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Salisbury Military History Society February 2025 eNewsletter



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The Battle of Cheriton Battlefield Walk Sunday 13th April 2025

We have had a good uptake so far and encourage you to pay for places if you would like to experience the walk and talk. You can pay on the door at our next talk. or, Payment can be made to the Society using the bank details indicated and in the Reference box put your surname and Membership Number i.e. Smith 24 so this can be tracked by the Treasurer.

Account name: Salisbury Military History Society

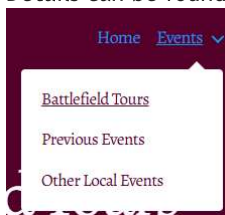
Account Number: 02293544

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Parish Notices

The Battle of Cheriton Battlefield Walk

Details can be found on our website under the ['Events' sub-menu](#).



Newsletter updates

If there are any ideas to make the newsletter even better then please don't hesitate to contact us through web query page on our website with the subject line 'eNewsletter suggestion'. Or email directly to salisburymilhist@gmail.com with the same subject.

Upcoming talks

Mar 26th - ['Abyss: The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962'](#) with Max Hastings

There is a full year of events scheduled with some details needed to be added to the website soon.

[View all our events](#)

Talk Review: 'BRIXMIS: My Life As A Military Spy'



At our latest meeting, Peter Williams captivated a full house with tales from his days at BRIXMIS, serving in West Berlin and East Germany. While some attendees might have had a vague sense of the mission's goals, Peter's detailed account of surveilling and reporting on Russian and East German activities in the region left many wide-eyed with fascination. He walked us through the logistics of "Tours"—the critical reconnaissance missions—and stressed the urgency of delivering timely intel. With vivid examples, he revealed the ever-present risks faced by the team, including chilling stories of fatal incidents involving personnel from allied nations. Peter's lively and engaging delivery kept us hooked from start to finish, making it a truly memorable evening! This talk is highly recommended and is available for viewing on our YouTube channel [here](#).

Next Talk: Weds 26th March 2025

'Abyss: The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962'

by Max Hastings

In this compelling talk, Max Hastings delves into the harrowing events of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, a period when the world teetered on the brink of nuclear annihilation. Drawing from his meticulously researched book *Abyss*, Hastings offers a vivid narrative that captures the tension, fear, and high-stakes diplomacy of those thirteen days in October.

Hastings will explore the perspectives of key figures such as U.S. President John F. Kennedy, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, and Cuban leader Fidel Castro, as well as the experiences of ordinary citizens caught in the geopolitical crossfire. He will discuss the strategic miscalculations, secret communications, and near-catastrophic decisions that defined the crisis.

The talk will also highlight the broader implications of the crisis, including its impact on U.S.-Soviet relations, the evolution of nuclear deterrence, and the lessons it holds for contemporary global security challenges. Hastings will reflect on how the Cuban Missile Crisis remains a stark reminder of the fragility of peace and the importance of cautious, informed leadership in times of international tension. Details [here](#)

Selection of events through history in February

Why not explore the details behind these events?

February 1, 1861: Texas seceded from the United States, joining the Confederate States of America at the outset of the American Civil War.

February 4, 1797: The Battle of Cape St. Vincent saw British Admiral Sir John Jervis defeat a larger Spanish fleet during the French Revolutionary Wars.

February 5, 1810: The Siege of Cádiz began, a prolonged Spanish resistance against Napoleon's forces during the Peninsular War.

February 6, 1838: Boer forces defeated the Zulu at the Battle of Vegkop, part of the Great Trek conflicts in South Africa.

February 7, 1807: The Battle of Eylau ended inconclusively between Napoleon's French army and Russian forces in a brutal, snowy clash during the Napoleonic Wars.

February 10, 1258: Mongol forces under Hulagu Khan sacked Baghdad, ending the Abbasid Caliphate after a devastating siege.

February 12, 1429: The Battle of the Herrings saw English forces repel a French attack on a supply convoy during the Hundred Years' War.

February 15, 1898: The USS Maine exploded in Havana harbor, sparking the Spanish-American War.

February 16, 1804: The U.S. Navy, led by Stephen Decatur, burned the captured USS Philadelphia in Tripoli harbor during the First Barbary War.

February 17, 1864: The Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley sank the Union ship USS Housatonic, the first submarine to sink an enemy vessel, during the American Civil War.

February 19, 197: Roman Emperor Septimius Severus defeated usurper Clodius Albinus at the Battle of Lugdunum, securing his rule during the Year of the Five Emperors.

February 20, 1813: Austrian forces under Karl Philipp retook Kraków from Napoleon's allies during the War of the Sixth Coalition.

February 22, 1744: The Battle of Toulon saw an indecisive naval clash between British and Franco-Spanish fleets during the War of the Austrian Succession.

February 23, 1836: The Siege of the Alamo began, a pivotal 13-day standoff in the Texas Revolution.

February 24, 1525: The Battle of Pavia saw Spanish-Imperial forces crush the French army, capturing King Francis I during the Italian Wars.

February 25, 1336: The Battle of Pilėnai ended with Lithuanian defenders committing mass suicide to avoid capture by the Teutonic Knights.

February 26, 1266: The Battle of Benevento saw Charles of Anjou defeat Manfred of Sicily, shifting control of southern Italy during the Hohenstaufen conflicts.

February 28, 1646: The Battle of Torrington saw Parliamentary forces defeat the Royalists, advancing Cromwell's campaign in the English Civil War.

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[Excerpt from a talk by Dr Helen Fry for the Salisbury Military History Society on 26th June 2024.](#)

[Excerpt of Robin Phayre's 22nd May talk on Drone Dynamics: A Look at drones in the Ukraine theatre and the lessons for the future](#)

Full Talk: [Flying to the Sun: A Modern Englishman in Mediaeval Japan with Michael Jay](#)

Full Talk: [Peter Hart's - 'Laugh or Fly with The Royal Flying Corps 1914-18](#)

Full Talk: [Custer's Last Stand - Robert Kershaw](#)

Full Talk: [Keep Them or Give Them Back](#)

Full Talk: [BRIXMIS: My Life As A military Spy](#)

It's All Gone South - by Andy Tailby: Unfortunately due to a technical hitch only the first few minutes were captured. These things happen so all the better to be there!

YouTube

Local Events, Online Talks and Podcasts

There is a wealth of upcoming military history talks and events in Salisbury and the surrounding areas. This calendar is updated regularly so check back for new additions.

4th March 2025 - [The Path to Dien Bien Phu: The French in Indo-China, 1945-54](#)

4th March 2025 - [Did General Dan Sickles Save the Union Army at Gettysburg](#)

5th March 2025 - [Battlefields Trust Online Talks Spring Programme 2025 - The Battle of Northampton 1264](#)

5th March 2025 - ["Like Angels from Heaven": U.S. Army Nurses and the War with Spain](#)

11th March 2025 - [Did General Dan Sickles Save the Union Army at Gettysburg](#)

12th March 2025 - ["Like Angels from Heaven": U.S. Army Nurses and the War with Spain](#)

13th March 2025 - [Armour in Burma](#)

14th March 2025 - [Pride and Fall: The British Army in Afghanistan, 2001-14](#)

17th March 2025 - [Battlefields Trust Online Talks Spring Programme 2025 - Remembering Black Tom Fairfax: Parliament's Yorkshire General](#)

19th March 2025 - ["Like Angels from Heaven": U.S. Army Nurses and the War with Spain](#)

20th March 2025 - [The RAF Regiment in Burma and India: Operational history in SEAC 1942-46](#)

20th March 2025 - [Robert Rogers, Ranger: The Rise and Fall of an American Icon](#)

21st March 2025 - [Soldiers of Uncertain Rank: The West India Regiments in British Imperial Culture](#)

23rd March 2025 - [The Siege of Pensacola 1781](#)

24th March 2025 - [Bouncing the Rhine - Operation Varsity](#)

Events from Website

- 06 Mar [Bravery in Burma](#)
(The Gurkha Museum, Winchester)
- 11 Mar [Thunder Through the Valleys](#)
(Boscombe Down Aviation Collection, Old Sarum)
- 14 Mar [Behind the Scenes: Archive Tour](#)
(Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock)
- 23 Mar [Walk: Battle of Stow on the Wold, 1646](#)
(The Battlefields Trust, Stow-on-the Wold)
- 24 Mar [Bouncing the Rhine - Operation Varsity](#)
(The Army Flying Museum, Middle Wallop)
- 27 Mar [Glider Operations of World War Two](#)
(The Army Flying Museum, Middle Wallop)

Military History News

Please see below a periodically updated list of articles from the world of military history.

[10 Inspiring Stories Of Bravery During The Battle Of Britain](#)

[Interesting Links from British Military History](#)

[The mysterious story of the Unknown Warrior](#)

[Bernard Law Montgomery: Unbeatable and unbearable](#)

[Introduction to Legion: life in the Roman army](#)

[History Has No Lessons for You: A Warning for Policymakers](#)

[7 Greatest Military Strategists from History](#)

[Exhibiting military history](#)

[New Medieval Books: Byzantine Military Rhetoric in the Ninth Century](#)

[Legion: Life in the Roman Army review - 'More than just a blood and guts orgy of military might'](#)

[Why a Rabbit Appears on This Japanese Samurai Helmet](#)

[The Navy's Short-Lived Plan to Dominate the Skies with Flying Aircraft Carriers](#)

[Learning Lessons from the Prussian Past?](#)

[Which Countries Were Major Players in World War II?](#)

[Carry On films: The star who helped World War II prisoners escape](#)

[D-Day 80th anniversary: Pop-up museums tell Portsmouth's story](#) [video]

Click on the links below for the next (and future) webinars from a range of organisations. Some of these talks may have a small fee to join.

[Old Front Line](#)

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

[Pete and Gary's Military History](#)

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 to St. John's Place next week!

Best regards,

Tony Corkery
Marketing Officer

Keith Rigden
Membership Secretary



Who's who:

Chairman & Speaker Secretary: Ian Thomas

Secretary: Mark Vincent

Treasurer: John Loades

Membership Secretary: Keith Rigden

Marketing Officer: Tony Corkery

Links Curator: Dave Simons

Without portfolio: Andy McCafferty, Bob Kershaw



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Our meeting venue is:
St John's Place, Lower Road, Bemerton, SP2 9NP

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