



Surrey Infantry Museum

Museum Newsletter – Mar 2017

Volume 1 Issue 12

AIM

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

FOSIM – Tony Ward

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 FOSIM
- 2 Trustees report
- 3 Regimental Events
- 4-7 Museum matters
- 8 Obituary Col T Sewell
- 9 Lunch Club
- 10 Lunch Club Proforma

Since our last Newsletter, we have lost several very loyal supporters: Colonel Toby Sewell who did so much to establish the Museum at Clandon House. An obituary is on Page 8 in this issue. Mike Etherington, who for many years carried our Association Standard and was always to be found at every Re-union with his suitcase of Regimental ties, badges and other Regimental memento's. Mike was such a loyal devoted member of our Regimental family. I must also make mention of Doug Mitchell who for many years arranged the 5 Queen's Reunions. Doug was one of our few WW2 veterans and had recently been awarded The Legion d'honneur by the French Government for having taken part in the D Day landings. I know all the families were very touched by the large number from the Regimental family who attended their "Last Parades". To all the families who have lost loved ones I know all in the Regimental Family send their condolences.

You will also read in this issue the progress being made with Guildford Council establishing a Regimental display at Guildford Museum. Also at last more and more items, mainly medals, are being returned from the restorers. We still have a long way to go but a way ahead is emerging.

Our successor Regiment – The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment sees many changes following the Ministry of Defences latest changes. 1 PWRR will leave Paderborn, Germany in 2019 and go to Cyprus for 2 years. 2 PWRR leave Cyprus this year and are posted to Cottermore in Rutland for 2 years before moving to Aldershot in 2019. 3 PWRR this year lose A Company in Farnham but raise a new Company in Kent; and a new Battalion is formed, 4 PWRR which will have it's HQ in Redhill, an outstation in Crawley with A Company (Queen's Surrey) in Farnham, B Company (formally part of London Regiment) in Edgware and a third Company to be raised Portsmouth/Southampton area.

All three Battalions will receive new Colours on 23rd September at Canterbury Cricket Ground presented by Colonel in Chief HRH Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. The Secretary The Queen's Association is coordinating attendance for Veterans. It should be a very big Regimental occasion. The Queen's Royal Surrey Combined Charities are giving financial support. Note the occasion now, get up a party and have a fantastic day out.

We are still arranging our FOSIM lunch and talks (see page 9). Do consider coming along they are a great occasion to meet up with old friends.

Lastly, we are planning another Battlefield Tour 14th-17th May 2018 when we will visit locations of our forebear Regiments who saw action in 1917 and 1918 plus those Battles which we were unable to visit on our 2014 and 2016 tours. If you are interested do let Dee know. We are anticipating a large number wishing to join us.

Thank you all for your continued support especially all those who give up their time sorting out the remains of our display at Clandon and those that come to our lunches and tours.

Surrey Infantry Museum

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

Tel: 01483 770761

email:

fosim@btconnect.com

David Pollard - MUSEUM MANAGEMENT and TRUSTEES

March NEWSLETTER – TRUSTEE REPORT

At the February 2016 meeting the PWRR Museum Trustees it was decided to temporarily suspend restoration of the items salvaged thus far, until all the salvaged items had been sent to Farcroft. At that point, we reasoned, we should then know which items we would wish to restore and which, if any, we might not wish to restore. All the salvaged items were eventually received by Farcroft by September and decontamination completed in October. At the November 2016 meeting of the PWRR Museum Trustees it was agreed that the restoration of the salvaged items should proceed. In late November I travelled with Steve Johnson and Steve Blanchard to the Farcroft facility to review all the salvaged items, along with our curator Henry Thomas. I was struck by how thorough the Farcroft operation is and their attention to detail. I think we all came away reassured at the work they were and are doing, and Steve Johnson's report below gives an insight into the results so far.

Since the last report we have met Guildford Council (GBC) twice. It is clear they remain keen for SIM to be present in the existing museum and also in the expanded one. We are waiting for a document from GBC outlining the terms (akin to a 'Memorandum of Understanding' or Heads of Terms') for our presence in the museum. They have promised we will have it in time for me to circulate it to my fellow PWRR Museum Trustees before our next meeting on 4th April 2017. The Museum Trustees are very supportive of a move to Guildford Museum, but it is obviously essential we know what GBC's outline proposals and terms are before taking any substantive decisions. Unfortunately the date for occupying an office at the museum has slipped, but we anticipate being housed there by the Autumn, and as Stephen Johnson explains below there is an exhibition on now and a larger one planned for the end of this year.

When I last reported in October 2016, I said that I anticipated representatives from Ecclesiastical Insurance, their loss adjuster and the lawyers retained by Ecclesiastical, would be present at the November Trustees' meeting. That did not happen. However, over the Christmas period, Tony Ward, Stephen Johnson and I went through documentation from BLM (the lawyers acting for Ecclesiastical Insurance), which included a lengthy and detailed document from the lawyers acting for the National Trust. We made comments and corrections on the document from the NT, and sent them to BLM. As ever with a complex matter such as this, the legal wheels turn pretty slowly. I am assured, however, that BLM will be asked to attend the April meeting of the Trustees, when I hope we will be told how they see events moving forward, and that should include SIM's uninsured losses.

At the Dover Museum, work is progressing on OP Revitalise, but not as fast as I suspect Deputy Colonel (Heritage) would perhaps like! The aim is to update the museum to reflect the latest in museum presentation, as well as to adequately show the 25 years of the PWRR in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan. English Heritage is keen for the museum to remain in Dover Castle, and have said they will agree a licence period of 10 years (but not longer), but that it is hoped should be sufficient for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

The Queens Royal Surrey Reunion at the Union Jack Club

2017 QRS Reunion

Date for diary this year is 18.30 on **10th November 2017** at The Union Jack Club. Application forms available from Surrey Infantry Museum. Tickets will be sent out from late Sep.. All QRS matters are to be sent to Dee Hutchison at the email address below.

fosim@btconnect.com

EVENTS for your diary

Regimental Dinner at Dover Castle on Thursday 13 July 2017.

Not only is Surrey Infantry Museum trying to rise up from the ashes but our sister museum is also in need of your support. The aim of this dinner is to raise money towards the Queen's and Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Museum, located in Dover Castle; preserving the heritage of the local Regiment of London and the South East. This unique Regimental Dinner provides those people who attend with a rare insight into the local infantry regiment, the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. Guests will be provided with a free tour of the Museum in Dover Castle, the opportunity to experience a Regimental dinner, accompanied by music, in a unique environment and to meet Lance Sergeant Johnson Beharry Victoria Cross. There will also be an opportunity to bid for some items as there will be a mini auction taking place as well.

The cost will be £70 per individual ticket and there are 50 places on a first-bid basis. Final tickets will be distributed on 19 May to those who have paid. People who would like to attend should send their details to Col Patrick Crowley se-ce@rfca.org.uk and Henry Thomas at henry.thomas112@mod.uk. Please do not email FOSIM in this instance.

Presentation of the New Colours 23 Sep 2017.

A small amount of information is now available as regards the presentation of the new Colours which will be at the Kent County Council Cricket Ground on 23 Sep 2017. Please be aware the information below can change and you will need to keep a watch on Association websites for any changes. Car parking will be at the Simon Langton Girls' School playing fields across the road from the KCC ground.

Audience is to be seated at Canterbury Cricket Ground by 10.30 for an 11.00 parade (but these timings may change.). Cut off date for the applications for tickets will be the end of June and will be co-ordinated by Associations. Tickets, with a full admin instruction will be issued centrally at the end of August. Please note there is no cost to attend this function.

Old Comrades /Associations will have an opportunity to form up, with their standards, and carry out a march past HM under Colonel Anthony Beattie, as Old Comrades Commander, and one of the RSMs from the PWRR. There will be a combined Association Beer tent which will either be in the corporate hospitality block or a marquee dependent on numbers attending. Food will be available from a number of concessions which will be organised by KCC. Old Comrades of course are perfectly entitled to bring a picnic should they so wish.

If you are QRS and wish to form up and march as an Old Comrade, then please email fosim@btconnect.com by 30th April 2017 latest. You will be in due course sent a form for completion etc which is a must for security reasons.

WW1 Battlefield Tour 14 – 17th May 2018

We have now secured the dates for our final Battlefield Tour 14 - 17th May 2018. Those who have joined us previously have thoroughly enjoyed the trips. The Tours are bespoke and hence costs that little bit more as we follow the story of our forebears through the final two years of WW1. The cost is Circa £475.00 at the moment and includes - Coach, Hotel, some meals/lunches, tour manager, two tour guides Ian Chatfield and Tim Saunders MBA MA. . Deposits will be required around Oct/Nov 17 and full payment By 31st Jan. Please note the more that go the better the rate. Tour starts in Ypres and moves to the ARRAs area. Please email Dee at fosim@btconnect.com to secure your place if you are interested in coming along.

Museum Report - Stephen Johnson

'Up from the ashes!'

In the last newsletter I reported that material transferred from Clandon Park to Farcroft, our restoration company was undergoing decontamination. This process was completed in late-October and the following month a party from the Museum travelled to Farcroft to assess the decontaminated items. We reviewed more than 3000 photos of the individual items, a few of which are shown here.



As expected the largest category of items recovered appears to be orders and medals: the DSO above is typical of the damage sustained by enameled decorations: medals have survived in a range of conditions.



We returned from Walsall with a number of boxes of items recovered from selected areas of the Museum of particular interest including the 'Colonels of the Regiment' cabinet, in the north-west corner of the Onslow Room and the main medal display wall. Volunteers have been concentrating on cleaning, identifying and cataloguing medals over the last few months: those bearing the recipient's name have been prioritised for restoration. Medals without a name inscribed have been set aside: those that are intact or slightly damaged will be cleaned and re-used to make up complete medal groups.



Orders and decorations of Major-General Whitfield: on display before the fire and prepared for restoration.

This process is expected to continue well into the year: the enthusiasm, effort and perseverance of the volunteers undertaking the work should not be underestimated. Their labours so far have allowed us to start populating display boards for the replacement medal cabinet which is currently located in the Reading Room of the Surrey History Centre. We have purchased a new touch-screen computer to allow visitors to explore the collection.

Medal display boards: work-in-progress.



Plans and expectations

The Museum office remains based in the Surrey History Centre but there has been a delay in the availability of office space in the Guildford Museum. This is currently working to our advantage as the SIM is not under any pressure to move out of Woking and the current office provides enough room for us to work on the artefacts.

We have a temporary exhibition in the Guildford Museum on the Clandon Park fire and its immediate aftermath. This was supposed to be on display just for the month of November 2016, however, it proved so popular that the run was extended until the end of February 2017.



SIM has been invited to mount a major temporary exhibition to be located in the main gallery of Guildford Museum. This will cover the history of Surrey Infantry Museum, include a reinterpretation of the most interesting items lost in the fire and consideration of the future of the Museum and its role in the 21st century. Originally scheduled for this summer, the exhibition will now run during November and December 2017.

Other news

SIM continues to engage in activities across the county including lectures to local interest groups and schools by myself and volunteers. The pop-up display has been out and about with events at the Harlequin Theatre, Redhill, a showing of the Somme 1916 film by the Cobham Heritage Trust and the Surrey in the Great War Showcase Day in Kingston-upon-Thames.



Keeping in the public eye is important so I have produced an information leaflet for distribution to Tourist Information Centres and local heritage organisations, including Clandon Park where, apparently, many NT visitors ask for news about the Museum! A copy is enclosed with this newsletter. The intention is to publish leaflets twice a year: the autumn 2017 edition will concentrate on promoting the forthcoming exhibition in Guildford Museum.



Have you bought any of the new SIM mugs for yourself, family or friends? Priced at £7.00 each for FOSIM members, these bone-china, gold-rimmed mugs bearing the emblems of the Queen's Royal Regiment, East Surrey Regiment and Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment will be on sale at SIM events, FOSIM lecture lunches or available directly from the Museum office in Woking.

Donations continue to be received: in addition to a few interesting medal groups and other militaria, the Museum accepted beautifully crafted silk embroidery: whilst these pieces are not unique, this particular example is of such good craftsmanship as to be of interest to the Royal School of Needlework.

In conclusion, I hope everyone connected with SIM will share my feeling that we have seen some good progress since the previous report: there is still much to do but 2017 has started well and I look forward to continuing improvement in the Museum's fortunes over the coming months.



COLONEL JW SEWELL - Dec 2016

As many of you are aware we lost an outstanding FOSIM and Museum supporter when Toby went to the Regiment in the sky. We have included his obit in respect as many of you will not have seen this.

“Toby” Sewell was one of our last Veterans who served in the Second World War and the years afterwards. He was able to have many varied experiences than is not possible nowadays. He served in 13 different battalions of 7 different Regiments, including 5 of The Queen’s Royal Regiment.

His military career started in May 1940 whilst a pupil at Marlborough College when he had to join the LDV, later the Home Guard. On leaving School, he enlisted into The Grenadier Guards and after the full 16 weeks training at Caterham joined the Training Battalion at Windsor. Achieving the rank of Acting un-paid Lance Corporal he was recommended for Officer Training and commissioned into the Queen’s Royal Regiment aged 19. Posted to 70th (Young Soldiers Battalion) in Northern Ireland and then onto the 13th battalion. In July 1943, he was posted to 1/6th East Surreys in Algeria. Then in October 43 he joined 2/7th Battalion The Queen’s Royal Regiment (part of 169(Queen’s) Bde) in Italy. He took part in Battle of Camino, crossing Garigliano River and Anzio where he was “Mentioned in Dispatches”. Following a short spell in Egypt to re-train and re-form the Battalion moved back to Italy to take part in breaking the Gothic line. He survived four major actions and was again “Mentioned in Dispatches”. In March 1945, he was wounded leading a small attack on the Senio floodbank.

With the end of the War in Europe he joined 1st Bn The Royal Fusiliers. Following the surrender of Japan, he now with a regular commission joined 2nd Bn the Queen’s Royal Regiment in Poona, India. The flight out took 7 days! He was Adjutant and later Company Commander. The Battalion returned to Dortmund in 1947 becoming again Adjutant. Later in the year he joined the Parachute Regiment where he served in Palestine followed by tours at Parachute Training School and on the staff on 16th Airborne Division. After Staff College in 1954 he was posted to Egypt and Cyprus. In 1958 he re-joined The 1st Bn The Queen’s Royal Regiment in Iserlohn, first as Adjutant (for third time!) and then as a Company Commander. This was followed by a tour in MOD as SO2 Land /Air Warfare after which in 1962 he was Second in Command 1st Bn The Queen’s Royal Surrey Regiment in Aden and Hong Kong. At the end of that tour he was posted as Brigade Major (Chief of Staff in today’s speak) of 19 Brigade which was deployed to Borneo during confrontation with Indonesia.

In November 1965, he assumed Command of 1st Bn The Queen’s Royal Surrey Regiment in Munster. During his time in command the battalion converted to FV 432, became 1st Bn The Queen’s Regiment and had the honour to receive its first Colonel in Chief Princess Marina and then on return to UK before proceeding to Bahrain. It was a very happy Battalion indeed more like a family.

Following command Toby served in the Military Secretaries Department, Recruiting and again Land Air warfare. On Retirement, he served as Schools Liaison Officer South East a job her did for 6 years. He had to retire aged 60 and was hereafter very actively involved with Voluntary organisations. He was Chairman of The Queen’s Surreys Association and was always a regular attender at many Regimental Re- Unions. Indeed, he attended the 5 Queen’s Alamein Lunch just a fortnight before he died. He was instrumental in establishing the Museum at Clandon Park serving as President 1984-89.

Toby was a good all-round sportsman. At cricket, he played for the Army and was a member of The Free Foresters and Incognita. At rugby, he was in the BAOR Champion side in 1949 and later being in the champion side at hockey. In later years, he was a keen golfer and regularly attended the Regimental Golf meeting. He won the “Veterans halo” some 17 times!

Colonel Toby was a much-respected Officer by all with whom he came in contact. Always calm and measured, never seeking his own advancement to the detriment of others. Always supportive to subordinates seeking to encourage and coach. He was a prolific letter writer, giving encouragement or suggesting initiatives. Toby was a fine Regimental Officer with high Christian standards, by his example of doing what was right he had a profound influence on Maintaining the traditions and standards of our Regiment.

Tony Ward (Much of the above is based on a manuscript Obituary Toby wrote himself.)



Lunch Club at Clandon

“meet old and new friends, come to lunch”

Luncheon Club

Lecture Lunches are continuing and we have a four events confirmed for this year and next. We must thank the speakers who give their time freely and for those who turn up to support the events.

On 28th March 17 our Curator, Stephen, steps forward and talks about the 2/4th Queens and their little known time in Palestine.

We also have as a Guest speaker on 20th June Michael Lucas who will be speaking on RC Sherriff who served with the 7th Bn East Surreys in WW1.

28th March 2017	Steve Johnson - 2nd/4th Queens in Palestine 1917 - Gaza to Jerusalem'. Community Room - Guildford Fire Station
20th June 2017 (Date Change)	Michael Lewis on the life of RC Sherriff who wrote Journey's End. Surrey History Centre
26th Sep 2017	Ian Chatfield - Passchendaele Surrey History Centre
21st Nov 2017	A Ling - SAS

Luncheon Club - Proforma

28 th March 2017	Steve Johnson - 2nd/4th Queens in Palestine 1917 - Gaza to Jerusalem'. Community Room - Guildford Fire Station	£7.50
20 th June 2017 (Date Change)	Michael Lewis on the life of RC Sherriff who wrote Journey's End. Surrey History Centre	£12.50
26 th Sep 2017	Ian Chatfield - Passchendaele Surrey History Centre	£12.50
21st Nov 2017	A Ling - SAS - tbc	

Name -----

Email/Address/ Phone if not FOSIM Member

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

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

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