Richard spoke about a new database designed to support research enquiries.

The RMP Museum receives many genealogical enquiries and used to manually find the details for each enquiry at a charge of £25 per request.

Now, after 8 years of research, they are just about to launch a searchable and chargeable database which allows members of the public to conduct a search online. This brings up all possible candidates based on details such as name and date. Enquirers pay £2.50 per record, so they can check several records to find the right person. They can then use the service number to approach other holders of military archives. The enquirer will also receive an email when new information is added to that record. Families can also send information in to be added to the database.

Scott Marketing came up with the software. It was originally input in MSExcel and transferred to Sequel.

Certain sensitive details are not included in the database, eg some service locations or certain illnesses.

RMP Museum received £1500 from AMOT to publicise the database and they are trialling an article and advert in the BBC *Who do you think you are?* Magazine.

Providing access to and copies of information can be a good income generator for military museums. One museum reported that they sell copies of vehicle cards to enthusiasts for £35 each.

**GDPR discussion**

Following Richard's talk there was a general discussion on GDPR.

RMP had taken the decision to only replicate images up to the 1950s and to make sure no sensitive images were put into the public domain. A statement is included to the effect that people should contact the museum direct if they are not happy for an image to be publically available. In discussions with solicitors about this issue, Tina reported that the feeling is that GDPR is not really concerned with museums making public their image archives, it's focused on the marketing ploys of big companies.

Furthermore, where material is already in the public domain (if posted online by a reputable company for example) then it is fair for museums to share it.
“Trials and Tribulations of a Redevelopment”

Army Flying Museum, Chris Munns & Susan Lindsey

Chris gave a candid presentation on what to expect with a large-scale, funded project. (See slides)

Firstly – be ready for scrutiny and have the answers to questions. Have a long term strategy in place (the Army Flying Museum had a 5 year strategy) with clear goals. You need to know what you want to do – but also be aware that funders’ aims will influence that strategy.

Ensure all your staff are on-board. Change is challenging. Check that the team can commit the time and energy. Be aware that things will not go smoothly, and the stress will be felt at all levels. Consider how you will deal with disappointment.

Finance

Think about cash flow. Funds from NLHF take time to draw down – they expect you to have reserves to draw upon. You now requires permission from NLHF to spend contingency money.

Fundraising is tricky – it’s not guaranteed but you still need to meet NLHF timelines.

People

Make sure you have the right board – the skills and diversity needed to drive the project and respond to the unexpected. Your Trustees need to offer greater commitment during the project. Can they give the Elevator Pitch?

Be clear about the roles of the Project Director and other members of the project team. Consider an external Project Manager. Be clear about level of authority. You need a Project Chair and an on-the-ball Treasurer. The Project Chair will oversee the Project and make decisions.

Recruit ambassadors for your project and ensure they are know the detail and show a united front.

Your Project Board should consist of the Chair, Treasurer, a Visitor champion, experts and stakeholder representatives.

Fundraising

Good fundraising needs commitment, connections and co-ordination. Make sure your approaches to potential donors are co-ordinated.

Check you have a GDPR compliant database and keep good records on fundraising, with personal thank you letters.
Use a phrase in your small print to enable you to keep donations in the event of an unsuccessful major funding application.

For efficient fundraising, cultivate High net worth individuals – boards of charitable trusts, industry partners etc. Keep your supporters engaged with special events (eg dinner with Tim Peake) You can charge around £80 per head for a fundraising dinner event in Hampshire, then tie in with a raffle etc.

Military Museums are not top priority for arts/culture & heritage funders because they already receive government funding and because arts funders can perceive military museums as being too focused on war. Use first names (not ranks) in your list of Trustees, stress the uniqueness of your collection and emphasise how you engage a wide range of audiences.

There are pros and cons to using a professional fundraiser. Army Flying Museum did the fundraising themselves which sends a positive message to donors. Either way, communication is important.

There will be other costs. You'll need a business plan (a professional one is £10,000). Army Flying Museum did their own. You'll also have an activity plan to deliver for 3 years on top of any capital works.

Susan Lindsey then described process of delivering the project (see slides)

Bianca Taubert, Adjutant Generals Corp Museum, “The Infancy of a Project” (see slides)

Richard Gardner, FAST, “Centenary Celebration-keeping a project affordable” (see slides)

National Lottery Heritage Fund, Joanne McAleer, new funding framework, opportunities and eligibility (see slides)
Ideas for future HMMN meetings

- Volunteer/ board recruitment
- Succession planning
- Community engagement, outreach and diversifying audiences
- PR, marketing and social media
- Political sphere for military museums, including MoD and AMOT and the War & Conflict Subject Specialist Network (possibly approach John Brown and xxxx Flemming)
- Income generation
- Accreditation update

Veronica & Kevin offered to join the Steering Group for HMMN