



Salisbury Military History Society

May 2022 eNewsletter

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

Parish Notices

Wednesday 25th May

7.30pm (arrive from 7pm) - 'Zulu Rising: The epic story of the battle of Isandlwana' with Ian Knight

In 1879, with Britain at the height of her imperial power, Lord Chelmsford's three columns marched into Zululand on a punitive expedition to teach the Zulu King Cetshwayo a lesson. Two equally professional armies with totally different fighting traditions and weapons met and fought with startling results. At Isandlwana the Zulus inflicted the most humiliating defeat of the Victorian era on the over-confident British battalions. Ian Knight tells us how and why. [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, card and cheque payments at meetings. Cheques 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](#)).

Please note that the bookstall will not be at next week's talk.

Upcoming talks

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 - 'Old Wardour Castle & Salisbury during the English Civil War' with Julian Humphrys

Wed 28th Sept - 'Dunkirk 1940: The German View of Dunkirk' with Col. Robert Kershaw

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](#)

Author talks at Waterstones, Salisbury

Mon 23rd May - [First Casualty: An Evening with Toby Harnden](#)

Thurs 9th June - [An Evening with Test Pilots Chris Taylor and Ron Burrows](#)

Review: 'Moltke and his Generals' with Quintin Barry (Wednesday 27th April)

In describing Helmuth von Moltke, Otto von Bismarck said "He was a very rare kind of man, wholly devoted to duty, an odd character, always prepared and utterly reliable, yet cold to the heart." For others, his considered nature meant he was "silent in seven languages". A cadet in the Danish Army before transferring to the Prussian Army, Moltke was a skilled cartographer and used his insight to establish his reputation as an effective military advisor to the Ottomans. However, as a commander who gave guidance rather than directives, his greatest ability was in selecting the right people with which to surround himself: the so-called 'Demi-Gods'.

Your 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

Swiss Guards: A brief history of the pope's army

A 150-strong permanent Swiss Guard was first established to defend the Pope in 1506. Today, new recruits are sworn in on 6th May each year – the anniversary of when 147 Swiss Guards died protecting Pope Clement VII from the army of the Holy Roman Emperor. Over the last 40 years, in addition to their famous ceremonial duties, Swiss Guards' training has focused on enhanced training in unarmed combat and counterterrorism techniques. [Read more](#)

British Tank Crew Survived Being Stuck in No Man's Land for Three Days

At 4am on 22nd August 1917, the 9-man crew of the 'Fray Bentos' Mark IV tank rolled out into No Man's Land in support of the British 61st Division's advance around Ypres in the Battle of Passchendaele. Three hours later, the tank had rolled onto its side, with one crewman killed and most of the others injured by German fire. Having survived three days and two nights with no supplies and subjected to sniper fire from both sides, the crew decided to risk the long crawl back to their own lines. By the Armistice in 1918, the Fray Bentos crew were the most decorated of the war. [Read more](#)

Kota Bharu: How Imperial Japan Conquered British Malaya in the Most Unlikely Way

As the now-infamous Japanese naval force approached Pearl Harbour on 8th December 1941, three cargo vessels were spotted from the coast of Kota Bharu, the British and Australian airbase in Northern Malaya. Unlikely the German Blitzkrieg witnessed in Western Europe, once ashore Japan's plans were low-tech: 5,000 troops commandeered bicycles from locals and pedalled south for the attack on Singapore. [Read more](#)

Other articles

[The Largest Armies in History](#)

[This Is the Deadliest Battle in World History](#)

[20 Wars Russia Has Fought Since 1917](#)

[Army posthumously promotes Charles Young to become first Black general officer in history](#)

[How the First Night Vision Scope Influenced the Outcome at Okinawa](#)

[De Havilland Mosquito: The Deadliest \(Wooden\) World War II Plane?](#)

[The 1983 Military Drill That Nearly Sparked Nuclear War With the Soviets](#)

[Why The RAH-66 Comanche Was Doomed From The Start](#)

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.

The Battlefields Trust

Next talk: 'The Western Rebellion, 1549' (Wednesday 18th May)

Institution of Royal Engineers

Next talk: 'Sapper service in Gibraltar in the 1971-73, A personal story' (Wednesday 18th May)

[Western Front Association](#)

Next talk: 'The Aisne Again – the essence of Blitzkrieg?' (Monday 23rd May)

[Lockdown Lectures](#)

Next talk: 'Nothing is Impossible - The Story of the Glider Pilot Regiment' (Monday 6th June)

[British Modern Military History Society](#)

Next talk: 'The Battle of Midway' (Tuesday 14th June)

[The Manchester Military History Society](#)

Next talk: '18th Century insights from a reenactor' (Tuesday 14th June)

[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 you all 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

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