

THE MUSEUM REPORT, July 2021



2021 is shaping up to be another difficult and challenging year for the 8th Hussars Museum. The impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic are still being felt in many cases. The museum was allowed to open on 14 June 2021 and will close on 05 Sept 2021. Visitors' numbers are on line to be a bit better than 2020 However, again this year two of the museum's annual fundraising events, the Flea Market and the Balloon Fiesta, have been cancelled which will impact annual fundraising revenue, showing a loss in the area of \$6000 per year. In order to be allowed to open the museum to the public a sanitization program is still required and daily sanitization will still be conducted by the summer staff. However, this program has been reduced in scope and the time involved on a daily basis has been reduced considerably.

Recognizing that 2021 would be another tough year, tourist wise, we successfully applied for funding in late 2020 to develop some social media support to supplement our advertising for the 2021 season. Five separate videos were developed and produced. Each video would be about one minute in length and featured a historic event in the life of the Regiment which also has supporting artefacts on display in the

museum. Four of the featured topics were the Commanding officer's sword from 1864, a background to the story of Camp Sussex, the last 30 days of WW II and the role played in the liberation of the Netherlands, and the last soldier killed in WW I as well as the loss of Cpl Wallace and Tpr Bons while peace keeping. The supporting artefact to the last video features the vehicle pennant of 44C recovered from the remains of their vehicle. All four are available on the museum Facebook page. The fifth video features the story of the establishment of the regular Regiment in 1957 and the fight to retain the name of Princess Louise in the Regimental title. Family members of the CO of the day, LCol RS McLeod, are featured and "Saving the Coronet" is a must see. Due to its length of 6+ minutes it has not be featured on Facebook or a number of other social media platforms but it is displayed prominently on a touch panel at the museum.



Dylan

Sophie

Cali

Hayden

Summer Staff 2021

We were fortunate this year in our applications for summer student employees sponsored by various programs. We received one from the federal Young Canada Works program, two from the federal Canada Summer Jobs program and one from the province of NB Heritage Branch. Two employees returned from last year and two new members joined the team. It should be noted here that Hayden has been with us for 6 years and he will be attending UNB again this fall for his last year of studies for his law degree. He is the great grandson of Sgt Frank Gaunce, a WW II Hussar veteran.

In December 2020 the Town of Sussex announced that the tourist bureau would be moving to a new location within the town and that the floor space at the train station would be turned over to the museum for our use. This came as a surprise to us but we recognized it was an opportunity to put more artefacts on display and to enhance the reception area of the museum. We applied again for funding to construct these displays and were fortunate to receive additional funding from the provincial government Heritage Branch. As a result, we were able to construct three large display cases and provide some prominent floor space for the museum digital display panel, as well as expanding the reception area.



New display cases under construction

All of the work was done voluntarily over 8 weekends and then the work began to develop displays to fit each new case. The first case was used to display artefacts from the first Hussar CO to take the regiment into battle in Italy during WW II. This display would also include the brass shell casing plaque that commemorates the Battle of Coriano and the capture of a German Panzer which was intact and given to the Div Comd as a gift by the Hussars in 1944. The second case was allocated to define battle rattle and the role played by various pieces of equipment including radios, field telephones, bugles, gas alarms, flares and carrier pigeons. This display was allocated to our summer staff to develop and they have produced an excellent product. It was quickly recognized that the display case was too small for all of the artefacts we hold and that the story of communications went back to Roman times so the summer staff decided to supply two blogs to supplement the display which will be posted on the museum blog pages soon. The display in case number 3 is still in the planning stage.

On 05 May the annual flag exchange between the Town of Sussex and Eelde (Tynarlo) in the Netherlands was conducted at the Sussex Town Hall to celebrate the Liberation of the Netherlands and the role played by the 8th Hussars in the last 30 days of WW II. Representatives from the province, the Town of Sussex and the Regiment were in attendance to the maximum allowed by the pandemic requirements.

Cancel all offensive operations, Ceasefire at 0800 5 May 1945.



Hon LCol Susan Chalmers-Gauvin, Hon Col James Lockyer, Mayor Marc Thorne, MLA Tammy Scott-Wallace and CO LCol Jamie Hunter



Soldiers of the Regiment hold the original hand sewn flag shared between the Regiment and Eelde in the Netherlands in 1945.



Sgt R Keirstead raises the flags.



The flags fly at Sussex Town Hall

Following the flag raising ceremony, the CO and other Regimental reps were provided time to visit town hall and brief the MLA and mayor on the tentative plans that are starting to shape up for the 175th Anniversary of the Regiment in 2023. Certainly, the Town of Sussex will play a role in that event.

In mid – July the museum hosted an evening open house which was also attended by our MLA and the CO. No formal activities occurred but visitors had the opportunity to review the new museum displays and both of our guests had the opportunity to speak and informally meet the museum committee members and the summer staff. Since opening, several schools and interest groups have visited the museum but it appears that our numbers will show a slower start than last year. Additional efforts to advertise will be employed in the coming days to hopefully increase visitor numbers during the month of August. Increased usage of Facebook, Instagram and other social media will be started soon using the videos developed in our social media project during the winter months.

The museum committee is also looking into other means of increasing attendance however these programs and plans may not be readily available until next year.



MLA and staff.

A guided tour

The kitshop continues to be active and the establishment of e-transfers has helped reduce paperwork considerably. Big sellers continue to be beer steins, ball caps and license plates however with the 175th anniversary approaching quickly suggestions as to commemorative items to list for sale would be gladly received. Some decisions would be needed NLT May 2022. E-transfers can be sent to the following address; museumsupport@nb.aibn.com. The current kit shop items are listed at the following link; <http://www.8chassociation.com/museum-gift-shop.html>

Since the appeal by the Hon Col in late 2020, numerous and generous donations have been received to support both the museum and the Association as a whole. The 2021 donors will be recognized elsewhere in this newsletter. It should be noted that these donations are the backbone of the museums financial picture and we are grateful for your support. Without them your museum would not be viable!

I wish to thank all of the museum board members and our volunteers for the effort they put forward regularly to keep the museum operational and viable. Also, I would like to thank the members and former members of the Regiment who offered their carpentry skills to the construction of the new displays and other modifications.



Thank you to all our 2021 supporters who have donated funds to the museum during 2021. Your support has been vital to the museum operations.

James Kendall Diane Lutes Derek McLellan

Marianne Donovan Janette Strokappe Michael Jackson

Ben Leblanc Sean Wallace Ann Taylor

Steve Bowes Terri Chesterman

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