



ARMY MUSEUMS OGILBY TRUST
58, The Close, Salisbury, SP1 2EX

Remembering Op Granby, 1990-1991

When COVID 19 struck, it was uncertain as to what the impact of the pandemic would be on the operation at the Firing Line Museum of The Queen's Dragoon Guards and The Royal Welsh, at Cardiff Castle. The impact was to be more significant than at first imagined. On closing to the public on 18th March 2020, little did we know that we would not be able to re-open our doors to the public until 28th May 2021. With our entire museum education and front of house team furloughed, and only the management team continuing to work throughout the museum's closure it became clear that, to sustain our organisation, we needed to build our resilience and diversify our methods of engaging with our audiences.

The ideal opportunity for us to demonstrate that we could adapt to these changing times came with a formal approach from Veterans of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards to reflect on and commemorate the 1st Gulf War and in particular the role that The Welsh cavalry had played in Op Granby. The project pulled together Veterans, a former BBC filmmaker and the Firing Line Museum Curatorial team to work collaboratively to collate oral histories, archival material, and people's experiences to create a concise but comprehensive online exhibit that documented the contributions of members of the Regiment. The heart of the project was ensuring that the narrative for this exhibition came directly from those who had served at the time.

Consultation was key to the development of the Op Granby project, with Veterans who had actively participated in The Gulf War contributing to a working group set up to collate the material needed for this exhibit. With so much uncertainty about reopening, the decision was made to create a digital online exhibition to maximize the potential of reaching as wide an audience as possible. The museum to date had no experience of creating digital content in this way and so the project proved to be a steep learning curve. With only three members of staff still working throughout the pandemic; roles were allocated to Rachel Adams the Managing Curator securing funding for the project, and the curatorial team Captain Mark Evans (regimental Curator) and Hannah Searle (Assistant Regimental Curator) managing historical research, text writing and digital content. The project team initially under-estimated the amount of time needed in producing such an exhibit, with timescales moving from a launch date of June 2021 to an actual date of going live in November 2021.

However, as we move into a world where hybrid delivery of online and in-person content seems more likely, there are no regrets about this move into the area of digital exhibits. While there are meaningful lessons learnt about time and content management, the audio histories that were captured mostly via mobile phone and online conferencing technologies has helped to create an audible memory of contemporary conflict that will be permanently accessioned into the QDG



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Archival collections. The loss of our usual audience of international tourists coming to Cardiff Castle has empowered us as a museum team to reinforce the relationship with our Regiments; thus, bridging the gap between our military and civilian stakeholders. We have also been able to use our social networking and website pages in a new way to promote our capacity to create exhibitions content. As we move forwards the museum has embraced technology to reach out beyond the confines of the museum.

We are extremely grateful to The Army Museums Ogilby Trust for their funding and for assisting us in adapting to change and embracing this new model of delivery.

The exhibition is live on our website and can be viewed at:

<https://cardiffcastlemuseum.org.uk/gulf-home/>

Rachel Adams, Managing Curator

Firing Line Museum of The Queen's Dragoon Guards and The Royal Welsh



Patrons: Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas PC AM | Lt Gen Sir Robert Hayman-Joyce KCB CBE DL | Lt Gen Sir Maurice Johnston KCB CVO OBE
Captain Sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards KCVO GCSJ RD GOMLJ JP RNR | David Hitchcock Esq. | Anthony Clay Esq.