

Secretary's Annual Report 2013/14

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen

I hereby submit my eighth annual report for the year just ended.

During the year we held 8 regular meetings:-

Apr 2013	Springfield Cold War Bunker visit – a repeat visit, requested by a number of members – still a fascinating time capsule.
June 2013	Fort Regent and South Hill fortifications – a really interesting walk, I certainly had never been to the well before, led by Martin Walton.
July 2013	Archives day – Occupation foods and display of archive – arranged by CIOS Archivist Colin Isherwood and Damien Horn at Trinity Parish hall – Wow! mobbed the whole time – 2 new members from this day as well.
Aug 2013	Visit to Elizabeth Castle – led by Tony Pike, an excellent visit on a somewhat drizzly day
Sep 2013	The well anticipated Fortifications from the sea trip had to unfortunately be cancelled due to the gale force winds.
Oct 2013	The Bertram films – shown by Colin Isherwood, a last minute change and a very interesting film, which I had not seen before. We are likely to repeat a showing of this soon.
Nov 2013	“Sechschartentürme!” The Heavyweight of MG positions - an excellent illustrated talk by Neil Walker
Jan 2014	“German Helmets” – an excellent illustrated talk by Colin Isherwood with superb examples on show.
Feb 2014	Flak 88 – an illustrated talk by Martin Walton, I learn a lot from one of Martin's talks – keep them coming!

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.

The CI Occupation Review for 2013 was published in Jersey for the first time under our new Editor Paul Ronayne – an excellent job and Paul is enthusiastic to get the next publication underway.

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. A huge number of visitor specialist Groups have been accommodated throughout the year, I was involved with a Czech group who had driven a van from the Czech republic – only one member of the party spoke any English at all – this showed me how wide reaching our interest has become. A number of people help with these ad-hoc Group visits mostly during weekdays – thanks especially to Paul Burnal, Damien Horn, Martin Walton and Malcolm Amy and others for helping to make these visits happen, quite often at short notice.

During 2013 a number of fortifications were again “threatened” by development, and Matthew Costard, on behalf of your Board, has made representations to our Planning Department to ensure that our interests are taken into account.

Donations – During the last year we have received a number of donations/loans, a separate Archivist report will be given by Colin at the AGM. During 2013, Colin Isherwood, has also greatly helped in organising events where our artefacts can be shown and 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 however I have recently felt that “new blood” was needed for our monthly meetings and I am pleased to say that Colin Isherwood has agreed to undertake the events planning and organisation for 2014/15, he will outline the exciting plans he has. As usual if you know of a speaker or are able to access a private area for a walk please let Colin know we are filling up the 2015 series already!

Membership ended the year at 418 (exactly the same number as 2012!), there has though been a steady turnover of members leaving and new ones joining, our Facebook group has nearly 200 members and has been a good channel to encourage people to become full members over 30 of this year's 41 new members have come via the Facebook page. However Social Media does have some drawbacks and I would like to publically apologise on behalf of the Board for a post recently made by a Board member which was posted in haste and removed shortly after. I still believe this is an important tool and we need to carefully embrace it, your Board will be considering this, as well as twitter, you tube and other new communication mediums shortly in more detail.

Your Board is recommending that the annual subscription be maintained to the following levels: Single member £18 p.a., 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 am also pleased to report that the newer members of your board, Damien Horn, Tony Pike and Paul Ronayne are all playing an active role and have attended all Board meetings since the past AGM – Damien in particular gets my thanks for hosting the Board meetings. I would also like to give a special mention to Tom Brossman, who is standing to the Board this year having revamped and run our website last year and has been updating it in a very efficient and creative manner.

I would also like to thank Tony Chalker for undertaking the Fortifications co-ordination responsibility, this role is greatly assisted by Tony's detailed knowledge of planning and building matters. I see this role evolving in 2014 and a more robust control being taken of bunker restoration and opening activities to ensure we provide a consistent standard of opening all within our very small budget.

This year for the first time I have considered not standing for re-election, there are two main reasons for this. Firstly I believe new blood and new ideas are important for a Society such as ours. I hear accusations of “the Society” being a problem. I believe all of us are “*the Society*”, those of us who are brave enough to step forward to be Directors are giving up a significant amount of time to help with the running of something to the best of our own abilities that we feel passionate about and all for no direct reward. I hope we can find resources internally for the bunker openings and multitude of other tasks we currently undertake, we punch far above our weight and I hope we can move forward in the 21st century and flourish as one of the most respected Occupation related History organisations in the island if not the world!

We can all make a difference to “*the Society*” in the coming year.



Jeremy Hamon
Secretary
12 March 2014