



# Salisbury Military History Society

August 2021 eNewsletter

If you've missed any previous editions, you can find them on our website – [click here](#).

## Parish Notices

### **Wed 25th Aug: 'Seapower States: Culture, Identity and Strategy' with Prof. Andrew Lambert**

Next week we welcome the excellent Prof. Lambert when he will explore the nature and consequences of being a seapower state, as opposed to a continental military power. He will do so through a collective analysis of the five seapower great powers: Athens, Carthage, Venice, the Dutch Republic and Britain.

[Read more](#)

For full members, entry is included in the 2019/20 membership fees already submitted. For non-members, entry is £10 on the door. Entry remains cash-only though the bar accepts card payments.

### **Book (& DVD) stall**

Apologies for not being able to put out the bookstall last month. However, we plan to be back with some fantastic books and DVDs next week. As always, you're very welcome to bring along any additional donations. The book stall remains cash-only.

### **Wed 24th Nov: 'The Changing of the Guard' (talk title TBC) with Simon Akam**

In 2015 Simon Akam stood in the midst of a tug of war between five publishers as they sought the rights to publish his "explosive, intimate, authoritative account of the British army". However, by 2019 Penguin Random House (PRH) had been informed that a number of those interviewed for the book had withdrawn their co-operation and PRH instructed Akam to submit a copy of his manuscript to each interviewee and the MoD for sign-off. He refused and PRH cancelled his contract and demanded that he return his £20,000 advance payment. Publisher Scribe took on the work last year and we shared an American review of the book in last month's eNewsletter. Come along in November to hear Akam's first-hand account and to ask your own questions. [Read more](#)

### **Review: 'Reflections on the First World War' with Allan Mallinson (Wed 28th July)**

"There is no history; there are only historians," said G.K Chesterton and what better quote for Allan Mallinson to open our first talk for 17 months! There is no single history of the Great War, though there are innumerable history books and interpretations. For Mallinson, the key to winning the war was to stretch Germany's resources by weakening its allies in the south rather than the attrition of the Western Front. Success in the Dardanelles campaign would've provided a Mediterranean route to Russia and would most likely have convinced Romania and Bulgaria to not join the Axis Powers. Though that thrust failed, we saw later that the Italian successes under General Diaz against the Austro-Hungarians forced Germany to send troops to their ally's aid, thus depleting their own forces. Did the war drag on longer than necessary due to poor Allied command? For Mallinson, the issue was at brigade level. Here, the choice was simply to conform or be removed; this was no place for officers with their own ideas. Highly recommended was the book '39 Months with the "Tigers", 1915 to 1918' ([see here](#)).

## Members' content

Our feature focusing on books, articles, documentaries, podcasts and more.

As the Society was established to encourage discussion and debate, we invite members and other local historians to contribute their own material and we're pleased to release a new page on our website dedicated to that aim - [see here](#)

## **Military History News**

### **Dstl marks 150-year history of its forensic explosives laboratory**

On 11<sup>th</sup> August 1871 two explosions at the Patent Safety Gun Cotton Company factory in Stowmarket, Suffolk killed 20 people, injured 70 more and deafened over 180. The Government announced a £100 reward to whomever could determine the cause. As the Home Office's Chief Inspector of Accidents, Captain Vivian Majendie was called upon to lead the investigation. Majendie employed the services of Dr August Dupre and their successful partnership resulted in Dupre becoming a chemical advisor to the Home Office and the subsequent introduction of the Explosives Act in 1875. Today, 80% of cases investigated are related to fireworks and other pyrotechnics. In March 2020 the Forensic Explosives Laboratory (FEL) relocated to Dstl Porton Down. [Read more](#)

### **Parcel unopened for 70 years contains perfectly preserved WWII RAF uniform**

Back in November 1951 someone wrapped up a blue WW2 senior aircraftman's service dress uniform in a copy of the Burton Daily Mail and tucked it away. Now, having been discovered 70 years later, it is expected to fetch several hundreds of pounds at auction on 24<sup>th</sup> September. [Read more](#)

### **Other articles**

[Battlefield Medicine from Ancient Egypt to Modern Afghanistan](#)

[Splitting the Difference: The SA80 v The Arquebus of 1540](#)

[Soldier statue reignites Spanish row over fascism](#)

[Countdown to Surrender – The Last 100 Days, review: a WW2 series told from the German perspective](#)

[10 Best World War 2 Books](#)

[Warrior Finds a New Home at the Tank Museum](#)

[This is Why Fallujah is One of the Marine Corps' Most Legendary Battles](#)

### **Local events, online talks and podcasts**

[Click here](#) to see a wealth of upcoming events in Salisbury and surrounding areas.

As societies, clubs and other groups return to in-person meetings, we'll be phasing out the online talks section of the eNewsletter. For now though, click on the links below for the next (and future) webinars from a range of organisations. Some of these talks may charge a small fee to join.

#### **Wessex Military History Group**

Next talk: 'The Commonwealth War Graves Commission' with Commander Stewart Kilby RN Ret'd (Wednesday 25th August) - £5, email [jameskrporter@aol.com](mailto:jameskrporter@aol.com)

#### **Western Front Association**

Next talk: 'The Battle that Saved the BEF: Le Cateau, 26 August 1914' (Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August)

#### **Old Front Line**

A weekly World War One podcast featuring 30-45min episodes.

#### **Pete and Gary's Military History: Peter Hart and Gary Bain**

For more than 40 years historian Peter Hart has interviewed thousands of veterans about their experience of war.

#### **New Books Network**

A series of interviews with authors of military history books.

After a fantastic return meeting last month, we look forward to welcoming more of you back to St. John's Place next week!

Dave Simons  
Marketing Officer

Keith Rigden  
Membership Secretary

**Useful links:**

Website - <https://salisburymilhist.com>

Email - [SalisburyMilHist@gmail.com](mailto:SalisburyMilHist@gmail.com)

Facebook - [SalisburyMilHist](#)

Twitter - [SalisburyMHS](#)

**Who's who:**

Joint Chairman & Speaker Secretary: Alan Rooney

Joint Chair: Bob Kershaw

Treasurer: John Loades

Secretary & Bookstall Co-ordinator: Andy Sharpe

Membership Secretary: Keith Rigden

Marketing Officer: Dave Simons

Joint Events Officer: Alex Howie

Joint Events Officer: Sandy Forrest