

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT
MUSEUM TRUST COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF HEAD OF ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Report prepared by Giles Guthrie, Collections Manager

Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust

Annual Report 2012-13

1. The Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association remain very supportive of the regimental museum. Over the last year with the support of Council staff a number of events have organized held in Maidstone Museum for their members and the public.

These have included the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regimental Day on June 22nd 2013 which was very well supported by the Living history Group and association members who were all on hand to provide information on the regiment to the 341 members of the public who attended the day

A second Regimental day was carried out on November 2nd 2013 and again it was very well carried out by members of the living history group and association members. The day was enjoyed by 201 visitors.

2. Discussions with the Association concerning the development of a programme of externally funded improvements to the regimental museum have begun. Consultation with other partners and with visitors was due to begin early in 2013 but due to staff restructuring these have, as yet, not been fully progressed.
3. The Malaya statue was unveiled in the front courtyard of the museum on September 15th 2013. This was a fantastic day that was very well received by the hundreds of veterans, association members, families, friends and other members of the public who attended the event.

Appendix A

4. Media interest in the Regimental Museum continues to remain high. Articles and stories relating to the regimental museum regularly appear in the local and national press and on TV.
5. During the year 17 individual donors made donations to the regimental collection. These include;
 - A collection of First World War Trench Maps relating to the service of Sergeant King 7th Bn RWK
 - Military Cross, GSM (Palestine) 39-45 Star, Africa Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal (MID), miniatures of the above plus Recollections of Island Warfare, by John Browne – All objects relate to Major Read MC 2nd Bn RWK
 - Defence Medal, War Medal and badges relating to Lt E. Waring. Although Miss Waring was not RWK but QAIMNS they were taken into the collection as Miss Waring was sister to Colonel Blick Waring OBE
 - Map Showing POW camps in Europe that belonged to 6095897 Pte R.Davey 2nd Bn RWK captured Leros 1943 and incarcerated Stalag IVB
 - Photograph of the 2nd Bn football team 1891/2, an embroidery of the 50th and 97th regimental badges and paperwork relating to Richard Spencer Ex RWK
 - War Medal and Victory Medal awarded to G24671 Pte J Apps, 1914-15 Star, War Medal and Victory Medal and British Empire Medal awarded to GS1775 Pte J.Denyer plus badges and Union Jack hung outside the Denyer home on 11/11/1918.
 - Paper archive relating to Captain Wilfred Newton RWK.
 - Letters relating to CSM H. Little RWK. All letters written in 1918.
 - War and Victory Medals awarded to 10735 Pte. J.R. Waterman.
 - 25 early 20th century postcards relating to 1005 Pte Charles Munn 4th Bn RWK.
 - Kukri and Fairburne Sykes dagger carried by 6349883 Pte John Charles Boorman 4th Bn in India and Burma including Kohima and North Africa respectively.
 - 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal and poem all relating to Cpl E. Stephens RWK.
 - For King and Country – The Story of Leslie Charles Wright 10th Bn RWK.
 - War Medal, Victory Medal and Cap badge relating to 6304 Pte Leonard Neville Hutchings RWK.
 - Memorial Scroll, service book and 1939-45 Star, Africa Star and War Medal relating to 6348106 Pte J. Palmer.

Appendix A

- Certificate of appointment as Officer of Sidney Herbert Smith 29.09.1918 and book of remembrance of the 20th Bn London Regiment.
6. The audio-visual presentation recording the memories of eight veterans of the Battle of Kohima (1944) is fully prepared but has not yet been installed in the Museum.
 7. The regimental museum has already feeling the effects of the coming commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great War. Inquiries are increasing as is general interest in the museum and the history of the regiment. Work continues on developing a programme of activities for the anniversary. We anticipate a very busy and productive coming four years.
 8. The regimental museum continues to be very well served by volunteer staff and particular mention should be made of Mr. Steve Finnis (ex RWK) who is doing sterling work with museum collections artifacts and also in dealing with the many research inquiries that are received.
 9. On October 19th 2013 a representative of the regimental museum attended a ceremony in Exmouth, Devon when Pte. A. Bassett's name was added to the war memorial, having been missed off when the memorial was erected in the 1920's. Pte Bassett was a 6th Bn Lewis Gunner who died of pneumonia contracted whilst a prisoner of war. It was partly through research carried out by the museum that Pte. Bassett's family were able to add his name to the town's war memorial.