

Sutton Veny

Hunt for wartime clues at Sutton Veny



*Marc Young will be out with his metal detector, looking for evidence left by
First World War soldiers around the Wylve Valley area*

A military historian from Sutton Veny is searching for First World War artefacts and information in the Wylve Valley.

Marc Young, 38, is helping to co-ordinate displays and re-enactments for the Wylve Valley 1914 Project, a commemorative event being planned for July 2014.

It will explore the period between August 1914 and April 1915, when 24,000 soldiers – many from Australia and New Zealand (ANZACs) – lived and trained in the valley, at a time when the largest village had a population of 500.

Mr Young – who has lived in the village for seven years with his wife, Rebecca, and children Millie, six, Isaac, four, and Barty, two – wants to head out with a metal detector and search for relics of the troops' presence.

"I was drafted in due to my experience as a collector of militaria," he said.

"I have been an enthusiast since I was about seven and was inspired by my neighbour's old Jeep.

"This is a fascinating project. I heard about it quite early on, as my children learned about it at school. My eldest is an avid Time Team fan and she was excited about it.

“There were an enormous number of troops stationed around here in the First World War and they left many traces of themselves in fields throughout the valley.

“I have already located the officers’ pistol range outside Sutton Veny, but I am hoping there are other landowners in the valley who know where soldiers were based on their land and will let me take a look.

“I have never searched in the valley properly before, but have found a few bits and bobs.

“If I find a great hoard of coins, I will share it with the landowner, of course.”

Mr Young is also appealing for villagers to loan their own finds for the display.

He has put on displays of his ANZAC memorabilia in the past for the village school and for Australian tourists.

The Wylve Valley 1914 Project was set up through the Codford Local History Group and is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Youngsters from Sutton Veny, Heytesbury and Wylve Valley primary schools have also become involved.

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