

CURATORIAL REPORT 19 December 2020 to 5 April 2021

Miranda Charalambous, Collections Manager

Collections Team: M. Charalambous; Claire Donithorn; Helen Jackman; Joan Varley; Lyn Layland; Kay Wilson & Jean French

Exhibitions and Displays

The Bonfire Exhibition will be de-installed on 19th April and MC will make arrangements to return the loans. It has not been possible to arrange this earlier owing to the lockdown. The hoard displays (two large boxes of small items) will be returned to their cases. Items will also be returned to the corner cabinet which was repainted recently by MF. Further items from the WW2 displays (formerly in the shop) will need to be relocated to the courtyard bedroom which now contains two reconstructed cabinets (R.J.)

Archaeology Exhibition (Buttery, 2 June)

Activities so far -

MC met with a metal detectorist who kindly donated 10 finds (many of which are Roman) and offered another Roman coin on loan. They were all found in Chiddingstone and are currently being photographed and catalogued. Four further coins, belonging to the same detectorist are tied up with the Treasury Department at the BM. MC made enquiries and it is possible that they may be released on loan in time for the exhibition in June. (We may be able to purchase them at a later date.) A further eight Roman coins have also been offered on loan. MC has also contacted another metal detectorist who visited the museum last year but no response yet. CD has made two enquiries to the West Kent Metal Detectorists (coins) and the West Kent Archaeological Society (pottery).

Postponed exhibitions

- *900 Years of the Church*. It has not been possible to meet up during lockdown to view objects at the Church or obtain information about church events.
- *Twinning Association* - The booking was cancelled by the Twinners this March. They would like to mount their display next year to tie in with their centenary.

Audio Display (Buttery)

MC created audio clips from a selection of oral histories in our collection using some new software. Visitors can listen to them via a telephone installed by MF. Feedback forms are supplied for participating visitors. The equipment was purchased with funds from the South East Museums Recovery Grant.

iPad tour

The digital tour of the upstairs galleries will be uploaded to the iPad which was bought with proceeds from the Recovery Grant. The tour, which includes photographs, videos and information about items in the displays, fulfils part of our pledge to make the museum accessible to all (see Forward Plan). MC has also compiled a photographic timeline of Eden Valley events for use on the iPad.

Conservation

Conservation and display of a Tru-To-Life-Chimp.

The conservation work was carried out by Sarah Glen, a costume conservator based in London and MC has made arrangements to collect the toy on Wednesday 21st April by train. MC provided content and images for a fundraising video to launch the Annual Appeal.

Object of the Month

MC has compiled five more object stories since December 2020 which can be accessed via the front page of the website. They include some new acquisitions.

New Acquisitions

- Cambridge Ph meter (1944) used at Edenbridge tannery for measuring PH levels in the tanning solution. Donated by the friend of a former tannery employee who helped clear the tannery when it closed in the 1970s. (Provisional delivery date: Saturday 17th April.)
- Warmafoam baby bottle holder. Made by a former employee of the Warmafoam factory in Edenbridge and donated by his daughter. (To be delivered for donation later this year)
- Philips young electronic engineers set. The polystyrene packing inside the box which held the components was made at the Warmafoam in Edenbridge c1965. Purchased for the collection.
- Glass medicine bottle for quinine tablets marked Coolings Chemist, Edenbridge. Donation.
- Bible with WW1 bond stamp in aid of Jack Cornwell Ward at the Star and Garter home. Jack Cornwell, who dies at the age of 16 was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry posthumously at the Battle of Jutland. His story was featured in EVM's WW1 exhibition in 2018. Donation arranged by post.
- Watercolours of Delaware Farm, a scrapbook of photographs relating to the Edenbridge Senior Citizens Club, plan relating to the Edenbridge and District Youth Club c1967. Donation arranged by post.

Station Partnership

Nov 2020 - Two more display panels, compiled by JV have now gone up at Cowden Station. Stuart to take photos. Sharon also has artwork for two panels at Penshurst. JV working on Hever.

Local History Enquiry Service

LL received 26 email requests this financial year - this included 16 external enquiries and 10 in house enquiries for work within the Collection Team. The fee is £10 per enquiry. This year £44 was raised (which included a payment of £14 for a new member. JV received 13 Facebook requests, many of which included digital copies of images from our photographic archive. All images were supplied with a watermark. Four requests were passed to Lyn for more detailed information. It is not known whether the recipients made a donation, but they were encouraged to do so. Recipients were also notified about the EVMT membership scheme.

Disposal

MC has drawn up a transfer proposal for the gas masks following the Exec's request to dispose of two in the collection. One mask has been donated to the Ruthin Museum in Wales and the other has been returned to the donor.

Learning

The work cannot continue without extra hours and volunteer support.

During lockdown, MC provided videos, photographs and information to Edenbridge School to support their toy project because their visit was cancelled.

The Medway Business Partnership has asked MC to prepare and facilitate a project to support a student on work experience for one week this June.

This year, Wheels of Time extended their offer to include E- badges. So far, 18 museums, including our own, have taken part since the scheme went live on 2nd April. An E-badge is a digital badge awarded to anyone, irrespective of age, who completes an activity on one of the Kent Museum websites. MC provided activities for the website and MF has created an activity page to link them to relevant content. MC has agreed, for now, to send out codes to participating families via a dedicated email account set up by MF for this purpose. MC attended the Wheels AGM and launch via Zoom. These are mandatory events which generally take place across Kent (non-attendance would result in having our membership suspended.)

The pharmacy cabinet will be relocated to the High Street Bedroom and could become a children's discovery activity. It has been suggested that it could be filled with replica objects which link to our displays. The project would be ongoing as there are many drawers to fill and donations of unwanted/second-hand items are needed to save on costs. A list of suggestions can be provided. We need at least ten items for the activity to go ahead. The discovery activity would form part of our offer for *Kids in Museums* which was set up by the museum some years ago (see MC's report 27.02.2020).