

# What's on!



## November 2024

### Diary Dates:

- 25 October Bell Festival
- 10 November Remembrance Sunday
- 10 November Presentation to Thorpe Acre
- 11 November Armistice Day
- 11 November Poetry Event

**Bell Festival.** This is the second year running that Charnwood Arts have organised a bell festival. I believe it was actually born out of our application for funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) when we first explored the idea of re-developing the museum. We were looking for partners so that our application satisfied all the requirements of the NLHF: all inclusive, diversity, reaching the 'hard to reach' and having a lasting impact.



We have loaned them the Taylor bell from the collection. Read more...

[Loughborough Bell Festival — Charnwood Arts](#) PS. We didn't get the lottery funding.

**Remembrance Sunday.** This is an incredibly well attended parade and service with Queens Park packed with people and thousands of poppies are thrown from the carillon balcony to drift down onto the crowds. We don't have any responsibilities on Remembrance Sunday apart from cleaning up the mess that is left in the ground floor. We used to open for an hour after the service but it became too much, too many people in too short a time. How odd that we ended the practice because it was popular.



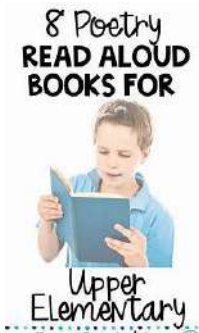
I went on the internet to find an image to illustrate this story and came across a piece I had written and was reproduced in the Loughborough Echo in 2015. [Armistice/ Remembrance Why Two?](#)

**Thorpe Acre Church.** I have explained in the past that following the Roll of Honour Neil did for the Emmanuel Church Debbie did the same for Thorpe Acre Church. Unfortunately, on the Sunday we were intending to present it to the church the vicar had an emergency and the presentation was cancelled. The vicar suggested their Remembrance Service was an appropriate occasion on which to hand over the folder to the church.

Debbie will present the folder and anyone who wishes to join her will be most welcome

**Armistice Day.** Each year there is a short service in front of the carillon at 11am to commemorate the armistice, the final cease fire in Europe thus ending WW1 (the war went on a little longer in other theatres). It is reasonably well attended. Everyone welcome.

**Poetry Event.** This was an event that we were contacted by the university some time ago about and we (me and Debbie) agreed to support. At the time it would have involved workshops and poetry readings at a number of venues. Unfortunately, the funding for the event did not come through. See: [Being Human Festival](#)



However, the event will take place and we were asked if our volunteers would read some war poems, I did ask but apparently you are all too shy. So as not to let them down I have agreed to read two poems, L/Cpl Richardson's poem about the customers of the Plough at Thorpe Acre. See [The Plough](#). The second is very short but one of my favourites. [The General](#)

**Loans.** I mentioned that we had loaned the Taylor bell to Charnwood Arts for the bell festival, we also have objects on loan to Mountsorrel, two uniforms, Quorn Heritage Group, a number of Home Guard objects and Shepshed St. Botolph's Church, items related to Shepshed casualties.

**Website Progress.** When Goff and I first explored the idea of a webpage that anyone with the minimum of training could add to and amend I thought we would get a number of blank pages and we would add the content. However, the people who are working on it seem to be even more interested in the carillon and museum than us.

Being closed, we have not been too concerned with their endless playing with various themes and colours. Fortunately, we agreed on the end price so their experimentation is not costing us. I cannot mention the website without mentioning Mary; who has taken the project on and responds to their every email. Here is the proposal for a page with details of recitals: [Recital Page](#). and I have finally got the username and password for the Roll of Honour site and know a man who knows how to add to and amend it.

**Clearing the Ground Floor.** All the cabinets that were on the ground floor have now been dismantled and disposed of. There was talk at the beginning that we should have offered them free to other organisations and it was something I considered and in fact someone came to view them and decided against accepting them.



They were a six man lift and the glass does not meet present day specifications. Not everything went in the skip, the glass that we used to replace the drawers found a new home as did all the hinged tops after they were advertised as ideal for the lids on cold frames. A big thank you to Karon, Steve, Eric and Adam who helped and dismantled in half the time I had estimated.

**Interested?** Some of you might be interested in this newsletter from the [Victoria History Trust](#) a number of pieces about Loughborough

**Mystery Object.** Last month's mystery object, obviously money. British Armed Forces Special Vouchers (pronounced Baffs)

At the end of the war in Europe in 1945, France, Britain, United States and Russia agreed to split Germany into four occupation zones. The British area (BAOR) became a country within a country. However, a problem soon emerged; goods intended for the troops were being sold to a thriving black market among the local population at highly inflated prices. Millions of pounds sterling was being lost by the taxpayers of Britain. It was decided in March 1946 that special military voucher system was needed.



Historically, soldiers serving overseas had been paid in local currency rather than in their "home" currency, most cash drawn by soldiers would go directly into the local economy. The British Armed Forces issued their own banknotes between 1946 and 1972. A special "military currency", which was paid out to soldiers at a fixed rate of exchange and simply declared legal tender in occupied areas by local commanders.

After a remarkably brief period of preparation, the first series of 52,400,000 British Armed Forces Special Vouchers (BAFSV), valued at just over 10 million pounds. On December 31, 1979, when they were finally withdrawn. On February 14, 1991, The Ministry of Defence auctioned off their stock of 17 million uncirculated vouchers from the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 6th series to a consortium of dealers

**This month's mystery** object metal and about 8 inches long and it is not a disposable vape.



**Fakes.** You may have seen this in the newspaper, an article about Iranian weaponry from the Iron Age after they were first discovered in the 1920s, 'Several swords seized at UK customs and held at the British Museum were revealed, using a scanning technique called neutron tomography, to be modern forgeries created by glueing together different parts of ancient swords in a bid to increase their value to potential buyers'. [Iranian Iron Age swords seized at Heathrow revealed to be glued together fakes | The Independent](#)



It reminded me of the two muskets we hold; a gentleman offered them to us but I declined the offer as they predated the carillon. However, he told me that I might as well take them as he had left them to us in his will. The gunsmith we use confirmed they were genuine bits from different muskets, 'glued' together to make a reasonable copy of the real thing. They come from a time that every country pub had a musket over the fireplace.

**WW1 Webbing.** In the new ground floor, standing high upon two-metre-high plinths will be two mannequins, one in a WW1 uniform. We had the uniform, water bottle and bayonet but not the 1908 pattern webbing the British went to war with. I have purchased a reproduction set (Christine, it was within my spending limits) It is,



of course, brand new. I just now need to wear it for a fortnight in a trench to age it.

**Storyboards.** The new ground floor museum will have 17 storyboards telling the stories from the youngest WW1 casualty to the building of the carillon. A small team meets each week to review progress, prove read articles and decide on the objects best suited to compliment the stories.

We are very lucky that not only have the people with talent but also the enthusiasm to complete this task. My sincere thanks go out to them.

**The Catalogue.** During the last meeting of the above group mention was made of the poor quality of some of the descriptions and in many cases the absence of an image. When the collection was first put on computer (2012) many of the entries were copied from the cards that had been used up till then. It was purely an inventory, a list of the objects in the collection. At the time the possibility that the catalogue would be made available to the public wasn't considered. Our catalogue is now not only on our website but also on [MDS](#) if, when you type in a keyword, objects come up that appear to have no relationship to the keyword it is because some fields are hidden from the public, donors' details, location of the object etc.

However, in all the years I have been involved no volunteer has ever pointed out a spelling mistake, punctuation or an inadequate description. If you spot any of these on the catalogue then let me know and they can be corrected. [Our Catalogue](#)

**Anderson Shelter.** The allotment next to mine had an area at the top that was completely overgrown. It was recently cleared and revealed a section of an Anderson shelter. I spoke with the gentleman who occupies the allotment (ex RAF) and he agreed that I could dig it out and stand it up.

By the outbreak of WW2 Anderson shelters had been installed in the gardens of around 1.5 million houses in the areas most expected to be targeted by the Luftwaffe. A further 2.1 million were installed over the course of the war. They were issued free to those earning less the £250 per annum, better off families were asked for a contribution towards the cost.



**Above** the section I dug out ready to be bolted together and stood upright.

**Left,** WW2 Londoners receiving their Anderson shelters.