



Salisbury Military History Society

February 2023 eNewsletter

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

Parish Notices

Wednesday 22nd February

6.30pm - Annual General Meeting

Details were emailed to Full Members on Wednesday 1st February.

...and in a change to our advertised speaker

7.30pm (arrive from 7pm) - 'The Battle for Hill 107, Maleme, Crete (20th-23rd May 1941)' with Colonel Robert Kershaw

Only rarely is it possible to positively identify the decisive point of a battle in modern warfare. Hill 107 was one of these during the night of the 20th/21st May 1941. Its capture decided the eventual outcome of the German airborne invasion of Crete. When the Germans jumped on the morning of the 20th May, they had never lost a battle thus far in the war. The New Zealanders, after fighting a succession of desperate rearguards during the evacuation of mainland Greece in April 1941, had never won one. [Read more](#)

2023 membership subscriptions

Rather than queuing to pay your 2023 subscription at the door at next week's meeting, we encourage everyone to pay in advance by bank transfer if possible. The Committee proposes to keep the annual subscription at just £45.

Sort code 40-40-14

Account No. 02293544

Please include your name as the payment reference

Alternatively, if you'd prefer to receive an invoice, please email our Treasurer, John Loades (at john.loades@hotmail.com), who will arrange for a Subscription Invoice to be emailed to you from Zettle.com. Upon opening the emailed invoice, there is a link to an online payment page.

Upcoming talks

Wed 22nd Mar - 'Desert Warfare: The Experience of British Empire Armies in the Two World Wars' with Prof. Gary Sheffield

Wed 26th Apr - 'Why does the British government never talk about Nuclear Weapons?' with Dr. Andy Corbett

Wed 24th May - 'The Soldier's Soldier: A Leadership Life – Erwin Rommel' with Prof. Lloyd Clark

Wed 28th Jun - 'Alfred the Great and the campaign of 878 – What can we know?' with Prof. Ryan Lavelle

Wed 26th Jul - 'To War with the Walkers' with Annabel Venning

Wed 23rd Aug - 'The Indian Mutiny' with Dr Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

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

Glossary of terms

We're fortunate to include a great range of experience and interests among our membership. However, the knowledge gap between the services, generations, professionals and hobbyists can vary widely. Therefore, we have started to collate a new '[Glossary of Terms](#)' webpage and we invite everyone to reply to this email (or email salisburymilhist@gmail.com anytime) with suggested entries, or requesting what particular abbreviations and acronyms mean.

Book exchange

To replace our bookstall, we'll be introducing a book exchange from our February meeting. Everyone is invited to bring along any books (or DVDs) they no longer want and can take away something else that catches their eye. We only ask that you take home anything you bring which isn't snapped up.

Review: 'The Great Game: Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Central Asia' with Major Gordon Corrigan (Wednesday 25th January)

Major Corrigan's talk centred on the political, diplomatic and military confrontations that occurred through most of the 19th Century (c.1830-95) involving the rivalry between the British and Russian Empires over Afghanistan and neighbouring territories. The distrust between the two Empires waxed and waned through this period with neither side entirely sure of the others intentions. This suspicion led each to a series of recces usually undertaken by young officers as they were essentially "deniable" in that if discovered by the enemy their presence could be put down to youthful exuberance. The rewards could be significant, such as promotion upon return, but the risk was that if caught certain death was likely. The British annexation of the Punjab in 1849 established a firm border with Afghanistan and this heightened tensions with the Russians, as this approached their interests. Wanting to lure British troops away from Crimea in the mid-1850s, Russia sent its troops into Afghanistan, ultimately unsuccessful in that plot. Later in 1857/8 as the Indian Mutiny erupted, the British were convinced the Russians were making mischief and aiding the Indians but no substantial evidence was ever found to support this. By the 1890s Britain had India and her borders under full control, Russia seemed content with controlling the old Silk Road routes and associated regions and therefore tensions lessened and tentative agreement were reached.

Military History News

Wreaking revenge on the Anglo-Saxons

After Anglo-Saxon King Ælla of Northumbria killed Ragnar in the ninth century, his five sons sought revenge. With his brothers, Ivar the Boneless set sail for England. One of the greatest military strategists of the era, Ivar gained his nickname due to brittle bone disease and was often carried into battle on a shield. At the head of the Great Heathen Army, he gained notoriety for his torture and executions of Ælla and of King Edmund of East Anglia.

Read more: [Ivar the Boneless: How a Disabled Viking Warrior Conquered England](#)

The General who stood up to Hitler

In February 1945 General Dietrich von Saucken – sacked a recently reinstated – entered a room to meet with Hitler about the embattled Eastern Front. He wore his cavalry sword, gave a military salute and refused to report to a local Prussian politician. Three strikes, but he was not sent to a prison camp. Instead, the Fuhrer respected this Great War veteran and put him in charge of all forces in Prussia, which he led until his capture by the advancing Red Army.

Read more: [Dietrich von Saucken: The German General Who Told the Führer, 'I Will Not Take Orders from a Local Chieftain'](#)

Other articles

[Top 10 castles in England](#)

[WWII Plans That Never Happened – There's a Reason These Were Shelved](#)

[The Battle of the Atlantic: The Longest Military Campaign Of WWII](#)

[Battle of Tannenberg: Annihilation of the Russian Second Army](#)

[The Fascinating History of the Messerschmitt Bf 109](#)

[How "Tet" Began the End of Vietnam](#)

[A history of Ireland's Military Archives](#)

[How Nations Have Spied from the Sky](#)

[The Fastest Planes in the US Military](#)

[Top 10 Best Modern War Movies of All Time](#)

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.

Gallipoli Association

Next talk: '[The Thinking Man's Soldier: The Pre-War Military Thoughts of Ian Hamilton, 1870-1914](#)' (Tuesday 28th February)

British Modern Military History Society

Next talk: '[Operation Freshman - Telemark](#)' (Tuesday 7th March)

Institution of Royal Engineers

Next talk: '[Op Telic 20 - The RE contribution to Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003](#)' (Wednesday 15th March)

[Old Front Line](#)

A 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 welcoming you all 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

Facebook - [SalisburyMilHist](#)

Twitter - [SalisburyMHS](#)

Who's who:

Chairman & Speaker Secretary: Alan Rooney

Vice Chair: Bob Kershaw

Secretary: Ian Thomas

Treasurer: John Loades

Membership Secretary: Keith Rigden

Marketing Officer: Dave Simons