

**** General Information ****

Annual Conference of the International Committee of Museums and Collections of Arms and Military History (ICOMAM)

6-10 October 2012, Oman

1. ICOMAM, the International Committee of Museums and Collections of Arms and Military History, is pleased to announce that its next annual conference will be hosted by the University of Nizwa and the Bait ar Rudayah Historic Small Arms Centre of Excellence, Birkat Al Mauz in Oman on October 6th to October 10th 2012. A Post Conference Tour will follow the main conference from 11 to 13 October 2012.

2. The general theme of the Conference will be:-

Military heritage in Oman and the Middle East and the relationship with the outside world.

3. Basic information on Oman and the Conference

- **Conference**

The main Conference venue will be in the campus of the University of Nizwa which is only a few hundred metres from the Bait ar Rudayah Historic Small Arms Centre of Excellence. Some meetings will be at the Centre. The surrounding town is called Birkat Al Mauz and is relatively unspoilt with an extensive and picturesque ruined old quarter and attractive historic falajs. It is distinguished as being the gateway to the road which leads to the high plateau of the Jebel Al Akdar, over 10000 feet in altitude.

- **Accommodation**

Within 5 kilometres of the Centre is the Golden Tulip Nizwa Hotel with 93 rooms all of which have been block booked for those attending the Conference. This is because this is the only 4 star hotel with a swimming pool in the entire area. A specially low room rate for the hotel has been negotiated and details will be published in due course. Cars can be hired through the hotel for those who wish to explore the area but a shuttle bus service between the

hotel, university and Centre makes this an optional extra. For any late comers it may be necessary to use 2 or 3 star hotels of which there are two or three in the area.

- **Area**

Nizwa is the principal town in the area but it still some 20 kms distant from the University campus and about 15 from the hotel. It is an historic town rather heavily restored with some of the original peripheral wall remaining and a celebrated castle. Fortunately some of the original Souk has also survived. The walled city of Bahla, an UNESCO world heritage site, and the castle of Jabrin are within a short drive and well worth seeing. According to demand from those accompanying conference attendees, visits to many of these sites can be arranged during the conference. This can also include the high plateau of the Jebel al Alkdar and may include a visit to the estate of HH Syd Assad bin Tariq bin Taimur Al Said to see his camels and other animals.

- **Post Conference Tours**

The first day after the Conference, viz 11th October, will be devoted to a long morning tour of the castles of Al Hazm and Barka with their outstanding collections of cannon and carriages – perhaps the most comprehensive in the world for muzzleloading artillery. It will also embrace the castles of Jamma, and Al Awabi, and, if there is time, Nakhal and Masannah. In the afternoon there will be a viewing of muzzleloading field artillery, also researched and made by HAEF LLC, and the more interesting sites of Muscat including the souk. Accommodation overnight will be in Muscat ready for departures the next morning either to Salalah, the capital of Dhofar in the south of the Sultanate or to Khasab, capital of the detached province of Musandum bordering the straits of Hormuz or, obviously, elsewhere for those staying on for only one extra day.

On the 12th & 13th October there will be a choice of excursion either Dhofar and the battlefields where the Communist insurgents were defeated in the 1960's or Musandum to see the remains of the 1864 Telegraph Station on Telegraph Island where the telegraphic cable from India joined that from England. Both these tours necessitate internal flights. There is good hotel accommodation in both towns. It is hoped that a participant in the battles will lead the former tour and an historian/marine biologist that to Khasab as the boat journey from Khasab to Telegraph Island affords an excellent opportunity to snorkel on the coral reefs in warm water avoiding the need for a neophrene suit.

4. Program for accompanying Persons during the Conference

A special program for accompanying persons will be offered and will be inspired by visits to interesting monuments, museums and cities.

- Day 1 Jabrin Castle, Bahla Castle and Town walls(an UNESCO World Heritage site) and Nizwa Castle and souk
- Day 2 Jebel Al Akdar and its high plateau and historic sites plus the historic quarter of Birkat am Mauz
- Day 3 Bait al Zubair, Franco-Omani Museum, Muttrah Castle, Bait al Baranda and Muttrah souk.
- Day 4 Beach at Sawadi Beach resort and boat trip to Dalmaniyat Islands to see the corals and fish

5. More Information

More information will soon be made accessible on the ICOMAM website (<http://icomam.icom.museum>) and will be distributed by e-mail as soon as available.

Information can also be obtained by contacting the conference coordinator or the ICOMAM secretariat

dr. Christopher Roads
Historic Arms, Exhibitions & Forts LLC
PO Box 3726, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman.
E-mail: armshist@omantel.net.om
Mobile: 00968 99797326
Office: 00968 24501218
Fax: 00968 24503382

drs. Mathieu Willemsen
Secretary of ICOMAM
Nederlands Legermuseum
Korte Geer 1
2611 CA Delft
Nederland
M.Willemsen@legermuseum.nl
T: +31 (0)15 21 50 580
F: +31 (0)15 21 50 544