

Brigadier H D Allfrey MBE
Chief Executive & Producer



THE ROYAL EDINBURGH MILITARY TATTOO

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

32 Market Street,
Edinburgh EH1 1QB

Tel: +44 (0)131 225 4783
Fax: +44 (0)131 225 8627
administration@edintattoo.co.uk
www.edintattoo.co.uk

DO/HDA

All Veterans in Scotland

c/o Kevin Gray Esq MM MCGI
Chief Executive Officer
The Royal British Legion Scotland
New Haig House
Logie Green Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4HQ

By Email: ceo@rbllscotland.org

21 May 2014

Dear Veterans,

LAUNCH OF THE SCOTTISH COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMME - 10 AUGUST 2014

During the next 5 years people in communities across Scotland will gather together and remember the exceptional sacrifice made by those who endured the First World War.

The Scottish Commemorative Programme features 8 key dates which will give the whole country the opportunity to reflect on the impact which the War had on our country and our people as well as enabling us to recognise Scotland's contribution to the War and its lasting social and civic legacy:

- August 2014: Outbreak of WWI.
- 25 April 2015: Gallipoli.
- 22 May 2015: The train crash at Quintinshill
- 25 September 2015: Battle of Loos.
- 31 May 2016: Battle of Jutland.
- 9 April 2017: Battle of Arras.
- 11 November 2018: Armistice Day.
- 1 January 1919: Loss of HMY Iolaire.

As recently announced, the first event in the programme calendar will be a *Drumhead Service* to take place at the Esplanade of Edinburgh Castle on Sunday 10 August 2014. This multi-faith Service is seeking to re-enact the sort of occasion, familiar to generations of Servicemen and women, which has taken place in barracks and in the field across the years. Neatly piled drums will be draped with appropriate Service Colours and used to create a makeshift altar before which senior Tri-Service Chaplains will conduct the Service with the 'body of the kirk' filled by Guards from the 3 Services, Military Bands and Pipes & Drums drawn from the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, and selected choirs. A Congregation of 8,800 (5,450 members of the general public being invited from Local Authorities across Scotland along with a further 3,139 representatives of the Armed Services and ex-Services organisations) will be seated in the Tattoo Stands.

This first phase of the Event aims to stimulate reflection on the atmosphere and realities that might have prevailed in the opening stages of the World War, as many people, most without military service, prepared to play their part in the conflict. For those already serving, a Drumhead Service might have been the precursor to deployment on operations in France or further afield.

We are seeking volunteers for a cadre of veterans to act as 'Marshals' not simply to help the congregation to find their seats - as 'sidemen' in church - but to engage with them and develop the narrative of the day. It is vital that we secure veterans as volunteers because their experiences and knowledge will help bring to life the realities of life in the Armed Services. We would like to set the pace of the event through a central narration, Orders of Service and from cues set out in a simple Patrol Card, embellished as appropriate by individual veterans. Each member of the cadre will be allocated a section of the congregation to host from the start to the close of the day's events.

Each Marshal would ideally be able to come into Edinburgh for a pre-briefing (on a date to be decided) and then parade at 0830 hrs on 10th August dressed appropriately (a blazer or a suit would be ideal) with regimental tie, stout footwear, wearing regimental headgear and medals and carrying a waterproof. The wearing of previous generation's medals is also encouraged, not least to encourage broad conversation.

The Service will last for 30 minutes, after which the Tri-Service contingents on Parade will 'March as to War' down the Royal Mile to Holyrood Park, paying their respects to the Cenotaph outside the City Chambers and potentially again at Holyrood Palace. Once the Services contingents are clear, the Congregation will also have the opportunity to process down the Royal Mile (30 - 45 minutes for the full 1.5 mile route). Each block of seating will be called forward (in sections) on to the Esplanade to be formed up by the Garrison Sergeant Major with 'Marshals' alongside and then set off down the Royal Mile, each contingent in company with Pipes and Drums. There is no obligation for the contingents to march - merely to process - but we are inviting 'Marshals' to encourage participation and to gently develop a sense of team, similar to a group of newly recruited servicemen!

The aim of the 'March as to War' is to give an impression, particularly for those unused to military service, of what it might have been like marching to depart for the Continent in

1914, moving perhaps as part of a battalion to the railhead or a port of embarkation. There would have been a mix of emotions ranging from jingoism, excitement, 'the moment of proving', uncertainty, through to home-sickness, apprehension and fear. The intention of this second phase of the day is to build a sense of expectation artistically proportionate to moving closer to the Front. Those not wishing to process will be invited to remain seated and find their own way off the Esplanade once the marching contingents have all departed.

Throughout this second phase of the Event, we would like 'Marshals' to guide and support the marching contingents, setting an example of bearing and professionalism while offering advice of drill and other matters of interest in respect of military service. Each Marshal will be issued with a Patrol Card, containing factoids that relate to each part of the day's activity. Marshals are not required to contribute to the 'safe and secure' aspects of the March - this will be done by trained security staff and the police - but will be invited to form a relationship and take a lead with their particular contingent.

At Holyrood Park, the Congregation - now in the form of marching contingents - will arrive in turn (over a period of about an hour) to join members of the public at a 'Living Memorial', marked by headstones in the style of Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries across the world. The Memorial will contain 145 headstones, which has been specifically designed to be a physical reminder of lives lost, on a scale of 1:1,000 - thereby representing the 145,000 names inscribed on the Scottish National War Memorial.

We would like a further volunteer group of veterans to man 'The Living Memorial' from the outset, working with our ushers to guide members of the public and 'marchers' into appropriate positions. As with other Marshals, we would like volunteers dressed appropriately with regimental tie, stout footwear, wearing regimental headgear and medals and carrying a waterproof. This group will need to assemble for the start of the day, will not take part in the Drumhead Service or the 'March as to War' but will care for the Memorial and its visitors throughout the day, distributing tokens of remembrance (we plan that these will be for purchase from Poppy Scotland) and offering advice as required.

The intention is that over 20,000 people will gather in and around the Park (and on Arthur's Seat) for a moment for collective reflection and an opportunity to capture the scene in its various guises as a prompt for wider contemplation and a catalyst for people to become involved across the 5-year programme. Once everyone has arrived, signals will sound for a period of silence, some smoke may be allowed to drift across the scene before contingents and individuals take a private moment to leave wreaths or commemorative markers and then make their own way home.

The day's programme has been designed to reflect how the First World War affected all sections of society and is designed to appeal to a diverse audience of differing age, sex, nationality and occupation, drawn from across Scotland from civil society and the Services, appropriately representing the contribution made by those in our communities during the War.

The Event will open at 0900 hrs with the Parade beginning at 1000 hrs and the Drumhead Service taking place 1030 - 1100 hrs. We anticipate the 'March as to War' taking place over

the period 1115 - 1245 hrs with the 'Living Memorial' and the period of reflection running 1300 - 1500 hrs. Formal activity should be complete by 1400 hrs and the day is expected to reach its conclusion by 1700 hrs at the latest.

Poppy Scotland will be available and in attendance and vendors will also be on site at Holyrood Park throughout the afternoon to provide refreshments. It is the intention of the BBC to broadcast live for the Service and Procession and they will engage with the congregation prior to and after the Service.

Once the scale and geographic distribution of volunteers is clear, we aim to develop a transport plan with RVs in the key centres of population and onward travel to Edinburgh City Centre by 50-seater coach. Each volunteer Marshal will be provided a bag meal and a memento of the day.

all best wishes

David Allfrey

Copy to:

Lieutenant General Robert Baxter
Professor The Reverend Norman Drummond
Colonel Martin Gibson
Carole Robinson