

# WOODFORD MEMORIAL HALL

## ANNUAL LECTURE 2014

### ***TRENCH TALK – THE LANGUAGE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR*** **BY PETER DOYLE AND JULIAN WALKER**

The Trustees of the Woodford Memorial Hall have announced the title of their annual lecture 2014.

As part of the wider centenary of the outbreak of World War One, the lecture is entitled *Trench Talk: the language of the First World War*.

The First World War largely dictated the course of the twentieth century. Fought on three continents, the war saw 14 million killed and 34 million wounded and its impact shaped the world we live in today.

Though one of the enduring myths of the First World War is that the experience of the trenches was never discussed, the language of the trenches continues to live in the modern consciousness.

This lecture looks at how the experience of the First World War changed the English language, adding words that were both in slang and standard military use, and modifying the usage and connotations of existing words and phrases. Dozens of words entered or became familiar in the English language as a direct result of the soldiers' experiences.

The melting pot of the combat zones, especially the Western Front, brought together in concentrated environments men from a wide range of social, cultural, occupational and geographical backgrounds. New technological and slang terms developed and spread, many of them still with us, some recognisable, others not. In this talk we will hear how the war was the catalyst for change in the words people used.

Illustrated with material from the authors' own collections and photographs of the objects of the war, the lecture will examine how the words emerged into everyday language.

**Peter Doyle** is an author specialising in the British experience, and the material culture, of war. A member of the British Commission of Military History, and secretary of the Parliamentary All Party War Graves and Battlefield Heritage Group, he is the author of many works of military history and the material culture of warfare, most recently *The First World War in 100 Objects* and *Remembering Tommy*, both published by The History Press. A regular speaker at conferences and in invited lectures, he has given numerous specialist battlefield talks and battlefield tours. He is an occasional visiting lecturer at the US Military Academy, West Point.

**Julian Walker** works in education at the British Library. He is the author of a number of books on the English language and on social history. Having recently organised an international conference on Languages and the First World War, he is currently preparing a book on this subject, while researching the development of First World War slang. He is the co-uthor, with Peter Doyle, of *Trench Talk*; his most recent publication is *The Final Touch, Cosmetics through the Ages*, published by the British Library.

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Full details of the 2014 lecture are:

<b>Date</b>	Monday October 6 2014
<b>Time</b>	7.45pm
<b>Location</b>	Woodford Memorial Hall (next to St Mary's church) High Road South Woodford E18
<b>Tickets</b>	£7 (to include wine/light refreshments), in advance or on the door
<b>More information</b>	Memorial Hall office, Monday-Friday 0900-1200 020 8505 3352

### **Notes to Editors**

1. Woodford Memorial Hall is managed by an independent trust, but is closely linked to St Mary's church.
2. A lecture is held annually on a topic of general interest to the local community.