



The **BULLETIN**

Newsletter of British Model Soldier Society **Extra**

No. 3

2013

A fond and final farewell

See story on pages 4 & 5



Venue for National meetings - important message

As indicated in *Bulletin 2/2013*, we are obliged, due to rising costs, to seek an alternative to Napier Hall for the monthly National meetings. The Pimlico Room at St Saviour's (above), St George's Square, Lupus Street, London SW1V 3QW will be the venue for the 20th September meeting **on a trial basis**, while the Auction, on 18th October, remains at Napier Hall for reasons of space. At the time of writing, we expect that the November and December meetings will be at St Saviour's but this, of course, hinges on reactions to the new accommodation in September. If in doubt, members are advised to check the BMSS website after 20th September (National meetings section).

Dorset doings

Ian Groves, the Society's Area Rep for Dorset, has recently moved. For those members living in the area or those visiting and wishing to contact Ian, his new address is **21 Abbotsbury Road, Broadstone, Poole, Dorset BH18 9DA** and his telephone number is **01202 699504**.

Ship shape and Bristol fashion

This certainly proved to be the case when Bob Orr and the members of the Bristol Branch put up their stand at this year's Annual Show in April and were awarded the Ledger Trophy for the best club display! Bob can be seen receiving the Trophy from Debra Dance, the President's wife, in our photo below.

Bristol has a very good website that's well worth exploring. It's at <http://www.bmssbristol.org.uk/>, but Bob reports that, unfortunately, due to falling membership, the Branch's monthly meetings have been suspended for the foreseeable future. Some do still meet with *The S W Figure Modellers*, along with the remnants of *The Basement* members who live in the area. Otherwise, members meet up at the shows they attend. However, *Bugle Call 2013* will certainly be going ahead at The Pavilion, North Parade Road, Bath BA2 4EU on Sunday 24th November 2013!



The October Auction

Hon. Auctioneer John Ruddle reports that all the lots for the above auction, numbering about 200, have been submitted, including a considerable number of hollow-cast **Britains**. The complete list is now available to anyone sending a stamped self-addressed envelope (plus one first-class stamp to cover photo-copying) to: **John Ruddle, 22 Priory Gardens, Hampton, Middlesex TW12 2PZ**. The auction will be held at Napier Hall, Hide Place, Vincent Square, London SW1 from 5.30 to 8.30 pm on Friday 18th October and you are reminded that only members holding current membership cards will be able to participate in the auction.

John also divulged that, having won the Editor's Prize for 2012 (a book voucher) for his series on the history of the National Collection, he has used it to obtain a fascinating book, "*The Fishing Fleet: Husband-Hunting in the Raj*" by Anne de Courcy.

George Musgrave

The latest edition of *Plastic Warrior* reports that George Musgrave died in November 2012, age 97. George was a talented sculptor and artist, known to members for his work with **Herald** and **Crescent**. The *Gemodels* publication produced by *Plastic Warrior* includes an interview with George about his life in model soldiers (for information on that contact pw.editor@ntlworld.com).

Stephen Dance

Missing digit!

In the most recent *Bulletin*, (*Bulletin No. 2/2013*), on the inside front cover, the names and telephone numbers of the two new joint National Collection Curators are given. Unfortunately, the Editor managed to miss out one digit of Robin Marlin's number which should be: **01234 391119**. Robin has also suggested that we include his email address in the info we provide. This is: **rob911mu@aol.com** and, together with the *correct* phone number, will

be included in future issues of *The Bulletin*. As the Editor's Basic Training Instructor, the late great Cpl Bob Recton of *The Buffs*, was given to say: "*Get your finger out, Regan!*".

John Tunstill

We were pleased to welcome a surprise visitor to the June Napier Hall meeting in the person of a tanned and well looking John Tunstill. John will be known to many of our readers for his **Soldiers Soldiers** range, the magazine *Miniature Warfare* and the shop he ran near to the Imperial War Museum. John now lives in Italy but he maintains an interest in model soldiers, as evidenced by his website "*John Tunstill's World of Model Soldiers*" <http://www.soldierssoldiers.com/>

Can you help?

The Society was recently contacted by a fellow modeller, seeking our help. Paul Bennett is involved in a community project in his village in the West Country that will be commemorating the start of the Great War next year. Paul has undertaken the construction of three 1/32nd scale dioramas that will depict recruitment, participation and remembrance of that conflict. His intention is to make considerable use of converted **Airfix Multipose** figures but, unfortunately, after re-issuing their **Multipose** range a little while ago, **Airfix** have, evidently, discontinued these kits once again, leaving Paul with quite a problem. So, he is appealing to any members who might have any spare boxes of the following:

British and/or German World War II Infantry; British 8th Army; Africa Corps. He could also use the arms, legs and heads of the **US Infantry** but not the Japanese. Paul is happy to pay for any kits and also cover postage, so if you have any of the above kits that you no longer need, he would be delighted to hear from you, either by telephone on 07507126557 or email at pbinshiphay@hotmail.co.uk

IMSS Show, Dublin, May 2013

Story and pictures by Paul Newman



The Galloglass re-enactor

Julie and I have been going to the IMSS show for many years, first as visitors and modellers and then as traders with **Name It!** and representing the BMSS, as well as entering the competitions.

The show is a two-day event, held each year in Dublin, either in the castle or, as per this year, in Collins Barracks. It was held over the weekend of the 25th to 26th May, a month after our own show in London. The Irish really do provide good hosts; Julie and I being picked up at the airport and taken to the hall by one of the IMSS members.

Collins Barracks is just that, a large square of two storey buildings with a parade ground in the middle, which was used to house the British military before Irish independence. The show was held in one of the buildings off of the yard, which was once used for horse dressage. The barracks also holds the National Military Museum, and one of the bonuses of the weekend was being able to look around the museum, which shows how the Irish have served not just in Ireland but in units that have seen service throughout the world.

Entries in the competitions are put onto the tables on Saturday morning, judging taking place in the afternoon



A general view of the Show



Geoff Illsley's "Montgomery"

(and into the evening if needed) and, then, the presentation of awards on Sunday afternoon. The classes of the competitions include all types of models - not just figures, but tanks, vehicles, planes, boats, fantasy and non-fantasy.

The competition is of the Gold, Silver, Bronze type, with prizes being "Open" (more than one of each award being eligible as per the BMSS). An interesting point was that the aircraft class had so many entries that the organisers decided to issue just a single medal for the "best" that a competitor entered, with the full list being read out.

The standard of the models entered is high, with several worth 'Gold' at any of the major competitions (*Best of Show* was John Schley's boxed diorama of Napoleon in his carriage, which won 'Gold' at Euro and at the BMSS Annual Show, too), but also of the normal club standard which means that everyone who enters stands a chance.

There are re-enactors at the show as well, bringing the public through the doors. Of particular note was the medieval re-enactor dressed up as a "Kern", a lower ranking "Galloglass" (described by the re-enactor as the Irish equivalent of the German

Landsknechts and just as blood-thirsty!) – lots of ideas there for future models!

The event, like many shows, was part sponsored, and part funded by traders and part by 'door' and raffle.

The number of prizes for the raffle allowed the IMSS to really go to town on the raffle tickets. Julie and Sandra (John Schley's wife) were the main raffle ticket sellers. There was a queue of customers for them when they saw the amount of prizes on the Sunday afternoon!

As well as local traders, a few ventured from the UK (Sphere and Hawk Miniatures; Friendship Models had booked, but were unable to attend on the day) and modellers from the UK included BMSS member Geoffrey Illsley, who did particularly well in the competitions.

I came away with my best ever "Away" results, with two 'Golds', a 'Silver', a 'Bronze' and a 'Commended'. (I entered the models again the following week at the "Open de Bretagne" competitions in Nantes and came nowhere.....)

As you can see from the pictures accompanying this piece, there was plenty to see and interest the modeller for the whole weekend. Looking forward to next year!



Military Police of the Irish Defence Force 1939-1945

Collecting Model Soldiers - where did it all really begin?

By Chris Bartlett

In about 1958, a friend from school in Rhodesia invited me back to his house for a visit. I was introduced to his father who, it turns out, was the curator of the museum in Salisbury, the then capital of Rhodesia.

It was evident that my friend's father was a very clever and proficient modeller, for there was a long railway layout, that was, in the main, all scratch-built (to a very high standard). Also, in the main living room, was a series of cabinets, about 6 inches high and 6 inches deep, running along the walls with hundreds of flat figures from all the armies involved at the Battle of Waterloo, I was mesmerised. The gentleman's name was Mr Reece (I did not know his Christian name) and he showed me how he made/converted figures and my abiding memory was of him showing me how he made a model of Napoleon Bonaparte, using a *W. Britains* walking nurse and a toothpaste tube (in those days they were made of lead).

Such skill

I was, naturally, astounded by his skills and patience. I hasten to add that, up to and around that time, I had been brought up on *Airfix* and *Frog* plastic kits plus a myriad of toy soldiers and *Dinky Toys*. Also, my father and I built layouts for *Marklin* trains. The one "constant" with all this was my desire to care for my toys, along with creating things, not destroying anything. But I digress!

On another visit to Mr Reece (who, I



These French and German World War I demi-ronde figures are by Gebruder Schnieder

believe, was a member of the BMSS in the 1940s and 1950s), I was shown how he cast up figures using a mould that produced *demi-ronde* figures.

I lost touch with my friend and his father (more on that later) and life progressed. I finished school, went to college, did my National Service in the Rhodesian Artillery, started my career in cinemas, married.

In the 1970s, I discovered *Military Modelling* magazine – WOW! What an eye opener! I was given a book by Henry Harris - "*How to go collecting model soldiers*". My interest had been aroused, but how to get these figures? The best I could get were the plastic figures produced by *Airfix* which I cut my teeth on, so to speak. But I didn't like the idea of plastic figures, but drooled over adverts in *Mil Mod* from *Lasset, Rose, Greenwood and Ball* etc., etc. The price to try and import the figures was horrendous.

It wasn't until 1974, in Johannesburg, when I found a shop selling *Rose* and *Imrie Risley* that I could finally start collecting/modelling/painting figures.

It grew like Topsy

In the 1970s, in Africa, there were not many collectors of figures, or so I thought! I wrote an article for a magazine in South Africa, plus one for *Military Modelling*, to see if there were other collectors/modellers in South Africa? I was *NOT* alone! Suddenly, I received letters from all over South Africa and, shortly, realised that, maybe, we should all get together. I then started *The South African Model Soldier Society* and to say "*it grew like Topsy*" is an

understatement. By 1992, we had 120 members and had held competitions in Johannesburg and in Durban.

During this time, I wrote various other articles for other South African magazines and, as a result, had acquired some *Gebruder Schnieder* moulds, some *Elastolin* figures and some *W. Britains* figures again. My collecting/modelling had taken a different turn in that I was beginning to prefer the "TOY"-type figure over the model soldier. I suppose that this came about due to my inability to paint to the standard of the connoisseur figures, painted in oils, and so well illustrated in every edition of *Military Modelling* which, although I admired the finished result, I could never achieve.

We left South Africa, to return to the UK, at the beginning of 1992. In June of that year, I went to the *Royal National* for my first Toy Soldier Show. What an eye opener! An hour after going into the show, I found myself standing in an aisle with my knees wobbling. I had just realised that I was now in the biggest toy soldier shop in the world!

In 1996 I started *Soldier Pac* (with passion!), using the late David Bracey's moulds.

I still collect but I limit my collecting to 54mm. I get a great buzz from restoring and repainting old *W. Britains* figures and have at least 2,000 to 3,000 castings to be painted! I try and finish at least ten figures a week and I've told my wife I'm not going until they are all finished! I am constantly repairing, building and painting - lovely jubbly!

In 1991, whilst living in Natal, *The South African Model Soldier Society* put on a display at a local Militaria show. Whilst manning the stand, I was painting figures (as you do) when an elderly gentleman walked up and was admiring my display of *demi-ronde* figures. He looked vaguely familiar. He then said: "*I cut my teeth on these moulds in the early days*" and I said "*I know, Mr Reece*"!

Sadly, I never found out his Christian name...

A proud but sad day



The Pipes & Drums play the Regiment into the Cathedral





The Colours are proudly carried down Burgate Street

On Tuesday, 25th June 2013, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 5th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland, having received the Freedom of the City of Canterbury in 2008, exercised their right to march through the City for one last time, with drums beating, Colours flying and bayonets fixed. At the conclusion of the march, the Regiment attended a special service in Canterbury Cathedral.

majority of the soldiers from 5 SCOTS will join other Scottish battalions. A rear guard of about 100 soldiers will remain in Canterbury until the middle of next year when Howe Barracks will be closed and sold off for re-development. This will draw to an end the close association of the City with the British Army which has had a base in Canterbury since 1794.



This Regimental Policeman's tattoo appropriately reads: "Pain Is Inevitable"!

This was a particularly poignant day for both soldiers and city as the Regiment, having been very much part of Canterbury for some ten years, was about to leave Howe Barracks in July. And, under the Army's restructuring programme, the battalion, which currently forms part of 16 Air Assault Brigade, is being reduced to a single rifle company of approximately 100 men which will mainly perform ceremonial and public duties in Scotland. The



Well worth a visit

I have recently returned from a three-night stop-over in North Norfolk, a county my wife and I have come to appreciate more and more in recent years. One of the highlights of the trip was a pre-planned visit to Houghton Hall, the home of Britain's first Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, to view a fabulous exhibition of paintings that are on view there this summer, but more of that later.

Although my wife pointed out that a model soldier museum was listed as one of the attractions of the house, I took little notice as I imagined it would be a room set aside with, perhaps, a small display of *Britains* and various other toy soldiers, plus a sprinkling of various 'bits and pieces'. However, as soon as I entered the first of the two large rooms of the museum I realised that there would be much of interest.

Filling the floor space and walls in the two rooms are some 35 display cases, housing an impressive array of well-constructed dioramas of all shapes and sizes, together with some larger figures and fascinating militaria including weapons, head-dress and emblazoned drums. The descriptions of the majority of the dioramas read like a military history of both Britain and Europe as the roll call includes such titles as "*The Battle of Culloden Moor, 1746*", "*The '45 Rebellion (1745)*", "*The Zulu War 1879*", "*The Sikh War 1845/46*", "*The Napoleonic Wars*", "*The War in Algeria*", "*The Franco Prussian War 1870/71*" and, of course, "*The Battle of Waterloo 18th June, 1815*". These are supplemented by what seems like a host of other dioramas illustrating various events and scenes in campaigns from the Peninsular to the Western Desert in World War II.

The figures are in a variety of scales, mostly painted to a very good standard and also include some French flat tin soldiers from Paris which have considerable charm (but are not particularly well painted) and a small number of large (roughly 18 inches to two feet high) wooden figures, clothed in fabric and



Houghton Hall was actually designed to house Sir Charles Walpole's magnificent collection of Old Master paintings

depicting various soldiers and generals of the First Empire which had once been in Napoleon III's collection, reminiscent of the superb miniatures created by Eugene Lelievre although, it has to be said, considerably cruder.

The main Waterloo diorama is enclosed in a large glass case and can be viewed from all four sides, providing four different aspects of the vital struggle for the farm of La Haye-Sainte at the centre of the scene. Surprisingly, I felt that the painting of these figures was rather below the overall standard of the museum but it was a fascinating and compelling exhibit, none the less.

However, it was two other massive displays that really bowled me over. Like the Waterloo scene, they could also be viewed from all four sides. The first, featuring some 2,000 figures, depicted the German Emperor reviewing his troops at Potsdam in 1900 and, on parade, were representatives of every branch of the Imperial Army. The second, equally fantastic, scene was one of the British Army of 1895 which shows a Grand Review at Aldershot in honour of Field Marshall Lord Roberts V.C., who can be seen at the saluting base, taking the salute. Again, the 3,000 troops, wheeling in serried ranks before Lord Roberts, represent all that was finest in the British Army of the period, including the Escort of the Day – the Royal Scots Greys – plus Cavalry, Artillery, Infantry and Massed Cavalry Bands and the

Massed Pipes and Drums of the Highland Division – a really fabulous sight. Being a bit biased, I was especially delighted to spot a contingent of The Buffs (The East Kent Regiment) as one of the units "keeping the ground". The figures were, I think, in about 30mm scale and probably those superb and beautifully painted "Willie" figures sculpted by Edward Suren. Horses and men were amazingly well and individually animated, providing a fantastic spectacle of Victorian military opulence. Both these dioramas also included delicate little civilian spectators, adults and children, many of the ladies shaded by exquisite little parasols. I really was mesmerised by both displays.

Being aware that my wife was sitting on a bench outside and waiting to proceed to the house, I frenetically rushed round the exhibits, absorbing as much as I possibly could. Sadly, photography is not permitted in the museum so I had to try and commit as much as I could to memory.

Besides the dioramas, there were also a number of larger porcelain(?) figures which were equally impressive. These included a superb mounted figure of the Duke of Marlborough, plus Wellington and Napoleon and, on top of one of the cases, a massive and magnificent model of "Coriolanus", the Drum Horse of the Life Guards, 1984, together with the mounted drummer, drums and all his harness and saddlery – a really fantastic sight!



The only opportunity I had to unlimber my camera and photograph anything of military significance at Houghton Hall was this rather nice 2nd Life Guards Officer's bridle in the harness room of the stables!

Also on the walls was a veritable art gallery of military paintings and prints. These included two small oil paintings by Harry Payne - of a 1st Royal Dragoon and a Sergeant of the Infantry of the Line - and a super painting of a French Artillery Driver of 1860 by Louis Auguste Georges Loustaunan, a highly talented French nineteenth century artist whose work I didn't know at all. Then, there were a couple of paintings by Terence Cuneo and work by Richard Simkin. Unfortunately, the light was not brilliant and it was a bit difficult to see some of the pictures but, by clambering up on footstools that were, I think, really meant for smaller individuals to view the dioramas, I managed to get quite close to some of the more inaccessible material!

I can certainly believe the claim that the Collection numbers about 20,000 figures. It was started, by the sixth Marquess of Cholmondeley, a direct descendent of Sir Robert Walpole, in 1928 and is now under the care of his son, the present owner of Houghton Hall, the seventh Marquess. Interestingly, but unsurprisingly, our own John Ruddle knows the Marquess and, at some stage in the National Collection's history, did explore the possibility of siting our Collection at Houghton.

I hope that I have managed to convey my pleasure and excitement at viewing so many inspiring exhibits. I am sure that our members in the Norfolk and Suffolk Branch and others of the *cognoscenti* will be familiar with the museum but, for any member who hasn't had the pleasure of viewing this material and might be holidaying in the area, do try and get there.

Oh, yes, I nearly forgot! My original reason for making the journey was, of course, "*Houghton Revisited*", the exhibition of paintings that is on display in the Hall **until Sunday, 29th September 2013**.

It has come about because, way back in 1779, Sir Robert Walpole, perhaps like more recent politicians, needed some extra cash and sold much of his magnificent collection to Catherine the Great who displayed it in the Winter Palace (what is now the world famous Hermitage Museum) in St Petersburg. And by a wonderful act of cooperation, over 70 of the paintings are being re-assembled and hung in their original positions in the House for the first time in over 200 years!

And what paintings they are! Amongst them is a wonderful (and quite small) painting of an old lady by Rembrandt and a small portrait of one of the Popes by another of my favourite painters, Diego Velazquez. And I also spotted a superb full-length portrait of Sir Thomas Wharton, by Van Dyck, that I am almost sure was the self-same picture that inspired master modeller Gianfranco Speranza to produce one of his awesome figures. If I am mistaken, and he didn't, then he should...if you see what I mean.

Anyway, if art is your 'thing', then this is another good reason to visit the House but do note that specially timed and dated tickets are required for entrance to the Hall to see the *Houghton Revisited* exhibition. Tickets for the exhibition, Hall, garden and grounds: Adults £18, Child £10, can be booked online at www.houghtonrevisited.com or, as I did, telephone 01603 598640, which worked most efficiently.

John Regan

Letter to the Editor

We owe it to them

Dear Editor,

I would very much like to pay tribute to all those individuals, whether they are BMSS members or, indeed, belong to other societies, who, on our behalf, help to keep our modelling interest alive.

On Saturday, 3rd March, the BMSS Aldershot Branch Show, held at Christ's College, Guildford, was, as always, a great event. Run by Andy Dunstan and the members of the Branch, they make everyone feel so welcome and the show gets better and better every year!

Then, the BMSS Annual Show, at the Holiday Inn, Coram Street, London, on 27th April, was another well organised event, thanks to Paul Newman and his band of helpers and, once again, a great day was had by all.

Now for the new kids on the block - the first modelling show in Northants in 40 years was arranged and presented by the Northants Military Modelling Society. I have to point out that this isn't the Northants BMSS Branch although some members do belong to both Societies. It was organised by Chris Simmons, Paul Sargeant, Dave Sparrow, Ray Totten and Simon Lidle and was well planned and a credit to them for all the hard work they put into it, which certainly paid off. This show will now become a regular event and should not be missed, so book your place or resolve to pay a visit next year. Chris Simmons can be contacted on 01933 384753.

Other events that shouldn't be missed are Figure World on 20th July, and the Letchworth and Bristol shows and, of course, not forgetting our own Inter-Branch Competitions on 7th September, at Knowle.

As you know, there are also many other shows, but they all need our support so let's get out there and really support those individuals who put themselves out for us all!

Yours faithfully,

Ray Dorrington (Northants BMSS)

BMSS Diary 2013

- August 31st Norman Joplin's Old Toy Soldier & Figure Show (UK), Holiday Inn, Bloomsbury, Coram Street, London WC1N 1HT. 10.30-4pm £5 (early entry 6.30am, £15). Pre 1980 vintage figures. Contact Adrian Little 07887 802932
- September 7th **BMSS Inter-Branch Competitions. The Masonic Lodge, Knowle, Solihull, Warwickshire.**
- 20th **BMSS Indian Army Competition. PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE FOR THIS MEETING: Pimlico Room, St Saviour's, St George's Square, Lupus Street, Pimlico SW1V 3QW**
- 21st Euro Militaire 2013 (*the 28th year of one of the largest military modelling shows in the* world). Leas Cliff Hall, The Leas, Folkestone CT20 2DZ.
- 22nd
- October 18th **BMSS Auction.** Napier Hall, Hide Place, Vincent Square, London SW1. **5.30pm to 8.30pm.** Contact Arthur Smith 020 8856 0064.
Please note that only members holding current membership cards are able to participate in the Society's auctions. A list of the lots is now available to anyone sending a stamped self-addressed envelope (plus one first-class stamp to cover photocopying) to: John Ruddle, 22 Priory Gardens, Hampton, Middlesex, TW12 2PZ.
- 26th Gravesham Military Modelling Society Open Day. **Note new venue:** North West Kent College, Lower Higham Road, Chalk, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2JJ. 10 am to 4 pm.
- November 15th Conversions Night. For confirmation of venue for this meeting, members are advised to check the BMSS website **after 20th September** (National meetings section).
- 24th Bugle Call 2013 - the Annual Show of the BMSS Bristol Branch in association with the South West Figure Modellers. The Pavilion, North Parade Road, Bath BA2 4EU. Numerous displays of models including figures, sci-fi, aircraft and ships plus a large selection of trade stands. 10am to 4.30pm. For more information and bookings, traders should contact Bob Orr at boborr@talktalk.net while clubs are asked to contact Kevin Peart at napoleonpeart@yahoo.co.uk
- December 20th Old Toy Soldier Competition. For confirmation of venue for this meeting, members are advised to check the BMSS website **after 20th September** (National meetings section).

"Bulletin" Schedule - 2013

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Bulletin no. 3	22nd July	Early September
Bulletin no. 4	7th October	End November

"BMSS Bulletin Extra" schedule - 2013 (distributed electronically)

Extra no. 4	9th September	Early October
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BMSS Information Service

The BMSS has assembled a team of volunteers who are willing to try and assist any member who has a query on any facet of our hobby. They do not, however, attempt to answer questions on allied hobbies. Some questions, particularly those dealing with campaign and regimental histories, may be a little too complex for the team to provide a direct answer. In these cases, the team will endeavour to provide a reading list. Every effort will be made to answer queries as quickly as possible but more complex questions may take some time. Please be patient. Questions, with a stamped self-addressed envelope, should be sent to: **BMSS Information Service, 37, Yeading Ave, Rayners Lane, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 9RL**

