

# Loughborough Carillon and War Memorial Museum

## What's On September 2023



Burdett's bracelet

### Diary dates

31 August Visit by Church Group (Cancelled)

10 September Bell Festival

11 September Visit by Ian Brown

12 September Carillon Talk at Longcliffe Golf Club

21 September Visit by?? (During normal opening times)

**Bell Festival.** This event organised by Charnwood Arts will take place in various locations and will end up in Queen's Park at 2.15pm where there will be free entertainment. The carillon will open and I will confirm timings later. Charnwood Arts have been working on this for some time and deserve our support. Read more..... [Bell Festival 2023 | Charnwood Arts](#)

**Visit by Ian.** A few years ago, this gentleman who has a website about the German Prisoner of War (POW) Camp [Stalag 18](#) contacted us about eight copies of POW newsletters we had in our collection [Cat. 2019..031](#) and asked if he could view them and about 18 months ago asked if we would be willing to loan them to a museum exhibition about POW Camps being held in a museum in Austria (Austria was part of Nazi Germany from 1938 to 1945) so that is where our news letters have been for the last year and Ian is returning them and obviously, we will give him the tour of the carillon



**Loughborough Heritage Trail.** A newly introduced heritage trail, there are 15 sites located around the town centre where you can access the online trail. Download the app, point your smart phone at the QR Code on the board located at the sites and you'll hear about the

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history of the town and the site with an audio description and accompanying video. Rather unfortunately the board with the carillon details is located by the Queen's Park toilets. Perhaps they get a greater footfall than the tower? To find out more visit [Discover](#)



**The British Museum.** A man has been interviewed by the Metropolitan Police following alleged thefts at the British Museum, though the force confirmed no arrests have yet been made and its director, Hartwig Fischer has resigned and an MP has said “Suspected thefts at the British Museum have exposed the insulting ridiculousness of its refusal to return contested artefacts to their country of origin on security

grounds”.

The British Museum has revealed that police are investigating items that are “missing, stolen or damaged” from its collection. These are thought to number between 1,500 to 2,000 objects, including gold jewellery, semi-precious stones and glass dating between 1,500BC and the 19th century.

The British Museum has more than eight million objects whereas we have about four and half thousand, keeping them secure and confirming at regular intervals that we still have them is a problem, keeping track on 8,000,000 objects must be a real challenge. This may seem a little remote from our small organisation but you can guarantee that it will have implications throughout the museum world.

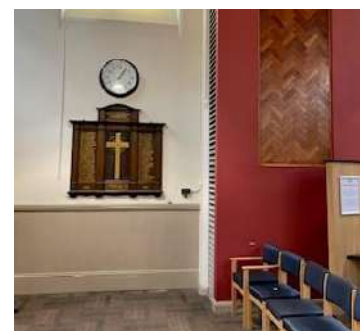
It was also revealed that not all the objects in their care were catalogued. We have made enormous progress in that area and I would say that 99% of the objects we hold have been catalogued however, I would have said that last year but already this year we have catalogued 129 separate objects, nearly all were objects we already held. Unfortunately cataloguing is not an activity that can occupy more than one person at a time, for the most part I write the description and Christine enters the object on the catalogue, but of course being on the catalogue does not guarantee their safety. We recently had our ‘Mystery Object’ stolen from the handling objects table; a rifle bore inspection mirror.



Some of you will remember that when most of the collection was in the tower behind glass, we used to print off the contents of each cabinet and the volunteer on duty, during a quiet moment could compare the print out against the content of the cabinet. We also had Keith who always spotted and reported if an object had been moved.

I know that when we return to normal, we need to do this on a more formal basis. More of a problem are those objects in store. In New Street there are over 600 objects in boxes that no one has seen since we were forced to move everything out of the tower when the tower renovation began in 2017.

**Rosebery Medical Centre.** The medical centre is located in the old Rosebery Street School, moving in shortly after the school closed. During the building’s conversion we were approached by a member of the centre’s staff requesting the return of the Rosebery School Roll of Honour. A large wooden plaque with gold lettering listing the former pupils who had fallen in the two World Wars. Pictured right.



Our records showed that it was gifted to us by Leicestershire County Council (LCC) and the committee turned down their request. However, when the major renovation was carried out the memorial plaque was removed and placed in storage.

A visit to Rosebery Medical Centre showed that they were in it for the long run and had a mini museum of the old school artifacts, including the school bell which had been retained by LCC but they had donated it after a request from the centre.

It was fairly obvious that the memorial would struggle to find a place in the new museum (we were fairly naive then and thought we would be back to normal once the renovation was complete) and the committee agreed to let the medical centre have it. A decision that I thoroughly endorsed; war memorials should be returned to their original home.

It occupies a prominent spot in the centre, all it needs now is a booklet along the lines of the one Neil produced for the Emmanuel Church. Neil has done all the preamble all you need to do is copy and paste the casualties' details from the [Loughborough Roll of Honour](#) site. Any takers? I am sure Neil will help you.

Along similar lines Steve is scanning all the sketches of Loughborough man F A Faulkes who served in 154 (Leicestershire Yeomanry) Regt RA in North Africa and Italy so that the public can view them without handling the very precious originals.

**Objects.** I thought it would be an idea to feature some simple object from our collection each month with an explanation of its use and history. This month's object is an identity bracelet (Cat. No. 1987.184) that once belonged to Charles Burdett, a gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery ([RGA](#)) (top of the page)



Soldiers had always carried some means of identifying them if they were killed, Roman soldiers had wooden tags tied to their wrist. The British Army introduced identity discs in place of identity cards in 1907, in the form of aluminium discs, however WW1 brought a huge increase in the size of our armed forces and a shortage of aluminium so a switch was made to fibre discs. One red one green on a cord worn around the neck. In the event of death the red disc was cut off and handed in to record the man's death and the green remained on the body so that the burial party could identify the corpse.

However, soldiers weren't convinced that the fibre discs would survive a fire and sailors doubted the discs would survive in sea water. Many of them purchased metal bracelets as an added insurance. We have a number of them in our collection, all slightly different but all serving the same purpose. Burdett has his regiment, RGA, stamped on his disc but today that information is kept from the enemy. Following the Korean War an enquiry into the treatment of allied prisoners decreed that POWs, should only state their number, rank, name and date of birth.

**What's New.** We have accepted the donation of a number of items that belonged to Loughborough man Pte Reginald Harriman. At the start of WW2, he joined the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Leicesters' but was taken prisoner in North Africa in 1941 which is a little odd as although the 2/5<sup>th</sup> did serve in North Africa it was not until much later. However, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn was in North Africa so it appears that Reginald must have been posted to them. (Marigold?)



He was in various prison camps in Italy, Austria and Germany, having been a member of St John's before the war he was employed as a medic in the camps. Read his story (written by his family) here: [Royal Leicestershire Regiment](#)

A gentleman from Shepshed asked to meet me as he has a large collection of military memorabilia and no one in his family are particularly interested in inheriting it.

He did not donate it to us but that looks like a strong possibility in the future. As I browsed through his collection, I spotted a baton round (Round Anti-Riot 1.5inch) and he gave me two, one rubber and one plastic.



We have in our collection a Very Pistol (named after Edward Very an American who developed a single-shot breech-loading snub-nosed pistol that fired flares). It was a little more robust than any flare pistol I had seen in the past. Searching the internet, I discovered it was used by WW2 aircrew, within the aircraft was a socket that allowed the pistol to be inserted and locked in using the (bayonet) lugs and fire coloured flares to alert people on the ground they were friendly and not to engage them.

What has that got to do with rubber bullets? Well at the start of the troubles in Northern Ireland these same Very pistols were brought back into service, a longer barrel fitted using the bayonet lugs on the pistol, a butt was attached and 'a presto' you have a riot gun.

By 1975 the rubber bullet had been replaced by the plastic bullet, more accurate and could be fired directly at a person (unlike the rubber bullet that was supposed to be fired at the ground in front of the person to ricochet and strike the target on the legs). Unfortunately, the plastic version proved to be far more lethal. See [Stephen Geddis](#)

**Finally.** We have now got a magazine for the Bren Gun. The magazine has a lug on it so that when the last round is fired the working parts remain to the rear. That will not work for us as we, of course, are not using ammunition. The solution is to use a coin to hold down the magazine spring, I will pop in on Thursday to demonstrate.

