



Friends of The **FUSILIERS MUSEUM** OF **NORTHUMBERLAND**

Christmas 2023

Thank you!
Your support and
donations are so important
to us - greatly appreciated

*Wishing you a very
Merry Christmas
From all at the Museum*



Alnwick Castle in winter

Courtesy of Alnwick Castle

2023 Season

Visitors tell us that our Front of House staff are 'welcoming and informative'. We congratulate them. This season they have had to get to grips with new equipment in the shop.

An electronic point of sale (EPOS) till with integral card reader has been added to help with sales, and a contactless donations point to encourage card donations. We are grateful to Museum Development North East (MDNE) for their contribution through the Recovery and Development Grant Scheme.



'Front of House' – new equipment

350th Birthday celebrations

St George's Day will be marked by Fifth Fusiliers with a Parade and Service on Saturday 20th April 2024 at Ashington. It will be our 350th Anniversary.

The museum has
welcomed **99,892**
Visitors this season

Volunteers – Education and outreach

In addition to presenting regular, themed, object handling tables for visitors to Alnwick Castle, our volunteers have delivered:

Talks: Northumberland and Newcastle Civic Society; Killingworth Library and Alnwick Civic Society.

School workshops: Carville Primary, Wallsend; Southlands School, North Shields; four schools in the Rothbury area, as well as an online workshop for Seaton Delaval First School.



Above: Remembrance workshop, Rothbury First School



Above: Remembrance workshop, Thropton Village First School

The workshops presented to the four Rothbury Schools were a joint initiative between the schools and Rothbury and Coquetdale Royal British Legion. We are grateful to their Chairman, Peter Colquitt, for including the Fusiliers Museum of Northumberland in these sessions.



Above: Object handling table outside the Fusiliers Museum

“As far as I was concerned Christmas Day was just like any other day ... about eleven o'clock orders came that we had to change our position and for the latter half of the day we were ‘digging in’. You see, we could not afford to take a ‘day off’. The enemy might well have been planning something unpleasant for us, gambling on the fact that we should be a bit weary, off our guard and radiating the Christmas Spirit ...

“We did manage a pretty good Christmas dinner.”

Lieutenant Richard Randall, No.2 Independent Machine Gun Company, Royal Northumberland Fusiliers in Germany. Extract from a letter to his mother dated 31.12.1944

Thank you!

This year, volunteers have donated more than 1,100 hours of their valuable time.

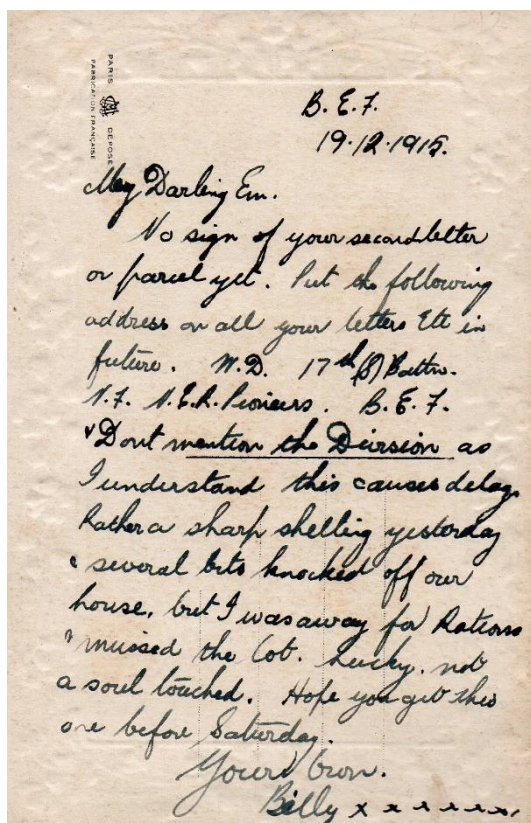
Volunteer Andrew Wharton left at the end of the summer to spend more time on his British Sign Language course – we are very grateful to him for his contribution.

Staff and volunteers are constantly busy in the background doing research, cataloguing and working with collections we are grateful to them all.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Fusiliers Museum of Northumberland please do contact us.

See our website www.northumberlandfusiliers.org.uk for further details.

From the archive



Billy Dorward, Northumberland Fusilier

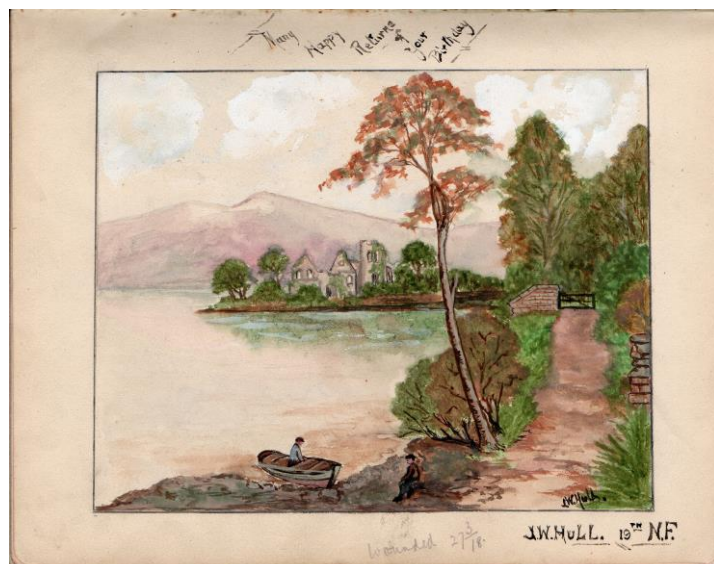
This pretty, embroidered Christmas card comes from a collection relating to William Dorward, a Company Quartermaster Sergeant serving with the 17th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers during the First World War. He was sent to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force in 1915.

There are many of the same type of card in his collection, he rarely wrote on them. However, I did find one written to his 'Darling Em' which is shown above. They wrote letters to each other regularly and Miss E Hanning later became Billy's wife. They lived in High Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne.



Company Sergeant Major James Gray served with the 19th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers in the First World War. On the occasion of his daughter's 5th Birthday, he sent home an album which he had compiled – it was filled with poems, rhymes and sketches, written and drawn by soldiers in his Company, especially for Stella.

Sometime later, someone has marked against each contributor whether they had been 'killed' or 'wounded' ...

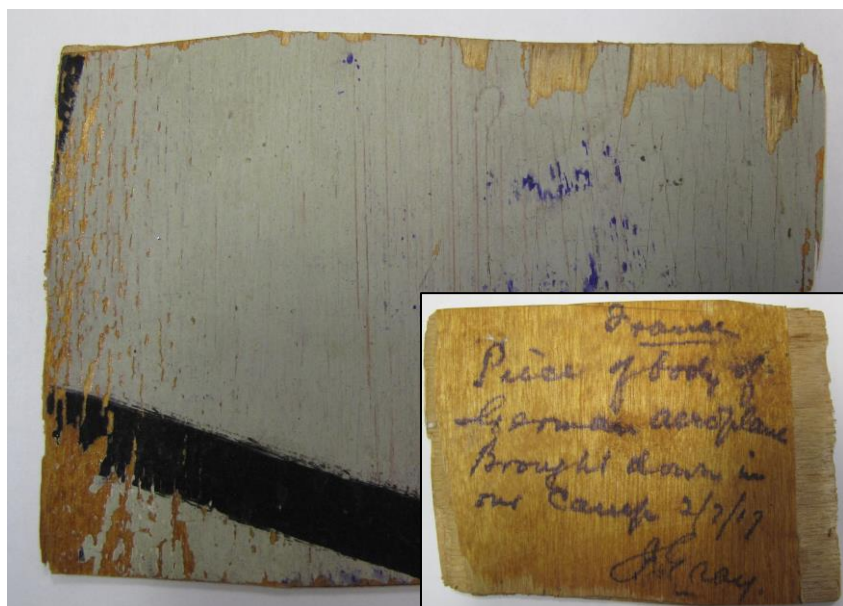


Above: Sketch of Charlie Chaplin by A Coates, 19th N.F. 14.10.1915 (Killed 27.3.1918)

Right: Scenic sketch by J W Hull, 19th N.F. undated (wounded 27.3.1918)

From the archive continued

Also found amongst CSM James Gray's collection of objects was a small piece of lightweight wood. He had written on the back "Piece of the body of German aeroplane brought down in our camp 2/7/17."



Above: Piece of the aeroplane's fuselage. **Inset:** Reverse with note signed J Gray

Left: Albatross aircraft at Duxford Airshow, 2012

The entry in the 19th Battalion War Diary for that day confirms that the enemy aircraft, an ALBATROSS, one seater, had "attacked an observation balloon at HEUDICOURT, and missed. A Lewis Gun, fired by Y. Coy. got onto the plane, which crashed in HQ Lines. The machine was totally wrecked, and the pilot killed."

Special visitors



Above: The Museum Manager welcomes Major (Ret'd) Joe Foster (RNF/RRF) and the Jolly Bedesmen from St Bede's Church, Blyth

Left: James Legge with the medals donated in memory of his great grandfather, Lt Colonel Kingsley Foster who was killed at the Imjin River Battle, Korea, 1951

"A long overdue visit to see my great grandfather's and his father's medal collection. A fine museum it is housed in too!"

James Legge, July 2023

Consider becoming a 'Friend of the Museum'

Please visit the support page on our website:

<https://www.northumberlandfusiliers.org.uk/support/>



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Visit our website

www.northumberlandfusiliers.org.uk

Contact us

Email: fusnorthld@aol.com

Tel: 01665 602152

Registered charity number: 273064