



AIM

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

FOSIM – Tony Ward

David Pollard - MUSEUM MANAGEMENT and TRUSTEES

The most recent meeting of the Trustees of the PWRR Museum Trust was on Mon 7th October 2019.

At Dover, English Heritage (EH) do not seem much further forward with their plans for Dover Castle, which may well have implications for the PWRR and Queen's Museum because of possible changes to the visitor flow around the site. The roof of the museum building requires replacement and necessitates the vacation of the building for the work. This means work for the future of the museum and OP Revitalise is pretty much on hold. Along with the other Trustees, I attended the official opening of the Northern Ireland Op BANNER 50 display on Monday 7th October, performed by WO2 Paddy Ryan MM, ex 1 Queen's - I did not recognise him at first, such is the passage of time!

As Tony Ward has mentioned, the work of going through all the artefacts (mainly but not entirely medals) for restoration and categorising them has been a lot of detailed and painstaking work. That work has almost entirely been done by Stephen Johnson, Ian Chatfield and Stephen Blanchard; to all three we owe a considerable debt of gratitude. Stephen Johnson met the Insurer and Loss Adjuster on 3rd October, to go through the losses item by item. They were both in agreement with Stephen's reconciliation and so, in addition to the payment we have already received of £100,000, a further payment of £250,000 will, by the time you read this, have been made. Once all the invoices from the restorers have been cleared, there should be a further payment of at least £10,000 once the insured losses have been finalised, probably by the end of this year.

In June, Tony Ward, Stephen Johnson and I met with the Development Director of Guildford Borough Council (GBC), the Heritage Manager and the Museum Curator. In the May local election 26 Conservative Councillors lost their seats, leaving the Liberal Democrats with Independents and Ratepayers as the majority on GBC - the new lead Councillor for Heritage is an undergraduate student at Surrey University! We came away reassured that GBC and the Councillors are totally committed to the redevelopment and enlargement of the museum – there is no Plan B we were told! Currently there is structural work going on in the museum and all the exhibits have been decanted to enable the work to take place. That work is due to end around November, and so we hope to occupy our office in early 2020. The main redevelopment for the GBC museum is currently planned to last from June 2021 to June 2023, during which time the museum will close and we hope to be co-located with the GBC museum offices - wherever that might be!

Stephen Johnson moved home from Guildford to Shropshire in July. Since then he has spent alternate weeks in Woking, and when not there has worked from home. This is working well, with Ian Chatfield Stephen Blanchard and Dee Hutchison now coming into Woking on different days to maintain cover in the office. At some stage in 2020 Stephen Johnson will relinquish the role of manager, and we will have to appoint a successor. Stephen has proved to be an excellent Museum Manager, who just four months after taking up the reins had to watch as the Museum was destroyed, but has remained dedicated to it in the 4½ years since. His work on the administration of the restoration process on the museum artefacts has put us in a strong financial position.

Finally, I must pay a sincere and heartfelt tribute to our loyal band of volunteers, who have stuck with SIM these 4½ years since the fire. We would not be where we are today without them, and especially without the dedication of Ian Chatfield and Stephen Blanchard.

Date for diary for next year is **Saturday 31st October 2020** at The Union Jack Club. Application forms available from Surrey Infantry Museum from May 2020. Tickets will be sent out late Sep/ Oct 2020. All QRS matters are to be sent to Dee Hutchison using the email: fosim@btconnect.com

WW2 Battlefield Tour - May 2020 – Itinerary and Forms now out

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. There are only 5 places left for this event so if you are still thinking about it please get those forms into Dee Hutchison as we will be sorry to disappoint you.

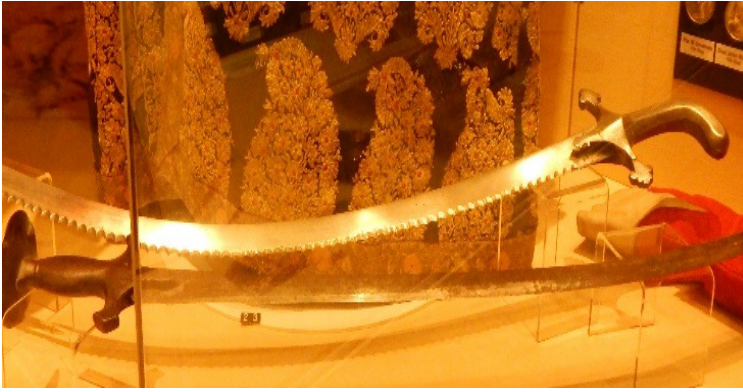
Books etc

In the Shadow of The Great War. Surrey 1914-1922 by Surrey Heritage which explores life on home front during this period. There is talk and displays at Surrey History Centre on 9th November 13.30 – 14.00. Representatives from SIM will also be there.

The Cobham Conservation and Heritage Trust are delighted to announce the publication of **Cobham Remembers**. A nostalgic, poignant and insightful view of Cobham and the surrounding villages during the Great War, with interesting anecdotes and rare photographs. This social history has been combined with a Roll of Honour recognising the local men who died in the service of their country.

Escaping with his Life - By Sir Nick Young. This is the story of his father Maj Leslie Young during WW2. Maj Young served firstly with the Bedford's and when fighting in Tunisia was captured and taken as a POW in Italy. From here he escaped and went on the run to get to allied lines. On his return to England and getting ready for invasion he was posted to 1/6th QRR and was Company Commander of A Coy. Please note that Sir Nick Young is our key speaker in Mar 2020 at the FOSIM Lecture Lunch. See this section for more details.

Surrey Infantry Museum – October 2019 Update



Assessment has continued on the artefacts returned from Farcroft Restoration. As mentioned in the previous report, amongst other items, three important examples of bladed weapons have been selected for repair.

These are the swords belonging to the Khan and his Adjutant captured during the storming of Khelat in the First Afghan War and a rare Drum Major's ceremonial sword. Each item was insured for £250 but the total restoration cost would be £5,000. This is a good example of the



predicament in which SIM finds itself – until the issue of insured and uninsured losses is resolved and SIM's financial position is determined, these items will have to be 'quarantined' until funds can be allocated for the work.

Disappointingly, following more detailed evaluation of the work required, of the ninety items selected for restoration in 2018, only twenty are currently work-in-progress with the remainder held back for the same reason.

Many of the other pieces returned from Farcroft are either duplicated or irretrievably damaged. Volunteers are currently working through these items, scrapping those that are beyond repair whilst re-uniting fragments of incomplete

objects.

The plan to move SIM into an expanded and refurbished Guildford Museum (GM) continues. The Trustees and I met with officers of Guildford Borough Council for an update following the local government



elections earlier this year which resulted in large changes to the political complexion of the Council. SIM was re-assured that, despite the loss of a number of Councillors who were fervent supporters of the scheme, the incoming Council remains strongly in favour of the project.

Meanwhile SIM continues to use two cabinets for exhibitions in the 'Industrial Room' on the first floor of GM. However, essential maintenance work, unrelated to the long-term plan, which started in June 2019 has resulted in the temporary closure of the building until November.



2018 being the centenary of the end of the Great War meant that SIM was involved in an unusually large number of events and



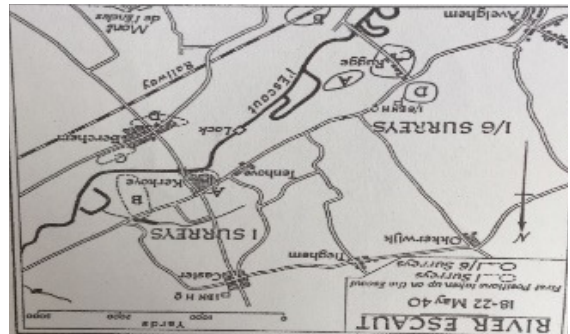
commemorations during the year. 2019 has been much quieter but SIM has still been 'on the road' a few times this year including a Family History Day in Woking, Brookwood Cemetery Open Day, the very well-attended finale of the Surrey History Centre's '*Surrey in the Great War*' project in Dorking Halls and our regular presence at Henley Fort on the Sunday of Heritage Weekend.

The emphasis of the material on display has moved away from the Great War to focus on other topics including the centenary of the East Surrey's campaign in Northern Russia and the 75th anniversary of both Regiments' actions in the first six months of 1944 in Burma, Italy and Normandy.



The Friends (FOSIM) continue to support and promote the Museum with its series of quarterly Lecture Lunches and, in June, a behind-the-scenes tour of Sandhurst Military Academy took place.

Plans are well advanced for next year's FOSIM Tour in May 2020 to the battlefields in Belgium and Northern France fought over by both Regiments as part of the BEF in 1940. There are only a few places which if you are interested please get in touch with Dee Hutchison for Itinerary and Booking forms.



SIM continues to benefit from the donation of 'new' material including a number of medal groups, most recently from the family of Stan Blay who died last year. Video interviews of Stan's experiences with 2/6th and 2/7th Queen's in Italy and as a POW remain available on the Queen's Royal Surreys website under the '*Buried Battles and Veterans' Voices*' section.



Other items included: an East Surrey Regiment trophy drum found on a cattle station in Australia, returned to the UK and restored by the original makers, Potters of Aldershot:

a very generous gift of Regimental memorabilia, including silverware and a bugle, from the personal collection of Adrian Birtles.





and a large plaster Paschal Lamb embellished with the Queen's colours and symbols. The original location and recent history of this item is unknown , as is the identity of the anonymous donor

For museum matters please email:

surreyinfmuseum@btconnect.com

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Out and about

Researches.

We are get a lot of letters, photographs and emails on Campaigns, family members, medals and all the volunteers at the museum can get involved in carrying out the research. We have been involved in several large projects which has included the Brockham War Memorial and the Surrey Constabulary.



Tony Hines MBE has been the lead on the Brockham project and asked if the SIM could help with any information of those who were on the Memorial from both Wars. This we gladly did and not just for those of our Regiments but also were able to add further details for others as well.

There will be an exhibition at the Brockham Village Hall on 9th/10th November if anyone is interested in going along. SIM will be there on the 9th Nov only.

Another big project and still ongoing is the support we have given to Bob Bartlett Retired Chief Superintendent of the Surrey Police. Again we have supported not just our own servicemen who served but also carried out research on others from WW1. This research discovered that one of the policemen LCpl Robert Lawrence's name was not included in a local memorial as he died in 1919 in Bethnal Green Hospital. This was rectified and on the 30th October a Memorial plaque was presented at Reigate Town Hall and will now be hung in Mount Brown with other memorial plaques.



www.surrey-constabulary.com

Seen on the Reigate Town Hall Walls outside the Mayor's Parlour



Lunch Club at Surrey History Centre.

Firstly we must thank all the speakers who have stepped forward this year to do a presentation for the FOSIM Lecture Lunches. We started in March with Col (Retd) David Dickins who presented a talk on the Aden Campaign. This talk stirred up many memories and faces from this period in time. Also in the SIM office we received photographs and other information from this Campaign for which we are very grateful. We even had Dr. Jean Evans (daughter of WWII Harry Skilton) fly over from Australia to attend the talk.

Following on was the visit to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. The Tour took us around the Academy into the Chapels and we were able to take a photo on the steps of the front of the Academy. Our thanks to John Sandys and the other Tour Guides from the Trust who accompanied us through the Tour. It was very informative and lovely to see aspects of Academy life.

Next up was Tim Richardson who took us through the legacy of War in Surrey from 1066 and focused on WW2. The talk was very well supported by a vast display of memorabilia and it was a fascinating insight into how the effects of War can still be seen in the county.

Our last speakers of the year are Ian Chatfield and Steve Johnson on the 1919 Russian Campaign on Wed 27th November which will cover the 'White Knights and Red Dragons'. Bookings now being taken by email.

GUEST Speaker 2020

Our first Guest Speaker of the Year is Sir Nick Young ex CEO British Red Cross. This Lecture lunch will be held at 4 PWRR HQ at Denmark House, Batts Hill, Reigate, RH1 1DS and we thank the RSM Trevor Harrison and Col Ben Baker for allowing us to use the facility.

This a ticketed event so returns are required so we can present a Security Listing as this is an active Unit.

Sir Nick Young will be discussing his Book – ‘Escaping with his Life’ and the Story of his father Maj Leslie Young’s WW2 Service. Maj Young served with the Bedford’s originally and then was posted to 1/6th Queens as A Company Commander. Copies so of this book will be available for sale at this event published by Pen and Sword.

27th Nov 2019	Steve Johnson and Ian Chatfield The Russian Campaign and Brigadier GRP Roupell VC CB DL	£12.50
25 th March 2020	Sir Nick Young - ex CEO of the British Red Cross Escaping with his Life - The story of Maj L Young and his Exploits in WW2 -Ticket only event.	£10.00
3rd June 2020	Lt Col (Retd) Peter Swanson 2/4 th Queens in Gallipoli Campaign	£12.50

Lunch Club at Surrey History Centre

“meet old and new friends, come to lunch”

Luncheon Club - Proforma

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Name: -----

Email/Address/ Phone if not FOSIM Member:

In case of short notice cancellation

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

Cheques are to be made out to - Queens and PWRR Museum (Surrey Infantry).

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