



The Rifles Regiment Freedom of Wellington – The Rifles Museum Exhibition

From the 12-17th June, an exhibition from The Rifles Museum will be on display in Wellington Town Council's Pop-up Shop in Fore Street, Wellington. This will be to support The Rifles receiving the Freedom of Wellington on Saturday 17th June.

The exhibition tells the story of The Rifles regiment, from its formation in 2007 to the present day. It will also cover The Rifles' historic and current connections to Somerset, and the traditions and ethos of the Regiment. The exhibition will feature a collection of objects relating to The Rifles, such as a modern British Army ration kit, an Afghan (Dari) language booklet, and a manual on battlefield casualty drills. Additionally, visitors will have the opportunity to handle and try on pieces of military uniform and kit, and pick up handouts explaining elements of the history and character of The Rifles (for example, why 'Serjeant' is spelt with a 'J' in The Rifles and why Riflemen have swords, not bayonets!). Colouring activities and stickers will also be available for younger visitors.

The Rifles Museum is located in Peninsula Barracks, Winchester, Hampshire. It covers history of the British Army's largest infantry regiment, from formation, through the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to more recent operations. It also tells the story of life in The Rifles, including training, sport, art and more. A remembrance space in the Museum is dedicated to all Riflemen that haven been killed in action since 2007.

The Rifles Museum shares a building with the Royal Green Jackets Museum, which cover one of The Rifles four forming regiments and its antecedent regiments. Both museums are part of The Rifles Museums Network, which includes museums and collections spread across the country. In South West England, these are Bodmin Keep - Cornwall's Army Museum, Somerset Military Museum (Taunton), Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum (Gloucester), The Keep Military Museum (Dorchester), and The Rifles Berkshire and Wiltshire Museum (Salisbury).

A key battle honour of The Rifles, one of the 34 displayed on the Regiment's belt badge, was the Battle of Waterloo (1815), which saw Field Marshal Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, lead his Coalition army to victory over the French forces of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. Wellington's army included five antecedent regiments of The Rifles: the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment of Foot, 32nd (Cornwall)

Regiment of Foot, 51st (2nd Yorkshire West Riding) Regiment of Foot (Light Infantry), 52nd (Oxfordshire) Regiment of Foot (Light Infantry), and 95th (Rifles) Regiment of Foot. A sixth antecedent, the 54th (West Norfolk) Regiment of Foot, was operating close by in support.

To find out more about actions of The Rifles antecedent regiments at Waterloo, pick up the handout 'Wellington and Waterloo' from the exhibition. To discover the full stories of these antecedent regiments, visit their museums: Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum, Bodmin Keep - Cornwall's Army Museum, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry Museum (Doncaster), Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (Woodstock), Royal Green Jackets Museum and The Keep Military Museum.

The exhibition in Wellington will be installed and staffed by The Rifles Museum's Assistant Curator James Fenton, and volunteers from the Wellington community. The exhibition will be held in conjunction with and support from Wellington Museum.

