

Centenary in the UK – Readings, Exhibitions, Music

World War I was a devastating event for the entire world, but more so for Europe and the UK. The war's impact on these areas is more significant than anywhere else. Millions of casualties, as well as the Allies' victory, made WWI a piece of history worth remembering and celebrating. This year, the UK and the whole world commemorate the centenary of the beginning of WWI, a fateful even that led to one of the greatest wars in history. Numerous events are taking place around the United Kingdom for both history lovers and families of WWI participants, in an attempt to celebrate the war that made Europe and the United Kingdom what it is today.



The Imperial War Museum is the entity in charge of the First World War Centenary Partnership and Programme. The museum is organizing a wide range of cultural events all over the UK, and expecting millions of visitors to attend. Presently, more than 2,700 organizations from 47 countries have already signed up to be a part of the festivities. All of them are non-profit organizations including museums, universities, community groups, schools, special interest groups, etc. In order to keep the events centered around the celebration and not profits, commercial companies and individuals are not being allowed to participate.

Any war often causes despair throughout entire population of the countries involved. In order to survive both physically and mentally, many people designed ways to lift their spirits in times of emotional turmoil. If you want to learn more about the psychological aspects of WWI, you definitely don't want to miss the "Enduing War: Grift, Grit and Humor" exhibition that will be taking place in the British Library, which is located at 96 Euston Road, London, from June 19 to October 20, 2014. The items that will be shown in this exhibit will include poetry, posters, books, and more, with a majority of the objects depicting humorous images used during the war to give people a distraction from the depression around them.



Readings and lectures will also be organized for the commemoration of WWI throughout the UK. One of the must-sees is “History and Myth, Wiston in the First World War.” This is a one hour lecture led by actor Christian McAkey on Chartwell – National Trust, Mapleton Road, Westernham, Kent on June 22, 2014.

Music will also be present in the WWI commemorative events organized by the Imperial War Museum. Sara Spade and the Noisy Boys will be at the National Centre for Early Music in St. Margaret’s Church Walmgate, York on June 14, 2014. Many WWI era classic songs like “Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue” and “Long Way to Tipperary” will be played by Sara and her band. The band incorporates modern rhythm with classic swing music in order to create a mixture of beautiful sound and elation. At St. Cuthbert’s Chapel, Ushaw College, Ushaw Moore, Durham, the Durham Singers will be playing excerpts from Britten and Bach cello suites. These sad yet lovely tunes represent the sorrow and quest for peace so sought for during times of war.

The Imperial War Museum is currently undergoing remodeling. When all is said and done, the museum will have spent a total of £35 million in the refurbishment of World War I galleries. Due to the remodeling, the museum will not open its doors again until July 19, 2014 when it will be presenting Truth and Memories, the main British WWI art exhibit.



On August 4, there will be a vigil of prayer at Westminster Abbey all night that will end at 11 p.m. which is the exact time that Great Britain entered the war in 1914.

WWI commemoration is something that the British people and institutions take seriously. Around £15 million will be spent on renaming the streets so they bear brave soldiers’ names, and also for paying for transportation and other costs associated with schoolchildren visiting famous battlefields on which WWI was fought. Simply put, the events surrounding the remembrance of WWI are not something anyone would want to miss.

Some events are free and others require registration and fee payment. Events are also classified by age range and obviously geographic area. For more information on the events promoted by the Imperial War Museum visit www.1914.org.

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