

NEWS

2022

Here's to another year of making memories with you, our friends.
Happy New Year!

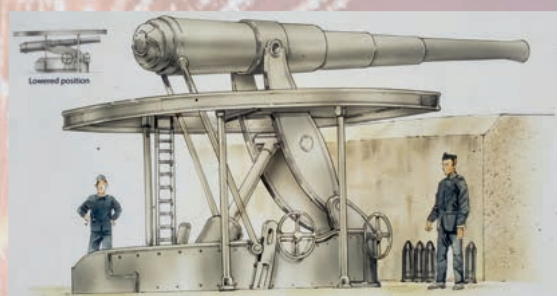
2021 Donations: MONCRIEFF DISAPPEARING GUNS MODELS

This year we had a delightful surprise when one of our volunteer's relative donated to Slough Fort two models of Moncrieff Disappearing Guns of the type that were once installed at the Fort in the later Victorian period. The Moncrieff Disappearing Gun carriage was developed by Colonel Alexander Moncrieff, it was a system that was further developed and adopted throughout the British Empire and other countries including the United States.

There were a number of advantages to the "disappearing guns" over more conventional systems. For instance, they provided the gun crew protection from direct fire by raising the gun over the parapet, they enabled the entire battery to be hidden from view when not in use maximising the element of surprise, it was difficult for an attacking enemy to bring their guns to bear and they were considerably cheaper than placing guns behind granite ramparts and iron shields.

Sadly, like many other ingenious British inventions, they became obsolete when long range BL (Breech Loading) guns made them no longer useful as the 19th century drew to a close, their limitations outweighed their advantages. The rate of fire was too slow, they were difficult to aim, the Moncrieff mountings could not be fired at angles above 20 degrees and the range was restricted, all were withdrawn by 1913.

Source: collections.royalarmouries.org, en-academic.com, victorianforts.co.uk, Moore, D (1992) "The Moncrieff Story", Palmerston Fort Society, Moncrieff's Protected Barbette System by Alexander Moncrieff, Colonel Woolwich: Royal Artillery Institution, 1868.



Drawn by Chris Forsey

Slough Fort was the only fort in the Hoo Peninsula to have had 4 Moncrieff guns emplaced, two 6-inch BL and two 9.2-inch BL. Only one of these gun pits remains in its original form in the left-hand wing battery, the 9.2" gun pit. The right-hand wing battery was extensively modernised to accept more modern parapet mounted guns in 1900.

Thanks to the generosity of our extremely talented donor, the disappearing guns will continue to be admired, respected and honoured through their outstanding models. We are deeply grateful for this wonderful contribution which you can see in our museum, together with many other interesting items that we host.

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Cub Scouts Visit

The Fort came alive in November when we had a group of Cub Scouts undertake "crazy camping" by staying overnight in the casemates of the Fort. Although it was cold, they had a great time. They certainly needed to "Be prepared"!

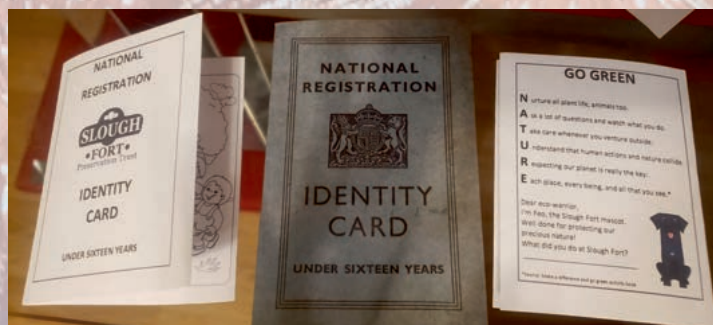


Go Green Project

Go Green Project is an exciting project that is aimed to protect our environment and save our beautiful planet. Last November the amazing eco warriors from PEPA school visited our Community Orchard and learnt about the importance of creating a valuable source of fresh fruit for our local community. They were very excited to Go Green and plant more trees in the Fort.



In a remarkable team effort, we planted 52 saplings (dog rose, blackthorn, rowan, crab apples, oak trees, walnut trees, etc.) in order to provide a precious new habitat for birds, bees and butterflies. Well done PEPA team! You've done a fantastic job!



We would like to thank our Trustees, PEPA's incredible students, headteacher and staff, The Woodland Trust, Haven and Village Voices for encouraging everyone to live more sustainably and for helping us to protect our precious planet.



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Volunteer Xmas doo

After working so hard throughout the year, we had a very special Christmas party to celebrate our achievements, to get together and to embrace our team spirit. It was indeed a magical moment where we could all enjoy each other's company, listen to funny stories, sing our favourite Christmas songs, eat, drink and have lots of fun together.



It was a lovely way to finish the year where we had the opportunity to share our appreciation and to say how much we care for each other.

This year we were joined by the members of the Community Payback, who also help us to look after our magnificent Fort. Well done everyone and thank you for your outstanding job!

Colin has lived in the village of Allhallows for over 40 years and had an interest in local history since moving out here. As a hobby he collects items of local history, whether it be books, postcards, or newspaper clippings and has displayed the collection numerous times to the village at the local church. He also has conducted guided tours of the village telling visitors about its local history.



Colin Davis, our new Chairman



When and how you did you start your collaboration with the Slough Fort?

In 2012 when the Parish Council started up a community project to tidy the fort up. This led to Victor Smith giving us a guided tour in time order around the fort (which is still basically adopted today), then leading to the steering committee being set up, the Trust and then the Charity. The rest they say is history!

What is your goal for Slough Fort till the end of the year?

During 2022 I would like the forts visitor numbers to grow, to get the fort known about by many more people and hopefully get more volunteers from these numbers.

Can you tell us about a time when you had to work in extreme conditions?

I am seen as the fort's very own bob the builder. There have been many unpleasant or extreme times as I have been the one that is down a hole or knee-deep in the mud. This ranges from water pipes being laid in the middle of winter, to clearing out sewer pipes!

What would you recommend for people who are wishing to visit the Slough Fort?

The fort is well worth a visit. Most people say they did not realise it was even there or how much of it is uncovered / remaining. Visit the fort with an open mind and see the enthusiasm of the volunteers working to restore the fort to its former glory. The guided tours are highly informative and you get to see the entire fort. Our open days offer even more.