

Annual General Meeting of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association 2021

Secretary's Report

This year of 2021 saw us still endure the difficulties and sorrows imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. I'm happy to report that your Committee has continued to keep the Association vibrant and has been much more active than last year.

The Committee continues to meet virtually out of necessity. Zoom conference, organised by Thomas Murphy, has been a saviour to us. We had seventeen such meetings during the year. We are delighted to report that some Association activities took place under the Covid-19 restrictions that were in place at the time.

On Saturday 19th June, some members supported our colleague Gerry Spain in dedicating a headstone in Mount Jerome Cemetary to his late grandfather James Aspill who served with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

On Saturday 18th September, a trip organised by Suzanne O'Neill and George Jones took place to Durrow to visit the small museum dedicated to the memory of Jack Moyney VC. The visitors enjoyed a lecture given by a local historian on the history of the Dubs and other regiments in the area.

On Sunday 3rd October, a special day was experienced by those who attended the commemorative event in Mount Jerome Cemetary. The tour was organised by John O'Brien who with his colleagues Sean Ryan, Aidan Kavanagh and Anthony Barnes collated details of forty-four former members of the Dubs who are interred there. This mammoth task culminated with the placing of a memorial card and rose, kindly donated by Kevin Cunningham, on each grave visited. Some people gave a talk on their relative who is buried there.

On Saturday 10th October, Brian Moroney and John Sheehan travelled to Portlaoise to meet with colleagues from our sister regimental associations. A committee has been formed to coordinate activities around the commemoration of the centenary of the disbandment of their regiments to be held in June 2022. Further meetings are planned to be held on line.

Sadly during the year we learned of the passing of several loyal members including my fellow Committee member Sean Slattery. On Friday 19th November, we had a moving and dignified ecumenical ceremony in City Quay Church. Candles were lit as the names of our deceased friends were read out. This was the first such commemoration of its kind and is sure to become an annual occasion.

The weekend around Remembrance Sunday saw the Association involved in some events. Thomas Murphy laid a wreath at the war memorial in Oldtown Cemetary. A group led by Brian Moroney laid a wreath at the first remembrance ceremony to be held at the Royal British Legion Hall in Killester. John O'Brien, Sean Ryan and Anthony Barnes joined our colleague Kevin Cunningham in Mount Jerome Cemetary in his private commemoration of his late father Tommy, a former Dub. They then participated in the Annual Remembrance Service in Saint Patrick's Cathedral in the afternoon. A wreath was laid on behalf of our Association at the Kilkenny War Memorial.

The Editorial Sub-committee has been exceptionally busy this year, publishing issues 23 and 24 of The Blue Cap. They also produced three issues of The Old Tough which continues to receive great praise from readers. In addition they have assisted in the publication of the records of the forty-four members of the Dubs so far identified as being interred in Mount Jerome Cemetary. Currently they are finalising production of issue 25 of The Blue Cap and preparing a booklet to commemorate the centenary of the Regiment's disbandment.

Plans are advancing to organise a trip to Windsor in June 2022. George Jones and Suzanne O'Neill have been in contact, through the Royal British Legion, with the Naval Division who are enthusiastic about joining us as we journey through Liverpool. The British Embassy is fully aware of our intention to mark

the centenary of the disbandment and representations are being made to get our Government on board.

Our proposed tour to Salonika was postponed yet again but it is hoped that it can proceed in May, pandemic restrictions allowing.

Thanks to the unceasing work of Paul Appleby the Committee can confidently say that the Association is fully compliant with all the regulations of both Revenue and the Charities Governance Code in relation to inter alia The Trustees' Code of Conduct and Internal Financial Controls.

David Buckley our Exhibition Officer was unable, unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions organise any physical material exhibitions. He continues however to use the Facebook pages of The Royal Dublin Fusiliers and Collectors of Irish Regiments to show part of his collection of memorabilia.

The next year promises to be a very busy one for our Association. Apart from the tour to Salonika, the commemoration of the centenary service and the trip to Windsor, the Committee will ask the relevant authorities to respectfully relocate to a suitable site, the statue of the dying Royal Dublin Fusilier, a remnant of the Queen Victoria monument, which is currently languishing behind the scenes in Dublin Castle. The timing would be appropriate in view of our centenary.

Finally, as I shall not be going forward as Honorary Secretary next year due to family care commitments, may I thank my fellow Committee members for their unfailing support and encouragement. May I wish my successor and the incoming Committee all the very best in their roles.

Paul Taylor,

Hon. Secretary,

January 2021

