

RESTORATION OF THE "RISING SUN" CHALK EMBLEM

Exercise Long Look participants from all three Services, Codford villagers and foreign armies joined forces again for the 16th annual restoration of the Australian Rising Sun Badge at Codford in Wiltshire, England.

The Australian Rising Sun badge was the idea of an Australian Brigade Commander of a nearby garrison during World War 1. The Brigade Commander wanted to leave a visible mark on the local English countryside.

The badge, measuring 53m by 45m, had originally been carved in chalk in 1917 by the 13th Training Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces.

The hill in which the badge was carved became affectionally known as Misery Hill by the Australia troops who were forced to maintain the badge as a form of punishment.

The Codford area has had a long history with the ANZAC soldiers. During World War 1, large training and transfer camps were established for the tens of thousands of troops waiting to move to France.

Codford also became a depot in 1916 for the men who had been evacuated and were not yet fit to return to the front. The meticulously maintained nearby War Cemetery is the second largest in the UK.

The Wiltshire County sadly contains graves of 97 ANZAC troops, 636 Australian Imperial Forces and 173 New Zealand Expeditionary Force members who had lost their lives.

Even today, the wars have had a dramatic impact on the local community and there is still a sense of welcoming towards Australians and New Zealanders.

You can even find the Codford villagers giving a remembrance ceremony on Anzac Day each year.

The Australian Rising Sun Badge in Codford and the War Cemetery is the only reminder of the period when troops from Britain, Australia and New Zealand were stationed in and around the village.



Australian and UK military personnel and local residents of Codford participate in the annual restoration of the Australian rising sun badge on Misery Hill, England.

Photo by AB Joanne Edwards.

(Royal Australian Air Force newspaper- edition 4716)

Hillside Badge at Codford gets a clean-up

Australians and villagers gathered on a hillside in Codford to clean a 90-year-old chalk figure carved there by Australian soldiers in the First World War.

The Australian Badge was carved into the Lamb Down hillside in 1916 and on Saturday more than 25 people gathered to clean it.

The hill was nicknamed Misery Hill by the First World War soldiers, who had to trek to the top with packs where they would exercise.

Originally a trophy of arms, the badge was covered over in the Second World War to prevent it being used as a navigational aid by the enemy bombers and re-cut in a simplified pattern when the conflict ended.

(This is Wiltshire.co.uk 26th June, 2010)



Leading Seaman Carlier, Leading Seaman Ritchie and LEUT Eldridge take some time out and admire the view at Codford.



Personnel hard at work off-loading one of the four trucks of chalk used to restore the Codford Badge.



One of the many War Grave sites situated in the Codford area.



A photo of the restored Codford Badge taken from the bottom of the hill.

(Navy Annual Publication 2005)

Members of the Parish Council, the landowner and the Australian exchange officer at Warminster form the committee which is responsible for the maintenance and care of the Rising Sun Chalk Badge.