

WW1 Rugby Memorial

September 14 – 17 2017

Laon, Aisne, France

Firwood Waterloo RFC are representing Lancashire in Laon, France in a unique event dedicated to the memory of Rugby Players from around the world who were killed in WW1. The event also forms part of the Chemin des Dames Centenary Programme.

A new Memorial designed by Jean-Pierre Rives, former French Rugby Captain, will be unveiled on Saturday September 16th at Craonnelle, Aisne Department, France. Craonnelle is located in the heart of the Chemin des Dames, an area that was fought over throughout the First World War.

The Club will take part in this Ceremony along with others at Cerny en Laonnais and Les Bois aux Ville les Pontavert, commemorating important contributions by the UK Army. The teams will also receive guided tours around the Chemin des Dames, and also the Caverne du Dragon where the war was fought underground in caves around an old quarry.

On the rugby pitch they will take part in an International Youth Festival featuring U16 & U18 teams. There is also a feature game between the UK Army and French Pacific Army.

Another highlight of the event is the Rugby 4 Heroes Charity Team who will be raising money for Military Charities by taking part in a Sponsored Bike Ride from Twickenham Stadium to Laon. On Friday the 15th they will also play a game against the French Legends Rugby XV in Laon.

Firwood Waterloo will be taking part in a combination of Education, Remembrance and Sport at an Event that has been 2 years in the making. It has been jointly arranged by Francourt Events and the Conseil Department L'Aisne.

Along with this Francourt Events have been researching names of rugby players killed in the war and compiling a "WW1 Rugby Players Book of Remembrance". Here we have received contributions from around the world. Clubs can still contribute to this part of the project. For details how to do this contact RugbyMemorial@gmail.com This part of the project will continue beyond September gathering names for the database, and in 2019 we start the process of recording details from the Second World War.

Clubs wanting to send representatives to France and take part in the Ceremonies are most welcome. Please contact johndennison@francourt.org Also use this address to find out about other Centenary Events taking place between now and November 2018.

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