



The Society for Army Historical Research

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www.sahr.org.uk

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER - September 2023

*Council would like to record a sincere vote of thanks to **Christopher Palmer** for acting as editor of the Newsletter since 2020 when he took over from the then Chairman – who has now resumed editorship on his return.*

EVENTS

The Templer Lecture & Dinner - Tue 31 October

This year's **Templer Lecture** will be delivered by **Dr Huw Davies** of Kings College London. He will be speaking about the development of military knowledge in the British Army from the War of the Austrian Succession to the Crimean War – the subject of his book *The Wandering Army*, winner of this year's Templer Medal. The lecture will be delivered at the Army & Navy Club, Pall Mall in London on Tuesday 31 October at 6pm (please note change of date since last Newsletter). Entrance is FREE for SAHR members plus one guest per member - but please register (details below) so that we can arrange smooth entry into the Club for you.



The Templer Dinner will take place at the Club after the lecture at approximately 7.15 pm. Attendance is an 'optional extra' which has become an increasingly popular event in our annual calendar. The subsidised price for SAHR Members and their guests is £63 per head for a three-course dinner including wine. To request a vegetarian option or notify us of special dietary requirements, email secretary@sahr.org.uk

The dress code for both events is lounge suit or jacket & tie and equivalent for ladies.

Registration:

If you missed the SAHR calling notice (check your inbox) you can book in by either:

1. Visiting: <https://buytickets.at/societyforarmyhistoricalresearch/979100> or,
2. Registering via Ticket Tailor by going to the following link: <https://buytickets.at/societyforarmyhistoricalresearch/979100> or simply,
3. Visiting the *Upcoming Events* page on our website.

Online Talks 2023/24

Our popular 2023 online talks programme continues with Dr Andrew Bamford speaking on Tuesday 26 *September* about **British amphibious descents on the French coast during the Seven Years War**. October's speaker will be Dr Eamonn O'Keeffe on **Military Musicians**, followed in November by Glenn Price on **Logistics during the British Civil Wars**. See the website ('Events' tag) for further details.

We are now starting to pull together the Talks programme for 2024. Any members interested in giving a talk should contact the Hon. Secretary with details of their proposed topic. If you have been tuning in this year, you will know that our speakers cover a wide range of topics and eras - subjects in 2023 have ranged from a brilliant close analysis of the ground in the Spion Kop campaign, to the political implications of corporal punishment in Wellington's day. In filling out 2024's programme, speakers on pre-1700 or post-1945 topics would be particularly welcome.

The Annual Members Meeting – late April 2024

The Annual Members Meeting is a highlight of the SAHR year. Having got the formalities of AGM out of the way, members are treated to a topical lecture followed by the annual prizegiving ceremony when the winners of the prestigious Templer book competition are announced, and other awards made – followed by an enjoyable reception. Next year's event will take place in the last week of April 2024 – watch this space and the website for confirmed date and further details.

SAHR COUNCIL

New members

Those who attended the 2023 AGM will be aware that we have had a lot of turn-over at Council level, from Chairman level downwards, these past 12 months due to illness and other unforeseen circumstances. We are pleased to announce that have now filled almost all vacant posts – including that of Grants Officer which had been vacant for some time. Council would like publicly to thank Dr Andrew Cormack for filled this post in an acting capacity while we were without a permanent incumbent. It is particularly pleasing that both our new Grants Officer and our new Essay Prize Coordinator are past-beneficiaries of these initiatives who are now in a position to give something back.

By way of introducing them to the membership, brief resumes on our three newest Council Members follow overleaf:

Ian Beckett - Chair of the Templer Medal Judging Panel.



Ian retired as Professor of Military History at the University of Kent in 2015. He was Senior Lecturer in War Studies at Sandhurst for 15 years before returning to university life with chairs in both the UK and the US, including as Professor of Military Theory at the US Marine Corps University. He was Chairman of the Council of the Army Records Society from 2001 to 2014. Condemned by his wife to live in exile in Cornwall, he keeps trying to get back to his beloved Buckinghamshire where he remains Secretary to the

Buckinghamshire Military Museum Trust.

Nicola Martin - Grants Officer.

Nicola completed her AHRC funded PhD on *The Cultural Paradigms of British Imperialism in the Militarisation of Scotland and North America, c.1745-1775* with the University of Stirling in 2019. Having focused on Scottish history, primarily Jacobitism, for her undergraduate and masters' degrees with the University of Strathclyde, her doctoral research took a transatlantic approach to warfare and pacification. She is currently completing her first monograph, *The British Army in Scotland and North America, c. 1745-75: Militarisation on the Fringes of the Empire*, which develops her PhD research. The book demonstrates the impact of the Jacobite Rising of 1745-46 on British imperialism in North America and centres the role British army officers played in the crisis that led to the American Revolution. She works as a lecturer in history for the University of the Highlands & Islands.



Zeb Micic - Essay Prize Coordinator.



Zeb is currently reading Modern History at the University of St Andrews. His academic interests centre on the history of honours and dignities, particularly those relating to military service. He has been aided by the Society as recipient of a research grant, as well as encouragement through the essay competition as a sixth-former and early undergraduate. Of his new Council post, he writes: '*I note the lack of military history in many university and school curriculums. Inevitable, perhaps, given the lack of exposure to the Armed Forces in general. I hope this is an area which I can help the Society promote in the future.*'

STRATEGIC REVIEW

Council is currently undertaking a 5-Yearly 'health-check' of all aspects of Society business and membership services:

Membership Survey.

A key part of the Review is to obtain feedback from members on what you think of the service we currently provide and how you would like to see the Society develop in future. A membership questionnaire was accordingly emailed out to all members last month. The response has been hugely encouraging, with well over 200 very helpful responses so far. Although the official deadline for responses will have passed by the time this Newsletter reaches you, and Council will be discussing the consolidated feedback at an Awayday on 24 September, if you haven't had an opportunity to respond yet and would like to do so, the details can be found on the website.

Templer Competition Rules.

An early 'deliverable' of the Strategic Review has been a significant updating of the rules and process for judging the Templer Competition. This has been necessary to recognise the growing success, higher profile and greater volume of books involved. The updated rules can be found on the website – and we particularly draw the attention of publishers and prospective authors/competitors to it.

RESEARCH

Doctoral Dissertations

Each year, the Society produces a record of doctoral dissertation and research theses on British military history completed at higher education institutions in the United Kingdom and abroad. The latest edition can be found in the Journal's Winter issue for 2022 (Volume 100, Number 403). Advice on dissertations completed in the last two years, particularly those that were undertaken outside of the United Kingdom and those omitted from previous lists, are welcome. Please alert the Book Reviews Editor to any material suitable for inclusion on future editions of the list: bookreviews@sahr.org.uk"

THE JOURNAL

A possible Special Edition: American War of Independence

A request from Dr Andrew Cormack, Hon. Editor:

'In the March Newsletter this year I floated the idea of a Special Publication to mark the 250th anniversary of the War of the American Revolution. The suggestion was enthusiastically greeted by the various authors that I thought may wish to contribute to this volume, but the same readiness to assist has not been shown by the sponsors whom I have approached.

'Though the project is a good one, the Society will certainly need financial assistance to bring it to fruition. I should be very grateful therefore if members or readers of the Journal could have a think about possible sponsors in the United Kingdom or the United States and suggest them to me with precise contact details if possible. Appeals have already been made to the following:

- *The Museum of the American Revolution*
- *The Society of the Cincinnati*
- *The Daughters of the American Revolution*
- *The Sons of the American Revolution*
- *The British Academy*
- *The Royal Oak Foundation*

'The volume would be a stand-alone publication similar to the Waterloo and Great War Specials of 2015 and 2018, which were generously supported by the National Army Museum and the Lord Ashcroft respectively. It is estimated that the cost would be about £12,000+ based on the increased costs of printing and postage. It would not replace one of the quarterly Journals'.

BATTLEFIELD TOURS

During his first tenure as Chairman, Maj Gen Ashley Truluck led a number of bespoke tours for SAHR to Spain and Malta through his company *The Cultural Experience*. Over 40 members and their partners participated and now that Ashley has returned as Chairman, he is offering to repeat the experience with a choice of two of his favourite and most popular destinations in 2024 (see next pages). *In order to gauge the likely response, please register an interest, and/or to book a place via email at chair@sahr.org.uk*



The Waterloo Campaign: 17-20 May 2024

This tour takes place over a long weekend based in historic Waterloo town. It traces the 4-day Waterloo campaign and includes pleasant walks in the Belgian countryside.

[Outline Itinerary](#) (for full itinerary see SAHR website):



Day 1 – Brussels - Eurostar to Brussels, lunch in magnificent Grand Place (left) where casualties were brought after the battle; walking tour of ‘Wellington’ sites in historic Brussels; visit Wellington Museum, book into comfortable Waterloo hotel for 3 nights.

Day 2 – Ligny & Quatre Bras - Walking tours of battlefields of Ligny (Napoleon vs. Blucher); and Quatre Bras (Ney vs Wellington); and coach tour of Wellington’s withdrawal to the Waterloo ridge.

Day 3 – Waterloo – Survey Napoleon’s and Wellington’s positions; visit Hougomont visitor centre and La Haye Sainte; discuss French Artillery bombardment, Infantry and Cavalry attacks.

Day 4 – Waterloo – Finale - Walk the route of the Imperial Garde’s final attack; visit the Waterloo Visitor Centre; free time in Waterloo village; Eurostar back to London.

The Essentials: The tour will be hosted by SAHR Chairman Ashley Truluck who lived near the battlefield of Waterloo and has made a particular study of it. Based on a minimum of 10 paying participants the **price** would be £995 per person (single occupancy supplement of £165) – with a **discount** of 20 Euros pp if final bookings exceed 15, and 40 Euros pp if bookings exceed 20 – distributed as cash on day 1 of the tour. Included in this price is: return standard class Eurostar between London St Pancras & Brussels; 3 x nights 4* hotel accommodation with breakfast and welcome drinks party; discounted guide costs; coach transportation; and all entry fees.

Participants
in the 2019
SAHR Malta
tour



Fortress Malta: 9-16 October 2024

This 8-day tour looks at the broad sweep of military history and culture in Malta from the time of the Great Siege of 1565, through the rule of the Knights of St John, occupation by Napoleon and subsequent British colonial period - to then concentrate on the epic Second World War Siege. Based in Valetta, this is a tour for military enthusiasts as well as culture vultures– and for that reason is equally popular with individuals and couples.

[Outline Itinerary](#) (for full details see SAHR website):



Day 1 - Introduction – Fly to Valetta, walk overlooking Grand Harbour; book into Valetta hotel for 7 nights.

Day 2 - The Great Siege 1565 - Visit ‘The Malta Experience’; Fort St Elmo; National War Museum; & the original Hospital of the Knights of St John.

Day 3 - The Rule of the Knights 1565-1800 – Walking tour of Valetta’s historic and cultural sites; visits to Grand Master’s Palace, Armoury, and Cathedral; and Casa Rocca Piccola, a present-day Knight’s historic town house.

Day 4 - The Victorian Period 1800-1940 – East Coast coach tour taking in Pembroke Garrison; beautiful St Paul’s Bay; the impressive Victoria Lines; coastal defences; and Fort Rinella, home to Europe’s largest gun, with demonstrations by re-enactors.

Day 5 - Rest Day – A relaxing day on the unspoiled historic island of Gozo.

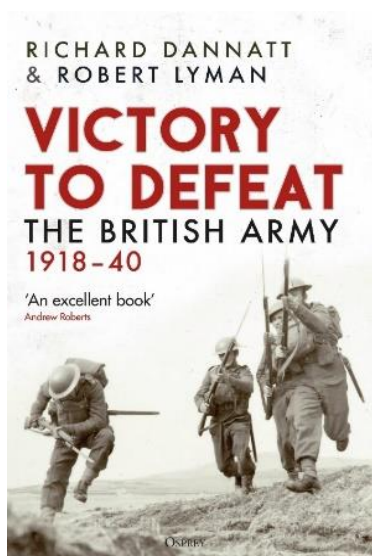
Day 6 - WW2: Maritime & Home Front – Spectacular cruise of Grand Harbour; walk around historic Birgu; visit Fort St Angelo (the Knight’s first and Royal Navy’s last HQ in Malta), the Second World War Museum; and the famous underground shelters.

Day 7 - WW2: Land & Air Fronts – West Coast coach tour taking in evocative evidence of WW2 defences, barracks and hospitals. Tour of perfectly preserved Mdina walled city, ancient capital of Malta; visit Malta Aviation Museum; and a drive back along the impressive Dinghli cliffs to discuss their contribution.

Day 8 - WW2: Command & Control – Lascaris secret war rooms – where the battle for Malta was commanded from, and where the Invasion of Sicily was planned. Attend the traditional firing of the noon-day gun over Grand Harbour; return to London Heathrow.

***The Essentials:** The tour will be hosted by SAHR Chairman Ashley Truluck assisted by a local cultural tour guide. Based on a minimum of 10 participants, the discounted **price** would be £1895 pp (+ single room occupancy £395) – with a **discount** of 50 Euros pp if final bookings exceed 15, and 100 Euros pp if bookings exceed 20 – distributed on Day 1 of the tour. Included in this price is: return economy flights from London (incl 23 kgs luggage); 7 x nights 4* hotel accommodation with breakfast and welcome drinks party; guide costs; coach transportation, ferries and harbour cruise; all entry fees; and Prosecco reception at Casa Rocca Piccola.*

MEMBERS' BOOK OFFER



We are pleased to pass on this SAHR members-only opportunity to purchase a copy of *Victory to Defeat: The British Army 1918–40* – a compelling history of the decline of the British Army from the triumph of victory in 1918 to defeat in 1940, and why this happened – a cautionary tale for modern Britain.

Britain entered the Second World War having lost all the hard-won knowledge, experience and strategic vision that had delivered victory after victory in the closing stages of the First World War. In the inter-war years there had been little focus on who Britain might fight and how – a failure of the army leadership which led directly to its abysmal performance in Norway and France in 1940.

Victory to Defeat is a captivating history of the mismanagement of a war-winning army.

General The Lord Dannatt, former chief of the General staff, is now one of UK's most respected military commentators.

Robert Lyman, former infantry commander and now one of Britain's most talented military historians, with over 20 best-selling works published, and numerous television appearances.

"Their analysis is succinct, scholarly, convincing, and, with the largest war since 1945 raging in Europe today, timely. It will be the standard work on the subject for many years to come."

(Andrew Roberts)

To claim your offer:

Visit www.ospreypublishing.com/uk/victory-to-defeat-9781472860866/ to pre-order your copy today and get **20% off** by entering the code **Victory20** at checkout - Valid from 21st August to 15th October 2023.