



# Step Up! April 2017

Spring news from Step Short, remembering the soldiers of the Great War.

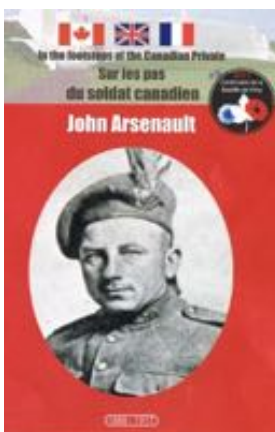
## Mole Cafe Welcomes Canadian & French WW1 Tour

On Wednesday 29 March 2017, a group of Canadian and French visitors enjoyed tea, coffee and cake at the Mole Cafe on Folkestone Harbour Arm, as part of a 20-day WW1 anniversary trek from Canada to France.

The Mole Cafe was opened especially for the event in advance of its official 2017 launch on Saturday 1 April. Folkestone's Mayor Martin Salmon and his wife Sheila attended.

The tour was organised to mark the centenary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, a landmark battle for the Canadian forces, and followed in the footsteps of Canadian Private John Arsenault.

Beginning on 19 March in Chéticamp, the soldier's hometown on the island of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia, the group arrived in Folkestone on Tuesday 28 March where they attended a reception at the Town Hall. The following day they took a walking tour of the town, which included the Step Short Memorial Arch on the Leas and the Harbour Arm.





**Step Short Visitor Centre & Mole Cafe Open For 2017!**

The Mole Cafe reopened for business on Saturday 1 April 2017, ready to serve up tea, coffee and cake between 10am and 4.30pm every weekend and bank holiday until the end of October.

Our lovely volunteers in period dress recreate the Harbour Canteen on the old railway pier, the last taste of Blighty for nurses and servicemen heading from Folkestone to the Western Front during WWI. Visitors today can sign a guest book, just like 43,500 men and women throughout the war.

**Don't forget that our Visitor Centre at the Harbour end of Tontine Street is also open for the summer, from 9am on Wednesday 12 April.**

The 'hub' features displays on Folkestone life during the Great War plus wartime artefacts and memorabilia. Check with our volunteers for specific opening times throughout the season.



**Folkestone's Forgotten Tragedy**

On Friday 25 May 1917, Folkestone's Tontine Street became the site of the First World War's largest single incident of civilian casualties outside of London. It was a sunny payday, packed with local people shopping for the long Bank Holiday weekend. At 6.22pm with no warning, a single bomb fell outside Stokes Brothers greengrocery.



German Gotha planes had shed their load on the Folkestone area after an aborted daylight bomb raid on London (the first ever). The injuries, deaths and aftermath were horrific, with 10 men, 28 women and 25 children killed and more than 100 injured on Tontine Street that evening. Further afield, 18 servicemen were lost at Shorncliffe and there was substantial damage to Central Station.



The centenary of the Tontine Street bomb will be marked at 5pm on **Thursday 25 May 2017** at the Methodist Church, Sandgate Road in Folkestone with a memorial service. It will be followed at 6.22pm in Christchurch Memorial Gardens by the unveiling of a plaque listing the names of those lost. Displays and refreshments will be available in the Methodist Church from 2pm on the day.

**If you have any stories to share or would like to get involved with the event, please email the organisers [margaret.care@btinternet.com](mailto:margaret.care@btinternet.com) or [marlinova@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:marlinova@yahoo.co.uk) (Martin Easdown).**

Read more about the [Tontine Street Air Raid and Roy Eastland's poignant artwork above](#) on the Step Short website.

#### Annual March

On Sunday 6 August 2017, Step Short along with Dymchurch British Legion and other local groups, will hold a march followed by a service under the Arch on the Leas, Folkestone in commemoration of the centenary of the Battle of Passchendaele.

We will meet at the Leas Cliff Hall and march down to the Arch for an 11.00am service. Passchendaele was the third battle of Ypres and lasted from 31 July until 6 November 1917.



Gallery



*Preparations for the new season at Step Short's Mole Cafe on Folkestone Harbour Arm.*



*Dymchurch Royal British Legion and Step Short monthly parade on Sunday 2 April 2017 at the Memorial Arch, Folkestone. Approximately 100 members of 103 Battalion REME were in attendance plus three RBL standards, on a beautiful spring day.*



*Step Short's Vice Chair Ann Berry and volunteer Pam welcome Canadian and French visitors to the Mole Cafe at the end of March.*





### Join The Team

We're always looking for more volunteers to join our friendly team. If you've got a few spare hours a week and you'd like to help share Folkestone's First World War story then get in touch. You could be welcoming guests in our Visitor Centre on Tontine Street or serving up tea and cake with the Mole Cafe gang on the bustling Harbour Arm.

**Contact Contact Heather-Gail de Souza (01303 269181) or Ann Berry (01303 278644) for the Mole Cafe and Carl Plummer (07766 796006) for the Visitor Centre, or email [admin@stepshort.co.uk](mailto:admin@stepshort.co.uk) for either.**

### Dates For The Diary

*Dymchurch Royal British Legion service*, first Sunday of every month, 10.30am at the Memorial Arch on the Leas  
*Tontine St Air Raid Centenary*, Thursday 25 May 2017, from 2pm (memorial service at 5pm) at Folkestone Methodist Church, Sandgate Rd  
*Centenary of Passchendaele*, Third Battle of Ypres, UK remembrance event 30 & 31 July 2017  
*Step Short Annual March* (incorporating Passchendaele Commemoration), Sunday 6 August 2017  
*Last Post*, Sunday evenings at the Memorial Arch on the Leas - to be confirmed

### Follow Us!

**Keep up to date with all of our news and events on the website ([www.stepshort.co.uk](http://www.stepshort.co.uk)), Twitter ([@step\\_short](https://twitter.com/step_short)) and Facebook ([Step Short Folkestone](https://www.facebook.com/StepShortFolkestone)).**