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Herefordshire Light  
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**Newsletter**

Number 2: February 2008

**Welcome:** Your committee welcomes you to this second Friends' newsletter - we hope you find it of interest.

2007 was a busy year for The Friends, The Museum, The Rifles (and The Light Infantry!) and The Army. Soldiers from the County continue to make history and soldiers from Herefordshire have been on operations in Iraq - their last operation wearing a Light Infantry bugle.

We wish all of those on operations a speedy and safe return.

The Museum Trustees have agreed a 'Development Plan' for the Museum and are now busy putting that in place - more of that later!

Finally The Friends (and Museum Trustees) have opened the Museum on several occasions, acquired new items and refurbished some of the old items - hopefully there will be (a lot (!)) more of the same in 2008

**Museum Acquisitions:** Accessions to the Museum continue at a steady trickle; we are particularly keen to acquire an example of a Territorial Efficiency Medal named to The Herefordshire Light Infantry.

The Museum purchased a lovely group of World War One medals to **8217 Pte Henry EVANS**. This comprised the British War Medal, The Victory Medal, The Territorial Force War Medal (TFWM) and The Territorial Force Efficiency Medal (TFEM) - a 'real' territorial group. Prior to 1914 the TF has no obligation to serve overseas, individuals did volunteer to do so and wore an identifying metal badge (Imperial Service) above their right breast pocket. Soldiers who thus volunteered but did not serve overseas in 1914 or 15 (and therefore did not qualify for the 1914 or 1914/15 Star medals), but did serve overseas after 1915 were awarded the TFWM; it is the scarcest of the First World War medals with just over 30,000 being issued; The Herefords received *about* 100. The TFEM was awarded for 12 years service with the TF (with war service counting double); this TFEM was awarded in 1919. This combination of medals to The Herefords is rare; there are only 6 known examples. Little is known of Pte Evans, his regimental number (4 digits beginning with an 8) would indicate he is probably from Radnorshire - but definitely a subject for further research

**Your Committee:** This remains unchanged with all eligible officers offering their services to the Friends for a further period and being duly elected at the AGM.

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**Herefordshire or Hertfordshire:** I am sure you all know of occasions when the 2 have been confused! You will hardly be surprised to hear that Military administration is no exception! There are examples of medals being incorrectly named. One 'mystery' is that of a group of 12 Military Medals awarded in January 1919. In the London Gazette they are correctly attributed to The Herefords, on the medal cards a (slightly spidery) copperplate hand seems to attribute them to the Hertfordshire Regiment. No one can recall ever having seen one of these medals so we do not know what Regiment actually appears on them, but ..... at the open day in September a WW1 MM group was presented - on examination it was named to The Herefords but was not recorded anywhere. Later research indicated it had been wrongly attributed to The Hertfords in The London Gazette - it was not one of the 1919 batch so the original mystery remains - but the Regiment has claimed one more MM for WW1.

**Soldiers Of The Regiment:** Attached to this Newsletter is an account written by Andy Taylor and published in The Journal of The Orders and Medals Research Society (OMRS), of the life and career of Lt Col Wilkins Fitzwilliam Chipp, who served in The Herefords during WW1.

**Accreditation:** Progress on the road to Accreditation continues despite some 'sleeping policeman' slowing progress. Restricting MOD procedures and changes to Charity Law have slowed progress, but the Museum still aspires to achieve Accreditation and will formally embark on the process in 2008. Accreditation reflects best practice and the Museum remains totally committed to the principles of Accreditation.

**TA 100:** 2008 marks the centenary of the formation of the Territorial Force, the final event which completed the reorganization of the military forces of Britain, and prepared them (unknowingly) for WW1 and set the structures which have endured for 100 years. There are to be a series of national events and it is planned to hold a local event. This will be in June and it will take the form of: Museum display, a presentation on the formation of the TF and The Herefordshire Regiment, displays by The Herefordshire Army Cadets followed by The Herefordshire Army Cadet League annual summer BBQ; it is also hoped that the Yeomanry from Hereford will take part as well. Planning is at an early stage and more details as the event firms up.

Royal Mail are to produce a commemorative stamp issue for TA100, although no Herefordshire soldiers will feature on the stamps, this photograph of Pte Ward will be used in a supporting information pack. The photograph was taken in Sonsbeck on 6 March 1945, and is captioned 'just prior to leave' - perhaps that's why he is smiling. Little is known about Pte Ward but a research campaign is under way.



John Skliros, a TA Rifles Officer is producing a book about 100 years of TA Rifles, he has been in contact with the Curator and several regimental photographs will appear in the book - wait out for full details

**Dates For The Diary:**

- Mar 8 - Herefordshire LI (Rifles) Officers' Dinner
- May 6 (1930hrs) - "The Dinedor Patrol of the 202Bn Auxiliary Home Guard" (Dinedor Village Hall)
- Jun 13/15 - LI Weekend (Shrewsbury)
- Jun 15 - Laying up 5 LI Colours (St Chadds, Shrewsbury)
- Jun tbc - Open Day/TA 100 Event & Cadet League BBQ
- Jul 19 - Laying up of 3 LI Colours/Grant of Freedom to the Rifles, and Sounding of Retreat (Castle Green & City)
- Sep 13 - Heritage Open Day (HOD Museum Open Day)
- Oct tbc - AGM & Lunch

**Museum Development:** The Museum Development Plan has been accepted by The Trustees, it looks ahead 20 years and where the Museum should be by then and how to get there. It is envisaged that in 20 years time the Museum will be collocated with the County Museum; this intent has been declared to the County Museum authorities. In the meantime work continues to improve the current state and range of displays, and plans are in hand to purchase two new purpose built display cases; these will be mobile. The acquisition of these cases is dependent on the successful award of grants to assist with the purchase. Grant applications have been submitted and we are awaiting decisions.

**The Home Guard:** This is a massive area which has without doubt been overlooked. There were 5 Battalions in Herefordshire, as well as auxiliary patrols (see Mike Wilkes book - The Mercian Maquis). They probably numbered over 5000 and had detachments in every town and most villages. The Museum has several photographs and even some film of the HG Beroni Metals Hereford factory detachment. At least 3 pubs in Herefordshire still have photographs on display of 'their' HG detachment! This is an often forgotten aspect of WW2 and an area which deserves further research.



The Hereford City GWR Section of The HG



The Sergeants' Mess, 3<sup>rd</sup> (Hereford City) Battalion Herefordshire Regiment Home Guard