

Secretary's Annual Report 2011/12

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I submit my sixth annual report for the year just ended.

During the year we held 10 regular meetings, with an annual dinner and a day trip to France:-

Apr 2011	'Jersey experiences in the First World War', contrasting with that of the Second World War and drawing some links between the two – a very interesting illustrated talk by local historian Ian Ronayne.
May 2011	'Channel Island Surrender aboard HMS Bulldog, 8th/9th May, 1945' – a very detailed illustrated talk by Mark Lamerton. Our annual dinner was held on 7th May 2011 at the Monterey Hotel. Thanks to Noel Le Fondre for organising this well-attended event and to Bob Le Sueur for being an entertaining speaker.
June 2011	A fabulous walk led by Colin Isherwood and Martin Walton around the site of Batterie Metz, Mont Rossignol. Thanks also to Dean who kindly allowed us to inspect the gun emplacement in his garden. A great deal of work went into this; we had nearly 50 members and no rain!
July 2011	Visit to Ho5 in St Aubin's. Thank you Colin for organising... those steps at the end were challenging! Visit to Pegasus and other parts of Normandy - Thank you Noel for organising a superb trip.
Aug 2011	A very successful archives day at Noirmont - 1,000+ visitors and a very good report in the local paper; well done to all involved. Thanks to all who helped, in particular Colin Isherwood, Neil Walker, Martin Walton and of course 'Mr Noirmont' (Paul Bernal).
Sep 2011	A very interesting talk by Wendy Tipping entitled 'Any day now', looking at political prisoners and escapes from Jersey.
Oct 2011	An excellent selection of slides from Michael Ginns, MBE.
Nov 2011	A great talk by the indefatigable Bob Le Sueur – 'Normal life in abnormal times 1939-45'.
Jan 2012	'Feuerplan & Azimuth - The Remaining Evidence' - an illustrated talk by Neil Walker. A highly successful evening with standing room only!
Feb 2012	'Some 8mm film from 1940 - cleaning and firing an '88 and more' – shown by Jeremy Hamon. A different seating arrangement for this one and the projector worked! (Thanks also to Billy Goode for donating a projector for future projection of 8mm film).

As usual, all the indoor meetings were followed by refreshments ably provided by Noel Le Fondre, with helpers, to whom all thirsty members are extremely grateful.

CI Occupation Review No.39 was published in Jersey on time in July. An excellent publication as usual with articles covering diverse subjects, ranging from Batterie Seydlitz to German defences in the Cold War. It is good to see some new and returning authors making contributions of such great quality. Our thanks once again go to the hard work undertaken by Matthew Costard. Matthew has also been working very hard on a revised and updated version of *German Tunnels in the Channel Islands*, which will focus solely on Jersey this time. It is scheduled for publication in the early summer.

The Noirmont Command Bunker has opened every week during the season. This, together with the dedication of members who open the other sites in our care, has seen a steady income from bunker openings. If you would like to help in the restoration or by manning the door or bookstalls, please speak to any member of the Committee, or other members involved. All those that open our fortifications will confirm how rewarding it is to

Speak with tourists, locals and other visitors about their favourite hobby! I have also noticed a significant increase in specialist and casual group tours; good for Jersey tourism and pleasing that organisations such as Leger Tours include our sites in their itinerary.

The mains electricity supply has now been connected to the Millbrook bunker, and the connection to the La Corbière M19/634 complex is being worked on. Our thanks go to Tony Chalker for supervising these projects.

During 2011 a number of fortifications were again "threatened" by development, and Matthew Costard, on behalf of your Committee, has made representations to our Planning Department to ensure that our interests are taken into account. The Plémont site remains a particular concern. We have also participated in the Jersey Heritage re-survey of historic buildings, and key information has been recorded for the Occupation sites that we hope to see afforded the appropriate level of protection in the future. Thanks to those who have helped, especially Dave Maindonald, John Stoakes, Martin Walton, Colin Isherwood, Tony Chalker and Neil Walker.

Donations – During the last year we have received a number of generous donations/loans, including a gift of £500.00 from Engelbert Hoppe, the former commander of Strongpoint Corbière which we shall be using to install interpretation plaques on the headland.

Also thank you to a number of members who have supplied photographs to our archive, both recent and old.

During 2011, our archivist, Colin Isherwood, has continued to make significant progress with the organisation and presentation of our collection, the archives day at Noirmont being particularly successful. Colin has also greatly helped with answering some of the ever increasing number of e-mailed enquiries on diverse (and sometimes very obscure) topics.

I am still able to fill our regular meeting slots and have continued to use members' expertise in both Jersey and non-Jersey based subjects that I believe to be of interest to members – I do try to have a variety of speakers covering as wide a range of topics as possible. If you know of a speaker or are able to access a private area for a walk please also let me know as I am filling up the 2013 series already!

Membership ended the year at 438 (a slight decrease from 454 in 2010), including 29 new members; during the year 9 members left or passed away and 36 did not renew.

The subscription rates have not increased during all the years in which I have been Secretary, and as we all know postage costs have gone through the roof! This, coupled with other increases, has meant a recommendation of a modest increase by your Committee to the following levels: Single member £18, Couple £27.00, Junior (under 16) £13.50, Family £27.00 (plus £6.00 for each child), Overseas (not inc UK) Members EUR25/US\$35/£23. I still believe this to be excellent value for money and it should still make membership accessible to those members who are finding increases difficult to manage.

As he indicated he would at the last AGM, Matthew Costard has retired as Chairman of the Fortifications Sub-Committee ("FSC") after nearly 15 years in the role. No-one on the Sub-Committee expressed an interest in taking over, and the opportunity was taken to review the function of the FSC, and to consider whether an alternative structure could be put in place. The matter was referred to the Board who came to the unanimous decision that there was no longer a need for the FSC, and that the interests of its members could be represented on the Board by a Director who would act as a 'Fortifications Co-ordinator'. If re-elected, Tony Chalker has kindly agreed to perform this function.

The last meeting of the FSC took place on 29 February, at the end of which it was formally dissolved. I would like to thank Matthew Costard for performing what has been in the past a very active role as FSC Chairman and for steering an objective course through a number of more controversial issues in recent years

One of Matthew's functions as FSC Chairman has been to liaise with the various heritage and planning organisations and States departments in order to ensure that our interests are maintained and presented in a clear and concise way. I am pleased to report that Matthew has agreed (if re-elected as a Director) to continue in this role with the title of 'Heritage and Planning Liaison Officer'.

Whilst looking at changes in officers I would also like to remind you that, after 23 years as Editor of Publications, Matthew Costard has expressed a wish to retire from this role as well, and will not be seeking re-election in 2013. We need to find someone who has the time and skills, and Matthew will be happy to show the new Editor the ropes for the publication of *Review No.41*.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Directors and all members who have helped during the past year, and who may not have been mentioned by name. I like to think that new, enthusiastic members are given a chance to participate in the wide range of activities undertaken and to ensure the burden does not become overwhelming for some individuals, I would like to thank Damien and Tony, our new Board members in 2011, who have both made a valuable contribution and taken an active part in the operation of the Society. If anyone else is thinking they would like to become more involved and have complementary skills to offer please step forward when an opportunity exists or a gap is identified. I am very happy to speak to anyone about what each role involves – it is essential that new blood is introduced to our Committee and Board of Directors so we continue to flourish in the future.

We have great plans for 2012 and beyond, and we hope to see you at our events throughout the coming year.



Jeremy Hamon
Secretary
14 March 2012