



## Somme Museum Spring Lecture Series 2020

**19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 – 7pm**

**The Coast Watchers:**

**Military intelligence gathering on neutral Ireland's Atlantic frontline – 1939-45**



Dr Michael Kennedy, Royal Irish Academy, will give a presentation about the Marine and Coast Watching Service, a special branch of the Irish Defence Forces that kept an invasion watch along neutral Ireland coastline during WW2. Reports from the Coast Watchers provided valuable intelligence information to the Irish Defence Forces, information which was in turn traded with the Allies as neutral Ireland recast the parameters of its neutrality to meet the needs of the war. This talk will look at the Coast Watching Service LOP network and the soldiers who manned LOPs, the war they saw from Ireland's coastline and the contemporary and historical importance of this specialist branch of the Defence Forces which was born out the urgent wartime need to defend Ireland's coastline.

**23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 – 7pm**

**Forgotten Gaelic Volunteers:**

**GAA Members and the War**



Dr Donal McAnallen's talk will explore the hidden history of members of the GAA who enlisted to fight in the war. It will focus on some of the personal stories of the 150-plus wartime soldiers who have been identified as sometime Gaelic footballers or hurlers, and attempt to explain the factors that led them to volunteer for the front, as well as how the association responded to their enlistment in the light of its standing ban on members of the Crown forces. Finally, it will examine how those returned fared after the war and how they all came to be forgotten.

**21<sup>st</sup> May 2020 – 7pm**

**Ireland and World War Two**

**Resistance and Escape Lines**



John Morgan, Trustee of The Escape Lines Memorial Society (UK) and Secretary of the Basque Pyrenees Freedom Trails Association (Basque Country, Spain) will speak about Allied Resistance and Escape Lines in Nazi-occupied Europe, with reference to men and women from Ireland who fought for the freedom of Europe.

**Entry fee: £5.00 (including refreshments)**

**Booking is essential via: [sommeassociation@btconnect.com](mailto:sommeassociation@btconnect.com) or: 028 9182 3202**