



Salisbury Military History Society

October 2019 eNewsletter

Hello and welcome to the eNewsletter for October 2019.

The new season got off to an excellent start with a number of you registering for either Full or Monthly membership at the beginning of the meeting in September. At the time of writing we have 31 Full and 11 Monthly members. Full members can collect their membership cards at the next meeting that they attend.

The annual subscription offers tremendous value for money, saving 50% off the "on the door" price of monthly membership. The Committee are aware that new members joining after September should also have the option of becoming Full members. To this end a table of "part year rates" has been drawn up:

Salisbury Military History Society				
Annual Subscription: Part Year Rates				
Month	Talks Remaining	Monthly Rate	Annual Rate	Comment
September	9	10.00	45.00	The Annual Rate reduces after the completion of each Month's talk.
October	8	10.00	40.00	
November	7	10.00	35.00	
December	7	n/a	35.00	
January	6	10.00	30.00	
February	5	10.00	25.00	
March	4	10.00	20.00	
April	3+9	10.00	60.00	Includes subscription up to following August.
May	2+9	10.00	55.00	
June	1+9	10.00	50.00	

So, for example...

- Becoming a Full member at the October talk, the cost will be £40.
- If you decide to become a Full member in either April, May or June then the annual rate includes the fee for the following year.

Please note that there are no monthly talks in July, August or December.

Note that the Full Membership is not only a saving over the monthly rate but will also entitle you to attend any future trips or functions, all of which will be restricted to Full Members only.

Newsflash:

Patrick Hillman, the owner of [The History Bookshop](#) at Fisherton Mill, has kindly agreed to give a 10% discount upon presenting your Full membership card.

All attendees of the monthly talks are required to have submitted a signed and completed membership form, whether for Full or Monthly membership. So please download and complete one, if you have not already done so, and bring it with you to the next meeting you attend.

Membership forms are available to download from the website [here](#).

The 1973 Yom Kippur War

[Colonel Tony Malkin](#) was our speaker for the September meeting and his talk on the Yom Kippur War was both fascinating and entertaining.

Although primarily focusing on the conflict in the northern Golan Heights sector, his insight and knowledge of both sides of the conflict provided unique background information on the lack of preparedness of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF).

Why, for example, did the Israeli Intelligence Services and their military High Command refuse to believe the timely and frequent intelligence, from a highly placed source, that pointed to the on-coming conflict? Also, the Israeli's assumption that both the Arabs' military equipment and combat capability remained inferior to that of the IDF and that the Israeli Air Force would have total air superiority were both examples that almost proved fatal for Israel.

All this and more was covered in great detail by Colonel Malkin which provided for an excellent talk, delivered in an engaging style, which was much enjoyed by all.

Colonel Tony Malkin will be guiding '[The Birth of Modern Israel](#)' Cultural Experience tour to the area in November those who wish to find out more about this unique part of the world.

Wednesday 23rd October

Our October talk will be on "**The Battle of Balaclava**" with our Joint Chairman, [Colonel Bob Kershaw](#).

Typically, the talk is just two days prior to the 165th anniversary of the famous cavalry charge of the Light Brigade, during the Battle of Balaclava on 25 October 1854. It was one of the most famous military exploits during the Crimean War of 1854-55. The war was truly a Victorian epic, pitting the British and French armies, allied for the first time after many years of enmity, against the might of Russia. Colonel Kershaw's talk is based upon his recent book in which he provides step-by-step analysis of the cause of the charge, the various personalities and also compares the reality with Tennyson's famous poem and the 1968 film.



The poster for the talk can be downloaded [here](#).

Col Bob Kershaw's book "24 Hours at Balaclava" is available [here](#) and also, hopefully, signed copies will be available on our Book Stall on the evening.

Refreshment break and book stall

During the break there will be a cash bar, supplying refreshments and also two book stalls. The first will be run by Patrick Hillman who is the owner of The History Bookshop at Fisherton Mill. Patrick has very kindly agreed to attend and will be offering a number of books, themed to the talk, for sale. There will be a 10% discount for Full members upon presentation of your membership card.

The second book stall (in reality, just a different table) will be selling second hand books which have been donated to the Society. If you have any surplus military history books, military DVDs, etc, that you are happy to donate, do please bring them along. All the takings from this stall go to the Society.

All of this means that, if you wish to partake of any refreshment or are tempted by a book, it is essential that you bring some cash in your pocket, purse or wallet and, if you are a Full member, be ready to show Patrick your membership card to obtain your 10% discount from his stall.



...one for the diary: Wednesday 27th November.

Lost Roman Legions

Chris Hewitt, a retired Army officer, will be delivering the talk on the Lost Roman Legions. Having lived in Germany for 13 years, he has an 'insiders' knowledge of the area and this, in part, led to his fascination with the fate of these Legions.

The annihilation of three Roman legions in 9AD by a coalition of German tribes led by Arminius was one of the biggest defeats in Roman history as well as one of the main events to determine the course of European history. The Germans decided to mark the event by erecting a huge statue to Arminius near Detmold in the 1870s, without a shred of evidence for the location of the actual battle. It was not until British Army warrant officer Tony Clunn armed with a metal detector discovered 100 Roman coins north of Osnabruck one weekend in 1987 that the actual site was discovered. The lecture covers the history of [Xanten](#) (the annual departure point for the Roman spring expedition east of the Rhine) as well as the route up the River Lippe, the battle itself and its consequences.

Chris is also chairman of the Salisbury [Xanten Twinning Association](#).

Future dates for your diary:

- Wednesday 22nd January: 37 Howitzer Battery RFA: The Curragh to Le Cateau, August 1914
- Lt Col Mike Watson
- Wednesday 26th February: Could the British have won the American War of Independence?
- [Professor Jeremy Black](#)
- Wednesday 25th March: British Volunteers and the Spanish Civil War
- [Ray Wilkinson](#)
- Wednesday 22nd April: Reflections on the First World War
- Brig [Alan Mallinson](#)
- Wednesday 27th May: Victory in Burma
- Lt Col Mike Tickner
- Wednesday 24th June: Seapower States: Culture, Identity and Strategy
- [Professor Andrew Lambert](#)

Non-Society Military History News:

Regeneration for former dockyard town

A £2.2m regeneration programme in the Medway Towns has been completed in a bid to reconnect residents with its heritage. The 'Command of the Heights' project includes a 200-seat amphitheatre overlooking the River Medway. While Chatham Dockyard closed in 1984, the Royal School of Military Engineering remains in Gillingham. [Read more](#)

Myth vs History: A Study of Vietnam War Stories and Journalism

Jerry Lembcke was drafted in 1968 and served in Vietnam as a Chaplain's Assistant with the 41st Artillery Group. Since the war he's published eight books, but it was the response to a lecture he gave in Brisbane in 2007 that led him to challenge the greatest myth of the conflict: were returning veterans spat on? His most revelatory discover was Mark Dain's book 'Australia's Vietnam: Myth vs. History' in which he unveils the myths he and other journalists (inadvertently) created and perpetuated, and how he discovered the real reason that Qantas brought Australian soldiers home at night. [Read more](#)

Should remembrance be only state-led?

Following the opening of the National War Memorial in India in February and as we approach Remembrance Day, Lieutenant-General KJ Singh (ret'd) has written a piece on the state of memorials across the country. While he acknowledges the clear importance of remembrance and praises the upkeep of national and state monuments, he questions the number of villages installing statues and busts commemorating individual battles or soldiers, as many fall into disrepair. In fact, for him we should think beyond stone cenotaphs and incorporate "...interactive digital screens.... digital kiosks, e-visitor books and e-memorials... to connect with the millennial generation." [Read more](#)

52 South African regiments renamed

Announced in August, 52 regiments of the South African army have been renamed to reflect “the military traditions and history of indigenous African military formations and the liberation armies involved in the freedom struggle”. [Read more](#)

The place of military history in today’s defence planning

While many may have hoped that General James Mattis’ new book revealed much about his relationship with President Trump, instead, it offers an enlightening insight into a keen military historian who has always sought to apply the lessons of the past in his operations. ‘Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead’ connects his time in Afghanistan with the pursuit of Geronimo, and his command in Iraq with the Battle of Hue in 1968. For Michael E. O’Hanlon, “Mattis’s book is one you really *should* read, rather than simply read *about*”. [Read more](#)

Current and forthcoming events in Salisbury (and around Wiltshire/the SW)

14th Oct to 29th Nov – “As a Training Ground for War: How Sport Prepares Soldiers for the Battlefield”, REME Museum ([click here](#))

17th October – “Alfred The Great’s Wessex”, Bourne Valley Historical Society ([click here](#))

17th October – “Reserve Collection Tour - Archives and Small Objects”, Fleet Air Arm Museum ([click here](#))

19th October – “REME Museum Model Show 2019”, REME Museum ([click here](#))

24th October – “Chindit Operations”, The Royal Green Jackets (Rifles) Museum ([click here](#))

26th/27th October – “Anglo-Saxon Living History Weekend”, Winchester City Museum ([click here](#))

28th/29th October – “Shipwreck Science”, Fleet Air Arm Museum ([click here](#))

29th October – “The History of The Wardrobe, The Wardrobe ([click here](#))

2nd November – “Tidworth History Festival”, Strange Old Things: The Mobile Museum ([click here](#))

6th November – “Who better deserved the thanks of his country: Nelson or Wellington?”, Alabaré ([click here](#))

10th/11th November – Remembrance events across the region

12th November – “Lost Soldiers of the Second World War”, The Wardrobe ([click here](#))

14th November – “First World War in North Africa”, Army Flying Museum ([click here](#))

17th November – “Aircraft Enthusiast Fair and Model Show”, Army Flying Museum ([click here](#))

19th November – “Planning the RAF 100 Fly Past”, Boscombe Down Aviation Collection ([click here](#))

21st November – “Rogues with Rifles; the story of the 5th/60th”, The Royal Green Jackets (Rifles) Museum ([click here](#))

30th November – “Screening of Secret Spitfires: The Director’s Cut”, The Salisbury Museum ([click here](#))

Parish Notices

Annual General Meeting

Our first Annual General Meeting will be held on 2nd December at St John's Place, commencing at 7:30pm. After the AGM there will be a military-themed quiz for teams - further details will be announced on team size, etc later. There will be free drinks and canapés provided for refreshment.

Please note that the event is only open to Full members (with a membership card)... yet another excellent reason to become a Full member!

...if you've got this far, hopefully you have found all of the above interesting and now feel awash with enthusiasm and wish to become more involved in the running of our Society! Well, good news then... as we are in dire need of an individual to join our Committee as our 'Social and Events Secretary'. Please, please, if you feel able to take on this role, do get in contact.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Balaclava talk on 23rd October.

Kind regards,

Keith Rigden
Membership Secretary

Dave Simons
Web & Marketing Officer

Useful links:

Website - <https://salisburymilhist.com>

Email - SalisburyMilHist@gmail.com

Facebook - [SalisburyMilHist](#)

Twitter - [SalisburyMHS](#)

Who's who:

Joint-Chairman & Speaker Secretary: Alan Rooney

Joint-Chair: Bob Kershaw

Treasurer: John Loades

Marketing Officer: Dave Simons

Secretary: Andy Sharpe

Membership Secretary: Keith Rigden

