

Secretary's Annual Report 2015/16

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen

I hereby submit my tenth annual report for the year just ended. During the year we held

11 regular meetings including a record number of overseas trips:-

Apr 2015	Plemont Walk A guided walk arranged by Matthew Costard and organised by the National Trust, there were limited numbers for this excellent walk and Matthew is repeating his walk this year in April
May 2015	Archives Week A superb Archives week organised by Colin Isherwood and held at St Mary's parish hall. Attendance was excellent and a lot of goodwill was generated for us resulting in a number of artifacts being donated. During May Neil Walker also repeated his day trip to St Malo & Le fort de la Cité d'Alet.
June 2015	Guided walk to Corbiere Lighthouse Led by Sue Hardy, around 20 members toured Corbiere lighthouse – it is a very interesting place to visit and I would recommend a visit on one of Sue's regular summer tours if you have not been before.
June/July 2015	Day trip to Guernsey and a Day trip to Normandy Two excellent day trips led by Noel Le Fondre – thanks also to our Guernsey friends for making the Guernsey day so interesting.
Aug 2015	Hafenverteidigung” – The Harbour Defenses of St. Malo April 1944 Day Trip “two” Neil Walker/Colin Isherwood leading us “fast paced” around the town and across to Grand Be – a fabulous day trip.
Sep 2015	Live firing of German hand weapons Led by Damien Horn, whilst only attended by a small number of members this was a well organised opportunity to live fire a number of German world war two weapons including a K98 rifle, MP40 and a Luger.
Oct 2015	Walk from Le Braye Area Walk South Tony Pike led us on a sunny afternoon walk from Le Braye to Les Carriers visiting all the fortifications in between.
Nov 2015	“Photos - miscellaneous” Jeremy Hamon showed a further mix of pictures from photographs donated to the CIOS by Michael Ginns MBE.
Jan 2016	With the late cancellation of David Gainsborough-Roberts, a film and archives evening was organised at very short notice thanks to our archivist, Colin Isherwood.
Feb 2016	Soldatenheims in Jersey Part 1 A very detailed illustrated talk by Colin Isherwood showing a number of unseen pictures and providing a lot of information on an interesting aspect of the occupation not covered before.

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

The CI Occupation Review for 2015 was published in Jersey, a quality publication as usual. And the first one published by our editor Paul Ronayne on his own – well done Paul. At the very end of 2015 Paul Bernal published his long awaited updated book on Batterie Lothringen, running to over 430 pages this is one of the largest books published on a local history site. The book includes a huge number of additional photos and information to the first publication and is a credit to Paul Bernal and Matthew Costard who edited the book.

The Noirmont Command Bunker has opened most weeks during the season. This, together with the dedication of members who open the other sites in our care, has seen a higher income from bunker openings. A large number of visitor specialist Groups have been accommodated throughout the year – usually at very short notice.

During 2015 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 Isherwood at the AGM. During 2015, 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. In addition to Colin I would like to single out Neil Walker for thanks – he does an awful lot for us in terms of events, research and visits and does this quietly in the background – thank you Neil.

Membership ended the year at 405 (402 last year), there has though, been a steady turnover of members leaving and new ones joining, our Facebook discussion group has increased from 400 to over 550 members at the current point and has been a good channel to encourage people to become full members. We now also have an official CIOS Facebook page where we can put information out to members and those liking the page, we currently have 125 “likes”.

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 would also like to thank Tony Chalker for undertaking the Fortifications co-ordination responsibility, deputised by Damien Horn, this role is greatly assisted by Tony’s detailed knowledge of planning and building matters.

Your Board holds a quarterly meeting, a quarterly site visit and a quarterly get together at the Victoria pub for bunker teams – I think we have widened the scope for communication with and from the Board in 2015 and made better use of individual member’s time in the process. I would especially like to thank Alex Fearn who having joined the Board at the last AGM is extremely enthusiastic and volunteers (and delivers) on everything he can. Alex is also producing a guide to the St Brelade’s bay defenses – if you have any information or photographs from the occupation or shortly afterwards he would be grateful to hear from you.

As some of you know I have been concerned over the last few years with succession planning, especially around the role of Secretary. The Guernsey CIOS have split the Secretary role into three Committee roles. The Secretary has a huge and varied number of activities in terms of communications, events, memberships, correspondence, record keeping and legal filings. Tom Brossman, a member of your Board for the last few years has stepped forward and expressed an interest in becoming the Society Secretary and I think a new person undertaking this role will breathe new and different life into the way our activities are undertaken. Tom is an Information Technology expert and has been an active member of the Board and I am fully supportive of Tom's nomination.

For my part the Board does have the ability to engage company secretarial assistance and they have expressed a desire to engage me to help Tom over the next few months and assist with the company annual return etc. This I am happy to do whilst giving Tom room to express himself without the "old" Secretary breathing down his neck! For the present time it is proposed that the registered address of the CIOS Jersey remain the same and I undertake Membership renewals for 2016. This will also use up stationery and allow Tom to get his feet under the table without this year's membership renewals to worry about.

In conclusion thank you all for the last 10 years whilst I have been Secretary, I think we have made progress and averted any major crisis, over the next few years, in my view, we need to work closer with similar interest Groups such as Unseen Jersey, I am sure there are opportunities for members of both organisations to benefit and together we can provide a united voice to Government bodies when required.

Finally, When you pay your subs. remember you are not buying something from a shop or supplier – you are making a contribution to the bunker restorations, public openings, events, publications, lectures, walks and representations we make whenever a German structure is threatened. Remember also that there are only a small number of volunteers doing the huge volume of activity – if you have skills and would like to contribute to your Society please do so. One of my catch phrases over the years has been "*you don't have to be on the Committee to make a contribution*" collectively we punch above our weight and have a credibility level on par with the Société Jersiaise or National Trust, it has been the commitment of members over the years that has led us (all of you) to be regarded as experts in the field of the German Occupation.



Jeremy Hamon
Secretary
9 March 2016