

# 'Take pride in Great War sacrifice'

by Ben Francis

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THE co-founder of national First World War commemoration charity, Never Such Innocence, visited Elizabeth College yesterday to help launch its latest competition for young people.

Lady Lucy French's charity aims to raise children's understanding of the war and gives donations to military causes.

The charity is holding a national competition for schoolchildren to create art and poetry inspired by the events of the war, which is being promoted with a roadshow visiting schools across the United Kingdom.

Lady French said it was important that children understood these events, and specifically knew what part the island played in it.

'It's getting children to recognise the sacrifices that have been made and to take a pride in that,' she said.

'We don't want it to fade into the history books, we want it to stay in the minds of young people.'

At the launch, students from Elizabeth College read a mixture of poems they had written and classic war poetry.

The CCF Drum Corps performed at the start and finish of the event.

Lady French said she was impressed with the poems written by the students.

'Today, we've heard three extraordinary poems and that's just the tip of the iceberg,' she said. 'The children are creating a wonderful centenary legacy.'

Elizabeth College principal George Hartley said remembering the First World War was very important for the college.

'The college lost 110 Old Elizabethans in World War One, half of whom were under the age of 21,' he said.

'At the time there were only about 120 students in the whole school, so whole year groups would have been wiped out.'

'It's very poignant to be in the college hall where all those boys would once have stood.'

He added that the school would be strongly encouraging its stu-



Elizabeth College's CCF Drum Corps played at the launch locally of a national art and poetry competition to commemorate the First World War.

(Picture by Steve Sarre, 13130140)

dents to take part in the poetry and art competition.

Year 11 student Jude Wegerer was one of the pupils who read out their poetry.

His poem focused on bullets and the suffering and pain they have caused.

Jude said it is important for us to take lessons from what happened in the First World War.

'It affects the life we have now,'

he said. 'It's important to know where we've come from and how such things developed – such tragic losses.'

He added that he had tried to make his poem universal, considering losses from both sides.

Earlier in the day Lady French visited the Guernsey Sporting Club.

She has a strong family connection with the club as her great

grandfather, Sir John French, was one of its founding patrons.

Sir John was in command of the British Expeditionary Force at the start of the First World War.

■ The deadline for the Never Such Innocence poetry and art competition is 25 March. More information can be found at [www.neversuchinnocence.com](http://www.neversuchinnocence.com).

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Student Jude Wegerer