



Salisbury Military History Society

November 2019 eNewsletter

Hello and welcome to the eNewsletter for November 2019.

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

Lost Roman Legions

Next Wednesday we welcome Chris Hewitt, chairman of the [Salisbury-Xanten Twinning Association](#), to deliver a talk on the 'Lost Roman Legions'. Now a retired Army officer, but having lived in Germany for 13 years, he has an 'insiders' knowledge of the area and this, in part, led to his fascination with the fate of these Legions.



The annihilation of three Roman legions in 9AD by a coalition of German tribes led by Arminius was one of the biggest defeats in Roman history as well as one of the main events to determine the course of European history. The Germans decided to mark the event by erecting a huge statue to Arminius near Detmold in the 1870s, without a shred of evidence for the location of the actual battle. It was not until British Army warrant officer Tony Clunn armed with a metal detector discovered 100 Roman coins north of Osnabruck one weekend in 1987 that the actual site was discovered. The lecture covers the history of [Xanten](#) (the annual departure point for the Roman spring expedition east of the Rhine) as well as the route up the River Lippe, the battle itself and its consequences.

Refreshment break and book stall

During the break there will be a cash bar supplying refreshments and our Committee-run book stall selling second-hand books donated to the Society. If you have any surplus military history books, DVDs, etc that you are happy to donate, do please bring them along. All takings from this stall go to the Society.

Our current book list can be found on the website ([click here](#)) and you may email the Committee – SalisburyMilHist@gmail.com – if you'd like to reserve a book ahead of a meeting.

All of this means that, if you wish to partake of any refreshment or are tempted by a book, it is essential that you bring some cash in your pocket, purse or wallet.

Wednesday 23rd October

Two days before the 165th anniversary of the famous Charge of the Light Brigade our Joint Chairman, [Colonel Bob Kershaw](#), provided a step-by-step analysis of the build up to the charge, the lesser-recounted charge of the Heavy Brigade, the personalities involved, and a comparison of the reality with Tennyson's famous poem and the 1968 film.

The war was truly a Victorian epic, pitting the British and French armies, allied for the first time after many years of enmity, against the might of Russia. The talk was based on his recent book '*24 Hours at Balaclava*' which is available [here](#).



Future dates for your diary:

- Monday 2nd December: AGM and Christmas social event (inc. quiz). Full Members only
- Wednesday 22nd January: 37 Howitzer Battery RFA: The Curragh to Le Cateau, August 1914
- Lt Col Mike Watson

- Wednesday 26th February: Could the British have won the American War of Independence?
- [Professor Jeremy Black](#)
- Wednesday 25th March: British Volunteers and the Spanish Civil War
- [Ray Wilkinson](#)
- Wednesday 22nd April: Reflections on the First World War
- [Brigadier Allan Mallinson](#)
- Wednesday 27th May: Victory in Burma
- Lieutenant Colonel Mike Tickner
- Wednesday 24th June: Seapower States: Culture, Identity and Strategy
- [Professor Andrew Lambert](#)

Posters/flyers for future events can be downloaded from the website – [click here](#)

Military History News:

Britain's 5 Largest Losses in Military History

The extent of Britain's colonial exploits meant military defeats shook the empire. 'The National Interest' magazine recounts the events leading up to the shocks at Saratoga, Isandlwana, Denmark Straits, Singapore and Gazala. However, some may say these are not so much shocks as the inevitable result of hubris. [Read more](#)

5 last-minute decisions that changed American military history

Soldiers are trained to react. In the heat of the moment, instinct takes over. In fact, pivotal moments in the US Civil War, Great War and Cold War were decided by individuals making last-minute decisions that affected millions of people. [Read more](#)

Leadership in War

Professor Andrew Roberts' new book explores how nine leaders – from Napoleon to Thatcher – performed in the crucible of war. On the key question of whether a leader can be labelled 'great' in defeat, only two stand out: Napoleon and Robert E. Lee. Whereas he believes Hindenburg and Ludendorff are considered great wartime leaders undeservedly. [Read more](#)

Bugs of War: How Insects Have Been Weaponized Throughout History

During the Second World War the Japanese killed 440,000 civilians when they dropped plague-infected fleas and cholera-coated flies on Chinese cities. However, such examples of biological warfare date back to the Romans with the scorpion bombs faced by Emperor Septimius Severus at the desert stronghold of Hatra. Eighteen hundred years later, the Viet Cong too used scorpions against their enemies as they filled boobytraps for American 'tunnel rats'. [Read more](#)

Current and forthcoming events in Salisbury (and around Wiltshire/the SW)

8th Oct to 8th Dec – "The Ruined Factory: REME Volkswagen and the car that defined an era", REME Museum ([click here](#))

14th Oct to 29th Nov – "As a Training Ground for War: How Sport Prepares Soldiers for the Battlefield", REME Museum ([click here](#))

21st November – "Rogues with Rifles; the story of the 5th/60th", The Royal Green Jackets (Rifles) Museum ([click here](#))

- 21st November – “The Stories behind the Hoards”, Bourne Valley Historical Society ([click here](#))
- 28th November – “SOFFAAM Talk Series: The Barracuda Restoration Project”, Fleet Air Arm Museum ([click here](#))
- 30th November – “Screening of Secret Spitfires: The Director's Cut”, The Salisbury Museum ([click here](#))
- 3rd December – “An evening with Senior Curator of Aircraft, David Morris”, Fleet Air Arm Museum ([click here](#))
- 5th December – “Airframe Tours of Cobham Hall”, Fleet Air Arm Museum ([click here](#))
- 12th December – “Scuttled - the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the River Plate”, Army Flying Museum ([click here](#))
- 17th December – “17,000hrs in the air”, Boscombe Down Aviation Collection ([click here](#))
- 28th December – “Starlight Cinema: ‘Top Gun’ on the Flight Deck”, Fleet Air Arm ([click here](#))

Parish Notices

Membership

Our annual subscription offers tremendous value for money, saving 50% off the ‘on the door’ price of monthly membership. The Committee are aware that new members joining after September should also have the option of becoming Full Members. Therefore, part-year rates are shown below:

Salisbury Military History Society				
Annual Subscription: Part Year Rates				
Month	Talks Remaining	Monthly Rate	Annual Rate	Comment
September	9	10.00	45.00	The Annual Rate reduces after the completion of each Month's talk.
October	8	10.00	40.00	
November	7	10.00	35.00	
December	7	n/a	35.00	
January	6	10.00	30.00	
February	5	10.00	25.00	
March	4	10.00	20.00	
April	3+9	10.00	60.00	Includes subscription up to following August.
May	2+9	10.00	55.00	
June	1+9	10.00	50.00	

So, for example...

- Becoming a Full Member at the November talk, the cost will be £35 for the year to June 2020.
- If you decide to become a Full Member in April, May or June then the annual rate includes the fee for the following year.

Please note that there are no monthly talks in July, August or December.

Note that the Full Membership is not only a saving over the monthly rate but also entitles you to 10% off at of [The History Bookshop](#) at Fisherton Mill and includes invitations to attend future trips and functions, all of which will be restricted to Full Members only.

Membership forms are available to download from the website [here](#).

Annual General Meeting

Further to our previous announcements at Society meetings and in these monthly eNewsletters, our first AGM will be held on Monday 2nd December at St John's Place, commencing at 7.30pm. The agenda for that meeting

is attached here and may also be found on the Society website ([see here](#)). After the AGM there will be a military-themed quiz. Free drinks and canapés will be provided.

Please note that this event is open to Full Members (those with a membership card) only; yet another excellent reason to become a Full Member! We invite Full Members to sign up to the evening at next week's meeting in order to give the Committee an indication of expected numbers.

Events Secretary

For those enthused to become more involved in the running of our Society, we're seeking an 'Events Secretary'. The next half-dozen events are already in their formative stages in that we have locations and dates in mind; we just need someone to help finalise the details and carry each over the line.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Roman Legions talk next Wednesday (27th November)!

Kind regards,

Keith Rigden
Membership Secretary

Dave Simons
Marketing Officer

Useful links:

Website - <https://salisburymilhist.com>

Email - SalisburyMilHist@gmail.com

Facebook - [SalisburyMilHist](#)

Twitter - [SalisburyMHS](#)

Who's who:

Joint-Chairman & Speaker Secretary: Alan Rooney

Joint-Chair: Bob Kershaw

Treasurer: John Loades

Marketing Officer: Dave Simons

Secretary: Andy Sharpe

Membership Secretary: Keith Rigden

