

From: Paul Bennett (former Bursar at Pocklington School)

4th December 2024

Dear Friend

**A BATTLEFIELD TOUR FOR ADULTS – 22-25 AUGUST 2025
NORMANDY, THE SOMME AND FLANDERS**

2025 will be another year of significant anniversaries, commemoration, pilgrimage and celebration. We will be marking the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the 70th of the opening of the War Memorial Pavilion at Pocklington School. You are invited to be part of these events. Indication of interest by Friday **10th January 2025**.

We are privileged to have secured the services of Callum Braidwood Smith, our Head of History and Politics, to lead this latest tour for adults connected with the School. He will be joined by the Head of History from Huntington School, Hugh Richards, and we hope (logistics permitting), on occasion, by Gareth Hughes, Assistant Head (Staff Development and School Operations) and author of the books *Visiting the Somme and Ypres Battlefields Made Easy* and *Visiting the Normandy Invasion Beaches and Battlefields*. Although not really needed, I have offered to assist them.

We will deploy through Normandy and recover from Dover. We will leave early on Friday 22 August 2025 and return on Monday 25 August. Travel is by coach throughout and packed lunches will be provided each day. Although not finalised and subject to change, the proposed itinerary is:

- Day 1: Leave Pocklington, visit Southwick House, the D-Day Museum in Portsmouth, take an evening meal and then travel by overnight ferry from Portsmouth to Caen
- Day 2: Normandy – visits to the Normandy beaches, Pegasus Bridge, museums and the American Cemetery. Move to hotel in Arras and evening meal.
- Day 3: The Somme - a day following the progress of Kitchener's volunteer army during this most harrowing of battles in 1916. Visits will include the battlefields, cemeteries and monuments around Serre, La Boisselle, Pozieres and Thiepval. A short visit to Loos (1915) on the journey north. Hotel in Ypres. Self-found evening meal after the Menin Gate Ceremony (2000hrs).
- Day 4: Ypres (Belgium) - a day focused on the battles for the Salient. Likely visits: Cloth Hall, Lijssenthoek, Sanctuary Wood, Tyne Cot, Langemarck. Recover via Dover.

The trip will be a mixture of battlefield tours interspersed with the stories of infamous days; inspiring and moving individual tales will be told whilst also taking the time to simply remember the sacrifice of a generation. We will trace the steps of Old Pocklingtonians who lost their lives and, where possible, we will track down links/memorials/graves of any relatives of the party in these localities.

The cost of the trip is likely to be around £800, less if we can reach a total of 40 people. Single supplements will apply.

If you would like to be a part of the trip then can I please ask you to complete the form overleaf and return it to me by email by Friday 10 January 2025. Once numbers are confirmed then I will write back to you with more details, hopefully before the end of January.

Yours sincerely

Paul Bennett



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education from 2 to 18 years

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Lead Passenger: * _____

Others in party

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

*Parent/ Governor/ OP/ Member of Staff/ Friend: _____

I would like to attend the August 2025 adult trip to Normandy and the First World War Battlefields

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone number: _____

Possible areas of special interest:

A particular battle: _____

A particular cemetery: _____

A relative who died: Name: _____

Date of death: _____

Please return as soon as possible, and no later than **10 January 2025**, to Paul Bennett
bennettp@pocklingtonschool.com