



# Salisbury Military History Society

March 2022 eNewsletter

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

## Parish Notices

### Wednesday 23rd March

7.30pm (arrive from 7pm) - 'Doctor Enigma' with Dr Mark Baldwin

Mark Baldwin (aka 'Doctor Enigma') brings to life the extraordinary story of the greatest hack in history – how Germany's Enigma ciphers were broken during WW2 at Bletchley Park. To allow the audience to get a full understanding, **Doctor Enigma brings with him a real German wartime Enigma machine** for the audience to photograph and operate. [Read more](#)

For Full Members, the cost of entry is included in your annual subscription. For all other attendees, you can pay £10 on the door.

We accept cash and card payments at meetings, or cheques that should be made out to the 'Salisbury Military History Society'. For bank transfers, the Society's account details can be found on the [membership form here](#). As we've already held our first meetings of the year, part-year fees now apply ([see here](#)).

Thank you to those that have signed up for the first time or renewed for 2022. Full Members can collect their 2022 membership card at the first talk they attend in the new year.

### Upcoming talks

Wed 27th April - 'Moltke and his Generals' with Quintin Barry

Wed 25th May - 'Zulu Rising: The epic story of the Battle of Isandlwana' with Ian Knight

Wed 22nd June - 'The Changing of the Guard' with Simon Akam

Wed 27th July - 'Victory in Burma' with Lt. Col. Mike Tickner

Wed 24th Aug - TBC

Wed 28th Sept - TBC

Wed 26th Oct - 'Counter-Insurgency in Malaya: An Imperial Success Story' with Dr. Robert Lyman

Wed 23rd Nov - 'The Soldier's Soldier: A Leadership Life – Erwin Rommel' with Prof. Lloyd Clark

For more information on all our talks, click through to each from [our 'Events' webpage](#)

### Review: 'The Making of the Light Division' (Wednesday 23rd February)

While the origins of the Rifles in the British Army can be said to date back to *Rogers' Rangers* fighting on the North American continent during the Seven Years War (1750s/60s), the principles of the rifleman are grounded in European huntsmen, particularly in southern Germany and Austria. However, the upper echelons were not overly keen on these soldiers that took cover upon contact with the enemy and engaged in less regimented manoeuvres. Therefore, initial formations were exactly what they were titled: "experimental". At this time, Major-General Francis de Rottenburg was the leading light. When the Rifle Corps was founded in January 1801, Sir John Moore and Lieutenant Colonel McDonald set about making them different in every way. They wore the green of the continental hunting classes – though officers wore a uniform more akin to a light cavalryman and with a Hungarian-style pelisse – and they were drilled fastidiously at Shorncliffe to deter invasion and in anticipation of launching onto the European mainland. As companies were typically despatched to other units then returned, it wasn't until 1808 that Moore sent the Rifles into operation *en masse* on the Iberian Peninsula as the Flank Brigade under Craufurd and von Alten. With the addition of Portuguese regiments in the Spring of 1810, the Division was established. Tim Saunders' two books on 'The Light Division in The Peninsular War' – covering the periods 1808-11 and 1811-14 – were published by Pen and Sword.

### **Books offer**

The Kohima Museum in York has a number of books available at modest costs. Click here to view the list of books available and email Bob Cook at [kohimamuseum@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kohimamuseum@yahoo.co.uk) for costs (inc. postage) or with any queries.

Also, don't forget to take a look at our own bookstall that carries a wide range of books and DVDs.

### **An invitation to join the Committee**

The Society is led by an enthusiastic Committee that books speakers, hosts talks, organises events and fulfils administrative requirements. Most of your current Committee has served for almost three years and so we're always keen to invite new postholders to join us in order to encourage fresh ideas. Andy will be stepping down as Secretary once a successor has been appointed so please do reply to this email or speak to any Committee member at the next meeting if you're interested in this position or any others.

## **Military History News**

### **The 5 most effective battlefield tricks in the history of warfare**

While we may all be familiar with Hobart's Funnies and the use of inflatable tanks to deceive the enemy, military forces have used all manner of trickery to gain an advantage. Amongst the simplest and most effective were the Indian army's orderly retreat so as to flood the battlefield at Asal Uttar to bog down Pakistani tanks in 1965, and the heroin-laced cigarettes British soldiers threw to the Ottoman trenches in Palestine in World War One. Perhaps the most ingenious was the Afrika Korps planting one genuine landmine then digging dozens of holes filled with metallic rubbish, thus slowing down the British advance with ultimately unnecessary mine detection operations. [Read more](#)

### **A Look at the Recent Military History of Every Former Soviet Republic**

During the 18th and 19th Centuries, the Russian Empire subsumed vast swathes of land and those peoples did not gain any form of independence until the Soviet Union fell in 1991. However, independence did not sever ties with Moscow, with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) retaining that close bond between nine former Soviet Socialist Republics. As the largest and most powerful member of the CIS, Russia is the dominant force within it, but Russia has continually sought to regain its "lost" lands and people militarily where they have not succeeded politically – for example, South Ossetia in Georgia, and most notably the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic in Ukraine. [Read more](#)

### **Other articles**

[The Worst Military Leaders in History review - from Ancient Rome to Vietnam](#)

[8 Fierce Historical Military Figures Most People Haven't Heard About](#)

[The dark history behind the record-breaking Terracotta Army](#)

[Did the Redcoats teach George Washington how to fight?](#)

[How Disobeyed Orders Led to the Largest Confederate Surrender of the Civil War](#)

[The Eastern Front in WW2: How it all went wrong for the Germans](#)

[The history of the Molotov cocktail, an iconic weapon of underdogs](#)

[Jersey at war: island life during the German occupation](#)

[Dutch PM apologises for state's role in abuses in 1940s Indonesian war](#)

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

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

While online talks continue, we'll include them in our eNewsletters. 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.

### [Lockdown Lectures](#)

Next talk: 'Codename: INTREPID' (Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March)

### [Western Front Association](#)

Next talk: 'Hardit Singh Malik: The Flying Sikh' (Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March)

### [Wessex Military History Group](#)

Next talk: 'Batterie Mirus on Guernsey in WW2' (Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March) - £5, email [jameskrporter@aol.com](mailto:jameskrporter@aol.com)

### [British Modern Military History Society](#)

Next talk: 'The Indian Mutiny' (Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April)

### [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.

We look forward to seeing everyone at 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:**

Chairman & Speaker Secretary: Alan Rooney

Vice Chair: Bob Kershaw

Secretary & Bookstall Co-ordinator: Andy Sharp

Treasurer: John Loades

Membership Secretary: Keith Rigden

Marketing Officer: Dave Simons

Events Officer: Sandy Forrest