



# Friends of the Herefordshire Light Infantry Museum



Newsletter

Number 5: February 2011

**Welcome:** Your committee welcomes you to this the fifth Friends' newsletter - we hope you enjoy it.

2010 has again been a significant year for the Museum following on from the success of 2009. The Trustees have appointed Sqn Ldr John Scott as an Assistant Curator (Projects) to commence the hard work of 'digitisation'; he can now often be found in the Museum pawing over a laptop and digital camera! The first task is to carry out a 100% stock and conditioning check of all the Museum's accessions and property; and this is underway. Associated with this is a major fundraising drive which is being lead by the Friends and started with a cocktail party in June. Just as we thought we had a clear path forward the economic squeeze and government cuts appeared, and whilst the final size and shape of things is not known there may well be an impact in 2 areas: firstly the local government resources supporting Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA), shortly to be abolished, and secondly of course the MOD! Quite correctly in times of paucity the resources must be directed towards the troops on operations, and at this stage it is not clear if there will be any change to the Museum's position. The Museum Trustees are kept in the picture regarding developments and have several embryonic contingency plans which can be developed if required. In this environment of uncertainty it is even more crucial that the Museum and Friends are in a position to support any contingency plan which has to be implemented.

The Museum has been opened on several occasions during the year and took part again in The Heritage Open Day scheme, where 'heritage' sites throughout the country, including many normally closed to the public are opened. The Museum has been well supported by group and individual visitors through the year.

**Museum Acquisitions:** Accessions to the Museum continue at a steady trickle; we remain keen to acquire a Efficiency Medal (Territorial) named to The Herefordshire Light Infantry.

Key amongst the acquisitions have been:

- A splendid HRVC shooting cup 'won' by Maj Bill Rollings' uncle.
- The WW1 memorial Plaque of William Tungue, donated by his niece whose husband's father had served with the HRVC in Ross and served with the VSC in South Africa during the BOER War.

**Your Committee:** At the AGM all retiring committee members and our President General Sir Peter agreed to be re-elected; Maj (Retd) Mick Atkinson was elected to the committee. Mick served as an ATO in the RAOC and RLC and was the last OiC of The Army Medal Office in Droitwich.

<i>Patron</i>	The Countess of Darnley
<i>President:</i>	Gen Sir Peter de la Billiere
<i>Vice-President</i>	Mr Bill Jackson
<i>Chairman:</i>	Mr Martin Jolly
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	Maj Dave Seeney
<i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>	Maj James Hereford
<i>Members:</i>	Maj Mick Atkinson
	Maj Bob Hayden
	Maj Nigel Jones
	Lt Col John Marsham
	Maj Tony McVeigh
	Capt Hugh Patterson
	Sqn Ldr John Scott
	Lt Col Andy Taylor

It is with great regret that we learnt of the passing of Lieutenant Colonel Tom Hill in the Summer of 2010. He was the last surviving Commanding Officer of The Herefordshire Light Infantry (1960-63) and had been the inspiration behind the creation of the Museum; Tom remained a great driving force behind the Museum for over 40 years and remained a great supporter until shortly before his death.

Tom had been mobilised with 4KSLI in 1939, before transferring to the Indian Army in 1941. He saw action on the North West Frontier and Italy before rejoining the KSLI and seeing further action in Korea, Malaya and Kenya. After retiring from the Army he was a personnel manager for Thorn EMI Lighting.



Colonel Tom laying a wreath at the War Memorial in St Peter's Square in August 2005 on the 90th anniversary of The Herefordshire Regiment landing at Suvla Bay.

**AGM - October 2010:** The AGM was again a great success with over 40 Friends attending; the format remains the same each year - firstly the AGM, then an interesting presentation and then lunch. Again this year the format proved a great success. The presentation this year continued in the Second World War theme set at the Cocktail party in June with the display of The Doenitz Pennants and Grand Admiral's Baton together for the first time in over 40 years. Ray Griffiths gave a most interesting account of his time in North West Europe with The Herefords after D-Day, and his research and search some 50 years later for the final resting place of his boyhood friend and comrade in arms who was killed in action with The Herefords at The Weser bridgehead in April 1945. Ray's story was moving and most interesting and his commitment and determination are to be commended. His goal was to locate the final resting place of Private Cedric George HOLDNALL which he did in Hanover CWGC. We are most grateful for Ray's presentation, the time he has taken with his detailed research and the work he has done in maintaining the memory of the Regiment and its members who took part in the hard fought battles in Germany in 1945.



Ray Griffiths lays a memorial wreath at the grave of Pte Holdnall



Wilf Slade, who served in The Herefordshire Regiment all through the Second World War, was a guest of the Friends and said that Ray's presentation had brought back many memories of places, comrades and events: this picture shows Wilf with other members of the Pioneer section with newly liberated civilians in Antwerp.



Maj James Hereford receives the HRVC shooting cup from Maj Bill Rollings.

**Cocktail Party - June 2010:** The launch of the 'Digitisation Fund Raising' drive took place at a splendid cocktail party held in the Town Hall in June. The highlight of the party was the display of Grand Admiral Doenitz's Pennants and Baton. The Pennants are 'held for safekeeping' by The Herefordshire Regimental Museum and The Baton by The KSLI Museum; this was the first time they had been displayed together for over 40 years.

The party was a great success and has set the Friends well on their course in raising the funds to enable the digitisation of the Museum's accessions and archives and the creation of a virtual web based museum.



Dave Seeney shows the Doenitz Baton to The Mayor of Hereford, Councillor Anna Toon, Our Patron Lady Darnley, and Air Vice Marshall and Mrs John Price.



Our Chairman Martin Jolly, Committee members Dave Seeney and Andy Taylor and The Mayor's Consort David Toon.

**Dates For The Diary:**

- 12 Mar - Herefordshire LI (Rifles) Officers' Dinner
- 11 Jun - LI Assn Day (Shrewsbury)
- 12 Jun - Dedication LI Memorial - National Arboretum
- 16 Jul - Rifles Freedom of Leominster; Parade, Sounding of Retreat and Reception.
- 10 Sep - Heritage Open Day (HOD Museum Open Day)
- Oct tbc - AGM & Lunch