

Steve Williams talks:

I am a Lancashire based historian and author who offers highly entertaining **talks** to clubs, historical societies, schools, libraries and museums, as well as to U3A, Lifelong Learning, lunch clubs, fellowship groups, Probus, Rotary Clubs, the Women's Institute, Mothers Union, and many other groups and organisations.

My talks generally last about an hour and are aimed at mixed audiences of all ages, focusing heavily on people, places and social history. Utilising the latest PowerPoint and graphics software means all my talks are fully illustrated. I bring my own equipment such as Laptop, projector, PA system and screen. I am available for talks during the day, as well as evenings and weekends.

I spent most of my working life in sales and marketing, being used to presenting at sales conferences, product launches, seminars, meetings and training sessions. I took early retirement in 2008 and now do charity work, consultancy and research; last year I worked on projects for the BBC and FIFA.

I researched and presented my first history talk back in 2003 and, since then, have presented my range of talks at venues across the North of England.

My main interest and passion is the First World War. I co-founded the Chorley Pals Memorial charity in 2007 and I am also Chairman of 'Chorley in The Great War', having set up the group in January 2014. I write books and articles on the subject, as well as appearing regularly on BBC Radio Lancashire and occasionally on the BBC TV North West Tonight programme. Since 2002 I have made many visits to battlefields in France, Belgium, Holland and Turkey, as well as organising and leading numerous coach trips to the Somme, Ypres and Normandy.

Charges:

Groups and Clubs - £45 * **Historical Societies, Libraries & Education Sector - £55 ***
'Other' - £75 **Conference, Research or Consultancy - from £175** per day + expenses

Travel expenses:

I look for a contribution towards my costs when **travelling** more than 15 miles from my home.

Additional services:

I offer **research** and **consultancy** to companies, groups, charities, not for profit organisations and Government bodies in the heritage sector; I also do related **marketing, PR and media work**.

Battlefield trips:

I have a bespoke **trips** planned to the Somme in September 2016 and the Ypres Salient in 1917 - call 0345 193 0643 for details or visit my website. I can also organise and lead trips for groups of 30 plus.

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Talks

BATTLEFIELD TRIPS

Marketing & PR, Consultancy and Project Management

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World War One



Kitchener's 'Pals'

In 1914, thousands of men across the U.K. joined Kitchener's New Army and his 'Pals' Battalions. Untried, many went into battle for the first time at the Somme on the morning of the 1st July 1916 - "Two years in the making, ten minutes in the destroying" is how one of them summed up their history. The talk looks at the Pals from Lancashire and Yorkshire who fought and died on the Somme.

The Chorley Pals

In September 1914, men from every walk of life in the small Lancashire market town of **Chorley** answered Lord Kitchener's appeal to join up. The talk looks at the 225 Soldiers of 'Y' Company, 11th (Service) Battalion East Lancashire Regiment, part of the famous "Accrington Pals". Their story ends with the unveiling of a memorial statue in Chorley in 2010.

Gallipoli

A visit to the **Gallipoli** battlefield in Turkey was more of a pilgrimage, searching out the lost graves of three men from my village. The talk covers the research and result, as well as looking at the beaches and battlefield; numerous maps and photographs.

The Somme

The talk looks at the **Battle of the Somme** in 1916 - from the 1st July until the 18th November when it ended in stalemate, resulting in thousands of men from Lancashire being killed or wounded.

Oh! What a lovely war?

The **futility of the First World War** was parodied in the 1969 film 'Oh! What a Lovely War'. The talk looks at the major battles (and local men who fought in them), the tactics, the technology, the personalities, the outcomes and memorials.

A Mother's tears

A few lines spotted in the 'In Memoriam' column of my local paper in June 1918 gave me the idea for this talk. I have put together some very poignant stories from my own research into WW1 over the years. As the title implies, they view the **War through different eyes**.

"All over by Christmas"

At the outbreak of war in August 1914 they said "it would be all over by Christmas". The talk covers life in the trenches on the Western Front and Gallipoli at **Christmas time**, including the famous football match during the 'Christmas Truce' in 1914.

First World War battlefields - then & now

The talk shows many of the **battlefields** on The Western Front and Gallipoli as they were during the War, and how they look nearly one hundred years on; many photographs from my own collection.

Rails to The Front

Railways (both at home and abroad) played an important part in the First World War, taking men and material to and from The Western Front; numerous maps and photographs.

Footballers in the trenches

Combining research into WW1 with my interest in football. Numerous stories of amateur and professional **footballers who fought in the trenches** during the War.



Football

Lancashire footballing greats

Features many of the **greatest footballers** the county of Lancashire has produced - including Dixie Dean, Tom Finney, Nat Lofthouse, Bryan Douglas, Alan Ball and Howard Kendall.

Blackburn Rovers in the Bryan Douglas era

A look at the Rovers during the era of one of its most famous players, England International **Bryan Douglas**. He played for his hometown club from 1950 to 1969.

Preston North End in the Tom Finney era

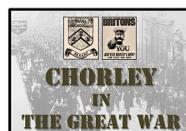
Sir Tom Finney was one of England's greatest players, playing for his hometown club from 1938 to 1960, as well as making 76 appearances for his country; he died in 2014.

Talks



2014-18

Member of...



17.5.2015



The railway from Blackburn to Chorley

In **steam days** the train from Blackburn to Chorley took around 25 minutes, going through some rustic villages and rugged Lancashire countryside; it closed in 1968. Numerous 'then and now' photographs.

Lakeland Lines

Looks at the railways in the **Lake District**, then and now - the closed lines to Coniston and Keswick, the preserved line to Lakeside, the narrow gauge Ravenglass & Eskdale and the line to Windermere.

Along the line from Preston to Blackburn

The railway between the Lancashire towns of Preston and Blackburn goes through numerous villages. The talk looks at the stretch of line through the villages of **Brindle and Houghton** over the years.

Rails to the Lancashire Coast

A look back at **journeys** to resorts of Blackpool, Fleetwood, Morecambe as well as Heysham, Knott End and Glasson Dock during the steam era, the hey-day of rail travel.

Railway Walks

Features **walks** along existing and disused railways in the Lake District, Lancashire, France, Belgium and Italy, outlining the history along the lines; many 'then & now' pictures.

Travel, Military & Misc.



Normandy

There is more to the **Normandy** than just the D-Day beaches. Whilst the talk covers the events of the June 1944, it takes a wider look at the historic region of northern France.

Malta GC

The talk looks at some of the history of the Mediterranean **island of Malta** - from the Knights of St. John and 'Great Siege' in the 16th century, through to World War Two when the island was awarded the George Cross by King George VI in 1942.

Italian reflections

I first visited **Italy** in 1994 visiting Milan and Bergamo. Since then I have visited Venice, Sardinia, Sicily, the Italian Lakes, the Dolomites and "The eternal City", Rome.

"For you the War is over"

Stories of Lancashire men who became **Prisoners of War** - from where they were captured to the camps and conditions they were held in, to what happen to them in hands of the Germans, Turks and Japanese in two World Wars

For King and Country

Covers **WW1 & WW2**, featuring men and women (including my own relatives) who fought in both wars. Stories and photographs of the Somme, Ypres, Gallipoli, Dunkirk, Normandy and Burma.

Preston in World War Two

A snap shot of **life in Preston** during the Second World War - from rationing to air raids and V.E. Day in the town on the 8th May 1945.

Battlefields & Poppyfields

Looks at the many of the WW1 & WW2 **battlefields in Northern Europe** - from Ypres, Verdun and the Somme to Dunkirk, Normandy, Bastogne and Arnhem.

The history of ROF Chorley

The **Royal Ordnance Factory** at **Euxton near Chorley** was one of the largest munitions factories in the U.K. Opened in 1938, at its height in wartime it employed over 30,000 workers. The factory closed in 2007 with the 925 acre site becoming Bucksshaw Village.

Who do you think I am?

Based on the format of the BBC TV programme 'Who do you think you are?' Although from Lancashire, **my own family history** goes back to 16th century London, the Home Counties and Yorkshire, with connections to America and the penal colonies in Australia.