

The Quickfirer!



Bringing alive the dry pages of history

Arras Tunnels open up to the public

Over 300 metres of the Wellington Tunnel system, 20 metres below ground, has just been opened up to the public in Arras. The original quarries from the 17th Century were massively enlarged by the British Army Tunnelling companies in preparation for the Arras battles of 1917. It is estimated that over 19 kilometres of tunnels are still to be explored but for now you can get a glimpse of this amazing, battle winning engineering masterpiece thanks to Arras Tourisme and a few well invested Euros. Complete with shops, audio visual exhibitions and a glass lift, first impressions this weekend were very favourable from our guide Clive Harris. Drawings, carvings and graffiti can still be seen on the walls, much of it proving that most of the soldiers definitely were not poets! Battle Honours trips based in Arras this year will include a trip down Wellington Tunnels. Coat and torch required!

This month in History – April

On Land – Argentine forces invade the Falkland Islands in the morning of 2 April 1982. The small Royal Marine defence platoon are overrun despite stout resistance and the islands stay under Argentine control until the British Task force defeats them in mid June.

VC– Reverend Theodore Bayley Hardy VC , DSO, MC. Hardy was the most decorated non-combatant of the Great War. His VC was awarded for a series of courageous acts during April 1918 while serving with 37th Division. The Essex born former Nottingham Schoolmaster and Deacon in Westmoreland had lost his wife a year before the war and was originally prevented from joining up due to his age but became Chaplain in 1916. Near Gommecourt in April 1918 while with the 8/ Lincolns he dragged wounded men under fire to safety, rescued men buried by rubble and finally returned to enemy held woodland to bring back a crippled soldier. Awarded the VC by the King he refused to stay in London as Royal Chaplain and later, aged 54, died of wounds when he returned to the front in October 1918.



The following units wear this honour with pride

Kemmel April 1918— Hertfordshire Regiment, Border Regt, South Staffordshire Regt, Otago Mounted Rifles, Suffolk Regt, West Yorkshire Regt, Lancashire Fusiliers, Norfolk Regt, KRRC, Cambridgeshire Regt, HLI.

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Forthcoming Tours Update

Somme Strolls 13/17 April

£399 *3 places left*

Mametz, Fricourt, Pozieres, Serre, Courcellette & Combles

Wipers Walks 25/29 May

£399 *6 places left*

The Bluff, Ypres, Polygon Wood, Zonnebeke and the Zeebrugge Raid

Walking 1915 18/22 May

£399 *4 places left*

Neuve Chapelle, Aubers, Loos, Notre Dame de Lorette

Redcoats to Khaki 8/12 June

£399 *6 places left*

Waterloo, Mons, Le Cateau, Landrecies & Etreux



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