

NEWSLETTER

THE FRIENDS OF
THE SOLDIERS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE
MUSEUM



SPRING 2019

GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND RACING REMEMBERS - 18 NOVEMBER 2018



Above, Veterans of the Gloucestershire Regiment, lead the Forces parade up the racecourse



The RGH Yeomanry display, left, complete with a WW1 equipped horse provide a historical presentation of the role of the RGH in the fighting in Palestine and Syria 1916 - 1918 The SOGM was strongly represented in the static displays.

Below, WW1 yeoman having finished their mounted contribution to the parade. .



Above, the contingent of the Gloucestershire Regiment Veterans dressed as for the Western Front.

In November 2018 the Cheltenham Racecourse held a tribute to the horses, the soldiers and the citizens of the county to mark the centenary of the 1918 Armistice.

Static Displays by local and national organisations, an Aerial Combat Display and a parade of all three Services added to the Autumn Racing.

Right, Mr Roger Deeks, a Museum Trustee talks to the Princess Royal at the static displays.



CHAIRMAN OF THE FRIENDS REPORT

Having marked the centenary of the First World War, the Museum now moves on to consider the opening phases of the Second World War, eighty years ago. The small display of the county's regimental links with the Russian Revolution 1917-1920 (Lt. Gerald Gosling MC. of the Gloucestershire Regiment, killed by an uprising of Bolshevik sympathizers he was training, and Lt. Alfred Scott of the RGH, captured and imprisoned for two years in Moscow by the Bolsheviks and threatened several times with the firing squad) will be dismantled. A new temporary display, being prepared by some of the Museum's volunteers, will mark the stand by the 2nd and 5th Battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment to keep the corridor to Dunkirk open for the withdrawing British Expeditionary Force in 1940.

Now that the Trustees are planning to purchase the Custom House from the MOD and the sole remaining financial support from the RGBW Trust is due to cease in 2022, the Museum Executive have been looking at the funding required to keep SOGM trading. Two important initiatives are being introduced. Firstly, the Long Room, and possibly more rooms of the Museum, will be available to hire for educational, social and business functions. With education in mind the Friends have donated a 65inch Smart TV and stand for the Long Room, for use at school talks and evening lectures. With income generation from the hire of the Long Room being an important asset, a bar has been created in the room next door. The first evening event of this sort was held in February, attended by former soldiers of the Gloucestershire Regiment who live locally. This event was a great success both socially and financially and points ahead to more Long Room events to which the Friends will be invited.

Secondly, a new Museum Membership Scheme is being introduced which will generate more income from all those who wish to see the Museum thrive. It will be good news for those Friends who paid a Life Membership fee many years ago and feel that they have not really contributed since. You will be able to donate an annual lump sum or anything from £5 a month upwards – all details of this new scheme are in this Newsletter. Bequests left to the Friends of the SOGM or the Museum directly are always appreciated.

At the request of the Museum Executive concerned about the age group of our visitors, the Friends have also donated a cardiac defibrillator, the use of which will be the responsibility of our first-aid trained permanent staff, although it is designed to be used by those with no training. It will be available at Reception. We have also agreed that, as soon as the Custom House is in the ownership of the Trustees, the café floor carpet will be replaced by a new wooded floor paid for by the Friends, a promise we made over a year ago. We look forward to it generating income through the summer months.

A Summer Reception is being held this year at Chavenage, home of the Lowsley-Williams family, the Poldarks and our Autumn Lectures! We are very grateful to David and Rona and we look forward to a sunny evening on Friday June 28th and hearing a little about Chavenage, nearby Beverstone Castle and the siege of Gloucester during the Civil War.

The Autumn Lecture is always the Friends main fund raising event and I'm delighted to announce that our speaker this year will be Jeremy Paxman. In September last year he approached the SOGM Tent at the Frampton Country Fair for a few minutes chat; that was enough for me to get in contact with him and invite him to join the list of distinguished speakers we have managed to attract. Do plan to come; your invitation will be with the Autumn Newsletter envelope.

Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD

CHAIRMAN OF MUSEUM TRUSTEES REPORT

Since my last report in the Autumn Newsletter 2018, I am pleased to write that there have been a number of significant and positive developments at the strategic level at the Museum. Summarising these, I can report the following:

Continuance of the Grant from the RGBW Trust

Friends of the SOGM Trustees will remember that the Trustees of the RGBW Trust had offered us a grant for a total of five years covering the period up to 31st March 2022. I would like to express our gratitude to them, as this grant gives us the real opportunity to both build our revenues and manage our costs to the point where we can be self-sufficient financially.

Purchase of the Custom House

Last year the Trustees gave approval for the purchase of the building. This transaction is now progressing through the two sets of lawyers and we are very hopeful of completing by the target date of 31st March 2019.

The Five-Year Business Plan

The Executive Committee have signed off on the Five-Year Plan. This has been a huge amount of work and is now a document that we will continue to refine; however we have a solid plan to work to.

The Heritage Lottery Fund Application

In mid November 2018 we put in an application for a HLF Resilient Heritage Grant. This was to undertake three separate but related studies, an Architectural Study looking at how we could develop the Custom House building, an Audience Study looking at how we could broaden our visitor appeal, particularly into communities other than those with a direct military connection and a Fund Raising Study developing a strategy to raise funding. I am delighted to report that this application was approved and we have just been given formal permission to start the planning.

Bearing in mind that Lottery funds are being squeezed, I think the success of our bid really does emphasise the strength of our proposal and our developing proposition. Clearly this is only the first stage in a two-stage process, the second stage being a very much larger grant to carry out the works to the building, potentially including opening up the roof space to provide a large multi-use area for functions, exhibitions and lectures. Such a development would be a major asset for the museum and also a major asset for the docks.

Other Matters

There are two that I wish to comment upon :

The New Bar - The anteroom between the Long Room and the Kitchen has now been reconfigured as a bar. This move will assist both in our 'Hires' revenue stream and to support our running of social events in the museum. The work to create the bar was done by volunteers and we have only had to pay for fittings, paint etc. This really does show what we can do with very little money. A massive thank you to all concerned.

I should also like to highlight two recent donations by the Friends, both the new Defibrillator and the New Large TV Screen and Stand; both will add greatly to the 'hire-ability' of the Long Room.

The support of the Friends has always been of real benefit to the museum and, in providing these additions, our services to our customers are significantly enhanced. On behalf of the museum, I say thank you.

Chris Ryland

AN ANNIVERSARY FOR THE 28th REGIMENT

Three hundred and twenty five years ago, on 16th February 1694, Sir John Gibson, Lieutenant Governor of Portsmouth, raised a new Regiment of Foot. Until the mid 18th century regiments were the property of their Colonels, so the new regiment was known as Col. Gibson's Regiment.



A musketeer of Gibson's Regt.

Dressed in red coats with yellow facings, in December 1695 Gibson's Regiment marched to London to be inspected, with other new regiments, by King William, at a Royal Review. In February 1697 the regiment received its first overseas posting, to Newfoundland. Commanded by Col. Gibson, they were to protect the new colonists from the French. However, on arrival, they found most of the colony had been killed, either by the French or the local Indians, and the houses and fort demolished. Reconstruction of the fort and harbour was undertaken and two companies, approximately 300 men, were left to over-winter in the inadequate buildings. This detachment suffered severely in the northern climate, dying of cold and malnutrition, only 86 surviving.

The Regiment returned to England in 1698 to be disbanded as Europe sought peace after the Nine Years War. Reformed again in 1702, under their same Colonel they fought in the War of the Spanish Succession. Gibson then sold his Regiment to Colonel Sampson de Lalo in 1704. Under army reforms of 1751 the regiment became the 28th Regt. of Foot.

One of the earliest items in the Museum is a handwritten letter from Col. Gibson, dated 25th October 1702, complaining about the inadequacy of the arrangements being made to move the regiment to Ireland.

FRIEND'S AUTUMN LECTURE

This years Autumn Lecture, now in its 28th year, will be held as usual at Chavenage House (grateful thanks yet again to Col. & Mrs. David Lowsley-Williams) on Friday October 25th 2019.

The speaker will be Jeremy Paxman, who should need no introduction having been the anchorman on BBC *Newsnight* for 25 years and hosted *University Challenge* since 1994.

The subject of his lecture will be his personal and interesting view of
'Great Britain's Great War'.

You will receive your invitation in the Autumn Newsletter.



Jeremy Paxman holds the SOGM leaflet at the Frampton Country Fair 2018.

MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP SCHEME

To aid the Museum becoming self-sufficient in funding by 2022, the Museum has launched a new Membership Scheme, which will complement the existing Friends offer. All those who sign up to the new scheme will continue to receive their membership of the Friends, so will receive unlimited admission to the museum, twice yearly newsletters, invitations to Friends events, but will also receive the following additional benefits;

- Invitations to members-only 'Club' events throughout the year
- Priority booking and FREE admission to special event talks at the Museum
- Special seasonal discounts on various items in the museum gift shop
- Complimentary tea / coffee every time you visit

Life Members of the Friends – who feel that they may not have contributed to the Museum since paying their Life Membership many years ago can donate monthly or annually.

Annual Members of the Friends - who agree to join this scheme can rest assured that the Friends will still receive their membership payment from the combined donation.

Individual Membership costs £5 per month (or £50 per year), Joint Membership is £7.50 per month (or £75 per year), and Family Membership is £8.50 per month (or £85 per year).

If you would like to increase your donation to the Museum then please select the relevant option when prompted, via the website sign up page on www.sogm.wildapricot.org choosing your preferred membership type (individual, joint, or family).

If you would like the museum to arrange the membership for you, please email enquiries@sogm.co.uk and they will be happy to do this for you.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Thursday May 2nd
from 12.30pm.**

Friends Lunch in the Yeomanry Marquee – The Badminton Horse Trials.
Please request places by notifying the Hon Sec: simoncolbeck@msn.com
All Friends and their guests are welcome, please pass this information to your friends and relations. Cost of lunch tbc.

**Thursday May 25th to May 27th
all weekend**

Tall Ships Weekend in the Docks
The Museum and Back Badge Square will be in the Family Zone.
Entry to the entire event £10 and children free

**Saturday June 1st
at 2pm.**

Talk in the Museum Long Room 'Quarte Bras; the Battle and the Picture. Entry free to Friends and Museum Members - £6 otherwise.

**Friday June 28th
from 6.45pm**

The Friends Summer Reception – Chavenage , near Tetbury
Chavenage featured in the English Civil War 1642-1651.

**Saturday June 29th
from 11.30pm**

Armed Forces Day in Back Badge Square.
Parade at 11.30am from the Cathedral to Back Badge Sq.
Then family activities in Back Badge Square.

**Saturday June 29th
from 6.45 pm**

The Friends Autumn Lecture 2018 – Chavenage House, Tetbury.
Jeremy Paxman will speak on 'Great Britain's Great War'. Invitations will be included in the Autumn Newsletter.

REGIMENTAL CHANGES AFTER WORLD WAR ONE

As with all wars, after the treaties are signed and the armies return home, there is a **rundown of the Services as the numbers of troops are brought to peacetime levels.** Recently it has been called the 'Peace Dividend'* but in 1919-20 there were no such euphemistic titles for the release of thousands of young men onto the labour market and often subsequent unemployment. There were still Empire garrisons to be manned and troops were required for the occupation of the Rhineland; some soldiers who had had a 'good' war signed up for a further period, finding the army to their liking, while the regular regiments sought to regain their peacetime numbers. The battalions of the Territorial Force were stood down and the wartime Service Battalions, the volunteer units of 1914-15 created by Lord Kitchener', were gradually disbanded.

When the November Armistice came into effect the 1st Bn. Gloucestershire Regiment was at Catillon, on the Sambre Canal, having taken the village at bayonet point. But, as part of 1st Division, they soon found themselves marching east, with Colours flying again, to take up position as part of the British Army of Occupation of the Rhineland, being based at Palmersheim, south of Cologne.



German transport waits to be collected as part of the war reparations - Cologne, 1919.

But both battalions were back in England a year later and reforming, the 1st in Catterick; *'Towards the end of 1918 we moved to Catterick in the hutted camp. Here we slept on bed boards raised 6" off the floor by trestles and had a palliasse filled with straw which we changed once a month'.*

- RSM. G. Pearce (1918 -1945)

* **Peace dividend** was a political slogan popularized by President George H.W. Bush and Margaret Thatcher in the early 1990s, purporting to describe the economic benefit of a decrease in defence spending.

The 2nd came home to Chiseldon and in November 1919 was sent to Ahmadnagar, in India, whilst, around the same time, the 1st Bn. went to County Cork, to achieve some success in the political upheaval of Ireland in the early 1920s, returning to Tidworth in 1922.

In 1928 it was the turn of the 1st Bn. for overseas posting and it was sent to Egypt. Service in Cairo was followed by moves to Singapore and various stations in India before being posted to Mingaladon, near Rangoon.

The 2nd Bn. came home in 1928, having spent most of their time in India, but had had a interesting but unexpected, emergency mobilisation in February 1927, to Shanghai, to spend seven weeks protecting the International Settlement during a period of civil unrest. As far back as 1843 the British, and later joined by the USA and other European countries, had established an enclave in Shanghai to act as a trading and political centre. The so-called ‘Shanghai massacre’ of April 1927 was the violent suppression of the Chinese Communist



Members of the 2nd Bn. The Gloucestershire Regt. at Tientsin, China. 1927.

Party. This purge led to a more violent suppression as communists were expelled from the left wing factions and Chiang Kai-shek established himself as leader of the right-wing faction. By July 1927 a state of civil war existed. The battalion, together with the 2nd Durhams, were welcomed by the local population and;
‘for seven weeks of high nervous tension the troops stood by; alarms and outbreaks of violence were varied by unaccountable fighting between mobs outside the defences. Chinese executed Chinese and heads dripped in baskets from lamp-posts’. ‘Cap of Honour’ – Scott Daniell
Gradually the opposing armies moved on leaving Shanghai intact and the battalion returned to India.

The 2nd Bn. came home to Gravesend in 1928; *‘.....our [married] quarters consisted of converted barrack rooms and the walls were not even plastered. Heating and cooking was by means of a coal-fired open range. We had a fuel ration and were issues with rations: 1lb of meat per day – issued in two joints of 3-4lbs – a loaf of bread every two days, a ration of tea and sugar at the end of each month and an allowance of 1s.0d. per day paid out at the end of*

each month. The Quarters were furnished only with the bare essentials and we had to pay for our excess baggage when we moved’.

– RSM. G. Pearce (1918 – 1945)

The three Territorial battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment (the 1/4th, 1/5th and 1/6th) returned from the Great War to recruit again in 1922 as the Territorial Army (TA), but the second line TF battalions were disbanded, the 2/4th and 2/6th in early 1918, the men distributed mainly to the 2/5th Bn., which fought its last battle in early November 1918 before it too was disbanded. In 1925 the War Memorial to 1,069 officers and men of the 1/5th and 2/5th Bns. who had given their lives in the Great War was unveiled in Gloucester Park, with 300 men of the post-war 5th Bn. receiving their first set of Colours, presented by Lord Bathurst. These Colours were lodged in the Cathedral for the duration of WW2.

The Service Battalions were beginning to be disbanded or distributed to other battalions from the spring of 1918, when the Army reorganized each Division from 12 infantry battalions to 9 (3 per brigade instead of the previous 4) as the number of available men declined. This caused much misgiving amongst the men who had faithfully served;

‘On returning to the battalion and disbandment, I was posted to the 1st Devons. I was disgusted and as a protest immediately reported sick due to my gassing. I did not go to the line again.

- 20089 Pte William James. - 12th Bn. Gloucestershire Regt.

After the war an Army Order was issued stating that Colours could be issued to the Service battalions who had taken part in active; these Colours were almost immediately ‘laid up’, as most of the battalions had already disappeared. For instance, the Colours of the 12th Bn. were presented in 1920 and laid up the same year. Sadly they were laid up in the Bristol Art Gallery where, being hung close to skylights, they deteriorated badly from the sunlight. A better choice would have been the Cathedral, where other Service battalions left their Colours, the 7th Bn hanging theirs in Gloucester Cathedral in 1932, immediately after their presentation in Horfield Barracks.

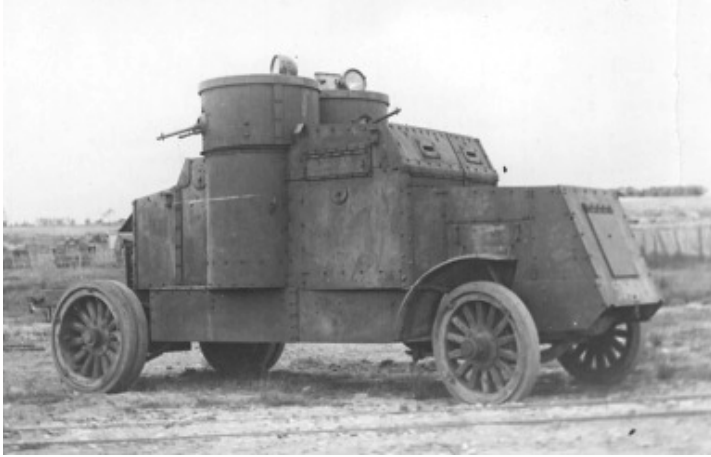
‘All second-line territorial and New Army battalions had been disbanded and the regiment returned to its pre-war establishment by the end of 1919. Close to 40,000 men are believed to have fought with the regiment in the war, of which 8,100 lost their lives, and the regiment was awarded 72 different battle honours. The regular battalions lost 1,400 men killed, 1,044 of them from the 1st Battalion, and were awarded 39 battle honours. The territorial battalions lost 2,542 men killed and received 60 battle honours, and the New Army battalions suffered 3,954 deaths and won 84 battle honours. Home-based reserve battalions and the regimental depot accounted for 204 deaths. Four awards of the VC were made to men serving with the regiment during the war, along with 47 Distinguished Service Orders (DSO), 188 Distinguished Conduct Medals (DCM), 265 Military Crosses (MC) and 747 Military Medals (MM). A fifth VC was awarded to an officer of the regiment attached to another unit.’

*

The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, who, with their beloved horses, had fought from the Sinai to Syria, remained in Palestine after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and were demobbed in stages, the last party arriving in Gloucester in August 1919.

The Regiment began recruiting again in 1920 with the reconstitution of the TA and in November 1921 was converted to armoured vehicles, becoming the 21st (RGH) Armoured Car Company of the Royal Tank Corps. It was initially equipped with four Peerless

Armoured Cars to each of the four sections of the Company, but these were replaced in 1928-29 by the more sophisticated Rolls-Royce



The Peerless Armoured Car was first produced in 1915, originally based on the American Peerless lorry chassis. After the war a new design was developed, again based on the 3-ton lorry chassis with an armoured body built by the Austin Motor Company. It was usually armed with two machine guns, in reality, a mobile armoured machine gun. It was reliable but was heavy, slow with a maximum speed of 16 mph, a crew of 4, and was unstable with a poor off-road performance, which made it limited to urban use. It was used by the British Army in Ireland and by the Irish National Army in the Irish Civil War. Early models were also used by the Tsarist Russian Army.



The first Rolls-Royce Armoured cars were also produced in WWI but were not suitable for the muddy conditions of western France. They were shipped to Mesopotamia and Egypt, where Lawrence of Arabia found them 'more valuable than rubies'. They were modernised in 1920 and again in 1924. They were relatively light, (4.7 tons) with a crew of 3, maximum top speed of 45 mph. and armed with a .303 Vickers machine gun.

They were used in Ireland in the Civil War and 13 were given to the Irish Free State by the British Government to fight the young IRA, having an advantage in protecting convoys and in street fighting. They played an important role in the retaking of Cork and Waterford in 1922.

Above, Driving Instructor Staff Sgt A. Distant with the first Rolls-Royce Armoured Car sent to Gloucester.

The second line regiments, the 2nd & 3rd RGH, spent most of the war at various locations in England and acted as training regiments with reinforcements being sent to 1st RGH, who were in the Middle East. But in July 1916, 2RGH were parted from their horses and given bicycles (the response was often measured in tears) and, in April 1918, were given orders to move to Dublin as part of the 4th Cyclist Brigade when the political unrest in Ireland was causing alarm. They remained there until the end of the war when regular regiments of the British Army returned to take over policing duties.

‘PREPARE FOR WAR’

It is always said that the Prime Minister in 1938, Neville Chamberlain, had believed that his Munich Agreement with Adolf Hitler, accepting that the Czech region of the Sudetenland should be ceded to Germany, had assured ‘peace in our time’. Was Chamberlain really duped by Hitler’s reassurance? Did his policy of appeasement play for time and allow Britain to strengthen her armed forces for a future war?

‘The story has been told by Sir Alec Douglas-Home, who was Chamberlain’s parliamentary private secretary at the time, was present at the discussions in Munich and witnessed Chamberlain waving a piece of paper at Heston airport declaring ‘peace for our time’, that, by saying nothing of his true feelings, Chamberlain had achieved time for Britain to plan for what he believed to be an unavoidable war. After hurrying back to Downing Street ‘he said to senior colleagues who had gathered to greet him, “Gentlemen, prepare for war”’.

- Christopher Booker, The Sunday Telegraph, 6 January 2019.

The entirely volunteer Army of the 1930s, about eight hundred thousand strong including the Territorial Army, was manned and equipped primarily to garrison the Empire. Certainly over the next year the postponement of an inevitable war, as Hitler increased his demands in Europe, provided time to expand and train new forces. A limited conscription was introduced with the Military Training Act 1939, requiring all men of 20 and 21 to receive six months training, but this was replaced in September 1939, as war was declared, by the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, extending the liability to all fit men between 20 and 23. This age group was gradually extended as the war continued to all fit men between 18 and 41. By the end of 1939 the British Army’s strength had risen to 1.1 million men.

Great emphasis was placed on the 1938 ‘Territorial Year’, encouraging many young men to volunteer and join the Territorial Army (TA) with his comrades rather than being conscripted to unknown regiments or corps, and on 29 March 1939 it was announced that the size of the TA was to be doubled. However the 5th Battalion became the Regiment's sole territorial unit to retain its infantry role and join the BEF. Placed within the 48th (South Midland) Division, alongside the 2nd Bn. it embarked for the Continent in January 1940 to take part in the early fighting in Northern France and the withdrawal to Dunkirk.



90cm searchlight, similar to those used by the 66th Searchlight Regt

Many county Territorial Battalions were reorganized to prepare for a different war and the Glosters accepted these changes. In November 1938 the 4th Bn. The Gloucestershire Regt. was converted to the 66th Searchlight Regiment, Royal Artillery (RA). The great fear in strategic planning was that ‘the bomber will always get through’. Each major Gun Defended Area in Southern England, such as Bristol, included an elaborate searchlight layout to assist the anti-aircraft guns and fighter aircraft, providing illumination for night engagements. *“The searchlights were to be deployed in groups of 48 on a 3500 yard spacing, the 90 cm carbon-arc projectors provided for this purpose being capable of producing some 210 million candle power”.* By late 1939 improved sound locators to operate with searchlights had also been introduced.

Likewise, the 6th Bn. was converted to the 44th Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment in 1938 and was based in Bristol when war was declared in September 1939. The Bn. was sent to the Middle East in April 1941 and took part in the stand against German and Italian armoured attacks, most notably in Operation Crusader, in which 2nd RGH were also involved.

The 7th Battalion was created in August 1938 as the second-line battalion to the 5th Bn. It served in Northern Ireland, training for the invasion of Europe in which they were to play no part and remaining a training battalion.



Matilda tanks of 'B' Squadron, 44 RTR on an exercise near Worthing in December 1940

As war in Europe was anticipated in the mid 1930s, with Adolf Hitler consolidating his expansionist policies in Germany, National Defence Companies were created by the War Office. In Gloucestershire older men from the 5th and 6th Bns. were grouped into these Companies as early as 1936 to guard key points in the county in the event of war.



Queen Mary wearing the Back Badge at Badminton.

In 1940 these companies formed the basis of the 8th Battalion the Gloucesters and, being composed of older and less fit soldiers, these men were employed at static key points, but a company were given the duty of guarding Queen Mary during her stay at Badminton House, from 1940 to 1942. She took a great interest in her devoted 'royal guard' and they, in turn, were delighted when she appeared around the Park wearing the Back Badge.

The 9th Bn., a garrison battalion, served in Northern Island at the same time as the 7th, whilst the 10th, raised in Bristol in 1940, fought in Burma in 1944-45. One other battalion, the 11th, was created in 1940 as a holding unit and, after service on coastal defence, changed its role in 1942 and became the 11th Light AA Regt. RA.

*

The 21st (Royal Gloucestershire Hussars) Armoured Car Company was converted to a tank regiment, equipped initially with the Vickers Mk. IV and Mk. VI light tanks, and in 1938 regained its original title as the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. The RGH went to Annual Camp in 1938 about 300 strong, but Camp at Windmill Hill, on Salisbury Plain in July 1939, saw 1000 volunteers present and two lines of the Regiment were formed. The 1st RGH which remained in England as a training regiment throughout the war, probably training as many as 5,000 officers and men; the 2nd RGH was put in the 22nd Armoured Brigade and travelled out to Egypt in 1941. *'It took its own tanks with it...the Mk VI Cruiser...the very latest cavalry tank. Few had been in action in the desert.... And great hopes were placed in their speed and fire power'*.

Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.

The Victorian Christmas Market took place in November last year, running for 11 days, over which period the Museum took over £10,000 in income. There were a couple of factors that played a part in the success – the first being that the market stretched right down into Back Badge Square for the first time, secondly, we had our own gazebo within the market.

We received confirmation from Arts Council England (ACE) that the Museum has retained its status of Full Accreditation; this is thrilling news as it confirms that in the eyes of the Arts Council we are seen as a museum that is maintaining the nationally-recognised standards of museum practice. We are working hard to deliver on the targets set within the new Business Plan and we are in the process of launching our new WWI and WWII taught sessions to Schools, recruiting some local freelance teachers who will push these forward.

The hire offer of the Long Room, along with a fully stocked bar, has now been launched and we have a booking form and price list, ready for all those who enquire.

As a result of our NLHF Resilient Heritage grant application having been successful, the project team has had its first meeting and we is with the audience development agency and architects to make sure they have all the information they need to fulfil the outcomes needed.

We have various events planned for this year, including a series of talks in the Long Room and a family event to mark Armed Forces Day in Gloucester on 29th June. The Tall Ships Festival takes place over the May Bank Holiday weekend, during which time the area outside the Museum will become a ‘family zone’, which will only help to attract visitors. We continue to bring enthusiasm and passion to the museum, and the team and I are very much looking forward to the exciting year ahead.

Now for some great news! The SOGM has been shortlisted for the ‘Cultural Venue of the Year’ award in this year’s SoGlos Lifestyle Awards, the Online county magazine. From a total of almost 500 nominations for all the categories, a shortlist of the best of the best has been decided by the SoGlos judging panel. It would be fantastic to see the Museum win this category so, PLEASE, vote for us by visiting the web page: www.soglos.com/awards You need to register but it is not difficult and doesn’t take long. As you are only allowed one vote, encourage as many votes as you can, every one counts!

The winners of all the categories will be revealed at an Awards evening held on Thursday 16th May 2019 at an event in Gloucester Cathedral.

I should add that the event is sponsored by Neptune Rum.



NEPTUNE RUM

SoGlos GLA 2019
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LIFESTYLE AWARDS 2019

Vote FOR US!

We've been shortlisted for
Cultural Venue of the Year 2019

Category sponsor
16i

Vicki Hopson

FUND-RAISING FOR THE MUSEUM



The Museum gazebo on Back Badge Square, during the Victorian Christmas Market (above and above right).

(Right) Janet Macdonald, a museum volunteer, who raised over £1000 by organising a cake sale at the museum.

The RGH Trustees have acquired a considerable number of copies of the print produced from the painting of the 1962 Guidon Parade at Badminton, from the estate of the late WO2 Bernard Rose. These prints (approx 75x50 cms) have been donated to the Museum to raise funds and are now on sale at £25 each (plus £4 p&p, if postage is required)

Please apply for your copy to the Chairman of the Friends: ralphhstephenson@gmail.com



Presentation of the Guidon
(From an oil painting by John King)

TREASURER'S REPORT SPRING 2019

Our finances remain healthy and we are well placed to continue our support to the Museum. We continue to receive one off donations from members and would like to say many thanks, all donations are most welcome.

I was able to bank £1,827 in October 2018 following the autumn lecture, including donations from those unable to attend on the night. The new flooring in the cafe area is yet to be completed, but will be when the Trustees take possession of the Custom House. However, we have been able to assist with the purchase of a Cardiac Defibrillator for £800, to be kept available in the Reception area, and the large television and stand at a cost of £1,074.

Subscriptions.

For those of you who pay for your membership annually may I remind you that membership was due in June and can be paid as follows:

- *By cheque made payable to 'The Friends of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum' forwarded to the Friends at the Museum address 'Custom House, 31, Commercial Road, Gloucester, GL1 2HE'.*
- *Via the Museum website at www.soldiersofglos.com and follow the link to the Friends' page on the Museum's Home page.*
- *By Banker's Standing Order. To save having to write cheques, pay for postage, or remember that you need to renew your subscription annually, why not complete a Banker's Standing Order Mandate? Please contact me should you require a blank mandate.*
- *Direct to the Friends bank account – Lloyds Bank, Eastgate Street, Gloucester
Sort code – 309348. Account Number – 01371982.
Account Name - Friends of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum.*

Please remember to add your name and or membership number in the reference box. Annual rates are £20 single, £30 couples and £10 for juniors. Conversion to Life membership is for a single payment of £200.

Mr. Patrick Smart

IMPORTANT REQUEST: E-MAIL ADDRESSES

The Friends of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire are aware that their email address list is far from complete. We would like to correct this so that all members can receive our communications swiftly and efficiently. Under GDPR regulations we will respect and protect your privacy and information but, if you think we do not hold your e-address, we would be grateful if you would send it to enquiries@sogm.co.uk .

Eventually we would like to send all our news and invitations via the internet, but we are unable to do this present until we have a fuller list. This would create a considerable saving of our precious funds. Many thanks.

The Editor

STRENGTHENING THE KOREAN LINK



Tuesday 11th December 2018 was a significant day for the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum and its relationship with Korea. The Museum welcomed two representatives from the 유엔평화기념관 - the United Nations Peace Memorial Hall in Busan, South Korea. The SOGM have signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Museums and we are looking forward to working more closely with our Korean friends, and honouring the memory of the Glorious Glosters who served in the Korean War.

The Museum Director, Vicki Hopson and the Secretary General of the UN Peace Memorial Hall.

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The UN Peace Memorial Hall, a five-story building in the port city of Busan, was opened in 2014 as 'a place to pay tribute to the fallen UN soldiers of 21 allied nations who served in the Korean War of 1950-53'. The building features four exhibition halls, a 4D theatre and a convention hall and is the first museum in the world to commemorate only the war veterans of the U.N. forces who fought in the War. About 25 billion won (\$2.3 million) has been spent on the four-year construction project.

Nearby is the United Nations Memorial Cemetery containing 2,300 graves laid out in national sites; the United Kingdom plot contains 885 graves. Construction commenced in 1951 and in 1953, following the Armistice Agreement, the UN Command sought to recover bodies interred in North Korean cemeteries established at 16 POW camps. From September to October 1954, the resulting exchange of casualties, dubbed Operation Glory, between United Nations forces and the North Koreans resulted in 4,219 remains being recovered, of which 1,275 were non-US casualties. Also exchanged were the remains of approximately 14,000 North Korean and Chinese casualties.

It is now maintained by the Commission for the United Nations Memorial Cemetery (CUNMCK), which is composed of representatives from the 11 countries who have service members buried there.

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Members of the Gloucestershire branch of the Korean War Veterans Association visited the museum in November 2018 to place their Standard to be on display within the Korean Gallery. They have decided to disband their branch, in view of age and diminishing numbers, and leave the Standard in the safe keeping of the Museum. They have also generously donated the balance of their funds to the Museum.

Members of the Gloucestershire Branch of the Korean War Veterans in the Korean Gallery of the SOGM



THE 'GEO BUK-SEON'

In April 1981 the Gloucestershire Regiment were presented with a model of a Korean Turtle Ship, the *Geo Buk-Seon* (귀선; 龜船), to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Battle of the Imjin River. It now stands in the Long Room and the ship's history is of interest.



The model Korean Turtle Ship sits on the chest in the Long Room of the Custom House

The Japanese invaded Korea in 1592 at the start of what has become known as The Imjin War (1592 was a year of the dragon and 'Imjin' is the Korean word for a dragon). They landed an army of 150,000 at Pusan, in the south of the Korean Peninsula with the objective of marching north to invade China, not expecting much resistance from the Koreans. In this they were to be disappointed.

The Koreans, with some assistance from the Chinese, resisted fiercely on land, but were heavily outnumbered and outgunned and the Japanese offensive initially made progress. However, the Korean Navy under Admiral Yi Sun-Shin retained command of the sea, in part due to Yi's naval prowess and understanding of the waters around Korea, but also because of the technical superiority of the Korean Ships.

The *Geo Buk-Seon*, Admiral Yi's flagship, had a number of advanced features. Its upper deck was covered with metal plates, each of which bore a spike which effectively prevented boarding, one of the main Japanese naval tactics at the time. Turtle ships were also armed with cannons which, as well as discharging round shot, could fire a type of heavy arrow with fins at a slight angle which spun the projectile in flight making it very accurate for the time. These 'arrows' could either carry a weighted head or a flaming one, particularly damaging to wooden ships. The dragon's head also had the ability to discharge fumes of sulphur dioxide

which, with the wind in the right direction, would distribute the fumes in the direction of the enemy in what was probably the first use of poison gas in war.



A reconstructed full-size replica of a Turtle Ship, the usual length being 30 to 37 metres. Propulsion, 80 oarsmen with a complement of 50 soldiers. Armament, 26 canons.

Without control of the seas, the Japanese supply line lengthened stretching all the way back to Pusan and eventually the bitter Korean winter and the lack of food and ammunition forced the Japanese to retreat. Despite this reverse the war effectively dragged on for six years before the Japanese eventually left the Korean peninsula in 1598.

It is said that the vast majority of the invading Japanese forces died during the war, whilst the Koreans suffered a huge number of mainly civilian dead, mostly from famine. Koreans to this day, see the Imjin War and the Korean War as the two biggest disasters that have befallen their country.

Admiral Yi has become Korea's greatest military hero and, like Admiral Nelson, died almost at the very end of the war from a stray musket shot as the Japanese were finally leaving.

Mr. Chris Ryland

DEVELOPING THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE – SOUTH KOREA LINK

In view of the developing relationship between Gloucestershire and the City of Paju in South Korea, the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire and the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum are planning to organise a joint party to visit Paju for a minimum of a week in late April 2020.

There are numerous purposes for the visit :

- To express our gratitude for the tribute paid by the Mayor, the City Council and the citizens of Paju in honouring the soldiers of the Gloucestershire Regiment with the new memorial built in 2014 that stands on the site of the 'Glosters' last stand on Hill 235 (Gloster Hill)
- To promote further cultural, educational, commercial and sporting links between Gloucestershire and Paju
- To visit the site of the Battle of the Imjin River on the anniversary of the battle
- To visit other places in Paju of cultural and historic interest including the DMZ and to view into North Korea (from a safe distance!)
- And to sample the truly exceptional warmth and hospitality of the South Korean people.

South Korea, from a devastated country at the end of the Korean War, is now a leading Asian Tiger economy, the 11th largest economy in the World and an amazingly vibrant place but with an enormous cultural heritage. However, unlike China and Japan, English is widely spoken and English people are welcomed.

Members of the party (all members of the Hon. Co. and of SOGM are invited to take part) will have to pay their own costs (for example a return flight in April is currently about £900), but in return will enjoy a genuinely unique experience. Expressions of interest should be lodged with the Chairman of the Friends (ralphstephenson@gmail.com) or of SOGM Trustees (christoryland@aol.com) by the end of May 2019 and a meeting will be held at SOGM for interested parties in June.

Mr. Chris Ryland

RETURNING THE KOREAN WAR DEAD

The slight thaw in the relationship between the United States and North Korea had, certainly up to the recent meeting between President Trump and Kim Jong-un, permitted an exchange of dialogue and, more importantly, the return of some body-fragments of coalition soldiers from the Korean War. The Korean War, technically a UN policing action which lasted from 1950 to 1953 and involved contributions of troops from sixteen nations, continues, according to some sources, with the two Koreas still at war as no peace treaty has been signed.

So far the remains of 55 soldiers have been returned to the US for analysis, with more hoped to follow. But the nationalities have yet to be identified and, with 33,000 coalition troops still unaccounted for from the war, it is possible that some of the remains may in fact be British servicemen. Over 1100 British servicemen were killed in the war, with 336 still listed as missing. Consequently the MoD has appealed for help to trace fallen British servicemen and families of the missing have been asked to provide DNA samples for analysis.

This includes family members of the Gloucestershire Regiment, remembering that, after the 'Glosters' had held out against an estimated 10,000 Chinese troops for three days, most of the unit of 600 men were killed or captured, with only 40 making it back to safety. There was a significant mortality rate amongst the prisoners of war, who were held in conditions of severe privation. This search for family members of the 'Glosters' is being led by the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), based at Imjin Barracks, Innsworth.

Nicola Nash, from the MoD's JCCC in Gloucester, has said: "We are currently attempting to gather the contact information of the families of these brave men who were killed during the Korean War but have no known grave. Although the process of tracing families, DNA testing and identification will probably take many years, we are hoping that as many families

as possible will come forward”. Any British personnel identified will be buried in the United Nations (UN) Memorial Cemetery in Pusan, South Korea. The MoD has said it will pay for relatives to attend the services.



A US soldier salutes during a repatriation ceremony for the remains of soldiers killed in the Korean War, Pyeongtaek, South Korea, Wednesday, August 1, 2018.

‘Sam Mercer, a Gloster veteran of the Korean War who was wounded and spent two years in a Chinese PoW camp was interviewed by the Daily Telegraph for this news item.

“Speaking exclusively to The Telegraph he said he supported the initiative and recalled that many of his fellow soldiers had been reservists at the time of the Korean War and had had to be recalled to arms to go and fight. “In the words of the RSM ” Mr Mercer said, “they were ticking like alarm clocks!”

He last visited the UN cemetery in Pusan about four years ago and visited the grave of his old Platoon Commander, Lieutenant Curtis, a Victoria Cross recipient. “I had a brief chat with him and wished him well” he said, “as you do”.

He felt it was a worthy endeavour to try to match remains from the war to help the families. He knew that the sacrifices of his comrades were greatly respected by the Korean people today, many of whom, he said, felt the UN forces had been their saviours.

Returning to his hotel from a visit to the Imjin River battlefield on his last visit, he said he had been overcome with emotion. A young Korean nurse had gone to his aid. Having ensured he was healthy she then knelt down in front of him and, as if she was addressing all the men that had gone to fight for her country, in broken English said three words that have stayed with Mr Mercer ever since: ‘You my hero’ ”.

- Daily Telegraph 15 August 2018

Many will know Sam Mercer, a frequent visitor to the Museum and stalwart member of the Korean Veterans Association.

Editor