmish in the campaign and had managed to find specific detail of the incident.

He also produced a Tribute Scroll presented to a soldier presented after the Boer War by his employers.

Paul Handford

Paul with his usual enthusiasm produced three recent acquisitions. A WWI pair to a person named Spier who had served in the Ambulance Corps during WWI, he also had a photograph of the recipient
Secondly a WWI trio and Croix De Guerre and lastly another pair that he had found out details of and discovered the recipient was a motorcyclist in the BRC. He had also acquired a photograph album with some lovely pictures