



Honorary Chairman - Mr Ron Mockford

Treasurer - Mrs Margaret Walton

Committee Members - Mr Keith Andrews, Mr James Whiskens, Ms Angela Lane, Mrs Annette Hughes

Vice Chairman - Mr Kenneth Coy

Secretary - Mrs Barbara James

BAFEPOW NEWS SHEET FOR APRIL 2022

NEWS FOR THE MEMBERSHIP

During the Covid problems it was difficult for the committee to hold our usual quarterly committee meetings and since the last meeting on 21/10/21, there has not been another meeting. This, however, has not prevented us from keeping in touch if necessary and whilst we have been in lockdown, not much happened that we actually needed to meet up to discuss. There will be an AGM later this year, possibly either in August or in September and it will be held at the Holiday Inn again. It will be a short meeting as there will be only a small amount of items to go on the agenda and the accounts have been kept up to date as required in the BAFEPOW Constitution by our treasurer, Margaret Walton. They will have been verified for the tax year 2021 - 2022 by Tony Truett. Our thanks go to them both for their work on behalf of BAFEPOW. Also the committee will be up for election. This means that there will be plenty of time after the meeting for us to enjoy a lunch and a chat together.

DONATION MADE TO THE APPEAL TO RESTORE THE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE -SINGAPORE

An appeal was recently launched to raise money for the restoration of the steam locomotive 'Singapore' that is based at the Rocks By Rail Museum. At last month's BAFEPOW meeting on March 8th, this was brought to the attention of those present and it was agreed unanimously that we should donate £1000 towards the fund. A cheque was therefore sent off to the museum and the curator sent confirmation of its safe arrival and also many thanks to us for our donation. Below is the information about the engine and also about the museum.

FEPOW Memorial Locomotive Appeal

"to keep going the spirit that kept them going".

Rocks by Rail – the Living Ironstone Museum is a small volunteer run community based industrial railway museum located near Cottesmore in Rutland, England.

The Museum is an educational charity and within its collection is the Far Eastern Prisoner of War steam locomotive SINGAPORE.

The loco was built in the UK in in 1936 and supplied to the Royal Navy Dockyard in Singapore.

On 15th February 1942 the locomotive, in company with 80,000 allied servicemen, became a prisoner of war of the Japanese upon the Fall of Singapore.

The loco often worked alongside parties of prisoners unloading ships in the dockyard.

Repatriated in 1953 the loco finished its military service at Chatham Naval Dockyard in 1972 before being preserved.

Resident in Rutland since 1979 the loco is a registered UK war memorial to FEPOW's.

Restored to working order in 1998 the loco last steamed in 2008. Funds are being raised to overhaul the loco as a working war memorial but a few years ago these plans received a significant setback when thieves broke in and stole parts of the loco valve gear.

Manufacturing replacement new parts and carrying out other repairs to return it to steam again will prove very expensive for the small volunteer run museum. However the museum plans to continue with its restoration plans but the associated costs will now be much higher.

Consequently the Museum has launched a public appeal to help fund this work which would see the locomotive returned to steam rather than remain a static exhibit.

A target of £40,000 has been set for the appeal fund and any donations by way of cheques should be made out to Rutland Railway Museum and handed in at the museum or sent to: RBR Treasurer, FEPOW Memorial Locomotive Appeal, 4 Main Street, Stanford on Soar, Loughborough LE12 5PY

'Driver for a Fiver' Days

Driver for a Fiver gives visitors the chance to get at the controls of one of the museum's historic diesel locomotives for an additional fee of just £5. Under the supervision of one of our drivers, participants can take a full 100hp powered loco for a trip down the line and back to the platform. This is offered on a first come first served basis, participants must be over 16 years of age and fit able to enter and leave the locomotive unaided. Dates for 2022 are on the following Sundays:

Sunday 5th June, Sunday 19th June (Bank Holiday only), 3rd July, 7th August, 4th September, 2nd October



General opening hours:

None - operational viewing Open Days Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am - 4pm From 12th April until 11th October 2022, except closed on 2nd June and 18th August
Sundays 10am - 4pm on 10th & 24th July and 21st August only

RiBR Admission rates 2022

Viewing Open Days

Adult	05
Child	04
Family	£15 (Two adults + up to 3 children)

"Diesel Driver for a Fiver" £5

Note - an additional fee to viewing open day prices.

Operational/Steam Open Days (see opposite for dates)

Adult	£10
Child	£6
Family	£25 (Two adults + up to 3 children)

Group Visits - welcome by prior arrangement. Dogs welcome if responsibly managed on a lead. All attractions subject to availability. Museum Café open on Operating Open Days, Driver for a Fiver Sundays and Thursdays.

Operating Days in 2022 - 10am - 4pm

17th April Easter Sunday: Steam Open Day, Easter Bunny Hunt & Take a Trip on The Rutlander Train

18th April Easter Monday: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train and Ironstone Quarry Railway Day. Start of exhibition marking the 50th Anniversary of the closure of Market Overton Ironstone Quarries, Rutland and including subsequent railway preservation schemes.

Sunday 1st May: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train plus Diesel Driver for a Fiver (Bank Holiday hour only - limited availability)

Monday 2nd May: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train and Cement Quarry Railway Day.

Sunday 15th May: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train

Sunday 29th May: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train and Ironstone Quarry Railway Day

Friday 3rd June: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on the Rutlander train and Ironstone Quarry Railway Day marking the 50th anniversary of the closure of Stonefield Ironstone Quarries, Northants.

Sunday 5th June: Open Day - Diesel Driver for a Fiver

Sunday June 19th: Steam Open Day - Father's Day - Take a trip on the Rutlander train plus Diesel Driver for a Fiver (Bank Holiday hour only - limited availability)

Sunday 3rd July: Open Day - Diesel Driver for a Fiver

Sunday 17th July: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train.

Sunday 31st July: Open Day - Ironstone Quarry and Diesel Day Exhibition to mark the anniversary of the closure of Bulby Ironstone Quarry, Rutland

Sunday 7th August: Open Day - Diesel Driver for a Fiver

Sunday August 14th: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train

August Bank Holiday Sunday August 28th: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train and exhibition and display to mark anniversary of Liberation of Far Eastern Prisoners of War in 1945

August Bank Holiday Monday August 29th: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on the Rutlander train and Ironstone Quarry Railway Day

Sunday 4th September: Open Day - Diesel Driver for a Fiver

Sunday September 18th: Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train and Oldfildon Ironstone Quarry Railway Day

Sunday 2nd October: Open Day - Diesel Driver for a Fiver

Sunday October 16th: Seasons Final Steam Open Day - Take a trip on The Rutlander train and Ironstone Quarry Railway Day. End of exhibition marking the 50th Anniversary of the closure of Market Overton Ironstone Quarries, Rutland

Please note that the museum reserves the right to modify its planned events for 2022 having due regard to any government advised mitigation measures required to enhance public health risks in the UK.



The Living Ironstone Museum
COTTESMORE
Incorporated Charity No. 113482

Visitor Guide
2022



NEW EXHIBITION - Market Overton Ironstone Quarry, Rutland



Rocks By Rail, Ashwell Road, Cottesmore, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 7FF
Telephone 01572 868415 / 07974 171068
curator@rocks-by-rail.org
www.rocks-by-rail.org




Last year the museum invited COFEPOW members to visit the museum for a special day featuring the engine and, very kindly, our own member Martin Horwell and his wife, Karen, were able to attend. Martin has very kindly sent some photographs of the 'Singapore' that he took on that visit which he said was extremely interesting.





Thank you, Martin, for letting us see your photographs and, hopefully, Karen is continuing to make a good recovery from the accident that she was involved in last year - we send her our best wishes as she continues to recover and to you too!

NEWS FROM THE TUESDAY DISCUSSION GROUP HELD ON MARCH 22ND

We were pleased to welcome Kevin Snowdon to the group and he shared his research on Sumatra and Java with Carol Rowe who has a particular interest on the events there where her father was a POW. Carol sent me the following about her discussion with Kevin and it is included as it might be useful to others too:-

'Some is my own knowledge of events. Some is from a statement Kevin shared with me completed by a Dutch officer. Dated 9th March 1942.

I explained that my dad was a Gunner with the 6HAA and that following a posting to Singapore and arriving early January 1942 my dad had been transferred to Sumatra on 30 January. His designated post P1 airfield, Palembang.

Kevin explained that both 35LL and 6HAA were at Palembang.

We went on to discuss the situation at Palembang. In particular the Japanese invasion. As well as the landing of the Japanese paratroopers landing around P1 on 14th February 1942.

I was then shown a copy of a statement written by Lt. B.J. Roslinwald of the Dutch Field Artillery posted with the Oil Refinery Battery.

I was already aware that there was daily bombing of P1 prior to the Japanese invasion of Sumatra. They were unaware of P2 airfield at that point so they concentrated their attacks on P1 and the oil Refinery.

The statement said that it was around 9.15 on the morning of 14th February when 100 planes bombed the airport, oil Refinery and rail station and it was about 10.30 when P1 was able to notify Head Quarters at Palembang. The planes were dropping bombs and strafing. Eventually 200 paratroopers were dropped on P1. According to my Dad there was some hand to hand fighting and a retreat into the jungle. Lt Roslinwald at around 0.300 14/15 February there was information that a Japanese ship was attempting to steam up the river Mosie. On 15th February they left camp at night on a motor launch in an attempt to make their escape. However this was unsuccessful and they were captured and taken to Muntock.

A tactic of the Japanese was to drop paratroopers by day and land troops at night having sent them via Padang and Batan rivers.

My dad somehow managed to make his escape and was able to make his way to Oosthaven and cross the sundi strait to Bativa Java. This is where the next part of my dad's war continued.

Kevin has subsequently sent me a copy of the statement. As well as information from other researchers confirming details of my dad.'

There are so many books on the war in the Far East and we had a discussion about the merits of books that were written soon after the war against books that have been released much later and that were written by the FEPOW themselves or that were researched by other authors. We all agreed that the one thing that is essential is that the content should be historically accurate and that some books do contain a certain amount of 'dramatic licence' to make them more interesting to a wider audience. This could be likened to the stories told in films like 'The Bridge on the River Kwai' or 'The Railway Man'. One book in particular that was mentioned as being an excellent one was 'Line of Lost Lives' by J.S.Cosford and it just so happened that I (BJ) had been given a copy recently and have been reading it. Tony Truett did also have a copy that was given to his father by the author as they had been POWs together and we had an interesting discussion about the author, J. Cosford, who was a friend of Tony's father.

Another topic that we discussed was the experiences of the Internees in comparison to those of the POWs. One obvious difference is that the Internees were not involved in the major construction tasks such as the building of the Railway, working in docks or in mines. This is not to say that they were not subjected to the starvation, deprivation and medical issues that caused great suffering to all who were prisoners of the Japanese. Of course there was also the sad imprisonment of many children and the impact that it had on their experience of growing up, often in extremely reduced circumstances to those which they had been accustomed to prior to becoming prisoners.

NEWS FROM THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

Before the Covid lockdowns BAFEPOW used to have an annual day trip and maybe we should start to plan for another one. Perhaps it would be interesting for our group to visit the Manchester IWM where there is a display of artefacts from the war in the Far East. It would be even better if we could arrange to go on a day when one of our members, Ray Withnall, is there in his volunteering role. This was mentioned at our usual Tuesday meeting in March when the subject of museums came up and, in particular, Tom Boardman's ukulele was mentioned as being at the IWM in Manchester among other items on display. Since then there has been a link (see below) about the volunteers at the museum and Ray is featured. You can take a look at this if you follow the link below:-

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/events/ten-minute-talks-powered-by-volunteers-at-iwm-north?fbclid=IwAR0YqcitE9IReEygRhYPvr4QIJdtje-cCHGifA6aY-azIjOfF5si1LivTyI>

NEWS FROM THE INTERNET ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE BORNEO DEATH MARCHES

We hear so much about the events in Singapore and the Railway but one of the worst areas for the maltreatment of POWs, Internees and the local population involved the Japanese occupation of Borneo. The book by John Tulloch entitled 'The Borneo Graveyard 1941-1945' has done so much to tell of the events there and to bring to attention the atrocities that were committed by the oppressors on their prisoners. I myself (BJ) wholeheartedly recommend this book for you to read and you can obtain a copy from John. It is extremely well researched and goes into the events in depth which totally justifies the cost - £25 + P&P Contact John at:- johnsmtulloch@gmail.com

Also John has taken part in a podcast and he tells of his research into Borneo during WWII and it is such an interesting podcast which is so worth a listen. It does last for 57 minutes, so pop to the loo first and have a drink to hand because it will just enthral, interest but also, possibly, distress you when you hear John and the two interviewers talk about what he had discovered during his research over there.

Click on the link below and select the top episode - 'The Borneo Graveyard 1941- 45'

https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/the-unconventional-soldier/id1524077345?fbclid=IwAR0Lly6PY5CyKGwT-aXfqW4z9Khycb0Pa-J_GSKFLtpIwZgn9t0Nojd9rIE

NOT JUST A FEPOW!

As a group we are used to discussing our own particular FEPOW's experience of imprisonment but many of them had been involved in other places during WWII before going out to the Far East. One of the founding members of BAFEPOW, Pat De Paeztron, had been involved at Dunkirk in France. He was later awarded the Dunkurque medal by the people of that town (see the information from

Wikipedia below about this award). My own Dad had been serving in the Royal Artillery and he, along with his comrades in the 316 Battery LAA, endeavoured to protect Bristol City and the Docklands during the Blitz and the City gave them thanks for saving the City from being destroyed by fire by holding a service dedicated to them at Bristol Cathedral.

And so, if you know what your FEPOW did before he was in the Far East and was captured, please share his story with us, either by writing it out for inclusion in the BAFEPOW News Sheet or by talking about it at one of our meetings.

The Dunkirk Medal (Medaille Dunkerque 1940) is an unofficial commemorative medal created by the town of Dunkirk to commemorate the defence of the town and surrounding area during May and June 1940. The allocation of the award was managed by nationale des anciens combattants de Flandres-Dunkerque 1940, the French National Association of Veterans of the Fortified Sector of Flanders and Dunkirk (and later administrated by the now disbanded Dunkirk Veterans Association).

Initiated in 1960, the award was initially awarded to only French service personnel (with approximately 30,000 medals issued). In 1970 it was also awarded to any Allied member involved in Operation Dynamo, the evacuation of Allied forces from the Dunkirk sector between 29 May and 3 June and those soldiers evacuated from the beaches. All British servicemen from the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Merchant Navy, and the civilian little ship volunteers were eligible to receive the award.

The Dunkirk Medal is struck in bronze and measures approximately 44mm in length and 36mm wide. The medal's obverse depicts a shield bearing the arms of Dunkirk (a fish and in chief, a lion passant) superimposed on an anchor and laurel wreath, crossed swords above. The reverse of the medal features a burning oil lamp over a tablet with the inscription: DUNKERQUE 1940.[1]

Beneath the ribbon suspension of the medal are crossed swords. A named certificate was issued with each medal though the medal itself was not inscribed.

The medal ribbon measures 36mm wide and features a wide central chrome yellow stripe with one wide and one thin red stripe each side with two further chrome yellow bars and two very thin black stripes.

For citizens of the United Kingdom, the medal may be worn on the right breast, but as it is not designated an official medal it is not to be mounted with other British official medals and awards.

THE MEDAL DUNKERQUE



ROLL OF HONOUR

Neil Le Maitre passed away on 24/03/22 just a week after his 90th Birthday. Neil had been a BAFEPOW member for a number of years, regularly attending our monthly meetings, and was very interested in FEPOW history. He had served in the Navy whilst doing his National Service and had often talked about being on HMS Indefatigable for which there is a memorial at the NMA. Neil enjoyed visiting the Arboretum and would always visit the Naval Area whilst there. RIP, Neil.

Harry Billinge - passed away peacefully on Tuesday, April 5th aged 96 - his work completed. Not connected to the Far East but so worthy of being included in our Roll Of Honour, it would have been difficult not to have heard of this dear man and his war time experience during the Normandy Invasions in 1944 where he saw so many of his comrades die alongside him while they were storming up Gold Beach. His one ambition had been to raise money towards a lasting monument to be placed in honour of the Fallen and he fund raised tirelessly over the years for it and also on behalf of the Royal British Legion. He became a bit of a 'celebrity' but would balk at the notion that he was a hero - "the heroes were those that didn't return". He was finally able to see his ambitions come to fruition in 2021 when he was able to travel to see the memorial that he had so long hoped for being dedicated on the hillside overlooking Gold Beach. He was one of only four men from his unit to survive the landing. He had a favourite poem and it is on the following page as a tribute to both him and those he wanted to be remembered - RIP, Harry xx

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!

WELFARE GRANTS FOR FEPOW, WIVES AND WIDOWS

If you need help with a grant towards hospital stays, Nursing Home Costs, alterations to the home, mobility aids etc, then please get in touch with:-

Mrs Margaret Martin, the Java Club by email:- margaretmartin1944@sky.com

Mrs Pauline Simpson, NFFWRA by email:- enquiries@nationalfepowfellowship.org.uk

The BAFEPOW news sheet is put together by the association secretary, Barbara James, and, hopefully, it contains items of interest to members. You are very welcome to suggest future topics or to submit items for future inclusion. You can contact me via email:- bmjames142@yahoo.co.uk or by phone:- 07954104857

For Harry - his favourite poem -

MY LONGEST DAY

Do not call me hero,
When you see the medals that I wear,
Medals maketh not the hero,
They just prove that I was there.

Do not call me hero,
Now that I am old and grey,
I left a lad, returned a man,
They stole my youth that day.

Do not call me hero,
When we ran the wall of hail,
The blood, the fears, the cries, the tears
We left them where they fell.

Do not call me hero,
Each night I stop and pray,
For all the friends I knew and lost,
I survived my longest day.

Do not call me hero,
In the years that pass,
For all the real true heroes,
Have crosses, lined up on the grass.

Author Rob Aitchison

