



# Surrey Infantry Museum

Museum Newsletter – Oct 2018

Volume 1 Issue 15

## AIM

To maintain knowledge within the County of Surrey's Infantry  
Regiments from 1661 to the present Day

## FOSIM – Tony Ward

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Gosh, 2018 has been a very busy year for FOSIM.

49 of us went on our Battlefield Tour in May in which we covered the actions of The Queen's and East Surreys during 1917-18. Many on the tour had relatives who had served, including two whose Grandfather's had served in our forebear Regiments, one of which was Lt Gen Richard Mills US Marine Corps whose maternal Grandfather had served in 9 East Surreys and had flown over with his son especially for the Tour. Wreaths were laid at the Menin Gate ceremony by The Lord Lieutenant of Surrey (Queen's Royal Regiment) and General Mills (East Surreys). Holding our Albuhera Ceremony in the Battlefields where 8,639 Queensmen and 6,684 Surreys were killed was especially moving. Our thanks to Ian Chatfield for being such an excellent guide and to Dee Hutchison for arranging all the administration so admirably.

Another major event was our SALERNO 75 Day when Col Peter Swanson gave a masterful presentation of the landings in September 1943 in which 6 Battalions of the Queen's took part and 3 from The Hampshire's. Peter managed to track down four veterans who had taken part, including 2/Lt (Brigadier) Geoffrey Curtis who was awarded a MC as a young platoon Commander and Fred Tree 2/5th Queen's aged 102 who is living at the Blind Veterans. It was fascinating to hear what they had gone through and first hand.

On this Remembrance Sunday 100 years after signing the Armistice saw Queen's and East Surrey Wreaths together with our successor Regiment the PWRR being laid in the respective Regimental Chapels at Guildford Cathedral, Holy Trinity, Guildford and All Saints, Kingston. During the lead up to the anniversary The East Surrey Memorial Gates at Kingston Market Place were repainted and re-gilded. Colonel Patrick Crowley produced beautiful new guides for our Chapels and the four Iron Grille Screens in the Regimental Chapel at Guildford Cathedral were repainted and re-gilded. They look amazing.

Our thanks to The Queen's Royal Surrey Combined Charities for providing generous subsidies to: our Battlefield Tour, SALERNO 75, the Chapel Guides and work at the Cathedral besides their support to all four Battalions, Cadets and to many reunions. So far this year grants have totaled over £39,000!

Rarely in recent years has a new Battalion been formed. Such is the reputation of The PWRR that a new 4th Battalion (Reserve) been formed. The new Battalion Headquarters is in Redhill with HQ Company in Crawley, A Company at Farnham, B Coy at Edgeware and a new company in Southampton/Portsmouth area. 1 PWRR moves to Cyprus next year. Also next year 2 PWRR moves to Aldershot in a Specialist role. These changes result in the PWRR having more Reservists than Regulars. We also congratulate Lt Gen Doug Chalmers DSO OBE Colonel of PWRR on his promotion and appointment as Vice Chief of Defence Staff (Operations). Colonel John Powell OBE has now assumed the role of PWRR Regimental Secretary. Gary Woodruff a new Assistant Regimental Secretary has recently been appointed tasked with looking after events and veterans. It has been good to see him at a number of recently held events.

### Surrey Infantry Museum

Surrey History Centre,  
130 Goldsworth Road,  
Woking, Surrey  
GU21 6ND

Tel: 01483 770761

email:

[fosim@btconnect.com](mailto:fosim@btconnect.com)

Tony Ward cont .....

Our Museum under Stephen Johnson with his dedicated band of Volunteers continues to do great work. There is still much work to be do sorting out all the items that come back from the Restorers. As you will read elsewhere there is a good medal display now at Surrey History Centre in Woking, there are now display cabinets at Guildford Museum. Further, the Museum with the Volunteers undertakes an "Out Reach" Display Monthly. They do a fantastic job ensuring that The Regiments name is kept alive within Surrey.

Dee Hutchison has arranged a great series of lunches and talks at Surrey History during the year and I am sure a great programme for 2019 will be arranged. Details will be elsewhere in this Newsletter and on our website. These talks provide another great opportunity to meet old comrades. Do consider coming – all welcome.

The Queen's Royal Surrey Website has now been handed over to The Queen's Association and Lindsey has done a fantastic job tiding it up. Do have a look at: [www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk/index.shtml](http://www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk/index.shtml) During the year I have had the privilege of attending many Reunions: The excellent Dinner of 5 Queen's Old Members Association (open to all) at Farnham Drill hall organised by Ian Chatfield. The East Surrey Reunion at Whiteley Village organised by Ken Bowden and Butch Steggall and this week The Queen's Royal Surrey Reunion at the Union Jack Club organised by Dee Hutchison. These are great events and a big thank you to all the organisers. I know arranging such gatherings is hard work. It is lovely to see so many coming from so far to meet up with old friends.

Thank you all for your support and friendship. Gill and I wish you a very happy Christmas and successful 2020.

Tony Ward

## David Pollard - MUSEUM MANAGEMENT and TRUSTEES

The latest meeting of the PWRR Museum Trustees was on Tuesday 14 November and this report includes some of the issues discussed.

Paul Humphries from Ecclesiastical Insurance (and our on-going link with them) attended and we had a detailed report and discussion. Since the SIM fire Ecclesiastical have, in conjunction with their lawyers and also specialists in fire and electrical regulations, been considering if they can realistically make a claim against the National Trust (NT) for their substantial insured loss. Needless to say this is a complex issue, involving landlord and tenant law, as well as fire and electrical regulations. Now, some 3½ years on, Ecclesiastical are getting near to deciding their next steps, if any, and we should have a verdict from them by March 2019. Whatever they decide will have a strong bearing on

## Trustees Report Cont.....

what SIM decides to do in relation to our uninsured loss. Tony Ward and I continue to closely monitor events on this front.

At the meeting we had a briefing from English Heritage (EH). They are planning a significant investment in Dover Castle which will involve a bid for Heritage Lottery Funding. This investment is likely to be more than £20 million, with the aim of doubling visitor numbers from the current just over 300,000 to more than 600,000 per annum. It was refreshing and reassuring to hear EH emphasise that they see the PWRR and Queen's Museum as an important and core part of the visitor offer at Dover Castle. This EH investment might result in an alteration of the visitor flows around the castle complex, with a possible impact on visitor numbers to the museum. Recently, in undertaking work in the museum building EH have discovered major problems with it, which will probably necessitate the museum moving out to a temporary site within the castle and consequently that has brought Op Revitalise work to a halt. This of course coincides with EH planning for their major investment, and its possible impact on long term visitor flows around the castle. The Trustees are well aware that moving, even to a temporary site, will cost money, whereas if we can move to a permanent site and skip a temporary one, should that become the optimal course of action, should be the aim.

On the Guildford Council front, we have not had any further meetings with them about our proposed move into the town museum. Our planning remains that the office will move into the Quarry Street museum by the end of 2019. As you will see in Stephen Johnson's report, the SIM presence there with various exhibits and displays is now well established.

### **The Queens Royal Surrey Reunion at the Union Jack Club**

#### **2019 QRS Reunion**

Date for diary this year is **Friday 1st November 2019** at The Union Jack Club. Application forms available from Surrey Infantry Museum from May 2019. Tickets will be sent out late Sep/ Oct 2019 All QRS matters are to be sent to Dee Hutchison using the email: fosim@btconnect.com

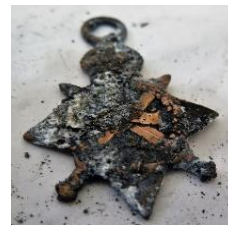
### **WW2 Battlefield Tour - May 2020 - Warning Order**

We are pleased to announce that we will be holding a WW2 Battlefield Tour in May 2020. This Tour will concentrate on the BEF in 1940 and the Queens/ East Surreys move to Belgium and France and the return journey through Dunkirk. More details will be in the March issue but will highlight a quick response will be required as we had a waiting list for the last one.

## Museum Report – November 2018

### Slow Progress

As expected, the pace at which the recovered items are being processed by Farcroft Restoration has slowed. Even within the category of medals we have seen the end of 'easy' restoration work as Farcroft move on to the more badly-damaged medals and the more intricate Orders that have multiple parts and enamelling. However, a further 300 medals were returned to us in late August: we have now accounted for roughly 1800 (some of which are badly damaged) out of the 2300 medals on display on the night of the fire which means that approximately 500 are either lost, presumed destroyed, or still hidden in pieces of debris awaiting further treatment.



With regard to other artefacts, the items selected for evaluation have undergone more detailed examination: as a result the cost of repair of all the pieces has increased leaving 13 with repair costs now significantly in excess of their insured value. Following discussion with the Trustees it was decided to look again at all the pieces awaiting restoration in order to fine-tune the priority of items on the basis of historical significance, rarity, viability and uniqueness. Our insurance company recognises our predicament and is working with SIM to maximise the funding available.

### New Barracks

Progress towards establishing SIM as a permanent tenant of Guildford Museum is also slow. Following the encouraging meeting with the new Guildford Borough Council Head of Environment reported in the previous newsletter, there was a public meeting of the full Council a few days later where the Guildford Museum project received unanimous approval. However we still have no firm date for moving the SIM office into the GM building and the planned completion date of 2020-21 for the refurbishment and extension building work is looking increasingly optimistic.



Meanwhile the two cabinets allocated to SIM as permanent display space in the 'Industrial Room' on the first floor have been very well received by the visiting public. Following my presentation in March on the *Battle of Medenine* I have used one of the four cabinet sections to tell this story. The other three sections contain displays on *Regimental Emblems, VC Winners from the Surreys in 1918*

and a piece on the major German and

Allied offensives during the last year of the war. This latter exhibition, *Brink of Defeat to Final Victory*, was temporarily placed on show at St Paul's Church, Sutton as part of its Centenary Armistice commemorations. From mid-November to January 2019 SIM will also have an exhibition in the Guildford Museum main gallery on the impact of the Armistice on the Surrey battalions still in the field.





The Send and Ripley History Society has a small museum in Ripley Village. Earlier this year SIM was invited to take up a residency in this museum and in response I have created an exhibition running from October until the New Year about the villagers who fought with the Queen's and East Surreys but who *'did not return'*. I would urge you to visit the museum (open Saturdays 10.00 to 12.30) to see their stories

### Out and About

The glorious weather over the summer and into the autumn has provided the backdrop to a memorable 'campaign season'. Starting with a reunion dinner at Farnham Reserve Centre in May through to the sell-out *'Concert for Peace'* at GLive on Armistice weekend, the SIM display, living-history reenactors and Volunteers



were 'on the road' on many occasions. We sweltered at a PWRR fund-raising garden fete in Elstead during the World Cup, returning to their Village Hall in October for a further event. Other days out included heritage week events at Cobham, Stoughton Barracks and Henley Fort plus very successful visits



to the East Surrey reunion lunch at Whiteley Village

and the *Salerno 75* event at Farnham.

Henley Fort



||The Museum also continues to work with schools, local history groups and other organisations, delivering lectures and mounting exhibitions.

In September I attended the VC Centenary Ceremony for John McNamara in Bamber Bridge, Lancashire. Just as before with Christopher Bushell's ceremony earlier in the year, it proved logistically impossible to put the genuine medals on display but a replica set and his original Memorial Plaque were loaned to South Ribble Museum for the event and a wreath laid on behalf of SIM.

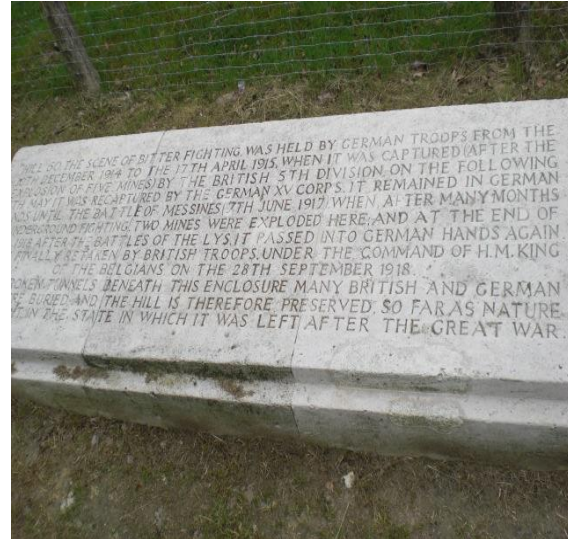


## Other News

### Battlefield Tour -May 2018

Well what can we say but a big thank you for all those who came aboard for the biggest Battlefield Tour we have ever done. It was a big admin task but we have to also thank Anglia Tours who managed to secure some good hotels and venues for us during our stay. The thank you emails on our return said it all.

The Tour this year focussed on the last few months of the 1914-18 war for the East Surreys and the Queens Royal West Surreys. We went to Hill 60, Bayernwald and upto the Battle of Messines Ridge and we felt what some of the troops felt - the driving rain, the wind blew and it was freezing even in early May. We were very glad to get back on the coach. This night was finished with the Last post at the Menin Gate where Lt Gen Mills USMC (East Surreys) and Lord Lieutenant of Surrey (QRSR) laid the wreaths for our Regiments.



Hill 60



Trenches at Bayernwald





On Tuesday it was off for the Battle of Passchendaele of 1917 and we were told about the attack on the Gheluvelt Plateau by the 18<sup>th</sup> Division and the 24<sup>th</sup> Division attack on 31<sup>st</sup> Jul 17. We also went to Polygon Woods to see where the Capt Robertson VC gained his award and hear about the bravery of this person. It was also a little bit warmer but not much.

We also walked the line of attack by 6 Queens and East Surrey and saw where Sgt Cator won his VC



The next day was a step back to 1916 for the first Battle of the Somme and the Somme of 1918 and the beginning of the 100 day advance from Albert to Longueval.

As this day was the 16<sup>th</sup> May and Albuhera Day, the Silent Toast was done in Rancourt Cemetery to finish with dinner at the Restaurant Le Prieure across the Road.

And finally off to the Hindenburg Line for our last day and we included the US memorial at Bony as we had Lt Gen Mills USMC with us so he could pay his respects. We did so much in short space of time and our thanks for to our guides Ian Chatfield and Tim Saunders.



### Salerno 75 - Lecture Lunch 29<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Again I must say thank you for all the people who made this event such a success by attending but in the back ground a lot of hard work had gone on. From Col Ben Baker who allowed us the use of the Farnham ARC and the Staff of 4PWRR who helped with Logistics. Sharon Stewart Andris from Sefrca for comm. Brendan Cooney for the catering, The Trustees of the QRSR CC who helped with some of the funding., The WW2 veterans who were able to attend. The larger than expected Kohima Band who played excellently. The songs delivered by the D-DAY Darling and most of all Lt Col (Retd) Peter Swanson who gave the presentation. A lot of research had gone on in the background as well as visiting the Veterans to ensure we had their story for the day.

For me it was wonderful to hear firsthand the stories that these Veterans had to tell. We owe them a great debt and not to be forgotten.



*Back Row Left to Right –*

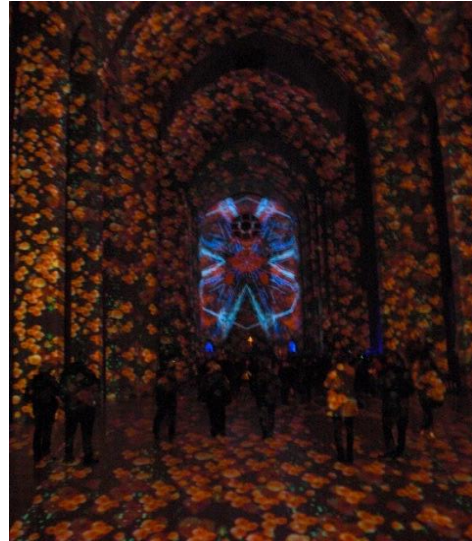
*Col John White, Col Tony Ward Lt Col Peter Swanson, Col Patrick Crowley, and Col Ben Baker –*

*Veterans: Sgt Fred Tree, Sgt Doug Weyhaupt, Rifleman Stan Ellis, Brigadier Geoffrey Curtis*



## Guildford Cathedral

Guildford Cathedral put on a Light show in Oct 2018 remembering WW1. This was an incredible sight to see and very moving and thought provoking. In The Queens Royal Surrey Regimental Chapel the names of the 16,323 soldiers that were killed from the East Surrey and Queens Royal Surreys cascaded behind the altar. It was amazing to see so many people just stand and watch the names scroll through. It was a shame it was only for two nights as I would have gone back again as there was so much going on.



## PWRR Cadets Visit to Gallipoli.

The Gallipoli Association kindly provided a grant which enabled some of our PWRR Cadets to visit the area and see the full story of this Campaign in WW2. Often forgotten but very important in the success of recovering Troops without Loss.

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*The Group: LtoR Back - Montgomery, Lawless, Duveen Conway, Medlicott, White, Hill, Franklin, Col White, Steve Chambers; Front – Reynolds, Lowery, Larmer  
Bronze of Cpl Seyit with his shell behind.*

## Lunch Club at Surrey History Centre

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*“meet old and new friends, come to lunch”*

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### Luncheon Club - Proforma

|                             |   |        |
|-----------------------------|---|--------|
| 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2019 | Col David Dickens<br>QRS and ESR in Aden 1960s<br>Surrey History Centre                       | £12.50 |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2019  | Tour and Visit to Sandhurst Military Academy<br>Ticket only event 10.00am start               | £20.00 |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2019   | Tim Richardson<br>Surrey on the front line<br>From the Normans to WW2                         | £12.50 |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2019   | Steve Johnson and Ian Chatfield<br>The Russian Campaign and<br>Brigadier GRP Roupell VC CB DL | £12.50 |

**Name:** -----

**Email/Address/ Phone if not FOSIM Member:**

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In case of short notice cancellation

Cheque amounts enclosed for ----- Tickets Cost £-----

Please note you can send separate cheques for each buffet lunch. They will not be cashed until the lunch date is due so can pre date.

Arrive for Pre- lunch Museum update for 12.30pm for lunch at 13.00PM

#### **Please return to:-**

Dee Hutchison – Secretary

Surrey Infantry Museum, Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 6ND

Phone and fax: 01483 770761

email: fosim@btconnect.com