



Gloucestershire Imjin 70 Co-ordination Group

c/o The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum
The Custom House, Imjin Square, The Docks
Gloucester GL1 2HE
Imjin70@sogm.co.uk

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An Imjin 70 Group Announcement

This year is the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Imjin River (22-25 Apr 1951). This battle was fought by the Gloucestershire Regiment (now RIFLES) within 29 Brigade as part of the UN Force led by the US. It was a major turning point for the Korean War (1950-53).

We want to ensure that we fully optimise this anniversary for people, organisations and businesses around Gloucestershire.

From initial discussions between major stakeholders within the county, including the City Council, The Rifles and the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum we felt that it was important for there to be a central co-ordinating body to ensure that all people, organisations and businesses that wanted to be involved have a forum to share and co-ordinate their efforts. Hence the formation of the **Gloucestershire Imjin 70 Co-ordination Group**, known as **'The Imjin 70 Group'**.

Why is this Anniversary Important?

The Battle of the Imjin River was a significant turning point in the Korean War. The Brigade and subsequently The GLOSTERS alone held their ground on what is now known as 'Gloster Hill', against 10,000 Chinese soldiers. They stopped their advance for four+ days allowing the UN forces the time to build a series of strong defensive positions that stopped the enemy advance. Subsequently, a long stalemate led to the cessation of combat on the Korean peninsula, although, to this day, no peace agreement has been signed.

After their courageous stand the Glorious Glosters, as they became known after the battle, were awarded the US Presidential Unit Citation for Valour, a unique award for a British Infantry Regiment.

These actions supported the burgeoning of South Korea as a vibrant, successful and peaceful nation. They also led to the development and continuing growth of the special relationship between the City of Paju and Gloucestershire.

An excellent example of this ongoing relationship occurred during this pandemic. The people of Paju, the city nearest to the battle site, sent the people of Gloucestershire 1000 sets of PPE to support local care homes as a token of their thanks for what the Glosters did for them at the Battle seventy years ago.

The Aim of the Group

The Aim of the **Gloucestershire Imjin 70 Co-ordination Group** is to promote, co-ordinate and support events across Gloucestershire that commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of the Imjin River.

The Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Mr Edward Gillespie OBE, is the President of the Group which consists of a team that reflect military, history, cultural and educational aspects of the County.

The Group will not necessarily run these events, but it will provide a forum for event organisers to share ideas and resources as well as providing a central capability to promote events and co-



ordinate schedules. Where appropriate the Group can also co-ordinate grant and fundraising activities to support multiple events and capabilities.

The anniversary of the Battle is 22-25 April, but the events will run from April until Remembrance Day with **the main events taking place in and around September and October** in the hope that we are past the worst of the current COVID situation.

An important element of this anniversary programme will be to raise funds for a number of military related charities across the county.

What Next

Please pass on this information to anyone that is interested, or who wants to organise an event in relation to this anniversary. The Group will help to promotion and support community events and projects across the county wherever possible.

A programme of events is currently under development and that information will be communicated out across Gloucestershire. Clearly the currently fast moving COVID situation is not helping, however, most events will be planned for the summer /autumn.

Remember that The Korean War has never been “a forgotten war “ in Gloucestershire. We have frequent and regular communications with our friends in Paju where young and old still continue to thank Gloucestershire soldiers for giving them their freedom, peace and prosperity.

Many thanks for reading this and please get in touch if you’d like to be involved.

Best Regards

Lt Col Tony Ayres
Chair
The Gloucestershire Imjin 70 Co-ordination Group