



The Society for Army Historical Research

Registered Charity No. 247844

www.sahr.org.uk

NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2025

Newsletter Editor: Ashley Truluck chair@sahr.org.uk

RECENT EVENTS

SAHR RESEARCH CONFERENCE – LEEDS 22/23 Feb 2025

Rory Butcher, Research & Student Member



SAHR's recent highly successful 'Land Forces of the Crown' Research Conference in Leeds was organised by a team consisting of: [L to R opposite].

Matthew Hough

(a 2nd yr PhD candidate at Leeds);

Rory Butcher,

SAHR's Student Rep who also undertook much of the planning, hosting and social duties; and

Dr Andrew Bamford (SAHR).

Attendees were treated to presentations on a wide array of topics, periods, and themes.

Day One.

- The first three parallel panels featured everything from disciplinary issues in the **West India Regiments** in the Napoleonic period; **epidemics and disease** in the late-eighteenth century; and **officer training in N. Africa** 1941-45.
- The next two parallel panels considered the **commemoration of British soldiers** (with some art history included along the way); and the questions of **medical care, injury, and maternity** in the last century and present day.
- The keynote was delivered by **Dr Zack White**, founding Chair of the **Napoleonic and Revolutionary War Graves** Charity – on the importance of respecting war dead from the period 1775-1815 (i.e. not covered by CWGC).
- **The evening's festivities** began with a well-attended reception at the conference venue, and continued well into the evening for many!

Day Two



Photos by
Emma
Norfolk

- The second day panels opened with one on **service experiences abroad** and within coalition contexts - everything from eighteenth-century Irish Catholic recruitment through to the failed military mission to Poland in 1939.
- A conference highlights was **Mick McTiernan** (recent recipient of an **SAHR Research Grant**) and his work into **British soldiers deployed to Crete** as part of a joint allied peacekeeping force in the 1890s.
- One of the fourth panels examined how the British Army has undergone development, examining **military technology in the nineteenth century** and the First World War, before heading onto the army of 2025 and its current application of research.
- Another panel was brought to us by a group from the University of Oxford, considering the material costs of the **British Civil Wars**, and the new approaches they have employed to examine the period.
- Lunch was swiftly followed by the last panels, which featured papers on: **Edwardian officer selection**; the **role of infantry NCOs in the Great War**; and the motivations of the men who enlisted in the British expedition to the **Russian Civil War**; the reality of the life in the **British Army in the 1790s**; and how two brothers fighting in the **Peninsular War** influenced their poet sister, Felicia Hemans, as she read their letters at home.
- **The final keynote** was delivered by Professor **Jessica Meyer**, of the University of Leeds, on **how civilian identity was essential to personnel serving during and after World War I** - a topic which forms part of her latest book project.

***Editor's Note:** Rory Butcher's characteristic modesty belies the sheer amount of work and enthusiasm he and his SAHR colleague **Andrew Bamford**, put into this outstandingly successful conference, which reflected such credit on the Society. It showcased some of the best work on Military History currently being conducted across UK – often by young people and including SAHR research projects. The Society owes both Rory and Andrew a great debt of gratitude for volunteering to organise this event in their own time, and carrying it off so smoothly & effectively. (AT, Chairman)*

FUTURE EVENTS

ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING – Wed 30 Apr – **DON'T MISS!**

Freddie Hyde, Events Member



As announced in our last Newsletter, this year's Annual Members' Meeting (incorporating the short formal AGM) will be held at Armoury House <https://hac.org.uk> in the City of London - the magnificent Georgian home of the venerable **Honourable Artillery Company (HAC)**, the oldest regiment in the British Army.

The address is Armoury House, City Rd, London EC1Y 2BQ – which is a short walk from Old Street and Moorgate tube stations.

Dress code for the HAC is suit, or jacket & tie, or female equivalent.

The programme for the evening is as follows:

3.45 pm onwards - Registration: Check-in any time up to 5pm at the registration desk in Armoury House.

As it is a military establishment, please bring photographic ID.

4pm: Museum Tour – Armoury House: The evening will begin with a optional one-hour guided tour of Armoury House and the Company Museum. Members will hear about the history of the Company and its service abroad. The Museum includes the Company's historic collection of uniforms, weapons, silverware and other artefacts. Places on the tour are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Please see below for information on how to book your free tickets.

The tour will begin promptly at 4pm and members are asked to assemble on the white steps outside Armoury House at 3:50pm.

5pm: AGM - Ante Room: please check-in at registration desk beforehand.
See Notice on this formal part of the proceedings on page 5.

6pm: Lecture - Ante Room: The social programme for the evening will begin with our Guest Lecturer [Fiona Macklin](#), who will address members on Operation Haggard, a little-known 1944 SAS operation:

In August 1944, men from B Squadron 1st SAS parachuted into occupied France and set up a base camp deep in the forest. From there they harassed the enemy by destroying bridges, blowing up railway lines and conducting ambushes etc. They stayed at the same camp for one month without being discovered, with the loss of only one man.

Fiona Macklin is a military historian and museum director whose father served in the Indian Army. He was present at the Fall of Singapore and later survived the Burma Railway, which first sparked her interest in military history. Fiona studied Museum Studies in Brisbane, Australia and worked for many years at the Queensland Art Gallery and on major international touring exhibitions. She worked for the Imperial War Museums in London as the Manager of the Cabinet War Rooms, overseeing the expansion to the Cabinet War Rooms and the Churchill Museum. She later acted as a Deputy Director at the Natural History Museum and as a curator for sound and film archives. Her research interests include the Nazi occupation of Norway, and she has also published work on the wartime RAF.



7pm: Prizegiving: After a short comfort break, we will assemble in the Queen's Room where our President, Sir Edward Smyth-Osbourne (left) will present annual awards for essay writers; scrolls for this year's new **SAHR Fellowships**; and announce the results of the this year's **Templer Medal** and **Chapple Prize** competitions, with prizes awarded for the best book and best first author on the history of the British Army.

8pm: Reception: The evening will conclude with the ever-popular informal and friendly Finger Buffet & Wine Reception in the impressive Queen's Room (right).



9.30pm: Coaches – in good time for members to catch transport home.

Registration – important

*The Annual Members' Meeting (& AGM) is the highlight of the Society's professional & social year. Despite the important agenda and impressive venue, it is always an informal, friendly occasion, much enjoyed by members. The event is funded mainly by sponsorship – so **entrance is FREE for SAHR members plus one guest each.***

*As a result, the event is very popular and as space is finite, we must ask members intending to attend, to **register in advance, on a first come first served basis.***

If you wish to attend the tour and/or AGM and evening social events, please register by visiting Ticket Tailor at the following link:

<https://buytickets.at/societyforarmyhistoricalresearch/1594698>

If you have any trouble, don't hesitate to contact me (Freddie) at events@sahr.org.uk

**** Book your place at this popular event by Wed 16 April to avoid disappointment ****

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Presided by Lt Gen Sir Smyth-Osbourne KCVO CBE, President

The Society for Army Historical Research

Registered Charity No. 247844

In accordance with the SAHR Constitution, Notice was given in the Society's Winter Newsletter published on 12 December 2024, that the 97th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Wednesday 30 April 2025 at 5.00 pm at the Honourable Artillery Company, Armoury House, City Road, London. EC1Y 2BQ.

All paid-up members of the Society are invited to attend and are eligible to vote.

The Agenda will include:

- Trustees' Report & Accounts for 1 January to 31 December 2024
- Chairman & Honorary Officers' reports on the Activities of the Society
- Request for an increase in some subscription rates (details on website)
- Report on the 2024 Templar Medal and Chapple Prize
- Election/re-election of Council Members (nominations by 19 Mar 25)
- Election of new Chair (on 5-year rotation)
- Any Other Business (to be notified in advance to the Hon. Secretary secretary@sahr.org.uk no later than 19 March 2025.)
- The date of the subsequent (98th) Annual General Meeting to be in April 2026 on a date and at a venue to be selected by the Society's Council.

AGM Papers

The full set of AGM papers will be posted on the SAHR website www.sahr.org.uk for viewing by members at least 14 days before the meeting – to include:

- Minutes of the 2024 AGM.
- The full Agenda for the 2025 AGM*
- Annual Report & Accounts*
- Note on Membership Subscriptions*
- List of candidates for election
- List of this year's Fellowship candidates



** Copies of this information will also be available at the meeting.*

Peter Swabey, Honorary Secretary

Society Ties

Members attending the AGM will be able to purchase SAHR ties. Please pre-order these in advance by emailing events@sahr.org.uk with the exact details of their order.

Ties are available in three different colours.

Payment for ties (£18.00) by bank transfer to:

The Society for Army Historical Research

Acc. No. 01241710 Sort Code 60-15-04

IBAN GB74NWBK60150401241710 BIC NWBKGB2L

NatWest Bank, New Milton Branch, 59 Station Road, New Milton, Hants, BH25 6JA.

Please give your name as a reference.

Alternatively, pay by cash on the evening.

Orders for ties and badges must be placed by midnight on **Wednesday 16 April**.



COUNCIL NOTICES

TEMPLER MEDAL COMPETITION

Templer Book Competition

Judging is in progress, and winners will be announced at the meeting on 30 April. The shortlist is as follows (all are eligible for the Templer Medal for best book with those marked with an asterisk eligible for the Chapple Prize for best first author):

***Ian Atherton, Britons and their Battlefields:**

War, Memory and Commemoration since the Fourteenth Century (OUP).

Lavinia Greacen, Military Maverick:

Selected Letters and War Diary of 'Chink' Dorman-Smith (Pen & Sword).

John Kiszely, General Hastings 'Pug' Ismay:

Soldier, Statesman, Diplomat - A New Biography (Hurst).

David Lambert, Soldiers of Uncertain Rank:

The West India Regiments in British Imperial Culture (CUP).

Frank Ledwidge, Helen Parr & Aaron Edwards (eds), Ground Truth:

The Moral Component in Contemporary British Warfare (Bloomsbury).

Kevin Linch, The British Army, 1783-1815 (Pen & Sword).

Sergio Miller, Pride and Fall:

The British Army in Afghanistan, 2001-2014 (Bloomsbury).

Diarmuid Murtagh & Harman Murtagh, The Irish Jacobite Army, 1689-91:

Anatomy of the Force (Four Courts).

***Stephen Quick, The Dhofar War:**

British Covert Campaigning in Arabia, 1965-1975 (University of Exeter Press).

***Dennis Vincent, The Forgotten General: Sir Alan Cunningham (Amberley).**

***Roger Wood, The Best of Appointments?**

The Evolution of Infantry Brigade Command on the Western Front, 1915-18 (Helion).

ONLINE TALKS 2025

Andrew Bamford & Dudley Giles

The programme for these popular talks for the first half of 2025 is as follows:

18 March, Ashley Truluck (Chair SAHR):

The Peninsular War Action at Barba del Puerco, March 1810

The coming of age of the rifle and modern infantry.



2 April, John Laband:

'The appointment of a senior officer is not intended as a censure on yourself.'

The politics of command and their effect on Lord Chelmsford's conduct of the Zulu campaign in 1879.

May, Date TBC, Josh Provan:

Assistance not to be Despised:

Native American allies & the Defence of West Florida, 1779-1781.

June, Date TBC, Andrew Young:

Amphibious Operations in the Seven Years War

RESEARCH GRANTS

Dr Nicola Martin, Grants Officer



Research Grants – Deadline Approaching

All applications for the University and Independent Research Grant schemes should be submitted by 1 May 2025. Full eligibility criteria for both schemes and details of the application process can be found on the [website](#). We have money available for worthy proposals – applications warmly welcomed from all. Please address all applications or queries to Nicola at grants@sahr.org.uk.

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

Glyn Pryor, NAM Liaison Member

Soldier Magazine has been the official magazine of the British Army for 80 years. To mark this milestone, the NAM is hosting a new short film charting the story of this unique publication. Running until July 2025, it will be available to watch in a dedicated gallery space, along with a selection of covers from across the magazine's history and some of the earliest copies produced.

Many Society members will be aware that the Museum has a wonderful collection of fine art, with a particular strength in works from the nineteenth century. Many of these paintings, prints and sketchbooks will be showcased in a new exhibition opening in July 2025

– ***Myth and Reality: Military Art in the Age of Queen Victoria.***



Over 140 artworks will be on display, including several major loans from the Royal Collection, such as **Lady Butler's 'The Roll Call'** (above). Sketches and paintings by soldiers form an important strand, including George Cadogan's images of the Crimean War. Featuring many paintings not seen in public for a generation, this major exhibition will bring a fresh perspective to a vital period of art history.

Throughout the spring, a season of talks and tours will explore the **American Revolutionary War** and its impact, as well as showcasing the Museum's related collection of objects and archives. April sees the launch of a new walking tour, **'Americans in Chelsea'**, starting with some key objects before heading out into the local area to explore sites significant to the American Revolution.

The Museum has made several important **recent acquisitions**, including the Cumberland Society Gold Medal awarded to Field Marshal Sir G. Howard, 3rd Regiment of Foot (The Buffs), who commanded the unit at the Battles of Fontenoy, Culloden, Lauffield and Warburg. He went on to serve as Governor of Minorca and Jersey and became Governor of the Royal Hospital Chelsea. It is believed to be the only attributed example and the only surviving one on its original riband.

Details of all upcoming talks and events are available on the Museum's website:

www.nam.ac.uk