



# *f*riends of the Herefordshire Light Infantry Museum



Newsletter

Number 14 - February 2020

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

The Museum has again been most active hosting visitors in groups and as individuals as well as delivering outreach presentations. The centenary of the end of the First World War is now over and was drawn to a close by The Rifles Freedom parades in Hereford and Leominster and more of that later. Already we are now looking towards the 75 anniversaries of VE Day in May and VJ Day in August. Although the Herefords did not serve in the Far East many from Herefordshire did and they must not be forgotten. Descendants of those that served in The Herefords continue to contact us and we continue to add artefacts and information to the Museum's archives.

The web site continues to be popular and we are planning a major revamp in the spring, and we plan to post regular monthly updates and articles including a feature 'the camera returns' - more of that later!

Attendance at the AGM in October was 'thin', but those Friends that did attend were given an outstanding address by the Army Sergeant Major, WO1 Gavin Paton (RIFLES!) who spoke about the role of the Army Sergeant Major and some of the challenges facing the Army and its soldiers in the current environment. However, the numbers attending suggest that the future and format of the AGM needs to be reviewed.

The Curator was appointed a 'Museums' Gallipoli Champion' by the Gallipoli Association and took part in a tour to Gallipoli in May and was a guest speaker at the Association's annual conference.



'A' Beach Suvla Bay with Lala Baba in the background

The Museum produced a display for the annual Orders and Medals Research Society annual conference and exhibition. The curatorial team of Dave Seeney, John Scott and Danny Rees all attended and presented and/or displayed and Danny Rees again was rewarded with a Silver Medal in the open class for a most thorough and thoughtful display titled 'Heroes of Chernobyl', which told the story of events after the disaster and the individuals whose commitment was recognised.

The Museum is due in February to resubmit its Accreditation return. This is effectively an 'MOT' for Museums and is required to apply for grants and funding. The Museum received its first Accreditation in 2009 and then it is renewed every 5 years - fingers crossed for the right outcome!

We have received the digitised images under the AMOT WW1 Digitisation programme, and they are excellent - we are now looking to acquire a new (bigger) computer monitor so the images can be viewed more easily. A national Lottery grant has been applied for.

## Dates For The Diary:

- 4 Apr - Herefordshire LI (Rifles) Officers' Dinner  
Masonic Centre - Kyrle St, Hereford  
**\*Note new date and venue\***
- 8 May - VE Day (75 anniversary)
- ? Jun - LI & Rifles Reunion (Shrewsbury)
- 22 Jun - Flag Raising, Armed Forces Week - High Town
- 27 Jun - Armed Forces Day
- 15 Aug - VJ Day (75 anniversary)
- 17 Oct - AGM & Lunch

## e-mail addresses:

The secretary would be pleased to receive your e-mail address so that all correspondence can be sent electronically and save the Friends the cost of postage. e-mail to [james@sufton.co.uk](mailto:james@sufton.co.uk)

## The Friends' Committee

<i>Patron</i>	The Dowager Countess of Darnley
<i>President:</i>	Lt Gen Sir John Foley
<i>Chairman:</i>	Capt Martin Jolly
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	Maj Dave Seeney
<i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>	Maj James Hereford
<i>Members:</i>	
Capt Hugh Patterson	Mr Danny Rees
Mr Pete Weston	Sqn Ldr John Scott
<i>Curator (ex officio):</i>	Col Andy Taylor

### Ledbury Drill Hall.

Many will remember the Drill Hall that stood in New Street Ledbury until the 1980s when it was demolished to make way for a supermarket. In early 2019 a group from Ledbury got together and, on 11 November installed a commemorative plaque on the wall of the supermarket. The group comprised ex-soldiers of 5LI who had paraded at the Drill Hall as well as sons and daughters and grandchildren of Herefordshire Regiment soldiers. The plaque was unveiled by the Mayor of Ledbury Councillor Phillip Howells and about 150 people were present. After the unveiling everyone moved to the War Memorial for 11.00am, the 'hour the guns fell silent' for a short act of Remembrance.



### The Camera Returns

It is planned that this will be a regular feature of the revamped website. As an indicator of what the feature will show:

In 1915 The Herefordshire Regiment were training in the Newmarket area and were photographed marching through the town past the Sir Daniel Cooper fountain:



In 2019 the site is still recognisable!



### Freedom Parades.

On Armed Forces Day, 29 June the Rifles exercised the Freedom of Leominster and Hereford. The date and locations were significant in the immediate post First World War history of the Regiment.

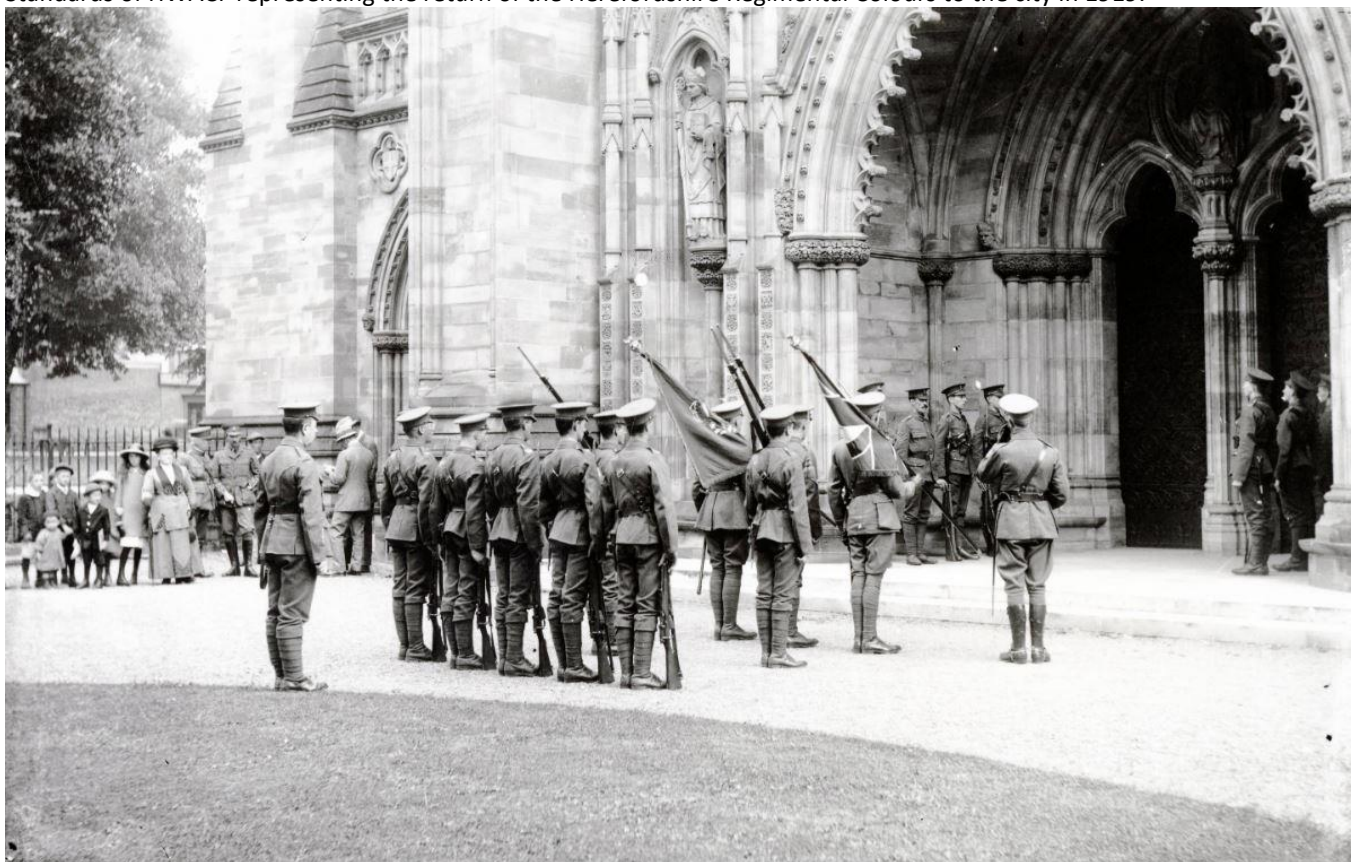
After the Armistice in November 1918, the Regimental Colours were withdrawn from Hereford cathedral (where they had been deposited in August 1914) and went to the Regiment based with the Army of Occupation in The Rhineland. As soldiers were demobilised the battalion reduced in size eventually becoming a cadre and then the few remaining soldiers were transferred to a composite battalion; this was the signal for the Colours to be returned to England. The Colour Party arrived in Catterick and then moved by train to Hereford, but were due to arrive in the city in the early hours which was considered too early for a civic reception; the Colour Party was taken off the train at Leominster, enjoyed breakfast in a local hotel, courtesy of the Town Council and re-entrained for arrival in Hereford at a more civilised hour. The return of the Colours signified the end to the Regiment's mobilised service in The First World War. 100 years later the parades were both superb, on the warmest day of the year to date, and the combined Waterloo and Salamanca Bands and Bugles ended a long day by delivering an excellent Sounding of Retreat in Suvla Barracks. At the Sounding of Retreat. C (Rifles) Company Hereford & Worcester ACF paraded their Battalion Standards to symbolise the return of the Herefordshire Regimental Colours 100 years before and the end of the County's First World War centenary commemorations.

And marching past the Jubilee Clock (Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee)





The Standards of the Royal British Legion and the Rifles Hereford and Ross Associations march on parade followed by the Standards of HWACF representing the return of the Herefordshire Regimental Colours to the city in 1919.



Laying up of the Colours in August 1914

### The Home Guard.

The Home Guard was formally stood down on 31 Dec 1944, on stand down there were over 6,000 men serving in 6 Battalions across Herefordshire. Almost every town and village had a unit, but little is known about them - the full County orbat is not known.

This picture shows a (very smartly turned out) Spigot Mortar demonstration team - whether the mortar was ever fired in anger, and how effective it might have been are unknown!



3rd HEREFORDSHIRE (HEREFORD CITY) BATTALION HOME GUARD  
"D" COMPANY. SPIGOT MORTAR TEAM

### Operation Blackout (23 May 1945)

The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had landed over the beaches of Normandy on June 12<sup>th</sup> and fought cross France, Belgium, Holland and Germany and on VE Day (8 May) were in North Germany on the Danish border at Flensburg. Hitler had committed suicide and nominated Grand Admiral Doenitz as his successor; Doenitz set up his government in Flensburg. The Herefords took part in Op Blackout, the operation to arrest the Doenitz government.



Adml Doenitz and his personal staff under arrest



Dr Speer, Adml Doenitz and Gen Jodl under arrest in front of War Correspondents.



Staff members under arrest

### Freedom of Hereford.

In September 1945 The Herefordshire Regiment received the Freedom of Hereford and marched through the city.



Major WAP Crofts

