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## PRESS RELEASE

# Opportunity to explore Aldershot's military heritage for free

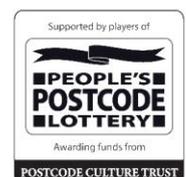
**Special events for Heritage Open Days,  
Saturday 12 - Sunday 13 September 2015**

[www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

Past local heroes, a Victorian architectural gem, and the changing face of Aldershot Garrison, will all be put in the spotlight in a special series of events for the Heritage Open Days weekend on 12 - 13 September. Organised jointly by the Friends of the Aldershot Military Museum and the Prince Consort's Library, there will be guided walks around the Aldershot Military Cemetery and the historic Aldershot military town, and the Prince Consort's Library, normally only open to serving members of the Armed Forces, will welcome all visitors for a special open day. All the Heritage Open Days events are free to attend.

The tour of the Military Cemetery will highlight the remarkable lives of some of the people for whom this is their final resting place, including three holders of the Victoria Cross; pioneers of early aviation such as Samuel Cody and Rex Cammell; and some whose stories may be less well known, such as six Sappers who died attempting to defuse an unexploded bomb close to Hook station in the Second World War. The guided walk around the historic Aldershot Military Town walk will show the development of the garrison from the original Victorian Camp, through the twentieth century rebuilding, and areas now undergoing redevelopment for civilian housing under Project Wellesley. Paul Vickers, from of the Friends of the Aldershot Military Museum, said that "The Military Cemetery and Military Town tours have proved very popular in previous Heritage Weekends and this is a great opportunity for anyone interested in Aldershot or military history to explore more of the area's rich heritage."

The Prince Consort's Library was founded by HRH Prince Albert in 1860 for the Army in Aldershot and is still the Army's main military library. It is not normally open to the public, so the open day is a rare opportunity to see inside this Grade II listed building which retains many of its original features. Librarian Tim Ward said: "The library is one of the oldest buildings in military Aldershot and is a wonderful survivor of the Victorian camp. We are pleased to offer this opportunity for local people to see this fine library and look forward to welcoming visitors for the Heritage Open Days."



The Military Cemetery tour is on **Saturday 12 September**, starting at 10.00 from the Cemetery Chapel at the top of Gallwey Road. Visitors should be aware that the cemetery is on the side of a hill so there will be some walking up paths which are on steep slopes. The Prince Consort's Library, situated at the end of Knollys Road, will be open on **Sunday 13 September** from 10.00 to 16.00, and there will be talks on the history of the library at 11.30 and 14.30. The Military Town walk will be on **Sunday 13 September**, starting at 10.00 from the car park on the corner of Queen's Avenue and Prince's Avenue. The length of the walk is approximately 4 miles, duration around 3.5 hours, and it will visit the Prince Consort's Library in time for the 11.30 talk on the library's history.

**Places on the Cemetery tour and Military Town walk are limited and pre-booking is essential**, to book a place please telephone the Friends of the Aldershot Military Museum on 01252 621221. For the Prince Consort's Library open day there is no need to book, just turn up. Visitors should note that there are many steps and stairs in the Library.

These events are part of the national Heritage Open Days weekend. Heritage Open Days is the largest heritage festival in the country; in 2014, over 4,600 events welcomed around three million visitors across England. Heritage Open Days operates as part of the National Trust with funding from players of People's Postcode Lottery and Historic England. Every single Heritage Open Days event is free, including over 150 National Trust properties, which waive their entry fees on the Saturday of the Heritage Open Days weekend. "After last year's triumphant event, we're looking to make 2015 another superlative year," says Loyd Grossman, Patron of Heritage Open Days. "New funding sources and a higher profile means we are in a stronger position than ever before to celebrate our wonderfully diverse local heritage, and to encourage local communities to engage with the hidden histories on their doorstep."

For more information see the website [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk).