



## **The Queen's Royal Lancers & Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Museum Report for AGM period April 2011 to July 2012**

Capt JM Holtby AMA

Curator

The Queen's Royal Lancers & Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Museum

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE PERIOD OF THE REVIEW

1. Although this report is written for the AGM, as it is the first year the Report covers the period from the 1st April 2011 to 1st July 2012, some sixteen months.
2. The main focus for the first part of this period was to complete the important task of the fitting out of the new Museum Gallery at Thoresby Courtyard in time for the official opening on 27th July 2011. This huge task involved a great deal of hard work and covered all aspects of the exhibition from the design, the installation of cases, transportation of artefacts, creation of displays, graphics, lighting, internal case text to the final fit out of the gallery. This work, was in the main carried out by two members of staff and a small group of volunteers from the partner Regiments.
3. The official opening by HRH Princess Alexandra on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2011 was a very special day with some 450 guests including VIPs, Old Comrades as well as members of the public.



4. Since opening the Museum has had in excess of 24,000 visitors including visits from the serving Regiments, Old Comrades, The Royal British Legion as well as visitors from overseas. Many favourable comments have been received and the Visitors Book is well worth a read.
5. In December 2011 the Museum won a ‘Chad Business Award’ for the Most Innovative Property Development. We have also been nominated for in two categories of the Nottinghamshire Heritage Awards, winners will be announced in mid-July.
6. The Museum has conducted a series of guided tours and themed talks as well as providing historical information to our visitors.
7. The new Museum website can be found at [www.qrlnymuseum.co.uk](http://www.qrlnymuseum.co.uk).

## EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

8. Education is an important aspect of a modern museum. During the planning of the Museum this aspect was taken into account and certain key areas covering the National Curriculum were enhanced. A plan has been written professionally by Deb Martin.
9. The Museum has developed a "joint educational offer" in partnership with the Perlethorpe Environmental Education Centre (situated on the Thoresby Estate). The centre already offer's WWII based activities. The Museum has agreed to act as an additional resource for school groups attending the Centre. Our first joint event was a local school's project based on 'Warhorse'; this saw some 240 children from 35 primary schools using the museum for a Drama based activity, which was very successful. We have agreed to assist the Centre with any future projects.



10. We have also had a number of visits from a local Special needs school which may be developed further.
11. A list of the Schools' Visits is at Annex A.

## EVENTS

12. Along with the Official opening there has been a number of events, these have included: 'An evening with Bill Harriman', a Militaria expert and former South Notts Hussar from the 'Antiques Roadshow' who gave a most interesting talk on Arms & Uniform. This was followed by our first Friends event in May 'An evening with Ray Ellis', Ray gave a moving personal account of the Battle of Knightsbridge of which he was one of the few to survive.



13. In June we were invited to Newstead Abbey where the Antiques Roadshow was being filmed. The aim was to publicise the Museum. We took along the Terence Cuneo painting of the Battle of Knightsbridge and the Balaklava Bugle. Both artefacts were filmed, with our old friend Bill Harriman, the programmes are expected to be shown on BBC later in the year.

#### ADDITIONS TO THE MUSEUM

14. There has been one exciting addition to the Museum, which is the loan of a Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM). This was the only DCM won at Knightsbridge and was awarded to Sgt GF Taylor, South Notts Hussars. It proudly sits in the Knightsbridge case.
15. We have offers of two other exciting artefacts:
  - a. A painting of General John Burgoyne, who formed the 16th Lancers.
  - b. The possible loan of the medals of Captain The Rt Hon Raymond H.L.J. De Montmorency VC. He won his VC at the Battle of Omdurman and was rescued by Captain Kenna VC at the same battle. It will be most fitting to be able to display them side by side.

## MUSEUM ACCREDITATION

16. Accreditation is the UK standard for museums and galleries. It defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, encouraging development. It is a baseline quality standard that helps guide museum to be the best they can be, for current and future users. The Accreditation Standard was reviewed between 2009 and 2011. This involved multiple focus groups and rounds of consultation with over 2000 museum practitioners. The Standard and detailed guidance is published on Arts Council's website.
17. The Museum achieved Provisional Accreditation in December 2009, but could not progress to Full Accreditation due to there being no physical Museum. In May 2012 the Museum went through the very lengthy process of applying for Full Accreditation and we await the decision of the Arts Council's Panel due at the end of July 2012.

## ORGANISATION

18. The running of the Museum is a complex process, especially as the majority involved do so in their free time. A series of committees have been set up in order to support the Board and run the Museum in a tight business way. The interaction between the Board and the committees is shown at Annex C. All the committees have Terms of Reference agreed by the Board. The various committees are:
  - a. The Board. This is the overarching organisation, which is responsible for the Museum. It is set up under a Joint Venture Agreement, a legal document, signed by all three partner Regiments on 21st September 2010. The current Directors are at Annex D.
  - b. Executive Committee. This committee's main task is to oversee the running of the Museum and make decisions on an as required basis on behalf of the Directors' Board. It has specific responsibilities for finance.
  - c. Management Committee. The main task of this committee is to produce the Annual Business Plan in conjunction with the Executive Committee and to manage the Museum within that plan. It has specific responsibilities for the fabric of the Museum and the displays.
  - d. Friends Committee. The Museum has formed a group of Friends of the Museum, who will provide a long lasting support for the Museum and go some way to ensuring its long term future. Each Friend has pledged a sum of money on a lifelong covenant and thus requires to be looked after and made to feel wanted.

## FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM

19. The Museum Friends Scheme was launched in August 2010; to date we have 48 Life Members over 240 other Friends. A Friends Committee under the chairmanship of Brig ME Brown CBE TD DL has been established with responsibility of organising two Friends events per year, production of a bi-annual newsletter and the recruitment of more Friends. The income, which the Friends produce, is key to the annual running costs.

## STAFFING

20. There have been no significant changes to the Museum Staff during this reporting period. There are but two, Capt JM Holtby AMA Curator and Assistant Curator Mr Robert Osborn. Congratulations to Mr Osborn, who in June 2012 achieved NVQ level 4 in Care and Cultural Heritage.

## VOLUNTEERS

21. The Museum has been successful in recruiting some 24 active volunteers during this reporting period. Our grateful thanks go to all who have assisted throughout the project and subsequent events. Special thanks should go to the following for their contribution during this reporting period: Chris Woodward, Steve & Rita Cox, Gil Aldridge, Graham White and Barry Stone. Shiela Osborn for her help in the shop, also to Anne and Ben Barrow for their assistance with local school groups visiting the Museum.

## RECENT WORK

22. The setting up of the Museum was a complex process and was set against some testing timelines. Inevitably we did not get everything exactly right first time. The work which the two main committees have been centred on during the last few months have been as follows:
  - a. Management Committee. Following a request for comments and ideas for improvements from all involved a list was drawn up, divided into priorities and due to the finances only Priority one looked at. Besides this a huge amount of other minor, but important detail has been worked through. Without the work done by this committee the Museum would not be so "polished" as it currently is.

- b. Executive Committee. Besides looking at the finances, the committee has gone back over all the agreements to ensure that we are meeting our side of the bargain.
- c. Marketing/Publicity. We have to actively promote the Museum to ensure that it is known about and that visitors do come. We have made progress in three areas:
  - i. The Hotel. In conjunction with the Management of the Courtyard, there is now a joint "pop up" by the reception desk in the hotel advertising the Courtyard and the Museum. In addition a "DL Flyer" has been placed in each hotel room visitor's pack.
  - ii. The Courtyard. The Courtyard has their own marketing material based on a "What's On" publication, which they send out to a large distribution. This is re-distributed every six months and we take a page in it.
  - iii. Own Flyer. We are producing our own flyer, which we will be distributing. We have taken time to get this right and it is now in production.

#### MUSEUM ACCOUNTS

- 23. The Annual accounts for the FY 2011/12 are at Annex D. This is a separate Agenda Item. A verbal "in year" update will be given at the Meeting.

#### ANNEXES

Annexes A, B, C and D have been omitted from this public PDF document.