



The Fusilier Museum

WARWICK

Monthly E-Newsletter - June 2023



MUSEUM NEWS

A MUSEUM FOR THE 21st CENTURY

Welcome to the June edition of the museum newsletter! We are delighted with how the number of subscribers has continued to grow but please do continue to pass this publication on to others who you think might be interested.

We would like to extend a belated thanks to the e-newsletter's editor Zita Ballinger Fletcher for her work in creating this attractive publication. Zita is based in the U.S. and her ability to support the museum halfway across the world picks up nicely on my key theme for this month's museum news - how technology is helping the museum to grow its reach and engagement.

For the Museum with limited budgets and limited space, the internet has become an important asset for growing new audiences and a place where more collection interpretation can be added - text, photo, audio, and video online can both enhance the visitor experience and make it more accessible. The museum's new website - www.fusiliermuseumwarwick.com - is a great platform to add new resources which can help increase access to the collections. With the support of web designer Elucidate (the company who also created the Fusilier Museum Bury's website) the site is now fully functioning. However, there are now plans to add exciting new layers of content: this will additional material related to displayed collections that can be accessed by QR labelling in the exhibitions (see project news below), virtual exhibitions, and archives of audio-visual museum content linked through from the museum's YouTube account. We have already put current and back issues of the e-newsletter on the site and starting to create blogs exploring themes around the collection.

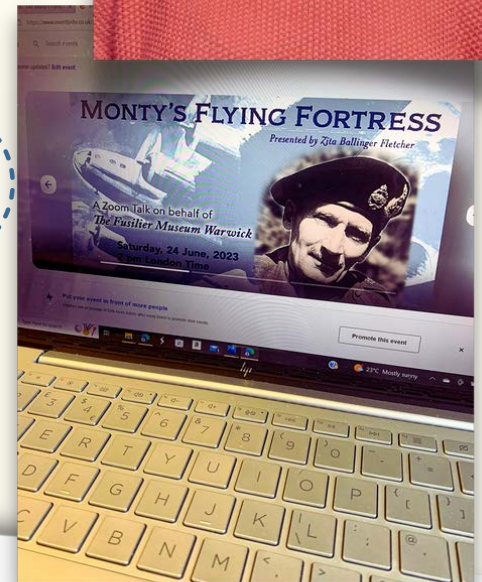
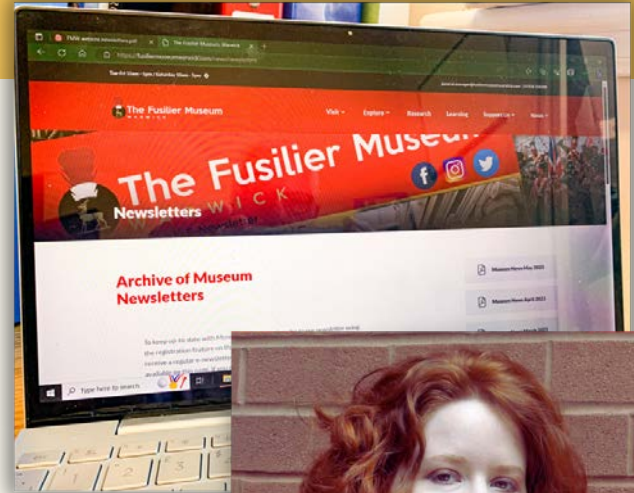
The museum has developed a strong social media community through Twitter and Facebook for many years, and we now have an Instagram account - [@fusilier_museum_warwick](https://www.instagram.com/fusilier_museum_warwick) and just developing a YouTube channel - [@fusiliermuseumwarwick](https://www.youtube.com/fusiliermuseumwarwick) to engage with more people in different ways. We will continue to push museum news, visitor stories and collection highlights through these media recognising that the museum's remote audience is as important as those who visit in person (although we would always recommend a visit in person!).

We have just introduced a booking system for Museum Friends' talks through Eventbrite to make the process simpler but also widen the promotion of these events. Going forward, all the Friends' monthly talks will be 'hybrid' meaning they will both happen live in the Brandwood Room at the museum while being simultaneously broadcasted by Zoom for audiences some of whom reside in other parts of the world.

The Fusilier Museum Warwick strives to provide the best services for its twenty-first century audiences as it delivers its mission to educate people about soldiers' stories and the history of the regiment. Technology is a powerful tool to do this - and for a museum with restrictive physical space there are great opportunities to create 'galleries' of learning and engagement to a large on-line audience.

-Chris Kirby, General Manager

www.fusiliermuseumwarwick.com



CURRENT PROJECTS

The museum continues to manage different projects that will both enhance the access to the collections, promote the Regiment's story and provide opportunities to generate funding essential to the organisation's future.

THE RESET PROJECT: SUPPORTING VISITORS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

When the new museum at Pageant House was in the design stage, the museum curator Stephanie Bennett commissioned an access audit to ensure that barriers to access at the new site were reduced as much as possible. This led to some modifications in the physical design of the gallery, for example:

- giving greater access for wheelchair users,
- recommendations that would improve access for visitors with hearing impairment.

Stephanie was successful in gaining a grant from West Midlands Museum Development to implement these just before going on leave and the project was picked up by the General Manager to see through. There is now:

- a new hearing loop at the reception desk with visitors can link to through their hearing aids or loop receivers.
- British Sign Language (BSL) presentations of the main museum audios including the welcome screen, WW1 trench narratives and a narrative about Field Marshal Montgomery. Made by a company called A2i, several of these BSL interpretations will be accessed via QR codes in the galleries linked to YouTube videos.

In the future, we would also look at providing mini tablets so visitors could access the BSL presentations on bigger screens.

The final stage of the project will be to invite in a local hearing impairment group for tea and cake to get their verdict on the new resources.



THE BRANDWOOD ROOM *Almost There!*

Following the installation of the roller blinds, the focus has been on sourcing appropriate chairs for the Brandwood Room, and these have now been identified.

Due to generous contributions by many donors both in person and online, **we are now within £200 of finding all the money we need to complete the project.**

A successful Friends' talk in the space on 27th May has already shown the potential of the Brandwood Room for future public events and we will be looking to produce a brochure to highlight the space as a hireable venue as soon as the furnishing project is completed.



We only need to raise just under £200 now for the completion of the Brandwood Room project!

If you can donate at least £10 to make the Brandwood Room an effective learning and hiring community space for the museum, please support this project and make a difference -

<https://fusiliermuseumwarwick.com/support>

OBJECT OF THE MONTH

Each e-newsletter, we will ask someone to choose an object from the collection to tell its story and what it means to them. One of the museum volunteers Sebastian Stokes talks about the man behind this important medal group which is on display in the museum.

LANCE CORPORAL WILLIAM AMEY'S WWI MEDAL GROUP 1960.307.1-5

William Amey was born in Birmingham on the 5th March 1891, one of eight children. He joined the 1/8th Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment which was the first line battalion raised at Aston Manor in Birmingham on 4th August 1914, the day war was declared.

It was during the battle on the river Sambre at a place called LANRECIES in France, that William won his Victoria Cross (VC) not long having been promoted to full corporal.

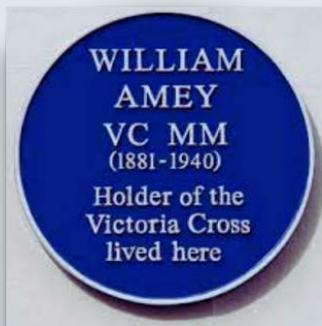
He led his section against a machine gun nest, and under heavy fire drove the enemy into a farmhouse capturing some fifty of the enemy and several machine guns. Later single handed, and under more heavy fire he again attacked a machine gun post in another farm, killing two of the enemy and drove the remainder into the cellar and then waited for his section to arrive.

After the war he was a prominent member of the British Legion, he also attended the VC garden party at Buckingham Palace and the 1929 VC dinner at the house of Lords. Later, he received the George 6th coronation medal in 1937, almost twenty years after the war.

In the autumn of 1937 William married Evelyn Hains in Edmonton in Essex. They came to live in Leamington Spa and lived at 13 Wiles Road naming the house LANDRECIES after the place in France where he won his VC. Can you imagine the quiet pride as William screwed the name plate to his front door and the local people asking what it meant?

Sadly, only 18 months later at age 59 William died at Wansford hospital. He was buried with full military honours in All Saints cemetery at Brunswick Street Leamington Spa.

All records and actions of William along with his medals, can be viewed at the Fusilier Museum in Warwick. Also on display is a mannequin with his likeness showing William Amey as he strides forward in a WW1 trench.



VISITOR NEWS

An Interview with Bobby the Antelope's Keeper

The museum has been exchanging correspondences with Ben Smyth, the last keeper of Bobby the regimental mascot. Recently, the museum sent Ben a Bobby toy which Ben has proudly displayed with his memorabilia relating to his time with the regimental mascot. In this interview, Ben tells us about his experiences in the regiment and as Bobby's keeper.

1. Can you give us a summary of your military career?

I joined the army at age 19 when I went to Phase One training then after that I went to ITC Catterick where I completed phase 2. On passing out I joined 2RRF in Germany where I did my training for deployment to Kosovo. After this, I attended the corps of drums school back at ITC Catterick then re-joined the Regiment who was taking over the 1st Battalion at St George's Barrack in North Luffenham when the rest of the Battalion joined from Celle. I finished my career in Northern Ireland at the Palace barracks.



Ben Smyth with Bobby

2. How did you end up becoming the shared keeper of Bobby the regimental mascot?

I became a handler to the Mascot whilst at North Luffenham. I was on rear party while the battalion was on a 6-month tour of the province. I was in B coy when Sgt Paul Martin asked if I would like to become a handler to the Regimental Mascot to which I agreed.



3. Can you give us a summary of your daily routine with Bobby and preparations for special Ceremonies?

Day to day care of the mascot was before breakfast we would clean out Bobby's pen and clean his bedding and give him fresh food. Then after breakfast we would take him for a walk round the camp. On the days we attended a parade We would do the same as a normal day, but we would get his trailer ready and put fresh hay in then put Bobby into the caged compartment and get his kit ready and our kit ready into the land rover and travel to the location. Once we arrived at the location, sometimes the day before we would prep our kit and his kit ready for the parade or whatever the task was.

VISITOR NEWS

An Interview with Bobby the Antelope's Keeper - Part 2

4. Can you give us a particular highlight from your time in the regiment?

Some people can pinpoint a moment in their career that stood out. Well, I've met Princess Ann and the Duke of Kent and I've made many friends but the one thing that will always be with me was being part of bearer party for Fusilier Turrington carrying that coffin of the back of a HERCULES down the ramp and off the runway and across the tarmac past his family to the hearse for his final journey home.

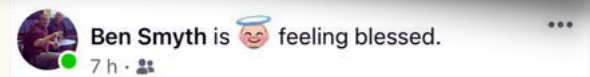


5. What role do you think Bobby played in the regiment and what did the mascot mean to you personally?

The Mascot is part of the Regiments history and is a big boost of morale when on parade and the mascot and handlers are there in full kit. The regiment had several Mascots before the amalgamation in 1968. For example, did you know that the Northumberland Fusiliers had a Terrier breed of dog called Sammy? The Lancashire Fusiliers had a pit pony called Minnie; the Royal Fusiliers had a duck called Donald who was mascot of the 9th battalion Royal Fusiliers army number 0-0-0-0-0-1. And finally, the Warwick Fusiliers had an Indian Black Buck but not just one, they had two: Billy who served with the 1st Battalion and Bobby who served with the 2nd Battalion.

The tradition of antelope mascots dates back 140 years, when the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, a predecessor regiment, adopted a live antelope as mascot when it was stationed in India in 1871. It was an Indian black buck antelope named Billy which was also the name given to its successors for many years. Subsequently, the names Charlie and Bobby have also been used. The custom stems from the Royal Warwickshire Regiment's 'ancient badge' of an Antelope, authorized to be displayed on colours and appointments in 1747, but traditionally held to date from the regiment's service in Spain during the War of the Spanish Succession. When the four fusilier regiments merged to form the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, the antelope was adopted as the mascot of the new regiment.

The second Billy was presented to the 1st Battalion, The Royal Warwickshire Regiment about the time of the Delhi Durbar of 1877 by a well-known Maharajah. It came home with the battalion in 1880 and died in Ireland in 1888. There were two sources of supply of these animals, the battalion serving in India usually received them as gifts from the Maharajahs, while the home battalion was given theirs by the London Zoo. The Regiment had a temporary mascot George the Otterhound. But everyone will always remember Bobby.



I want to thank the Staff at The Royal Regiment Fusiliers Museum Warwick For my lovely Gift of my Old Friend Bobby The Indian Black Buck.



REGIMENTAL STORIES

Honouring the enduring legacy of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, formed on April 23, 1968.

On 6 June 1944 the greatest amphibious operation in the history of British Arms was launched on the coast of Normandy. This was the beginning of the assault by the Allies on Hitler's Fortress Europe' to liberate Western Europe from German occupying forces.

All Allied landing forces were under the command of Gen. Sir Bernard Montgomery, who had been an officer of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment (later the Royal Warwickshire Fusiliers) from 1908 to 1934 and who was subsequently promoted Field Marshal and became Colonel of the Regiment.



"Nothing will be accomplished in the crisis by a man without a sense of duty."

FM Bernard Montgomery

The 3rd British Infantry Division landed on the left of the Allied forces, on 'Queen' Beach between Lion-sur-Mer and La Breche. 8 Brigade of the Division, the assault force, went ashore at 0625 hours followed by 185 Brigade, which was to pass through 8 Brigade and advance south to seize Caen.

One of the three Battalions in 185 Brigade was the 2nd Battalion the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. The Battalion lost three landing craft by enemy fire during the final run in to the beach. By mid-morning on 6 June all four rifle companies formed up under fire ready to advance south to clear the Brigade axis Hermanville - Beauville - Lebisey-Caen. Some German strongpoints holding out on the left flank and firing on the beaches forced the plan to change.



The Battalion was ordered to clear the villages to the east and southeast where these German posts were located. The first two villages were quickly cleared. A company was left in Benouville to hold two vital bridges over the River Orne. By the end of D-Day the Battalion had cleared the northern outskirts of Blainville, having advanced seven miles and incurred light casualties, four killed and 35 wounded. The 2nd Battalion of the Regiment remained in the 3rd Division in 21 Army Group until the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, fighting from the Normandy beaches to 75 Bremen. The 1/7th Battalion of the Regiment fought in Normandy with the 59th Division from June to the end of August 1944.

In 1946, the Colonel of the Regiment ordered the observance of 6 June by the Regiment as Normandy Day to celebrate the Regiment's part in the liberation of Western Europe.

MUSEUM EVENTS FOR 2023

Here is a list of museum events for the rest of 2023.
Make sure to get them into your calendar!



Fusilier Fun

10am – 5pm, Saturday 29th July 2023

A programme of family activities and re-enactor demonstrations at the Fusilier Museum Warwick.

Watch out for our special stall in Warwick Market! There will be the launch of the Big Summer Art competition.

Gallipoli Day

10am – 5pm, Saturday 12th August 2023

A special day of events in collaboration with the Yeomanry Museum Warwick and the Gallipoli Association. exploring the regiment in WWI including the campaign in Gallipoli. A talk by well-known historian Peter Hart, special exhibitions of Gallipoli material in the Court House, Warwick and WW1 family activities and reenactors in the Fusilier Museum Warwick.



To book Peter Hart's talk:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gallipoli-day-talk-by-peter-hart-tickets-657504803567>

To book Jon Davy's Military walk around Warwick:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/military-walking-tour-of-warwick-by-jon-davy-tickets-657522937807>

A Soldier's Tale

10am – 5pm, Saturday 28th October 2023

Marking the beginning of the autumn half term, a day of exciting events in the museum, including reenactors presentations in the museum looking at the life of the soldier.

Armistice Day

12 – 4pm, Sunday 12th November

A special presentation at the museum marking Remembrance Day or Armistice Day following the laying of the wreaths at the Warwick War Memorial



FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM TALKS

JULY-OCTOBER 2023

We invite you to attend our history talk series hosted by the Friends of the Fusilier Museum Warwick. Talks are offered online and hybrid.

DASHING HUSSAR, BRAVE CUIRASSIER



Maj. Mick Atkinson

2 PM London Time
Saturday, 29 July

P.J. PRETORIUS & THE SMS KONIGSBERG



Peter Griffiths,
Chair, East Rand Military Historical Society

2 PM London Time
Saturday, 30 September

DUNKIRK



Maj. David Seeney
Vice Chair, Friends of the Fusilier Museum Warwick

2 PM London Time
Saturday, 28 October

To learn more about & register for these events, please email:

friends.fusiliermuseumwarwick@gmail.com

For Zoom talks, a link will be sent to your email upon registration.

JOIN THE FRIENDS

The Friends support the museum and its mission of preserving regimental history and also promote education and activities for history lovers, both online and locally. All are welcome to join!

To learn more, contact us at friends.fusiliermuseumwarwick@gmail.com

VISIT THE MUSEUM

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