

Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archive

The Royal Engineers Museum in Chatham, is the only museum in Kent with a “Designated Collection,” an award given by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. This places the RE Museum in the top 3% of museums in Britain. The museum itself covers the history and development of military engineering, and the Corps of Royal Engineers. The many galleries house exhibits of international importance, including: Wellington’s Waterloo Map, John Chard’s revolver (used at Rorke’s Drift), Lord Kitchener’s military regalia and our large vehicle collection. There’s something for everyone at the Royal Engineers Museum.

Volunteer Option 1: Museum Education

The Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archive runs an active and growing learning Service utilized by students from year 1 to post-secondary levels. Volunteering with the Education & Events department would involve development work for the Learning Service, working with school-aged children, and the creation and refinement of visitor engagement schemes at the Museum.

Volunteer Option 2: Documentation and Collections Management

The Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archive holds over 500,000 items relating to the history of the Corps and the development of military engineering. This collection is catalogued, to varying levels onto the recently acquired Adlib database. Volunteering with the Documentation Department would involve all aspects of collections management, from identifying and accessioning objects, to entry of and corrections to the database and packing and storing new accessions.

In addition to this, the Museum is looking to develop its website and online presence. As part of the project working through uncatalogued and unknown collections, the opportunity will exist to prepare and write pages and or an online exhibition to be added to the website, to help advertise the wealth of material held by the Museum.

Volunteer Option 3: Fundraising & Operations

Fundraising volunteers will receive first hand experience raising money in a charity environment, and will play an active participatory role in the development and growth of the REMLA. The successful candidate will receive extremely valuable training and experience, helping to develop a practical grounding in administration and fundraising activities. You will have many networking opportunities, and the chance to find out more about the contemporary museum world.

Some experience of the not for profit sector is required, and you should be able to demonstrate a long-term commitment to the charity sector. Excellent written and verbal communications and team skills, and a lively personality are essential for this position. Candidates must also have good organizational skills, and work well under self direction. Good knowledge of MS Office is required.

(Minimum commitment of 4 months is required)

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Volunteer Option 4: Display and Interpretation (Exhibitions)

The volunteer will be a key member of the Display team, assisting with the revamping and redisplaying of the museum display cases- covering military history from the Napoleonic Wars through to modern day conflicts. A volunteer is needed to help standardize the display and text used in the cases- so all displays correspond in a uniform manner. This will help to reflect the wide participation of the Corps with every military conflict in which the UK have been involved- highlighting the individual nature of the conflicts, but the uniformity of the text reflecting the consistency and continued commitment of the Corps.

Enthusiasm for the heritage sector, care and accuracy are essential for this role.
(We require a 1 day a week commitment, or more for a short-term project).

Volunteer Option 5: Display and Interpretation (Medals)

We require two volunteers to work with the extensive museum medal collection. The museum holds just under 7000 accessioned medals and the collection continues to grow. The volunteers will gain experience working within Conservation and Display. As an essential part of the museum team, they will have primary responsibility for monitoring and conserving the medal collection- both on display and in store; training will be provided in how to conserve and clean the medals, redisplay them in a manner sympathetic to the medals and their ribbons, and manage the rotation of medals on display. Expert knowledge of medal groups and ribbons will be acquired but is not a prerequisite; we require the volunteers to have an eye for detail and accuracy, be comfortable with close work, and seek to gain new skills and experiences.

(We require a 1 day a week commitment, over a long-term period).

Volunteer Option 6: Display and Interpretation (Victorian social history)

We require a volunteer to assist with a brand new exhibition project, planning a display case on Victorian social history in the Corps. Feedback from visitors has suggested a need for information on the social history of the Corps- including family life, wives and children, food rations, etc, and we are keen to address that need- with the help of a volunteer assisting the two display curators. We will be choosing items from those in store, writing text and researching the period and living conditions. We require a volunteer who is passionate about the museum sector, and is keen to contribute to an innovative project.

(This project could be a short-term project for a volunteer looking to gain exhibition display experience).

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Volunteer Option 7: Display and Interpretation (Oral history)

In conjunction with an extensive redisplay of the first three galleries of the museum, we require a volunteer to organise and help manage some oral history interviews- the material from which will be built into the text in the display. We plan to interview over 60's, with young people and students in the area conducting the interviews. We would like a local student to conduct the interviews, and contribute in a very key way to the forthcoming revamp of the first three museum galleries; these three galleries illustrate and explain the history of fortification and defences in the Medway area, and the simultaneous growth of the Royal Engineers and their worldwide and local input. The memories and contributions of local people, and to have a local student conducting the interviews, would therefore be of great benefit to the museum and its displays. Interest in the heritage sector and particularly oral history is desirable, as is a commitment to learning new skills and a willingness to help manage a project. **(We require preferably a 1 day a week commitment)**

If you are interested please contact:

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