

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT  
MUSEUM TRUST COMMITTEE**

**REPORT OF THE MUSEUMS & HERITAGE MANAGER**

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**Date Issued: 17 June 2009**

**Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust**

**Annual Report 2008/09**

1. During the year 28 individual donors donated over 300 separate items to the regimental collection. Highlights include:
  - A collection of medals (including the Military Cross), documents, photographs and personal memorabilia belong to Captain Phillip Scott-Martin who was a PoW in Germany from 1940-45.
  - MBE medal set of Major A Watts and a medal set of his son, Private AF Watts (killed at Monte Cassino). Also, a booklet produced in Oflag VII where Major Watts was a PoW.
  - 3 silver cups won by Regimental Sergeant Major G. White 1931/32.
  - A letter sent by the mother of Sergeant T Harris VC to his commanding officer.
  - Burma Star Association Regalia.
  - Military Cross awarded to Lieutenant AW Catt.
  - Miniature portrait and medals in a leather case of Captain D Skinner.
  - First World War bronze memorial plaques and other personal memorabilia commemorating the lives of Maurice and Allan Crawley, brothers killed together in Palestine in 1918.
  - Personal memorabilia, documents and medals (including the Military Medal) relating to the service of Private J Wallen.
  - Large marble tablet incorporating a First World War bronze memorial plaque commemorating the life of Private George Vousden, killed in Mesopotamia in 1918.
  - Personal memorabilia, documents and medals (including the Distinguished Conduct Medal) relating to the service of George Gordon.

- Distinguished Service Order medal set of Colonel Frazer, Commending Officer of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion RWK.
  - A charter given in 2008 to the Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association by the Mayor of Maidstone and a framed stained glass panel also given to the Association in 2008 by the Mayor of Ypres.
  - A book "The British Expedition to the Crimea", by WH Russell, 1858. The personal annotated copy owned by Major CH Lumley VC.
  - Diary of Private J Farley, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion RWK, detailing the evacuation from Dunkirk in 1940.
2. The second of the Sikh cannons captured during the Sutlej campaign (1845-46), has been loaned for five years to Firepower (formerly the Royal Artillery Museum) at Woolwich. It was formerly in storage at the Territorial Army barracks in Canterbury.
  3. Media interest in the Regimental Museum remains high. It regularly appears in the local newspapers and stories featuring items donated to the Museum have appeared on the local TV news networks three times in 2008/09.
  4. In March 2008 the Council received a grant of £1,500 from the Kent & Medway Museums Development Service towards the production of an interactive AV display in the Regimental Museum. Eight Kohima veterans have been interviewed and their edited interviews will be available in the Museum's Battle of Kohima display later in 2009.
  5. An allocation of £7,000 from the 2008/09 Service Investment budget has allowed new graphic panels to be produced which will enormously improve the interpretation of the Regimental Museum's exhibits. New mannequins have also been purchased allowing the uniforms to be properly and safely displayed. A programme of major improvements will be carried out, including the installation of the graphic panels in 2009/10.
  6. In June 2010 we will commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the Regimental Museum at Maidstone Museum with a series of activities, improvements to the galleries and events. The Regimental Association will play a leading role in organizing the commemorations which, it is hoped, will attract a great deal of public attention.