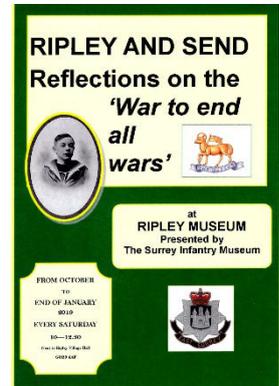


Surrey Infantry Museum – March 2019 Update

The winter of 2018-19 has been a relatively quiet period for SIM: the *'campaign'* season when we attend events and display the travelling exhibition ends after Remembrance Day and doesn't start in earnest until Easter. Nonetheless, SIM has maintained a presence in Guildford Museum with both its permanent display case and a temporary exhibition in the main gallery covering the experience of the Surrey Regiments on Armistice Day 1918. The SIM-curated exhibition in Ripley and Send Museum on the villages' experience of the Great War, and their *'local heroes'*, which ran until February 2019 was also well-received.



The SIM community was deeply saddened by the sudden death of Julian Martin in February 2019. Julian was a Volunteer, stalwart supporter and living-history re-enactor who had given a great deal of his time and energy to the Museum for well over a decade.



The processing of material recovered from Clandon Park carries on. Of the first sixty pieces selected for renovation, work on twenty has been suspended due to significantly increased cost estimates following more detailed assessment of the restoration work required: work on the remaining forty items continues.

In order to generate a comprehensive schedule of what could be restored and how much this is likely to cost, all the remaining items held at Farcroft Restoration have now been returned to SIM for appraisal, apart from the items that are work-in-progress, the framed Colours rescued, undamaged, on the night of the fire and a small number of medals needing further repair.



Many of these recently-returned items are the remains of firearms and bladed weapons. On initial examination the swords of Mehra Khan and his Adjutant taken in the storming of Khelat in 1839 and a rare Drum Major's sword have already been identified and earmarked for restoration.

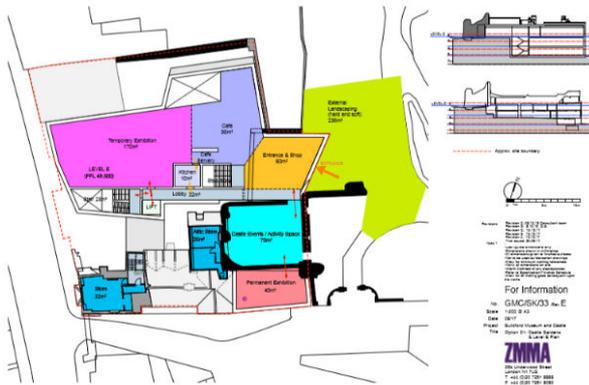


Quite by chance it would appear that the display bay in the Onslow Room at Clandon that held the material relating to regimental bands and music was not as badly-damaged as the rest of the collection. A few of the maces have survived and should be restorable.



Fragments of larger artefacts have been identified including a solid silver Lewis Gunner which

was part of a magnificent East Surrey table centrepiece known as 'Farewell to the Horse'. Unfortunately, the accompanying Vickers gunner, horses, limbers and other figures have not come to light.



Work continues on moving SIM into Guildford Museum. The project to refurbish and expand Guildford Museum, which has full support from Guildford Borough Council, has grown significantly in scope and vision. The budget is now set at £12 million, of which £6.5m will be provided by GBC and up to £5m is anticipated in grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund with the balance from public fund-raising and donations. The revised project is now due for completion in the summer of 2023.



Meanwhile SIM has received a number of donations to enrich the collection. Amongst the items acquired is an impressive sporting cup from the daughter of Lt. 'Buck' Buchanan (1st Bn. ESR) together with a telegram to his family announcing his safe return to the UK from Dunkirk. Also, a good example of a Queen's 'sweetheart' cushion from the Great War and a particularly interesting group of medals (and other items) belonging to RQMS W G 'Nobby' Clarke who served with 1st Bn, ESR from the '30s through to his retirement in 1952.



The Friends of SIM continue to organise lecture lunches and other events. In June 2019 there will be a 'behind the scenes' tour of Sandhurst Military Academy and plans are underway for the next Battlefield Tour in May 2020. This trip will follow the Surrey battalions through the campaign in France during 1940 including the Battle of the Escaut Canal and the evacuation from the Channel coast.

Vel Exuviae Triumphans