

## **Secretary's Annual Report, RDFA's 2023 AGM**

### **Introduction**

The Association held its 2022 AGM on Friday, 2 December, in the Freemason's Hall, Molesworth Street, Dublin, at 7.00 pm.

I am pleased to report that since our AGM your Committee has endeavoured to keep the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association vibrant and has met many times throughout the year in person and by zoom. The Committee members for 2023 were Brian Moroney (Chairperson), Thomas Murphy (Hon Secretary), Sally Keogh (Hon Treasurer), Paul Appleby, David Buckley, Seamus Greene, George Jones, Philip Lecane, John O'Brien, Suzanne O'Neill, John F Sheehan and Paul Taylor.

During the year, the Committee met over 12 times both in person and online and was assisted by several sub-committees, such as the Editorial Committee, the Membership Committee, the Governance Committee, the Finance Committee, the Mount Jerome Cemetery Remembrance Committee, the Standard Bearers Committee, the Social Media Committee and the Merchandise Committee.

### **Remembrance Events**

The Association participated in over 20 remembrance events in 2023 which included the following:

- 25 April (ANZAC Day), Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Dublin.
- 25 April, evening Service of Remembrance, St Ann's Church, Dawson Street, Dublin.
- 28 April, Dedication of Sligo Great War Memorial Garden, Cleveragh Park, Sligo.
- 11 June, Combined Irish Regiments Annual Parade, Whitehall, London.
- 1 July, Somme Commemoration, Ginchy Cross, Guillemot, France.
- 8 July, Somme Commemoration, War Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge, Dublin.
- 16 July, National Day of Commemoration, Cork.
- 26 August, Centenary Community Day, Killester Garden Village, Dublin.
- 30 September, Annual Dinner of the Irish Guards, Dublin.
- 10 October, RMS Leinster Commemoration, Dún Laoghaire.
- 11 November, Remembrance Ceremony, Killester Garden Village, Dublin.
- 11 November, Dedication of War Dead Monument, Oldtown, Co Dublin.
- 12 November, Remembrance Service, Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.
- 13 November, Unveiling of Plaque to Sgt Lawrence Crawley, RDF and ex-RIC, Castleberg, Co Tyrone.
- 17 November, RDFA Service of Remembrance, City Quay Church, Dublin.
- 19 November, German Remembrance Day Commemoration, Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, Co Wicklow.

In a field trip to Ypres/Ieper in Belgium in early September, 25 Association members enjoyed a very busy four days visiting many WW1 sites of Irish interest and paying our respects to the men who had fought and died there over 100 years ago. A highlight was the parading of the Standards of the Association and the Machine Gun Corps Association at the Menin Gate on 4 September. A review of the trip was included in the most recent edition of *The Old Tough* newsletter.

### **Dublin Festival of History**

For the first time, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association participated in the Dublin Festival of History. In Pearse Street Library on 30 September last, our President, Mr Tom Burke MBE, spoke on the theme, *From Shoebox to Window Box: Remembrance of WW1 in Ireland*. About 40 members of the public attended including a number of Association members. A summary of his remarks was included in the most recent edition of *The Old Tough* newsletter.

### **Publications**

The Editorial Committee of the Association is responsible for preparing our annual journal (*The Blue Cap*), our occasional newsletters (*The Old Tough*), other Association publications and our website at [www.greatwar.ie](http://www.greatwar.ie). The Committee met about ten times in 2023. Aside from their formal meetings, individual members of the Committee spent a lot of time researching aspects of the Dubs' history and developing or editing interesting articles for inclusion in either *The Blue Cap* or *The Old Tough*.

This year, three editions of *The Old Tough* were circulated to members in the Spring, Summer and Autumn. A positive response continues to be received to these regular communications which serve to inform members of Association news and developments. An extensive range of articles is again planned for inclusion in the 2023 edition of *The Blue Cap* which, it is hoped, to finalise and circulate in early 2024. The Editorial Committee thanks members for their articles and the other contributions to the journal and newsletters.

Last year, the Association issued a new publication, *'Come on the Dubs!' - A Brief History of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers*, to mark the centenary of the disbandment of the Irish Regiments. This booklet received a positive review in The Ticket supplement of *The Irish Times* on 28 January last – see Issue 9 of *The Old Tough*, Spring 2023. To date over 450 copies have been distributed to members and friends of the Association and to selected bookshops. Copies remain available to be purchased from the Association at a cost of €10.

This year, the Editorial Committee has designed and ordered a roll-up banner for use at public events featuring the Association. It is hoped to obtain delivery soon.

The Committee has also been tasked with updating the original pamphlet on the Association and its aims. It is hoped to complete this work in early 2024.

## **Website**

Our website at [www.greatwar.ie](http://www.greatwar.ie) contains a host of material relating to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and World War 1 in particular. The 2022 *Blue Cap* and 2023 *Old Tough* newsletters were added to the website during the year. Every effort continues to be made to keep it up-to-date and to address promptly any issues that arise for members and the general public in accessing the website's material. Please contact [rdfa1918@gmail.com](mailto:rdfa1918@gmail.com) if you experience any such problems.

## **Social Media**

Over the last year, our Facebook and Twitter accounts have had many hits and visits from members and the general public. Our Facebook and Twitter addresses are <https://www.facebook.com/RoyalDublinFusiliersAssociation/> and [@RoyalDubsFus](https://twitter.com/RoyalDubsFus) respectively. Our Social Media Committee closely monitors the content of the messages included on the sites.

## **Membership**

Following our review of membership data in 2022, we completed an up-to-date record of all renewed members: postal address, email address (when available) and contact phone number. We were therefore able to send renewal forms to all members by either email or post at the start of 2023.

We started the year with 103 members who had renewed during 2022. At the present time, we have 117 members who joined the Association or renewed their membership during 2023, i.e., an increase of 14 in total membership.

We have welcomed 16 new members to the Association during the year, but unfortunately two of our long-standing members, Capt Brendan Forde and Joe Gallagher, have passed away this year. They were stalwarts of the Association, and they will be sorely missed. May they rest in peace.

## **Governance**

As a registered charity (no 20038816), the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association endeavours to comply with the important provisions of the Charities Governance Code which was finalised by the Charities Regulator and became effective in 2021.

In reviewing the Code's provisions in early 2023, the Association's trustees updated the Schedule of Trustee Roles and Duties and agreed the Association's Activity Plan for 2023/2024. They also confirmed that other Association policies (e.g., the Statement of Internal Financial Controls) remained valid. The required internal form detailing our compliance with various aspects of the Charities Governance Code was also completed.

In submitting the Association's most recent annual return to the Charities Regulator earlier this year, the trustees notified their conclusion that we were fully compliant with the Code.

### **Mount Jerome Cemetery Remembrance**

Members John O'Brien, Anthony Barnes and Seán Ryan have continued their research into the Dublin Fusiliers buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery, Dublin. To date the graves of 91 men have been identified in cooperation with the Cemetery's Authorities. It is hoped that a film about this research project will be ready for screening in 2024.

### **Merchandise**

Members may purchase our ties, lapel badges, blazer badges, poppy badges and remembrance CDs. We are hoping that the ladies' scarves will be back in stock shortly. Printed copies of some of our older Blue Caps are also available for purchase. Contact our Treasurer, Sally Keogh, at [rdfa1918+Treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:rdfa1918+Treasurer@gmail.com) for further details.

### **Correspondence**

Most correspondence to our email account, [rdfa1918@gmail.com](mailto:rdfa1918@gmail.com), was from members and the general public interested in looking to join our Association or to find out information on relatives who were members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Every effort was made during the year to respond to these queries promptly.

Thomas Murphy  
Hon Secretary