

THE ANNUAL SOMME RUN - August 2019

A group of local runners organised by Gary Walker travelled to the Somme area of France to take part in a commemorative run along the front line of the First World War Somme battlefield to help raise money for the RAF Benevolent Fund. The annual event takes the runners through the historic 'No Man's Land' which separated the British Army from the Germans. The group were somewhat surprised by the terrain along the route: far from the expected flat French countryside, its course was quite hilly, and tackling the steeper slopes in the hot summer conditions was not easy. The thought of running up the hills was, however, tempered by the memory of British soldiers tackling the same slopes in very similar weather conditions while loaded with over 60 lbs of equipment.

The run finished at the Thiepval Memorial, which contains the names of over 72,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers from the battle who have no known grave. The group laid a wreath to commemorate all the fallen from the battle whose graves now lay in the numerous and very well maintained Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries scattered across the area. Legion branch secretary Gary Walker, Event Director at King's Lynn parkrun, said: "As in previous years, our runners were eager to get involved and pay tribute to those who fought for our country all those years ago. We're thrilled to be able to support the RAF Benevolent Fund in it's centenary year and we look forward to helping raise money for the Fund again in the future."

Below is a photo that includes Gary Walker actually during the 2017 Somme Run. Sadly rather fuzzy and few looking in the right direction!

