



The British Commission For Military History

by Michael Orr, Secretary-general of the British Commission for Military History

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The British Commission for Military History was founded in 1968 as an affiliate of the International Commission for Military History, largely through the efforts of David Chandler and Christopher Duffy. Beginning with a membership drawn from the Department of Military History at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, the BCMH has expanded to a current strength of nearly 200 under the successive leadership of David Chandler, Professor Brian Bond, Professor Richard Holmes and Major-General (ret'd) Mungo Melvin. Members include those who work professionally in the field of military history, for example as university teachers or museum staff, and others who contribute actively to the development of military history in the UK, by writing and publishing or by playing a role in the organization of relevant societies.

The Commission's main activity is the organization of a number of conferences each year, usually one weekend and two one-day conferences. Conference themes sometimes relate to particular campaigns or military historical anniversaries, but more generally pursue a topic across several periods and types of warfare, encouraging the interchange of ideas between specialists. In addition the Commission organizes an annual battlefield tour.

All these activities are open to members and their guests. A newsletter, *Mars & Clio*, is sent to members three times a year in which conference papers are published, together with book reviews, conference announcements, short articles and commission news. The Commission has been responsible for three commercial publications in the last decade. These books were collections of essays dealing with the First and Second World Wars. In May 2007, a BCMH website was launched, primarily for communication among the membership but also offering a selection of the commission's conference papers, news of forthcoming conferences, courses, publications & news of interest to the general public. It is our intention to develop it as the commission's public face as a service to the members of the British public who have an interest in military history without pursuing it at the professional or semi-professional level expected of Commission members. ICMH members are cordially invited to visit the website www.bcmh.org.uk/.

ICMH members are also welcome to attend the Commission's conferences. For details, please contact the British Commission for Military History, Secretary General, Mr Michael Orr, at secgen.bcmh@ntlworld.com