

Hannah - May Update

May has been a really interesting month. It's been incredibly varied once again, but really enjoyable. The first week saw the end of my time with the conservators for a while. We managed to finish cleaning Victory's Topsail and put her to bed under a layer of Tyvek and we also found some interesting marks and dates on her which indicate when she was made. The photos don't really do it justice...





After that I moved over to the old Marines Museum site where I did a week a while back. This time I was there for a month. It's been great fun. The entire collection is being moved to different sites under NMRN. It's a rare opportunity to see how to move objects en-masse, what tools to use, how to document where they're going, how to pack the objects etc.



When I started with them again the team were working on the Uniform stores. There were entire kit bags which obviously hadn't been sorted through since the museum acquisitioned them. As I was sorting through one I found a Housewife. This is a piece of cloth that holds cutlery, razors, and personal effects. I was surprised to find rosary beads in there too and the beard hair of the Marine who it belonged to. This meant he was Catholic and the objects hadn't been cleaned. I also found a tin mug with an odd shaped dent, perhaps a bullet? On the uniform I found blood which looked like it had been made from a stab wound, and after a lot of searching I discovered the uniform had been made during the Second World War. These objects gave me an insight into one Marine, his story and his life as a Marine in the Second World War. To know that this hadn't been looked at in probably over ten years was really exciting. But also quite humbling.



I also came across the uniform from a Marine who went to Afghanistan. This was very strange, sorting through and labelling the objects and packing them away. Especially as there was mud on the bottom of the boots, perhaps mud from Afghanistan? I think it's because I was alive during the Afghanistan war. It's very easy to distance yourself from an object, especially if it was a 'long' time ago. But with an object where it was more recent it shocks you back into reality. You end up thinking a lot when you're folding uniform.



We also went through trophies and medals which although can be quite dull (most of them are the same) you get some really interesting ones for strange events! Like bayonet fighting for example. Or this oak jug that has beautiful, ornate decoration. Or a lovely gold medal that's in great condition.



But I personally love this small silver cup!



So I've had a great week of learning new skills, handling unique objects, appreciating their history and making sure that they are packaged well for another 10 or so years until the next trainee comes across them...