

SANDWICH DRILL HALL PROJECT 2027

Remembering the gunners of 234 (HAA) Battery, Royal Artillery

Dear Friends,

In 1939, the young Territorial gunners of 234 (HAA) Battery, Royal Artillery, locked the door of the Drill Hall on Sandwich quay and drove away. Many were only 19 or 20, from Sandwich and the surrounding area. The battery never returned.

Today nothing on the building tells their story

After defending Chatham Dockyard during the Battle of Britain, they sailed round Africa to Egypt and were sent to Crete to protect the port at Suda Bay. They sustained many hardships; bombed on board ship, virtually no food, scarce ammunition and water rationing. After a few days of chaos and shooting down many aircraft, they succumbed to a glider borne force which landed right on top of their position. Within minutes over 50 were killed and the remainder were either wounded or captured. Many of the dead lie in Suda Bay War Cemetery, in graves marked *"Known only unto God"*. Three are named on Sandwich War Memorial.



Men of 234th (HAA) outside The Drill Hall

What we are doing

The Sandwich Branch of the Royal British Legion, working with the Mayor and Sandwich Town Council, aim to formally unveil a commemorative plaque on the Drill Hall in Spring 2027. A civic reception at the Guildhall will follow with prominent high-profile guests.

How your business can help

We are asking Sandwich businesses to help cover the costs of the day: the plaque itself, catering for the civic reception, security and first aid, and the printed programme. Every donation goes into the branch's bank account and is spent only on this project.

How we will thank you

- Every donor thanked by name on social media as gifts come in, and in our press release.
- Every donor named and thanked at the civic reception.
- A certificate of thanks for your shop window or reception desk.
- Larger donors featured in the printed programme for the day and invited to the unveiling.

Every gift, large or small, is gratefully received. Help in kind, such as printing, refreshments, flags or signage, is equally welcome. If you would prefer not to be named, just let us know.

How to support: bank transfer to **Royal British Legion Sandwich & District**, sort code **60-18-34**, account **05605989**, reference **DRILLHALL** and your business name; or a cheque payable to Royal British Legion Sandwich & District.

For more information, contact John Bennett on 07754 812989 or johnbennett@vfast.co.uk. Thank you for helping Sandwich remember them.

Yours sincerely,

Lt Col John F Bennett (Retd) PWRR
Project Lead, Sandwich Branch, Royal British Legion

Registered charity number: 219279

