



ABOVE: The Waterloo Diorama at the Green Jackets Museum in Winchester is the size of an average living room and contains thousands of small scale figures, giving a 3D rendition of actions during the battle. All photos, unless otherwise credited, by the author.

# The MAFVA column

News and views from the Miniature Armoured Fighting Vehicle Association

**John Ham** takes a look at regimental museums and explains that your regiment needs you!



BELOW: A garrison town since Roman times, Winchester has several military museums grouped around Peninsular Square. Displays cover not just fighting formations, but also other arms of service such as the military police, pay corps and army educational services.

Britain has a rich military history and much of this resides in small regimental museums. While most museums struggle to find enough income to keep going, the smaller establishments only survive because of dedicated volunteers. Admission charges are usually modest while others are free relying solely on donations. A list of these museums can be found at [www.armymuseums.org.uk](http://www.armymuseums.org.uk) and there are links on the MAFVA website ([www.mafva.net](http://www.mafva.net)). Many have accessible archives, and uniforms and weapons exhibits are useful reference sources. The changing needs of the British Army over the centuries, expanding in wartime and contracting in peacetime, are reflected in the regiments with enlargements, mergers, and changes of role. Mounted regiments may have become infantry and vice versa; infantry may have become artillerymen, or engineers, or sometimes different regimental battalions may have had contrasting roles.

Winchester has five museums on the same site. The Green Jackets Museum has the history of the earliest rifle regiments, being distinguished on the battlefield by their green uniforms. The Gurkha Museum has a number of tableaux and dioramas by the BMSS, depicting regimental battles. Horsepower is the museum of the Kings Hussars and is mainly focused on the horse cavalry years, but also has a Dingo scout car amongst the exhibits. Other museums at Winchester are the refurbished Hampshire Regiment Museum, and also the Military Police Museum and Adjutants Corps Museum – both branches of the Army that receive much less attention than fighting formations.

Warwick, apart from its famous castle, has three military museums: the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Museum; the Warwickshire Yeomanry Museum; the Queens Own Hussars Museum. These are in walking distance of each other, but as always it is wise to check opening times before visiting.

Shrewsbury Castle houses the museum of the Shropshire regiments. This fairly large museum, housed on three floors is a popular tourist site. The



A Dingo Scout Car seen at the Horsepower Museum, Winchester, is part of the display devoted to the Kings Royal Hussars regiments in North Africa during WW2.



ABOVE LEFT: The Hampshire Regiment Museum in Winchester has recently reopened after refurbishment. ABOVE RIGHT: At the Royal Warwick Fusiliers Museum, Warwick, a WW1 display depicts the action in which Cpl. William Amey won his VC following several attacks on German machine gun nests in France, November 1918. He survived the war and died in 1940 and is buried locally. Other famous sons of the regiment were Field Marshalls Bernard Montgomery and Viscount Bill Slim.



ABOVE LEFT: The Warwickshire Yeomanry Museum. Many Yeomanry regiments were raised during the French wars of the late 18th Century, supplying mounted units as self-defence forces against possible invasion. After mechanisation the mounted connection was often maintained by these regiments becoming armoured car or tank units. Behind the display case, in the background, is the 75mm Krupp gun captured in Palestine in 1917 from the Turkish 53rd Division in the last cavalry charge of the British Army. ABOVE RIGHT: The Keep Military Museum, Dorchester houses the history of the Devon and Dorset regiments on several floors. (Photo: Andy Lang, Mendips MAFVA)

upper floor deals with the present day; the large middle floor describes its origins in the volunteer home defence units of the 18th Century French Wars and the ground floor contains exhibits relating to WW1, WW2, and later 20th Century wars.

The Keep Military Museum ([www.keepmilitarymuseum.org](http://www.keepmilitarymuseum.org)) in Dorchester is the repository of the Devon and Dorset Infantry and Yeomanry regiments. On three floors, the part played by the regiments in the Boer War, WW1, WW2 are covered with displays relevant to each period. Amongst the exhibits are a 25pdr gun, Boyes Anti-tank

Rifle, and section of a glider-tow reflecting the part played by a battalion of the Dorsets in the 6th Airborne Division during the Rhine Crossings in March 1945.

Thanks to Andy Lang, Mendips MAFVA; Steve Cox, Notts MAFVA; Dan Taylor, London MAFVA for additional material.

Special Offer: For January only, a reduced special subscription for 18-months to mark the 50th anniversary of MAFVA and to encourage new members, details on the website.

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ABOVE: A 25pdr gun at the Keep, Dorchester is a reminder of the part played by artillerymen in regiments during WW2. Other displays cover the Boer War, WW1, Korea, Malaya and Kenya. (Photo: Andy Lang Mendips MAFVA)

BELOW: Sherwood Rangers Display at the MAFVA Nationals, Duxford staffed by volunteers from the Queens Royal Lancers and Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Museum, Thoresby Park near Newark. RIGHT: A model of the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Museum, a hopeful note for the future. Presently in Hever Castle, the new museum buildings in the castle grounds will allow a better display of regimental histories, due to open in September 2015. (Photo: Dan Taylor, Trustee)

