

## Press Release

**Date:** June 1<sup>st</sup> 2021

### **World War II war crimes – Alderney will work with Guernsey, the UK, historians and international organisations to show respect for those who suffered**

Alderney is committed to working with international organisations to ensure anyone who suffered on the island during the Occupation is shown the respect they deserve.

Following national press coverage of ‘new’ information about World War II camps on Alderney and the numbers buried there, further work will take place between the Island and international organisations.

The States of Alderney will work closely with Guernsey External Affairs to open any remaining UK Government reports to researchers along with documents and materials held in the Bailiwick.

Seen as a Channel Islands issue because all of the islands were affected by the German occupation, there is a strong desire to recognise the evidence and find new ways to show respect for those who suffered and honour the dead.

Recent media coverage claims that an intelligence dossier written by Capt. Theodore Pantcheff in 1945 has only recently come into the public domain from an archive in Russia. However, Lord Pickles, the UK’s special envoy for post-Holocaust issues, has pointed out the report was declassified in 1993.

The full Pantcheff report has been recovered from the National Archives by Professor Caroline Sturdy Colls of Staffordshire University and published on the university’s Centre of Archaeology website.

The States of Alderney agreed in 2019 to work with Dr Gilly Carr, Channel Island representative to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), and Lord Pickles.

Bill Abel, Chairman of Alderney’s Policy and Finance Committee, said:

“There is some uncertainty as to the actual numbers of victims at the hands of the Nazis in Alderney but in my view it is simply a matter of showing great respect for all of the dead and those who suffered so cruelly.

“To that end, we will work with those people and organisations that wish, as we do, to present the truth of those dark years and find ways to mark our respect. After all, these were war crimes of international significance that took place on our Island.

“The people of Alderney have shown great resilience since the Homecoming of 1945 when the evacuees returned to a devastated island, and Islanders have worked tirelessly to make it the island it is today. We must never forget.”

Deputy Jonathan Le Tocq, Guernsey’s Lead Member for External Relations & Constitutional Affairs, has discussed the matter with Mr Abel and said:

“The States of Guernsey will support colleagues in the States of Alderney in any way we can so that we can all understand exactly what happened during the Occupation, which has left a lasting impact on all Channel Island communities. Part of that will be working closely with relevant international organisations to ensure that all those who suffered are appropriately remembered and honoured as well as to educate future generations so that the lessons learned are never forgotten. This is very close to all our hearts and we’re committed to doing our part to ensure transparency and recognise evidence of what occurred during this harrowing period of the world’s history.”

In a May 24th letter to Alderney’s President, William Tate, Lord Pickles wrote:

“I am committed to safeguarding the historical record. I believe the best way to do this is to be open, accurate and transparent. There is an abundance of evidence in the public domain that has allowed experts to discuss what happened on Alderney, providing ample proof of the crimes committed by the Nazis on British soil.

“In a world where Holocaust denial, distortion and revisionism is on the increase, we have a duty to provide the unvarnished facts. I believe the best way forward is to ensure that all documents, photographs and other materials relating to this dark period of history are published.”

The Hammond Memorial on Alderney has five main plaques in Russian, Hebrew, Polish, French and Spanish, built by local residents to commemorate the slaves and forced labourers brought to the Island who subsequently died from maltreatment.

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