

DURING JANUARY FROMELLES DISCUSSION GROUP WAS APPROACHED ELECTRONICALLY BY A MEDIA ORGANIZATION INTENDING TO REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG AT PHEASANT WOOD. IN SPITE OF REPLYING IN GOOD FAITH TO THE BUSINESS CONCERNED, THIS GROUP IS UNABLE TO DISCLOSE THE NAME OF THE RECIPIENT OF THE INFORMATION WHICH WAS RETURNED BECAUSE WE HAVE NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED TO DO SO. BELOW IS THE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE PROVIDED.

OUR REPLY HAS BEEN POSTED TO THE WEBSITE BECAUSE IT CONTAINS BACKGROUND OF INTEREST TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. TYPICALLY MOST MEDIA ENQUIRIES ARE ABOUT EXHUMATION, THE BROAD APPLICATION OF DNA TECHNOLOGY, RELATIVE REGISTRATION AND SAMPLING, AND THE WORK OF THE MOBILE FORENSIC LABORATORY WHICH WAS SAID TO BE LOCATED ON SITE DURING THE RECOVERY PROGRAM.

SOME DETAILS OF THIS COMMUNICATION ALSO RELATE TO THE REBURIAL PROCESS UNDERTAKEN AT THE NEW FROMELLES (PHEASANT WOOD) MILITARY CEMETERY.

NAME OF COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE AND MEDIA ORGANIZATION

I acknowledge receipt of your Email today requesting information about the recent exhumation at Pheasant Wood and the DNA testing of remains. From what I understand the process of disinterment has been completed and DNA testing is taking place at the moment. Precisely what is happening though would need to be ascertained through the Australian Department of Defence, the British All-Party Parliamentary Group relating to Fromelles and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Our group is independent of government. The views of affiliates are contained in various documents posted on FromellesDiscussionGroup.com, our main interface with the community. We fulfill an educational and advocacy role.

Since [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] is interested in us providing comment on Fromelles might I suggest you look at our latest Discussion Paper titled "*Keeping Alive The Memory of the Fromelles Fallen*" which has been uploaded to the website and also review some of the other material we have published. For example items like "SBS Television", "British All-Party Parliamentary War Graves & Battlefields Group" and "The West Australian". These documents represent the collective view of affiliates and will provide you with a good understanding of our position on recent developments.

According to the latest information received by us, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission is well on the way to building its new cemetery, LGC Forensics is currently collecting and processing DNA samples and the reburial of the previously missing soldiers will commence on 30 January 2010, when the

people of Fromelles and dignitaries from Australia, the United Kingdom and France will attend a ceremony which will be held between 11:00 a.m. and conclude between 12:00 and 12:30 p.m. In fact the CWGC has advised that reburials, which will take the form of a standard military funeral, will continue throughout February and subsequent months leading up to the 94th-anniversary, with the corporation convening a board of identification in March.

Last I heard relative registration was proceeding and the Department of Defence had issued a revised list of soldiers for whom they were seeking family connections. Presumably relatives will be permitted to attend the ceremony on January 30 but no attempt appears to have been made to accommodate them. A public viewing area and a contemplation area though have been set aside according to Issue 7 of the CWGC Newsletter titled Remembering Fromelles.

Regretfully a further 1,131 missing and unidentified Australian Diggers from this battle have not been considered during the recovery project. This is not simply regrettable or unfortunate, the omission dishonours the men concerned, obviates their rights and brings shame on the Rudd Labor Government.

Regards
Grant Triffett, Convenor/Administrator, Fromelles Discussion Group

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