



Surrey Infantry Museum

Museum Newsletter Oct 2014

Volume issue 7

AIM

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

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FOSIM – Tony Ward

What a hectic last 6 months with much to report. The 100th Anniversary of the start of WW1 has generated much interest and activity. In May we had our Battlefield tour following the footsteps of 1 and 2 Queen's and 1 East Surreys (whose 2 i/c was David Dickins Grandfather). Full report further in the newsletter. We are most grateful to The Queen's Surrey Combined Charity Trustees for subsidising all who had served in the Regiment.

Numbers visiting the Museum continues to grow to 30,000. A remarkable figure due to the interesting layout but I feel more so due to the expertise and welcome given by our dedicated volunteers.

FOSIM has had a further two excellent lunches and talks. RSM Jack Chaffer was supposed to tell us how he won his Military Medal in Italy in 1943 but instead had us in fits of laughter with many stories, including telling us how he managed to get his Company Commander (Major Mike Reynolds) promoted to General. Our second talk was given by Brigadier Matt Maer telling about 1 PWRR tour when L/Cpl BeHarry won his VC.

Ian Chatfield has been busy attending many events within the County and giving talks at Schools, fetes and other events including at Stoughton Barracks. As you will see elsewhere in this Newsletter, Ian Chatfield will be retiring at the end of the year, although I know that he will continue to support and give of his time. How can we thank Ian for all that he has contributed over the years not only in the Museum but also arranging reunions to keep the Regimental family together. Ian, enjoy Chiddingfold Golf Course but not 7 days a week! Thank you so much for all you have done.

Also my thanks to you all for your continued support to FOSIM and a very Happy Christmas and 2015.

Tony Ward

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Opening times from
03 Nov 2014
12.00 am - 16.00pm
Tue,Wed,Thu only.
Other by appt

David Dickins - MUSEUM MANAGEMENT and TRUSTEES

The Trustees of the PWRR & Queen's Museums Trust met in Dover Castle on 22nd October. The Regimental Secretary, Col Wayne Harber reported that the regiment had created a Regimental Heritage Committee chaired by Colonel Patrick Crowley (ex 1 Queens) to consider amongst other things the futures of the three Museums, ours, Dover Castle and Winchester into the long term once MOD funding for two of the three ceases in 2017. Meanwhile the future of Clandon is protected by the endowment of £300,000 made to the Trust when the Queen's Surreys Association closed. Furthermore, and in part thanks to the income generated from FOSIM, Clandon has remained within budget,

Major David Pollard (ex 1 Queens and after a successful second career in retail with John Lewis) has been appointed a Trustee with a view to taking over from me as Managing Trustee for Clandon when my appointment lapses next year.

This month we have been heavily involved recruiting a successor for Ian Chatfield who retires after ten or so highly successful years as Curator. Surrey Infantry Museum owes so much to Ian's leadership, management skills, depth of Regimental knowledge and sheer enthusiasm that we will be extremely sad to see him go - but he will not go completely as he says he will continue to run his outreach programme round the county as a Volunteer and his knowledge and expertise will therefore remain available to help his successor settle in.

A panel composed of myself, Tony Ward, Patrick Crowley and David Pollard sat and interviewed five of the eleven applicants for the post of Museum Manager. We can now announce that the successful candidate in the throes of being appointed is Mr Stephen Johnson, ex-Operations Director of Page Aerospace in Sunbury, now resident in Burpham and ten minutes' drive from Clandon. Stephen, whilst lacking personal military experience has had a passion for history, particularly military history for the last 40 years. To quote his own words he relishes the opportunity "to apply (my) management, logistical and financial skills to an area in which I am deeply interested - a unique opportunity to use my knowledge and interests so support the preservation and display of important archival material".

After spending December taking over from Ian, Stephen should assume all responsibility from 1 January 2015. I will hang around in reserve, as it were, until the spring after which David Pollard will be in charge of producing these notes for the next newsletter. I shall remain a Friend!

The Queens Royal Surrey Reunion at the Union Jack Club

2015 Reunion

The handling of this event will now pass to the Friends and will continue in force for next year. Date for diary next year is **6th November 2015**.

Application forms and Tickets will come from Surrey Infantry Museum and all enquiries need to come to FOSIM at Clandon House address or email. Letter will be sent out in May time and tickets sent out in September. All QRS matters are to be sent to Dee Hutchison at the email address below.

fosim@btconnect.com

Friends Discount

Please remember to bring your Friends membership card with you on your visits as this will give you the 10% discount in the Regimental Museum Shop. Minimum spend £3.00. Please make sure you also annotate your Order form as such as discounts will not be done at a later date

FOSIM Membership - Dee Hutchison

Membership remains stable but we are looking to increase this over the next year. A new application leaflet has been designed for the Friends and is available in the Museum for visitors to pick up

Membership renewal was on 1st Jun 2014 and there have been a few members who still not paid their subs for this year so funds are necessary to maintain our standards for you. If you would like to change to standing order then please let me know.

Email:

We are using these for quick updates on the Museum and other events here at Clandon - so if you have an email address and have not provided it please do so. We do not pass your details on without prior permission. Also please advise when email changes I am getting 10 bounce backs per newsletter or email sent out

Museum Report -

Ian Chatfield

Visitors and Opening Hours

Up to the end of September we have had 33,063 visitors to the museum that is over 35% up on 2013 numbers which reflects the renewed interest in WW1 plus the weekend opening in January and February.

Accreditation

Our bi annual museum accreditation return is due for renewal in November and we have to do this to remain on the Museum listings

Displays

Our 1914 display featuring the 1914 database that the volunteers have been working on for nearly two years where they have identified over 3,500 names of soldiers who served in that year has created enormous interest.

Our travelling display has been most successful with visits to several events around Surrey including a day at Redhill library where over 300 school children came to listen to our presentation on soldering in WW1 with several more bookings to come and by the end of the year I shall have carried out 15 talks to a variety of groups around the county.

We have also loaned out items to Kingston museum, Guildford Cathedral, the National Trust and Surrey University and several local villages.



Children at Guildford Cathedral

Donations

Medals are continuing to come in with ex Capt. and RSM Ron Wildgoose's medal group being donated to the collection.



FOSIM BATTLEFIELD TOUR MAY RE-TRACING FOOTSTEPS OF 1 and 2 QUEEN'S and 1 EAST SURREY'S DURING 1914.

On 7th May, 27 of us gathered in the Car Park at Clandon awaiting our coach to take us on our Battlefield Tour retracing the footsteps of 1 and 2 Queen's and 1 East Surrey's during 1914. Ian Chatfield was busy loading up our War Diaries and other reference material. He was to be our Guide covering detail of our Regiments, whilst Simon Jones of Holts Tours would provide the "bigger picture". We were also joined by Dame Sarah Goad DCVO JP Lord Lieutenant of Surrey and her husband who wished to learn more about the part played by the Surrey Infantry Regiments in WW1.

Having travelled through the tunnel we drove to Mons where before clocking into our Hotel we viewed the monuments outside the town where the first (Pte John Parr) and last casualties of the war occurred. The following day we drove to Mons- Condi Canal where 11 Corps (Smith Dorrien) with 1 East Surreys being in 14th Inf Bde part of 5th Div were tasked to delay enemy advance for 24 hours to allow 5th French Army to withdraw. Having marched 15 miles the day before and 18 miles on 22nd Aug, 1 East Surreys reached the Canal. We could still locate the exact locations of each company and were able to appreciate the difficulty of so speedily preparing a defensive position, clearing fields of fire and dig trenches; no rations or entrenching tools having been brought up. Colonel David Dickins' Grandfather was 2 i/c and we were able to determine the exact area he set up his HQ. (One should remember that the establishment of an Infantry Battalion was 998! With 4 rifles Companies and 4 platoons each of 52 men).



The Mons Canal today

We then followed the retreat from Mons where 1 East Surreys become split in two due to confusing orders from a Staff Officer. As we drove South in our comfortable coach we thought of our regiments 100 years ago. Over 50% of the Battalions being reservists, many having been discharged 6 years previously marching, often in ill-fitting boots, in hot and humid conditions along French cobbled roads. 1 Queen's in less than 3 weeks marching over 300 miles. We next stopped at Le Cateau where General Smith Dorrien seeing his Corps was exhausted paused to delay the German advance resulting in a rather rushed battle resulting in 228 East Surrey casualties.

Having spent the night at Soissons, we next day viewed the Battle of Aisne and visited the grave of 1 Queen's CO Lt Col Warren at the little village Church at Paissy. We then moved on to Vendresse, visiting more 1 Queen's graves before climbing up to the high ridge of The Chemin des Dames, ground held by the Germans. We saw the difficult assault by 1 Queen's who reached the high ground only to be pushed back down due to an overwhelming counter attack. If only reserves had been available to quickly re-enforce things could have been so different.



Crosses laid for Lt Col Warren and Capt CE Wilson of The Queens

We then followed along the route back North, the Germans having become over extended and having suffered a mauling by the French at La Bassee. We arrived at Ypres in late afternoon in time for the Menin Gate Ceremony in which Dame Sarah Goad was the principle VIP who laid a wreath on behalf of the 7,399 Queen's men killed during the War and Colonel David Dickins, who also read out the exaltation in front of some 2,000, laid a wreath to the 6,233 East Surreys killed.



Dame Sarah Goad and Col David Dickins with the wreaths at Menin Gate

The next day we visited the First Battle of Ypres - 2 Queen's at Zonnebeke and Langemark and both 1 and 2 at Gheluvelt. In these two actions both battalions were virtually destroyed. We then went on to visit the excellent Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres which reminded us of the part played in the War by both the French and Belgium's.

At various times during our tour we stopped at Grave Yards, all immaculately maintained to lay crosses at graves of our forbearers. Though out the tour we could not help but admire the courage, determination, and endurance shown. They set high standards for us their successors to emulate.

And so we set of to return to England, except a storm had blown up in the Chanel resulted in a four hour wait being tossed around outside Dover harbour. I was not popular for suggesting it would be nice to return by boat just because the duty free gin was cheaper!

In summary an excellent tour helping us to fully appreciate the courage and professionalism of our forbear Regiments. Our thanks to The Queen's Royal Surrey Combined Charities for subsidising the tour for all those who had worn our Cap badge.

Tony Ward.

Lunch Club at Clandon

“meet old and new friends, come to a lunch at Clandon House”

The lunches have become extremely successful and we must thank everyone for supporting these events. This year we welcomed Richard Van Emden who speak about the Boy soldiers some as young as 13 and 14 who did whatever they could to join up for in WW1. We had the most brilliant of laughs with our very own Jack Chaffer who spoke about his Italy campaign and then some tales of his own.

Brigadier Maer joined us in September who told about a more uptodate war in Iraq and where LCpl Beharry gained the VC . We will be closing with John Lewis Stempel who will be joining us to talk about POWs in WW1. Please let me know if you wish to attend as there are still seats available.

Please see proforma at Back and return

18th Mar 2015 Ian Chatfield - 3 VCs and Hill 60

17th June 2015 Martin Stoneham - CWGC

22nd Sep 2015 Surrey History - Battle of Loos

25th Nov 2014 Col Patrick Crowley - Kut 1915

Grand Regimental Reunion - PWRR and all forebear Regts

The Friends of the PWRR would like to invite all past and present soldiers to join us on the **6th December 2014**, 12.30hrs. Great Connaught Rooms, Holborn, London. We want representation from all the forebear Regiments under one roof; which we believe is a first!

Tickets cost £12.50 pre-paid. (You can get tickets on the door)

This includes canapés and a free pint of Tiger Ale, specially brewed by Arundel Brewery for the Regiment.

Raffle - Food - Free Ale* - Cash Bar

Enjoy a Festive beer with an old mate contact
brianwoodmc@pwrr.co.uk

Obituaries

James William Pullen (Jim) 10 Nov 1934 - 2 May 2014

Maj Vic Sheppard MC Died 3rd May 2104 Age 93. He joined 2/7 Queens in the ranks in Jun 1939. He was commissioned in Nov 1942 and rejoined the 2/7th He served during the Italy campaign at Salerno and Casa Fabri Ridge and the Gothic Line. He was awarded the MC for leadership of his company after the River Garigliano Crossing. After the war he took over as the Secretary and Treasurer of the Queens Surrey Golf Society.

Maj R L Wildgoose died 22 May 2014 He served in the Royal marines 1943 - 46 having enlisted underage. Joined the Queens Royal Regiment in 1946, becoming RSM 1 Queens Surreys 1964-66. He was commissioned in July 1966 and was transferred on a regular commission to the Royal Pioneer Corps in 1970. Retired as a major in 1982 and became an Army Careers Officer until 1987.

Maj Jack St Aubyn 1921- 2014 He joined the East Surrey Regiment in Jan 1940 and helped clear up the debris from the Plymouth Bombing Plymouth. He was seconded to the Royal West African Frontier Force before joining The Nigerian Units of the 82nd (West African) Division Fighting in Burma. He then served with the Malay Regiment from 1949 -55 and finally at The School of Infantry at Warminster until retirement.

Lt Col Robert 'Bob' McGhie died on 11th October 2014 at the age of 67. Born in Scotland 1947 raised an army child living in Singapore, Southampton and all places in between He joined 1 Queens in 1967, serving in Bahrain, Northern Ireland, Germany, and Belize. He was responsible for training battalions for their tours in Northern Ireland and commanded 3 Queens in the UK and in Belize earning the Sword of Peace and an OBE. After a period in the Secretariat on the 5th Floor of MOD and an Instructor at the Joint Services College at Greenwich, he took up the job within human resources for London Underground. He will be sorely missed as a keen member of the Friends.



Luncheon Club - Clandon House

18 th Mar 2015	Ian Chatfield - 3VCs and Hill 60	No-----
17th June 2015	Martin Stoneham - CWGC	No.....
22nd Sep 2015	Surrey History - Battle of Loos	No
25 th Nov 2014	Col Patrick Crowley - Kut	No.....

Name -----

Email/Address/ if not FOSIM Member

Cheque amounts enclosed for £-----

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

Arrive for Lunch 12.00pm for seating at 12.30. All lectures will be held in the Onslow Room. If we reach capacity we will be moved into the main restaurant.

Guests are welcome to attend and do not have to be members of FOSIM

Please return to:-

Dee Hutchison - Secretary
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