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Women & War Conference

University of Birmingham

23rd February 2008

Phylomena Badsey

While it was most regrettable that no BCMH committee members could attend the first joint conference between the BCMH and the University of Birmingham, the conference was a great success with nearly 60 delegates in attendance. This included MA students from both the First and Second World Birmingham courses, together with regular attendees of the History Day School.

Dr Jane Potter (Oxford Brookes University) '*Khaki & Kisses*': *Women's Romantic Fiction of the Great War*' paper opened up new areas of primary research material for the MA students present. In the question and answer session which followed the whole subject of novels written and published during the First World War was discussed.

This was followed by an excellent history of the Women's Section of the IWM by Katie Cassells (Imperial War Museum) '*A Lasting Memorial of Common Effort and Common Sacrifice: The Women's Work section of the Imperial War Museum*', in which it was revealed that missing photograph albums of women killed during the First World War, created as an official memorial and feared lost had been discovered during renovation works. This paper showed the wealth of research material held by the IWM on the subject of women and war; this was of particular interest to students in both Birmingham MAs considering dissertation topics.

Dr Juliette Pattinson (Strathclyde University) '*Women in SOE*' provided a fresh and insightful approach to a well researched area and her book should be regarded as required reading by anyone wanting to research this topic. My own paper '*The Unknown Vera Brittain*' formed a link between both world wars and provoked a lively question and answer session.

I hope that future joint day schools with Birmingham University will take place, building on the experience and success of this event.