



STEP UP!

The STEP SHORT NEWSLETTER

100 Years Ago.....

STEP SHORT Registered Charity No. 1143305

September 2014

4th August 2014 - A Great Day for Folkestone and for Step Short.

After six years of work by Step Short volunteers, the primary aim of the charity, to publicly commemorate the troops who passed through Folkestone on their way to the Western Front on the 100th anniversary, was fully achieved.

Prince Henry (Harry) of Wales, visited the town to inaugurate the Step Short Memorial Arch, review the Parade of troops and met veterans, Step Short members and local dignitaries. The people of Kent turned out in their thousands and the event featured on television news worldwide. Step Short Chairman Damian Collins MP escorted Prince Harry throughout the formal ceremonies of the inauguration, presentations, laying of wreaths at the war memorial and the march down the Road of Remembrance. Damian also gave the speech at the Arch before the unveiling of the plaque.

The day was generally fine but a heavy shower of rain took the edge of the parade at the harbour, however from people's reactions afterwards, it was clear the morning was a resounding success.

Two torchlight events took place in Folkestone during the evening. Lights were lit at all the 550 WW1 graves in Shornecliffe military cemetery, while on the Folkestone Lees, the people of Folkestone turned out in their thousands to take part in the walk and commemoration ceremony at the war memorial. Songs were sung by Ben Millber and Victoria Barr and poems read by the mayor Alan North and Ann Berry from Step Short. At 11pm all the lights in both locations were extinguished. The 100th anniversary of the start of The Great War was duly marked in Folkestone.



Damian Collins MP introduces Prince Harry to Step Short representatives at the Arch.



4TH AUGUST INAUGURATION.	1
PHOTOS FROM THE DAY.	2
TORCHLIGHT PARADE	3
SASSOON ROOM EXHIBITION AND TIME CAPSULE	4

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Photos from the 4th August Commemoration.



The Folkestone Torchlight Commemoration



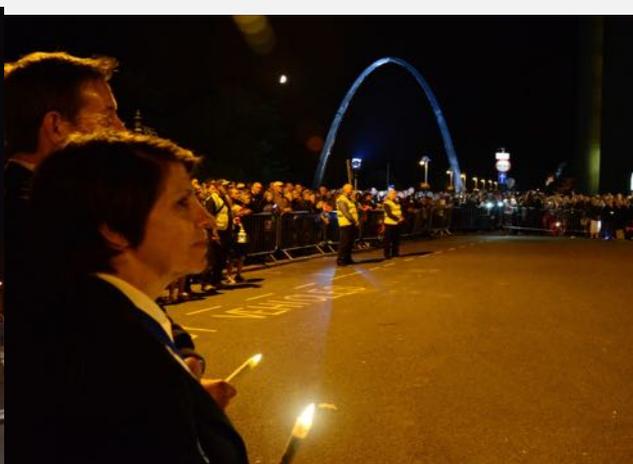
The Torchlight commemoration was a huge success. The people of Folkestone turned out in their thousands (approximately 5000) to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the Great War. Hearing the Last Post from the buglers was an emotive moment.

“The lamps are going out all over Europe and we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime”

*Sir Edward Grey—
Foreign Secretary 4th
August 1914.*



The Torchlight parade was led by piper Ben Millber. Starting at the Leas Bandstand and moving along the Leas, the parade halted whilst the Mayor lit the town's beacon. Then moving along under the beautifully lit Arch to the war memorial where poems were read, songs sung by Ben and Victoria Bass and the last post played by two buglers. Folkestone had responded to the anniversary magnificently!



Sassoon Room WW1 Exhibition

Folkestone History Society and Folkestone Camera Club have jointly staged a Folkestone themed WW1 exhibition at the Sassoon Room of Folkestone Library.

The exhibition consists of photographs and memorabilia from the First World War. Exhibits from local men who served give a reminder that Folkestone was not only a port of embarkation, but it contributed many men to the Kent and Home Counties regiments and the Corps, Don't miss this exhibition. It is excellent.



A German military helmet known as a Pickelhaube. These were standard issue at the beginning of the war but were soon changed to steel helmets due to the many head injuries caused by shrapnel. This helmet was brought back to Folkestone by a local man as a treasured souvenir.



1918 was in command, Staffordshire Regiment



And Finally



Here is a photo of the Time Capsule that was buried in the vicinity of the Arch.

It's to be opened in 2114. The three local councils KCC, SDC, FTC, local schools and many members of the public have contributed to its contents. There is also a letter from Step Short chairman Damian Collins MP.

Photo : Oliver Barratt

