



**Annual
Review
2016–17**

The National Army Museum is a leading authority on the British Army and its impact on society, past and present. We examine the Army's role as protector, fighting force and peacekeeper from the British Civil Wars to the modern day. Through our collections we preserve and share stories of ordinary people with extraordinary responsibilities.



The Chairman's Statement

General Sir Richard Shirreff KCB CBE

Chairman of the Council

General Sir Richard Shirreff KCB CBE was until 2014 NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe and since then has forged a career as an author and in business.

In a varied Army career, General Sir Richard has commanded on operations at every level from platoon to division, including combat in the Gulf War as a tank squadron leader and counter-insurgency operations in Northern Ireland, as well as active service in Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq. He then went on to command the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps before his final tour of duty as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

General Sir Richard is now a partner in Strategia Worldwide, a consultancy advising on the management of strategic risk.

The National Army Museum is most fortunate to have General Sir Richard's personal involvement and support as it moves into the next exciting phase of its development.

2017 marks a truly historic year in the Museum's development – the most momentous, perhaps, since its foundation and move to Chelsea in 1971 under the auspices of Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer.

The reopening of the Museum in March this year marked the culmination of six years' planning, involving five years of fundraising and of course, three years creating the new building itself.

As a result, the National Army Museum, more than ever before, acts as a communication channel between the Army, in its past and present form, and the wider public. Its new immersive, interactive approach brings to life, uniquely and compellingly, the experiences – as well as the weapons and equipment – of the serving soldier through the ages up to the present day.

Our close connection with the British Army has given us unique access, not only to objects associated with its history, but to the personal reminiscences of those who served – and continue to serve – in its ranks.

A valuable resource

At the same time, the Museum continues to play an important part as a crucial resource for academic researchers and military historians, via the Templer Study Centre and other research facilities.

Throughout this period of transition, we have had access to the constant support and encouragement of the National Army Museum Council, and of our donors and supporters who have played a major part in the re-creation of the Museum as it is today.

A royal presence

We were privileged by the presence of Her Majesty The Queen at the Royal Preview in March; a proud day for all who had experienced at close hand the transformation of the Museum. This was a fitting celebration of the achievements of the past six years – a celebration which is continued daily, by the presence of so many of the general public who are now able to connect with the history and experiences of the British Army and its personnel as never before.

Director General's Statement

A year to remember – The National Army Museum



Janice Murray
Director General

A re-envisioned Museum in a new building with a new purpose, designed for the needs of the 21st century.

A new vision

By 2011 we knew that the old building, while appropriate for the 1970s, had outlived its usefulness both in terms of capacity and public resource. In particular, we saw that with the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War in 2014, our visitor numbers would overwhelm the building as it was.

The vision went beyond a simple matter of capacity, we also saw it as an opportunity to engage new audiences as well as enhancing the experience of our existing friends, whether Army, military historians or academic researchers. We felt that there was a story to tell beyond the history of the Army as an institution, by bringing to the public mind the experiences of serving and non-serving soldiers: what they went through, how they lived and sometimes died, and the record of extraordinary service to their country.

It was also an opportunity to build on what was already an unrivalled collection of artefacts, written resources and personal accounts. This would enable us not just to reinforce our role as

an academic resource, but to use them to provide a unique experience to the wider public. Importantly too, their display would strengthen our bond with the British Army and its serving personnel, as they saw their own experiences mirrored in those of earlier times.

Our work in Chelsea was only part of the story. We took the opportunity, during closure, to 'turn ourselves inside-out' - to access a wider audience than we had previously enjoyed by extending our Outreach Programme across the UK. This enabled us to develop new ways of connecting with the public and reach new audiences throughout the UK.

The building as an asset

The new building defines the wider role of the National Army Museum. A vastly improved exterior is matched by an interior carefully designed as an open, airy space where people can meet, mingle and choose which of the exhibition areas to browse. It symbolises our philosophy that it is for our visitors to define their experiences, rather than our role to define it for them. Additionally, the elegant spaces have been designed for use as private and corporate functions, not only to raise awareness among opinion-formers, but to help grow our revenue.



**“It is for our visitors
to define their
experiences, rather
than our role to
define it for them”**

On a personal note...

My tenure as Director General is now coming to an end after seven extraordinary years in the life of the Museum.

During that time we have seen it develop into a resource that will reach out as never before to a wider public, and tell the untold stories behind the histories: the experiences of the men and women who made up - and continue to make up - the British Army.

My thoughts, thanks and best wishes are with the Museum, and everyone who contributed to making it what it is today, but particularly the staff who have worked so hard to make it happen.

I also want to thank those many friends of the Museum in so many walks of life who have offered their support, friendship and advice and who I know will continue to help make the Museum an even better resource to explain and connect the Army with the wider world in the years to come.

Janice

Janice Murray
Director General

A history of achievement, the achievement of history

The story of the National Army Museum, from its beginnings to the present day, has been a history of evolution, modernisation and development. Since its move to Chelsea in 1971, it has grown continually, both physically and in its collections, over the past 45 years. It has long been an essential resource for military historians, academics and all those fascinated by the story of the British Army from its earliest times.

However, time doesn't stand still. Changes in society, and public expectations of what a museum should offer, required a holistic look at what the National Army Museum should represent in the 21st century.

The need to close and reconstruct the building gave the Council and staff a unique opportunity to re-think the purpose of the Museum – literally – from the ground up.

They saw the need and the opportunity to widen the message of the Museum to the general public. Always a popular venue for the public and researchers alike, the Museum could now tell the story of the Army in ways that would create further appeal to a wider audience, while remaining an essential resource for professional historians and academics.

With Army involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan and with the advent of social media, the general public became aware as never before of the day-to-day lives of the men and women who had to deal with difficult combat situations. In this environment of a new public understanding of British soldiers' lives, a vision emerged of creating a museum which could engage new, wider audiences with the story – not just of the Army but of individual serving soldiers on a profoundly human level.

The period covered by this Annual Review is itself a record of achievement. In April 2016 the new building was still in the process of completion. Just one year later, the fully-functioning, revitalised National Army Museum was visited by Her Majesty The Queen before we opened to the public. What follows is a season-by-season summary of what was a complex, demanding but exciting process.



ABOVE
The new building taking shape during 2014-15

Countdown to launch Highlights

With so much happening virtually every day in such a hectic and demanding year, it would be impossible to cover all those activities in this Review. The following photographs capture some of the key events, season by season, that led up to the reopening of the Museum.



Spring

2016

With the structure of the new building nearing completion, the project moved into a different phase as large exhibits, including military vehicles, were installed.



“Parents, kids, experts – they all see the collections through different eyes”

As the building work progressed, our outward-facing activities continued unabated. We entered the final stages of our fundraising programme with a reception at St James’s Palace, and at the same time continued our Outreach Programme, completing our Heritage Lottery Fund activities, and bringing to fruition projects such as ‘The Old and the Bold’ and ‘Kaur Values’.

Meanwhile, the conservation of our precious artefacts continued, a task made more challenging by the fact that a third of all our objects had either been recently acquired or had never before been on display. All of them had to be examined and where necessary cleaned and preserved for future generations.



1 Installing the Humber Pig – an armoured personnel carrier used by the British Army

2 Council Members Mr William Wells and Lieutenant General Sir Barney White-Spunner at our Downing Street fundraising event

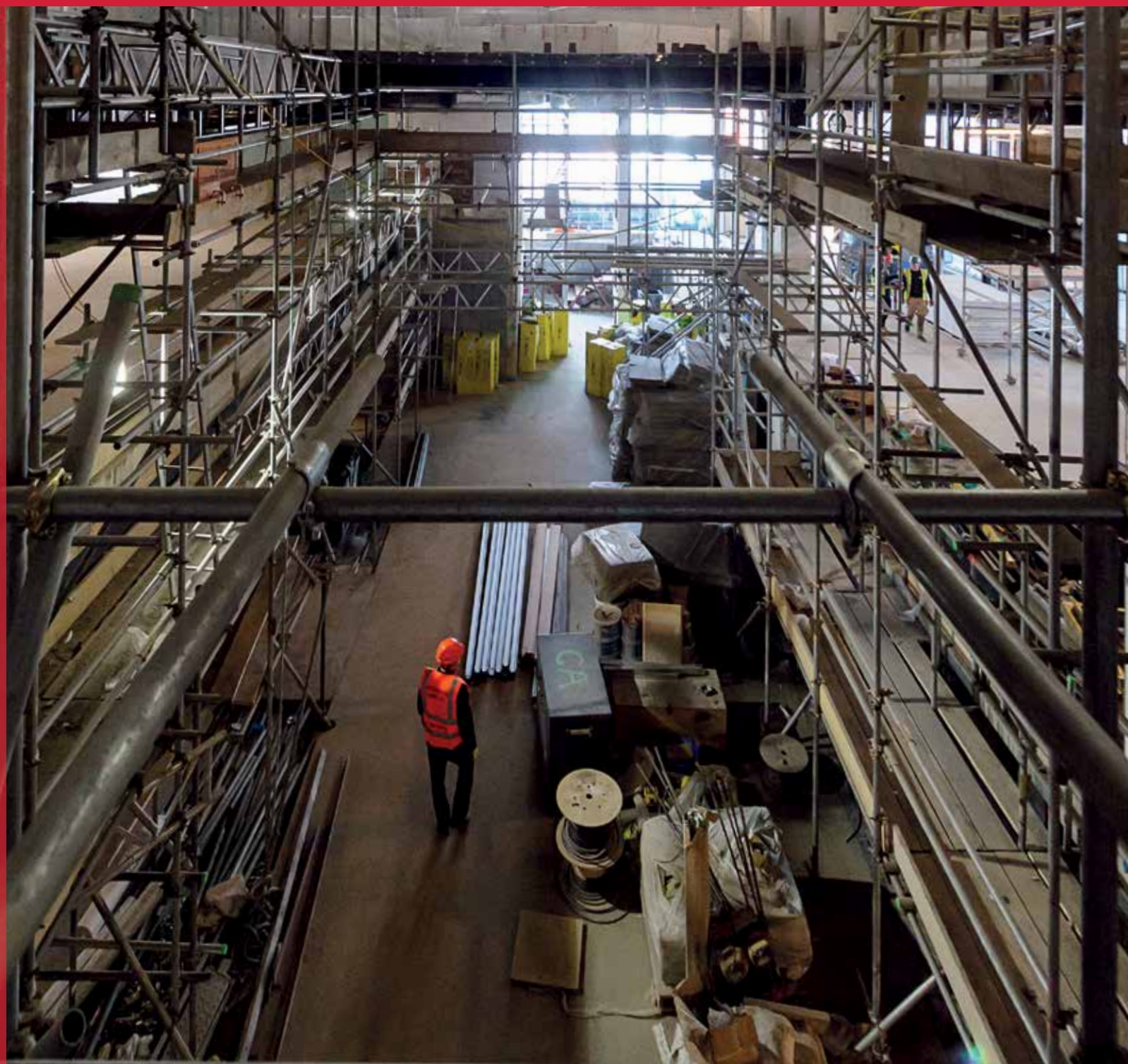
3 At the Royal Hospital Chelsea with The Old and the Bold community project

4 Conservation in progress – restoring old paintings

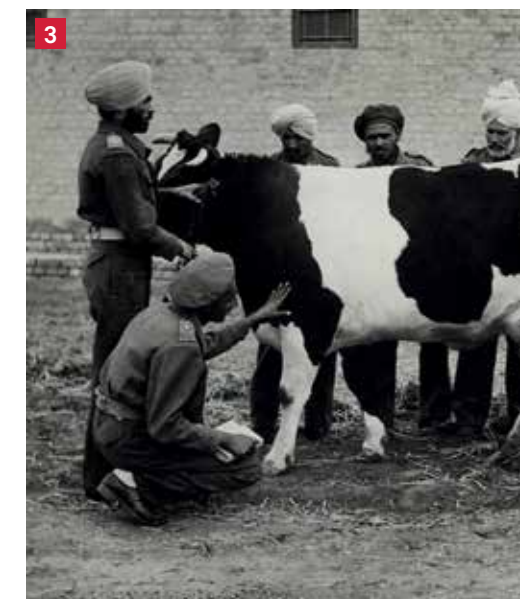
Summer 2016

During the summer months, the setting-up of the interior of the Museum continued.

BELOW
The Atrium and main entrance hall beginning to take shape



“We balance our messages around our 3 audiences: academics, the Army and the general public”



- 1 Conversing with the public on the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme
- 2 Engaging with youngsters at the Hay Festival
- 3 One of 180 photographs collected and taken by Lt Gen Sir Reginald Savory during his career in the Indian Army which have now been digitised by the Museum
- 4 An exhibition case under construction

Offsite fabrication of the exhibitions took place in locations across the UK, whilst the cases were designed and built in the Netherlands. Preparation work on the collections continued at Stevenage and conservation work was completed.

Meanwhile, the interior of the building began to take shape, with the design of the public spaces being completed, and the spaces themselves being constructed.

Digitisation of our collection of Indian Army photographs and disbanded Irish regiment enlistment books was completed and launched. Our national and international outreach continued with the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme in 1916, and attendance at events such as the Hay Festival in Hay-on-Wye.





ABOVE
Arranging the uniform displays in the Army gallery

Autumn

2016

With the return of our collections into the new building, the work could now begin of bringing the Museum back to life.



1
3



Our archives could now be brought back to Chelsea, and the Templer Study Centre fitted out. During this time, we were able to begin the installation of both exhibition graphics and the objects themselves in their eventual home.

Our focus was now firmly set on creating a museum-wide visitor experience. This informed our approach to every aspect of the building's interior. Nowhere was this more important than in the design of the displays and exhibitions as they began to take shape.

- 1 The Stevenage Uniform Store
- 2 The new archives in action
- 3 Interactive exhibits being installed



“The collections remain at the heart of the Museum, telling stories accessible to the wider public as well as researchers”



A gratifying number of new gifts and acquisitions reached us, including the robes of Captain TE Lawrence ('Lawrence of Arabia') and these, among many other objects, were also now installed.

We could also give our attention to the exterior of the building, including the exterior signage. On the visitor side, we began the process of designing literature, as well as setting up staff training programmes and planning our marketing campaign.

We also hosted a popular event at the House of Commons as well as a fundraising event at the Cavalry and Guards Club.



“We can now display many more objects than before, and rotate them to keep the displays fresh and relevant”



- 1 New visitor literature is ready for launch
- 2 External signage installation outside the main entrance
- 3 Youngsters debating at the Houses of Parliament
- 4 Frank Gardner, Kate Adie and Field Marshal Sir John Lyon Chapple at the Cavalry and Guards Club
- 5 Director General Janice Murray and Alderman Peter Hewitt at the Cavalry and Guards Club
- 6 Installation of Capt TE Lawrence's ('Lawrence of Arabia') desert robes



Winter
2017

As the New Year dawned, the pace quickened even more as the projected opening day grew closer.

The interactive displays were put in place, and the 'War Paint' exhibition finalised. Our new brand was made public for the first time, together with our new website and accompanying pre-launch publicity.

In January we were honoured by a visit by our Patron, HRH The Duke of Kent, who toured the site and was able to see for himself our work as it neared completion.

Play Base, our early learning facility, was installed and the café, retail and public areas fitted out. Everything was finally cleaned and polished before Her Majesty The Queen graced us with her presence at a Royal Preview of the new National Army Museum on 16 March – a crowning achievement! One thing only remained: our opening to the public, which occurred on 30 March. We were now 'open for business'.

- 1 Our team of volunteers provide welcome support
- 2 HRH The Duke of Kent visited during the last stages of the build
- 3 Our Play Base facility almost complete and ready for launch
- 4 HM The Queen is presented with a book commemorating her association with the National Army Museum by General Sir Richard Shirreff
- 5 Our new brand is reflected in our digital communications



“Anyone, from any background, can now find something to relate to”

Winter
2017



The grand opening

In March the National Army Museum saw one of the most significant days in its history: the day we opened the doors of the new Museum to the public.



Our first day open to the public. Old and young, from the public to serving soldiers – our Museum has universal appeal

External reactions

‘The proof of the pudding’, so they say, ‘is in the eating.’ Despite careful planning, and the development of the new Museum as a resource for the public, Army and researchers alike, we had to wait until we opened to learn how the wider community would react.



The press

“ National Army Museum’s reinvention is a thought-provoking triumph.”

The Daily Telegraph
March 2017

“ A £23 million redevelopment has transformed the once stuffy National Army Museum into a bright, modern space that reconnects us with soldiers’ lives.”

The Times
March 2017

“ The NAM is a fantastic achievement... it is exciting and enticing, engaging and fascinating and I can’t wait to go back.”

Tincture of Museum
April 2017

“ The reworked Museum is a joy to wander round, with airy, open spaces and a thought-provoking object around every corner.”

The Londonist
March 2017

Our associates

“ I got to think about how families might experience the spaces. There are lots of interactions, lots of opportunities to tell stories.”

Catherine McKeag
Kids In Museums

“ The layout of the current Museum is absolutely terrific. Moving to themes enables you to do so much more. A fantastic access to any number of exhibits that could never have been achieved before.”

Lt Col Tim How
Royal Tank Regiment

“ What we really like is how the National Army Museum have really thought about their different audiences.”

Stuart Hobley
Heritage Lottery Fund

And most importantly...

The public

“ **Fantastic**

collection, which is aimed at the general public rather than ex-military people, which is as it should be.”



Facebook

“ Congratulations to @NAM_London for a **truly stunning**

refurb. Great exhibits, excellent interpretation and wonderful staff. New benchmark!”

Twitter



“ Staff are really knowledgeable and eager to share their knowledge.”



TripAdvisor



“ Excellently curated and **incredibly interesting.**”



TripAdvisor

“ **Fantastic**

what they’ve done with this place; a real pleasure to walk around.”



Facebook

“ **Impressed**

with the exuberance of displays, thoughtfulness of labels and friendliness of staff @NAM_London. Highly successful redesign.”

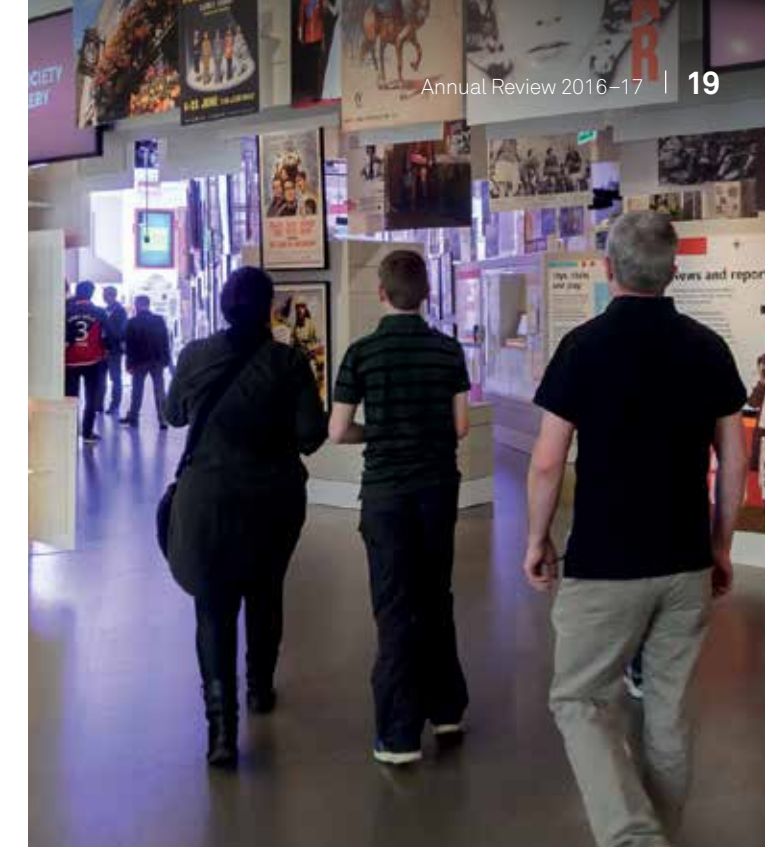
Twitter

“ **Well structured, informative and interactive.**

Much improved on its previous arrangement.”



Facebook

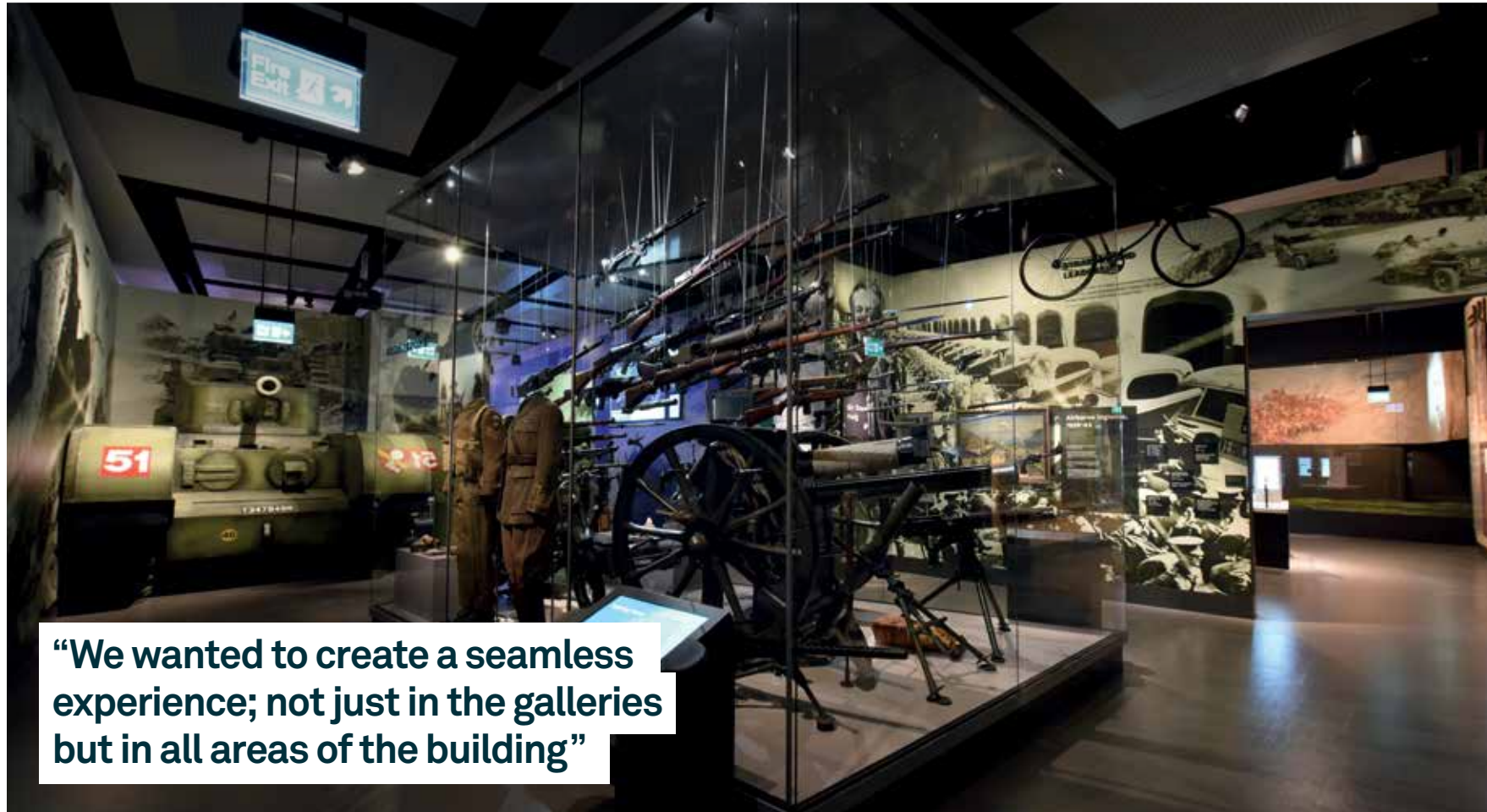


“ Visited today with the family – three kids and grandad. Loved it. **Utterly fascinating.**”



Facebook





“We wanted to create a seamless experience; not just in the galleries but in all areas of the building”



From vision to launch



Every aspect of the Museum was up for reconsideration and 'reframing', from the function of the building itself, to its approach to the display of the collections and its interface with the public.

Every member of staff was involved in the process of transformation, operating across conventional disciplines and contributing to the development of the Museum as a whole.

Our thanks are due to every member of staff, and our many volunteers, whose hard work and expertise made it all possible.

"My thoughts, thanks and best wishes are with the Museum, and everyone who contributed to making it what it is today, but particularly the staff who have worked so hard to make it happen"

Janice Murray

Donors

We cannot close this Review without giving our heartfelt thanks to the following donors, together with those who have chosen to remain anonymous, and those who have given smaller gifts for which we are equally grateful. Without their support and encouragement, we could not have achieved this pivotal point in the history of the Museum.

We send a sincere and extended thanks to all those who have been part of this project over the past three years.



LOTTERY FUNDED

The National Army Museum's major redevelopment was made possible in part thanks to a grant of £11.5 million from The National Lottery.

Donors 2016–17

Major Supporters

Ministry of Defence
 Heritage Lottery Fund
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 Hamish Parker, in memory of Major Horace Parker (1929–2010),
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Mr Patrick Bradley

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The Rt Hon The Lord Hamilton of Epsom

Professor William Philpott

Ms Jessica Spungin

Mr William Wells

Lieutenant General Sir Barney White-Spunner KCB CBE

Ms Caroline Wyatt

Ms Deborah Younger

Performance indicators 2016–17

744,701

Website visits

1,936,323

Website page views

3,279

Enquiries

Financial Information can be found in our Annual Report and Accounts at www.nam.ac.uk

NATIONAL
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MUSEUM



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