

PRESS RELEASE

1 MAY 2014

2014 sees the national commemoration of the First World War. This is being coordinated by Field Marshall Lord Guthrie (former Chief of Defence staff). One of the outstanding events is the unveiling of the first statue of a named private soldier in the UK at Walton-on-the-Naze in Essex. The subject is Private Herbert Columbine VC who earned his award for conspicuous bravery and self-sacrifice in March 1918. It is intended that this be seen as a memorial to the 'Tommy' who paid such a high price, in such challenging circumstances and who delivered ultimate victory.

The statue will be unveiled at the Marine Gardens in Walton-on-the-Naze on the 1st August 2014 at 2.30pm. It is planned that Lord Guthrie will unveil the statue and it is hoped that the Patron of the Columbine Statue, Dame Judi Dench will also be in attendance.

The commemoration will extend to the following day and will include a wreath laying ceremony by the Light Dragoons who inherited the mantle of the Machine Gun Corps.

The project was conceived and organised by the late Michael Turner. His untimely death in November 2013 prevented him from witnessing the ultimate realisation of his plans but the success of this project is, in part, a tribute to his vision and energy.

Background information

Herbert Columbine VC, a book by Carole McEntee-Taylor is the definitive story of this symbolic hero

The Sculptor is John Doubleday (an Essex man)

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