



Folkestone  
Museum

## Walter Tull: His Life and Legacy

28<sup>th</sup> September 2018 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019

Folkestone Museum is delighted to present an exhibition celebrating the life and legacy of Walter Tull. Born in Folkestone in 1888 to a British mother and Bajan father, Walter was one of the first black outfield footballers to play at the highest level, for Tottenham Hotspur, Northampton Town and Clapton. He also signed for Rangers of Glasgow in February, 1917 intending to play for them after the war. In December 1914 Walter readily enlisted with the 17<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, otherwise known as the Footballer's Battalion. Defying the military regulation that restricted the rank of officer to those of 'pure European descent', he became the first black officer to lead white men in battle. Tragically, like so many, Walter was killed in action on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1918, a month before his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday.

To coincide with Armistice centenary commemorations in November and Black History Month in October 2018, 100 years after Walter's death, Folkestone Museum will bring Walter's story to a new generation. Owing to the generous loan of objects, letters, diaries and photographs, this will be the first extensive exhibition about Walter Tull.

His early formative years in Folkestone, his character forming decade at The Children's Home and Orphanage in Bethnal Green, his footballing and military careers and his enduring legacy will all be explored. The exhibition will also investigate what it meant to be part of a mixed-heritage family in 19th century Britain, over 70 years before the Empire Windrush brought larger numbers of Caribbean British Citizen migrants to the UK. Some of the lesser-known aspects of Walter's life such as his father's connection to Folkestone and the lives of his equally pioneering siblings will also feature.

This exhibition has been made possible by the generous loan of archival material from the Finlayson Family Archive, Action for Children (The Children's Home and Orphanage), the National Army Museum, and Tottenham Hotspur, and with the kind assistance of Walter Tull's biographer, Phil Vasili.

A programme of talks and workshops for adults and children will compliment the exhibition. Details will be available on the Museum website. Folkestone Museum is bringing Walter's story to the children of the district through free outreach workshops for schools run by singer/songwriter Randolph Matthews, with the support of Folkestone & Hythe District Council, Kent County Council, and The Roger de Haan Charitable Trust. Workshops are available for KS 2 and 3. If you are a teacher and would like to book a workshop, please email [museum@folkestone-tc.gov.uk](mailto:museum@folkestone-tc.gov.uk)

### Visitor Information:

**Admission:** FREE  
**Opening Times:** Term time, Mon-Sat, 10am – 4pm  
October half-term, open daily, please check the website for updates to the schedule  
**Address:** Folkestone Museum  
Town Hall  
1-2 Guildhall Street  
Folkestone CT20 1DY  
**Phone:** (01303) 257946  
**Website:** [www.folkestonemuseum.co.uk](http://www.folkestonemuseum.co.uk)  
**Email:** [museum@folkestone-tc.gov.uk](mailto:museum@folkestone-tc.gov.uk)



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