

The Great War & D-Day 70 years on: A commemoration of the role of Hockley Viaduct

People came to the June 6th commemoration of the viaduct's important role in two world wars in various ways: a single decker King Alfred bus, hosted by the Vice-chairman of the Friends Rod Youngman; people arrived at the South Park & Ride to be shepherded across to the viaduct by Julia Sandison; or they arrived by bicycle or on foot.



Our first plaque was unveiled by the base of the original Victorian signal. After a reading of three verses of Binyon's poem "For The Fallen", and the Last Post & Reveille, books about the DNSR were presented to the military dignitaries who performed the unveiling.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them. "



Brigadier Sandeepan Handa - India
Lt. Commander Tony Nagle - Australia
Lt. Colonel Anthony Kaduck - Canada
Group Captain Paul O'Neill - UK, Commandant of Worthy Down



The second plaque is by the new signal, and its unveiling was accompanied by talks from Maurice Holmes, ex-British Rail main board director of Operations & Safety, and Kevin Robertson, railway historian and writer of the DNSR book.



Many of the 60 attendees lingered to chat after the ceremony, discuss and look closely at the plaques.

The King Alfred's bus then drove back to the Guildhall and the Railway Station by way of Twyford, Morestead, the railway sidings at Bar End and along the route of the old line to Chesil. A great hit with all on board!

A lunch was then given by the Friends Committee to a few people who had been particularly helpful and supportive over the last few years. Sadly, the chairman Chris Webb was in hospital and unable to attend the day.