



In Evington we have been commemorating WW1 with special events. On 4th August – the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of WW1 there was a Peace event, supported by a ‘Heritage Lottery Fund: First World War: ‘Then and Now’ grant to Friends of Evington.. On 9th November was Remembrance Sunday. On 11th November, there was a service and we buried a time capsule. This event was also supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

This front cover shows the commemoration that took place at the newly refurbished War Memorial on 11th November 2014. On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, WW1 hostilities stopped in 1918 on the Western Front. We observed two minutes of silence to remember all those who fought and died and others who gave service to their country.



LEST WE FORGET



This wreath was made by children at Linden Primary School

ABOUT THIS EDITION

This edition comes with many thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund and aims to present information about WW1 for Evington people, 'then and now'. The History and Heritage group have been researching for this edition and found out new things about 'then'. You, the readers have been sending in stories about your relatives for 'now'.

100 years ago Evington was a small village, not much more than 300 people. The 'squire', John Faire (see page 14) was a kind and benevolent benefactor. Most people were employed in agriculture and relied on the squire and the church for social activities. Then in 1914 WW1 started. John Dearden of Dorset, who owned the building we now call Evington Park House, allowed it to be used as a V.A.D. (Voluntary Aided Detachment) hospital, that was run by women, and women would have made up at least two thirds of the member volunteers.

The soldiers whose names appear on the war memorial have had their stories recorded (see page 12). Every year, for 96 years, Evington people have remembered them.

WW1 brought many changes on a local, national and international scale. The people of Evington are no longer mainly indigenous but have come here from all over the world. We wish to continue to collect these stories, so please send them in. Please also send in WW2 stories as well. As you will see on pages 4 to 6, the stories, told through the people we know here and now, bring the realities of war back to us.

Children in our local schools have also told us what they have learned (pages 8-9). Have we learned enough? Some issues of peace are discussed on page 7.

The final poem in this edition (p.16) was dramatically read by the author, Akifer Aboobaker, at the Peace event held on 4th August. The poem was also part of London Transport Museum's WW1 commemorative exhibition.

So what next?

The WW1 project will continue with a changing exhibition, which is now open to view in the foyer of Evington Park House. Open weekdays 9am – 4pm and Saturdays, 11am to 2pm and we will continue to collect stories and work with schools.

Please send in your stories to:

Helen Pettman Tel: 2204525

helenpettman@hotmail.com

Evington echo@yahoo.co.uk

Or drop them into Bennett's Hardware Store, 30 Main Street.

BURYING THE TIME CAPSULE



Armistice Day commemorates a ceasefire on the Western Front. In Evington on 11th November, a short service was followed by placing items in a time capsule. Friends of Evington organised burying this time capsule, supported by all the local schools, Leicester City Council, St. Denys Church and Evington in Bloom. The event was funded through a Heritage Lottery award.

All the schools in Evington sent representation and placed items in the time capsule. The schools were: Linden Primary School, Oaklands Special School, Whitehall Primary School, St. Paul's School, Krishna Avanti School, the City of Leicester College and Judgemeadow Community College.



Linden Primary School

Linden Primary School put the following items into the time capsule:

- a memory stick with videos of school life made by the children
- letters to children in 2114
- DVDs of school performances
- Artwork inspired by the Tower of London sea of poppies.

a wreath they had made themselves was laid on the war memorial steps.



Oaklands Special School

Oaklands Special School added the children's writings and colourings about the things they saw in some WW1 pictures and what things they would take with them if they had to move from their homes.

Whitehall Primary School added their contributions of two booklets about their school.



Krishna Avanti Primary School

Krishna Avanti Primary School added their contributions on a CD which included images of their poppy wreaths around the school, their WW1 centenary commemoration displays, their WW1 scrapbook and more information about the school.



St. Paul's School added articles about a trip to the battlefields in France. Also they had researched the life of the soldiers Gerald Egremont Trolove and Archibald Gordon Edward Bowell, who

were both Evington soldiers listed on the War memorial. They also wrote about their visit to the WW1 Centenary battlefields.

Judgemeadow Community College produced a booklet showing how they marked the 100th anniversary of WW1. There were: copies of art work produced by year 10 students, letters written to the Unknown Soldier at Paddington Station by year 10 students, Details of the visit to Flanders by year 9 students and photos from the reflection time in their memorial garden. On the memory stick were: The Remembrance assembly which included showing year 11 busking for extra funds for their poppy appeal.



City of Leicester College students who had researched music 'then and now'.



City of Leicester College students with a poppy wreath they had made. Each poppy was inscribed with a message.

The Evington War Memorial Restoration Project

The memorial, crafted out of Portland Stone was designed by Stockdale Harrison and Sons Ltd and donated by John Edward Faire Esq of Evington Hall. The monument was unveiled on 25th July 1920, originally sited in the middle of the Village Green; it was then moved to its current site.

By 2014 the site was uneven, the stone was disintegrating, covered in years of grime and moss and the planted features were struggling to survive in the shade. As part of the commemoration to the fallen, lest we forget and to mark the centenary of the start of the WW1, Parks Services and the Friends of Evington embarked on an ambitious project to rejuvenate the site, with a focus on community consultation and participation. Leicester City Council funded the restoration of the memorial, the hard and soft landscaping. The restoration was linked to an additional local social history project, led by the Friends of Evington and funded by The Heritage Lottery First World War: Then and now. The community were directly involved in the restoration project from the start and their ideas formed the final design of the site.

The slabs and steps were re-laid and new benches replaced the old wooden ones that were originally donated by the Royal British Legion. The bench plaques were remade using the same words. A new path was created to allow easier access to the site for those who are less able. A new bin completed the visible hard landscaping details. The Heritage Lottery funded the carved memorial bench and a time capsule; its location is marked by a coloured slab.



Following consultation, it was suggested the formal flower beds would look better if they were symmetrical. The old rose beds were removed and grassed over. Leicester City Council, Parks Services and the Friends of Evington members, along with the local community and the 2502 (Hamilton) Air Training Corps joined forces to create the new flower bed features. Summer annual bedding, partly funded by the Evington Ward Community Fund, was planted up in June.



When inspected for renovation, the monument was found to be covered in lichen and the surface was decaying due to weather and other environmental elements. It needed cleaning, repairing and repointing. Professionals gently removed the years of grime using a Slurry Clean, a calcium treatment used to bring the stonework back to its original state. Lime mortar was used to repair and re-point all the joints, then the monument was sealed using a Polyester resin. The slabs were washed down ready for the next stage.



The site was officially re-opened by Sir Peter Soulsby, Leicester City Mayor on the 4th August 2014. Parks Services would like to thank the Friends of Evington, the Ward Councillors and the community for their support.



In partnership with



WW1 STORIES TOLD BY EVINGTON RESIDENTS (INCLUDING PEOPLE WHO WORK IN EVINGTON)

A GLOBAL WAR

WW1 was a global war that pulled in people from every corner of the earth who had been part of the British Empire. This included people from Africa, Australia, Canada, India (which then included modern day Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka), Nepal, New Zealand and the West Indies and other British dominions.

INDIAN SOLDIERS

1,220,500 people from India fought for Britain during WW1. 47,000 were killed and 65,000 were wounded.

Councillor Baljit Singh has sent in the following story about his grandfather.

“My grandfather Nahar Singh was a Lancer in the Indian Army. I remember seeing the lance, it was made from a strong wood with a shiny steel tip. He used to ride in the Brigade, along with other lancers, on horses that were allocated to them. In fact they were the infantry charge brigade called upon to be the first to be launched in any attack on an enemy. All their senior commanders were dressed in white, as obviously they were under the British Raj as that was the governance at this time. My grandfather had two stripes, so I’m assuming he must’ve been the equivalent to a corporal rank. He served proudly and with honour throughout his army career. After the war he received a pension and he lived through to the ripe old age of 80. He has always been a role model to me. His response to duty was unflinching and his work and life, which he carried with integrity, was a true credit to him. He will always be remembered with love and affection.”

CANADIAN SOLDIERS

620,000 people from Canada fought for Britain during WW1. 110,000 were killed.

Helen Pettman tells the following story about her father.

“My father, Gregory Amos Fountain joined the Bedfordshire Regiment and entered the war a few months under age. He was in the Cavalry. I remember him saying that he had a one eyed horse that once bolted all around the German camp and that he was lucky to live to tell the tale. His war records show that he became a Corporal and won a Level 3 Gallantry Military Medal for bravery in the field. After hospitalisation for shrapnel wounds, he joined the Canadian Army, in the Machine Gun Corps.”

The Machine Gun Corps (MGC) was formed in 1915 when the British Military started to realise the tactical potential of the guns. There was also a machine gun school in France. My father was technically minded and described by my uncle as ‘the clever one’ in the family. This may have been the reason he got in the MGC.

When Britain declared war on 4th August 1914, this automatically brought Canada into the war as a British dominion. Canadian forces fought as a distinct unit first under a British commander and then under a Canadian-born commander. This war was the bloodiest conflict in Canadian history.

KILLED AT SEA

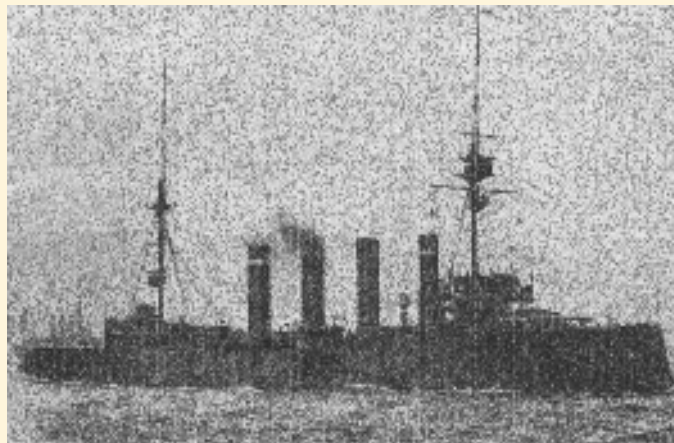
Barbara Nagy told the following story

Private Frederick James Brown was Barbara’s great uncle. He lived in Empingham, Rutland and joined the Royal Marine Light Infantry. He is pictured here in Bradgate Park. The picture was probably taken just before the outbreak of war in 1914.



From left to right: Private Frederick James Brown, Robert Brown, brother to Frederick and Barbara's grandfather, Robert's son, also called Fred, and a friend called Fred Newall.

Private Frederick Brown died on 1st November 1914, aged 36 years, when the flagship and armed cruiser, HMS Good Hope was sunk with no survivors at the Battle of Coronel, off the coast of Chile, when it was hit by the German battleship 'Sharnorst'. This sea battle was the first defeat for the British in over a century, with the loss of two armoured cruisers and nearly 160 crew.



H.M.S. Good Hope. The last photograph of Admiral Cradock's flagship taken on 20th July 1914

MY GRANDPARENTS WEDDING DAY - AUGUST 1914

Steve Hill says that Saturday 1st August 1914 was his grandparents' wedding day and the day France declared war on Germany. Hubertine (born 1886) and Gaston (born 1894) were married in Antwerp, Belgium. The following Tuesday a local government official signed their State marriage book which looks a bit like an old style passport.

<http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/en/contributions/13707>

Steve says: “I will never know whether my grandparents were aware that their country, Belgium, had been invaded by German forces that morning. “

The Siege of Antwerp lasted into October 1914. However, their town (and at times their house) was occupied by German troops until the end of the war - four long years of hardship later.

THE FIRST GAS ATTACK

Poison gas was probably the most feared weapon in WW1. An attack could leave a victim in agony for days and weeks before dying. Poison gas (chlorine) was used for the first time at the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915.

Chris Hossack’s father, Anthony R. Hossack, was there in the Queen Victoria Rifles. He wrote:

“We had had a gruelling time, and had left many of our comrades on the slopes in the fight for Hill 60. We survivors were utterly spent and weary; but we felt in good heart, for only an hour ago we had been personally congratulated by Sir John French, also the Army Commander, General Smith-Dorrien.

Our cooks were preparing a meal, and on our right a squad of Sappers were busily erecting huts in which we were to sleep. Alas! We never used them! As the sun was beginning to sink, this peaceful atmosphere was shattered by the noise of heavy shell-fire. A mile away on our right a 42-cm shell burst in the heart of the stricken city of Ypres.

As we gazed in the direction of the bombardment, where our line joined the French, six miles away, we could see in the failing light the flash of shrapnel with here and there the light of a rocket. But more curious than anything was a low cloud of yellow-grey smoke or vapour, and, underlying everything, a dull confused murmuring.

Suddenly down the road from the Yser Canal came a galloping team of horses, then another and another, till the road became a seething mass while over the fields streamed mobs of infantry running.

Plainly something terrible was happening. In the northerly breeze there came a pungent nauseating smell that tickled the throat and made our eyes smart.

“Fall in!” Ah! we expected that cry; and soon we moved across the fields for about a mile. The battalion is formed into line, and we dig ourselves in.

It is quite dark now, and water is being brought round, and we hear how the Germans have, by the use of poison gas, driven a French army corps out of the line, creating a huge gap which the Canadians have closed for the time being.

About midnight we withdrew from our temporary trenches and marched about for the rest of the night, till at dawn, we were permitted to snatch what sleep we could under a hedge.

About the middle of the morning we were on the move again, to the north. By this time we had joined up with the remainder of our Brigade, the 13th, and, after a meal had been served, we were ordered to dump our packs and fall in by companies. Here our company commander, Captain Flemming, addressed us.

“We are,” he said, “tired and weary men who would like to rest; however, there are men more weary than we who need our help. We may not have to do much; we may have to do a great deal. Whatever happens, fight like hell. I shall at any rate.” A few moments more then off we go again towards that incessant bombardment, which seemed

to come closer every minute. We were now in the area of the ill-fated French Colonial Corps. Ambulances were everywhere, and the village of Brielen was choked with wounded and gassed men. We were mystified about this gas, and had no protection whatever against it.

Shortly after passing through Brielen we turned to the left down a road which led to the Canal, along the south side of which ran a steep spoil bank, and, as the head of our battalion reached this, we halted. We could see nothing of what went on on the other side, but knew by the rattle of musketry that there was something doing.

So there was, for when we finally crossed the pontoon we found that the Jocks had met the Germans on the north bank and had bundled them helter-skelter up the slope to Pilckem. This saved us any dirty work for that day, so we spent the rest of it till midnight in carrying supplies and ammunition to the Jocks and Kents, and afterwards lay in reserve on the Canal bank. It froze hard that night, and after the sweating fatigue of carrying boxes of S.A.A. all night we were literally aching with cold.

Next morning about 12 o’clock the Adjutant, Captain Culme-Seymour, was chatting to Captain Flemming when up rushed a breathless despatch rider and handed him a message, which he read aloud to Flemming.

I caught three words, “Things are critical” .Then the Colonel had the battalion on the move, but a shell burst in the midst of “D” Company, making a fearful mess.

We moved on quickly, like a gigantic serpent, with short halts now and then. As we skirted Ypres there was a roar of swift-moving thunder and a 17-inch shell, which seemed to be falling on top of us, burst a quarter of a mile away, covering us with dirt.

Over meadows and fields green with young crops which would never be harvested, past cows peacefully grazing that had had their last milking, we went, passing curiously unperturbed peasants, who watched us from the farms and cottages.

Then the shells begin to fall about us in quantities, and gaps begin to appear in our snakelike line. We pass a field battery; it is not firing, as it has nothing to fire. Its commander sits weeping on the trail of one of his useless guns. We quicken our pace, but the shelling gets heavier. It seems to be raining shrapnel. Captain Flemming falls, but struggles to his feet and waves us on with encouraging words.

We double across a field, and in a few moments come on to the road again. Here was action indeed, for barely had we reached the road and started to work our way towards St. Julien, than we found ourselves amongst a crowd of Canadians of all regiments jumbled up anyhow, and apparently fighting a desperate rearguard action.

They nearly all appeared to be wounded and were firing as hard as they could. A machine gun played down the road. Then comes an order: “Dig in on the roadside.” We all scrambled into the ditch, which, like all Flanders ditches, was full of black, liquid mud. We started to work with entrenching tools - a hopeless job.

A woman was bringing jugs of water from a cottage a few yards away; she had just completed her week’s washing, for a line of garments fluttered in the garden.

“Dig! Dig, for your lives!” shouts an officer.

But, dig! How can we? ‘Tis balers we need’.

A detonation like thunder, and I inhale the filthy fumes of a 5.9 as I cringe against the muddy bank. Their last shell has pitched on our two M.G. teams, sheltering in the ditch on the other side of the road. They disappear, and all we can hear are groans so terrible they will haunt me for ever.

Another crash and the woman and her cottage and water jars vanish and her pitiful washing hangs in a mocking way from her sagging clothes line. More and more of these huge shells, two of them right in our midst. Shrieks of agony and groans all round me. I am splashed with blood. Surely I am hit, but no, I appear not to be, though all about me are bits of men and ghastly mixtures of khaki and blood.

For perhaps half a minute a panic ensues, and we start to retire down the road. But Colonel Shipley stands in the centre of the road, blood streaming down his face. The gallant Flemming lies at his feet, and the Adjutant, Culme-Seymour, stands in a gateway calmly lighting a cigarette.

“Steady, my lads!” says the Colonel. “Remember the regiment.” The panic is ended.

“This way,” says Seymour. “Follow me through this gate here.” As we dash, I catch a glimpse of our M.O. working in an empty gun-pit like a butcher in his shop. Many were the lives he saved that day.

Once through the gate we charge madly across a field of young corn. Ahead of us is a large farm, and advancing upon it at almost right angles to ourselves is a dense mass of German infantry.

We are carrying four extra bandoliers of ammunition as well as the rest of our equipment. The inspiring figure of Seymour urges us on, yet even he cannot prevent the thinning of our line or the gaps being torn in it by the German field gunners, whom we can now plainly see.

At last we reach the farm, but the roar of enemy machine guns rises to a crazy shrieking. With a sob of relief we fall into the farm’s encircling trench.

Not too soon either, for that grey mass is only a few hundred yards off, and “Rapid fire! Let ‘em have it, boys!” and don’t we just. At last a target, and one that we cannot miss. The Germans fall in scores, and their batteries limber up and away. At last we have our revenge. But the enemy re-form and come on again, and we allow them to come a bit nearer. Then we fire till our rifles are almost too hot to hold, and the few survivors of our mad quarter of an hour stagger back. The German attack has failed, and we have held them. Our next order tells us, “This line must be held at all costs. Our next is the English Channel.”

And hold it we did, through several more big attacks, Thirty-six hours later, we were relieved in a misty dawn, and we crept back through burning Ypres for a few hours’ respite.

Anthony R. Hossack joined the Queen Victoria Rifles at the beginning of the War and served with them on the Western Front from early 1915 till after the Battle of Arras, where, in July 1917, he was wounded, returning to France at the end of February 1918, when he was attached to the M.G. Battalion of the 9th (Scottish) Division, and, after coming through the retreat from St. Quentin, was taken prisoner in the battle for Mt. Kemmel.

LIEUTENANT C. D. STEWART ROBINSON



John Robinson wrote: “Here are the first hand notes of my father’s time in the trenches in WW1. My father never spoke of his experiences and I only realised what he had been through when my uncle sent these notes to me after his death.

I was particularly moved by reading that he had broken down and sobbed ‘like a child’ as my father was not one to show emotion, having been to a tough boarding school at Sedburgh, whose motto was ‘A stern nurse of men’. The regime in those days included cold showers and beatings. It was instilled in the pupils that ‘big boys don’t cry’!

My father later became a Church of England vicar. He had survived the battles at the Somme, Ypres and Paschendale. He must have had a charmed life, as the average life expectancy of a Lieutenant when he led his troops ‘over the top’ was three minutes. It’s not surprising they needed a tot of rum!

SOME EXTRACTS FROM LIEUTENANT ROBINSON’S NOTES

“The Colonel said my promotion was coming through. I replied I had joined up to fight, not for promotion. In 1916 came the Battle of the Somme. We were marching up and came to Corps H.Q. Rawlinson was Corps Commander and used to be called ‘Butcher’! I went to the Military Police H.Q. with another officer, saw a policeman and said we had not seen a German yet, were there any prisoners? He said that there were some, but we must wait for the Sergeant Major. A small world! This policeman was from the town I lived in and knew by sight. The Sergeant Major came and took us. There were the prisoners with an armed guard, a charcoal fire, and playing cards! I suggested that they were having a good time of it. The Sergeant Major said that if he had his way, he would shoot the lot of them! I suggested that sounded a bit bloodthirsty. He said it was not, as he had seen one of our chaps crucified against the door of a dug out. I only hoped the man was dead just before that atrocity.

I was with the Stokes Mortars. What a battle, and still more, what casualties in dead and wounded. I saw the *Boche (We were attached to the 36th Ulster Division on 1st July,) firing at our wounded lying in ‘No Man’s Land’. We did not hit any of them unfortunately. We came back to join our own Battery of the 145 Brigade. I and the other men had to step over two of our men whose bodies had been blown open and the bluebottles were at them. My batman Carter started to weep, but I stopped that. To a dug out, and asked for two volunteers to get water. The men and I had some. Previously to the beginning of the battle we had had a lot of rum. Then we joined our main body, and I broke down and sobbed like a child! The Sergeant Major came up and said “Have a drink of tea Sir, it will do you good”. It did! Then into trenches and tear gas. We wept, and could not move backwards or forwards. Then to the Leipzig Redoubt, a crater. The Boche attacked us three nights running. On the fourth night my skipper came up (Captain L. Pike) to keep me company. He said there would not be an attack the fourth night running. I left him, so lanky, in my dug out and went to our men. Then the cry ‘Stokes Mortars’. We had rapid fire. Reserves came up, and the moonlight shone on their bayonets. For one of the few times in my life I felt afraid! Our Stokes Mortar gun was not in action across the crater! I walked across as though I was crossing Piccadilly. A third man came out of the dug out who on challenge said he was the 8th West Yorks. I ordered him back to his unit as the ‘Boche’ were attacking! He went! One of my men hurt his leg when we fired rapid. I took over until the Cease Fire. Then up to the front line. Head down on account of sniping, one of our men having been sniped who would have won the Military Medal and was robbed of cash – R.A. M. C. – Rob all my comrades! “

The rest of the piece describes the attack on the Germans which was like ‘ferrets after rabbits!’ After this, “the Divisional General (Percival 49th Division) sent for Pike and gave him the well deserved Military Cross!”

. . . After a break at home when Lieutenant Robinson had his appendix out, he went out again to Lavontie. He describes getting ready for an attack that was cancelled. He then writes:

“My Captain came over at 7 a.m. and said Howarth had been placed under arrest in the front line for deserting his gun, and what should he do? I said “Have him up to Orderly Room and remand him for a Field Court Martial”. There to get a defence (a prisoner’s friend.) I said I would give evidence as to character having known Howarth for a year or two. I suggested an officer, solicitor in civil life. But no, as the Brigadier Goring Jones had got annoyed with so many accused having been found ‘Not Guilty’! So I suggested Richard Ward (whose wife and family I had met in Harrogate) a solicitor in civil life. He saw the accused and told me that he thought at least ten years. At the Court Martial I gave evidence. The President (a K.C. in civil life) asked me on oath if I thought it was cowardice. I said “No sir, in my opinion it is nerves and he should never have been in the front line”. Howarth was given two years which Corps deducted to one year. We did not send him down the line, but put him in the cook-house to complete the year! One youngster having given a false age, aged 16 years old, was caught asleep in the front line. He was court martialled and condemned to death (by shooting). However owing to his youth on appeal he was given ten years and kept up the line. He bombed single handed a Boche machine gun and brought back a prisoner. He was recommended for the D.C.M. but five years was taken off!”

*Boche - A name used for Germans.

SIDNEY NIX AND WILLIAM NIX

Stephen Taylors's great uncles, Sidney and William Nix, both fought in WW1. They both received the Victory medals, commonly known as 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred.' - the most common medals.



(from left to right) The War Medal, 1914-18 Star and the Victory medal

William Nix was a rifleman in the King's Royal Rifle Corps and died of his wounds on 4th October 1919, after discharge from the army.



Sidney Nix

Sidney was a private in the Royal Leicestershire Regiment and fought in Mesopotamia where he was killed in action on 10th March 1917.

Stephen's mother said that the impact of her brothers' deaths on her mother was devastating. Stephen's mother, still a child after the war, did not accompany her mother to the Nottingham graveyard near their home, where William was buried. She knew that she had had two uncles who fought and died, but nothing else about them and the war was never spoken about.

SERGEANT MAJOR WILKINSON BROWN

Barbara Nagy's great uncle, Regimental Sergeant Major Wilkinson Brown did not fight in WW1 although he is listed among the war dead. He actually died of heart problems less than a month before the outbreak of War. He was a veteran of the Boer War and was awarded 'The Distinguished Conduct Medal'

EXPLORING THE IDEA OF PEACE

DISCUSSING THE FULL STORY OF HUMANITY

A couple of days ago I was on a panel along with a Sikh, a Muslim, a Hindu, and a Catholic Priest. We were answering questions from sixth formers in a Catholic School. The questions were searching and were honestly answered. Afterwards, the staff member in charge remarked that the school was looking for dialogue rather than debate - for opportunities for all to contribute to consideration of the question, rather than for one of them to end up having won a contest.

Then on this morning's news there was a piece about the importance of diversity in commercial companies. We were told that boards with a mixture of different kinds of people: different social backgrounds, different cultures, different religions and beliefs, and, very importantly, different genders - do better - because they bring different skills, perceptions and approaches to an issue.

In Leicester we have an opportunity to put these insights into action in dealing with a question that we cannot avoid - how people with many differences can live well together - how we succeed as a city.

Living well together does not mean agreeing on everything: it means living in such a way that we take advantage of our different insights to help make a better life for us all. It involves open dialogue.

On the panel, I a humanist, learn from the other members and from their religions; I learn from the students - and I offer my own views.

Over the years, I have met many people, some religious, some not, whom I have come to respect and to look forward to meeting again - I have learned from their religions and beliefs and their humanity. It has taken many years of reading and talking for me to reach this position, and to be able to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the diversity of Leicester.

I would like our educational system to enable our children to take advantage of these opportunities. But they are being separated along religious lines in different schools, and religious education (RE) is limiting their understanding rather than expanding it (GCSE can be 50° ^{to} one religion, 25° ^{to} textual studies in the same religion, and 25° ^{to} in a different religion).

We need to tell them the full story of humanity (including the role of religions), and their own responsibility in taking humanity forward; and we need to educate them together so that they can get to know one another, and practice this responsibility together.

These changes will, I'm sure, seem threatening or damaging to some, but I am convinced that we must all come together in the big dialogue on this issue: given the attitudes of the young, and the availability of information and communication these days, they are, I believe, the only way in which we can gain the benefit from religions and respond to needs of the non-religious.

It is the way things should be done in a democracy.

Allan Hayes

WAR AND PEACE - WHAT SOME LOCAL PEOPLE THINK

Much research has been done on the causes of war with a remarkable lack of consensus in the findings. Evington residents’ volunteered the following:

What causes war?

Jealousy and greed

Uncontrolled anger

The persecutor/victim cycle

Religions fostering ideas that one

belief system is better than another

Nationalism fostering ideas that one

country is better than others

The power and means to fight

The contingencies, including any

previous alliances between groups

and unfair/horrible one off(or more) actions by individuals or groups

What maintains the peace?

Tolerance

Friendship

Helping each other

Opportunities and resources for all shared fairly

Honesty

Less division between rich and poor

Reducing the risks of crises

Strong norms against interference in the affairs of others

Habits of consultation and dialogue

Consensus building to work towards

eliminating unfair privileges

Economic independence

Letting go of grievances

Education and education about

fundamental human values

Free speech and

All other human rights protected by

law and listed in the ‘Universal

Declaration of Human Rights’.

Helen Pettman



This bench, on the Evington war memorial site was funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

ST PAUL’S SCHOOL - BATTLEFIELD EXPERIENCES

WW1 CENTENARY BATTLEFIELD TOURS

Mid-September 2014, St Paul’s Catholic School was one of approximately 13 Leicestershire and Northampton Schools to take part in the First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme. We left Leicester early on the Friday morning accompanied by a serving member of the Lincolnshire Poachers Infantry regiment, and spent a hectic and emotional four days getting to know each other as we travelled around a variety of historic sites in France and Belgium. We spent a day visiting the Battlefields of the Somme where the true scale of the casualties on the 1st July 1916 became clear. The magnificent memorial at Thiepval which towers over the area was in stark contrast to some tiny, yet perfectly manicured, cemeteries such as Serre Road No.3. We learned the story of the Accrington Pals, retraced their final steps and paid our respects at their graves.

Ypres is a beautiful city and the Menin Gate is another memorial which literally leaves you speechless at its size and beauty; the sheer number of names on the memorial – all soldiers who died with no known grave - is shocking. We searched through the index book and located Private G.E. Trolove whose name is inscribed on the Evington War Memorial. His name is on one of the external panels of the Menin Gate near the top.

Our soldier who came with us, Corporal Sam, was able to provide a modern day perspective for the students, he answered hundreds of questions and was remarkably open in sharing his experiences of conflict.

The whole experience was incredibly sobering and all the students who were lucky enough to have participated really learned a huge amount and experienced something which is truly life-changing. I would defy anyone to make such a visit and not be affected by it. St Paul’s students are returning to Ypres in 2015 for a more extended study of the Battles for Ypres and our plan is to visit the Somme again in 2016 for the anniversary of the Battle.

Many thanks go to St Paul’s for allowing us the time, to the IoE and Equity staff who ran a great trip, and to Tim our incredibly knowledgeable guide.

Mrs. Z. Walsh, History Teacher at St Paul’s

MY WORLD WAR ONE BATTLEFIELDS EXPERIENCE

First of all I would like to begin by saying a big thank you to the people who gave me the opportunity to go on this wonderful trip and to those who selected me. I can truly say it has been a life changing experience which I won’t forget. At first I didn’t actually want to go, but once I thought about it, I thought it might be a good life experience so I applied and surprisingly I was selected. I was really happy and excited.

Before going I didn’t actually think much about the serious side of the trip but once we began going around to the different sites the sheer scale of the war really shook me. I could not actually comprehend the number of people who had lost their lives fighting. I learned so many things I never knew and probably wouldn’t have known unless I went

on the trip. It was amazing to see and stand on the very same land that one of the greatest wars in history took place on. I read stories about certain soldiers and I had never really thought about the fact that almost each and every one of these soldiers were just like me; they had loving families and good jobs and some even had kids.

I now have a new found respect for the men who fought for their countries; I also have a new outlook on the war, on the more serious side I can actually understand the sheer numbers involved. Seeing the many cemeteries and war memorials has engraved an image in my mind that will stay with me for a long time. Once again I would like to thank the people who made this trip possible, it has been a real eye opener. Abean George – Year 9, St Paul’s Catholic School

MY EXPERIENCE

In September 2014 I had the opportunity to go on a WW1 battlefields trip to France and Belgium alongside other schools around Leicester. We visited many memorials and cemeteries full of soldiers from a range of nations including the well known Menin Gate and Thiepval Memorial. This trip was definitely one of the most moving trips I’ve ever experienced and has definitely changed me as person.

One of the things that really stunned me emotionally on the trip was seeing such a vast, unimaginable number of cemeteries and graves. For example when you hear that over 16 million soldiers died in World War One you can’t really imagine the numbers but when you can literally see row upon row of the graves in front of your eyes it really shocks you and makes you realise the enormous sacrifice they made for us and the age they were when died.

During the trip we spoke to a few guides and current serving British Army personnel; we researched family members and soldiers from the local war memorial in Evington and eventually discovered exactly where G.E. Trolove’s name was on the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres.

Another thing that I was surprised at was how much everyday life was affected and how villages before the war were turned into waste, desolate land afterwards due to the conflict.. Even today 100 years after the war farmers and villagers are still finding bullets and shells in their fields where battles took place.

When we returned to school following the trip we created presentations and were able to show them to the rest of our year and school. We showed them pictures and told them about our experience because we feel it is extremely important for children and teenagers to know what happened between 1914 -1918 and remember the great sacrifice given.

Since my visit, I have become very interested in the whole history of World War One including the cause and aftermath of it, the impact it has had on the world and the development of the military. I have a greater understanding of the sacrifice that so many brave soldiers and innocent people made during World War One.

Ethan Robinson St. Paul’s School

JUDGEMEADOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE REMEMBERS



Aaron Sahins and Said Albarra Year 9 Judgemeadow Community College

Our year 9 class have been making WW1 posters. We have found out facts about WW1; we were surprised when we found out how many people died in WW1.

WORLD PEACE DAY - CITY OF LEICESTER COLLEGE

Students at The City of Leicester College, including their Youth Council of Faiths, wanted to recognise ‘World Peace Day’ on Sun 21st Sept . Y11 student Bilal Bux created an art installation/memorial which consisted of 1000 origami paper cranes that was put on display in the Humanities Hub. This wonderful piece of art work related to a year 10 R.S. topic on ‘Religion war and peace’ including the study of the story of Sadako Sasaki in Hiroshima. This is what Bilal said about his work:

“If we don’t end war, war will end us.” H. G. Wells

I’m a person that tends to absorb feelings. This means if I see someone in pain, I feel the pain. In Year 10 Religious Studies, we learn about War and Peace. We discuss moral and ethical issues around this topic. In my last Religious Studies lesson, I learnt how every battle will leave scars – Sadako Sasaki and her struggle with Leukaemia - and it hit me. Sadako was one of the 66,000 victims of the ‘Little Boy’ nuclear bomb; she survived, and she was only two. But unfortunately, 10 years later, she passed away due to Leukaemia caused by the radiation.

I made these cranes as a tribute not only to her but the thousands of others who have died due to war. During the battle with Leukaemia, Sadako managed to make 644 cranes; and the rest were made by her friends and buried with her. I can remember the moment I finished folding my 644th crane; I stopped for one minute, and remembered. Battles have been happening since the dawn of time, and yet we always forget to remember the civilians who died.

The reason I didn’t give up was because I felt like I had to do this. I’m a very light-hearted person; and I will always go the extra mile in the moments that really never require it. With the cranes, it built itself into a situation where the meditation of Origami took over me and I actually became addicted to it.

Sadako is remembered through the story of a thousand origami cranes before her death, and is to this day a symbol of innocent victims of war.

OAKLANDS SPECIAL SCHOOL

What would Oaklands students take in their suitcases if war forced them to leave their homes?

“I would like to take lego people and lego cars and lego trains and a lego transformer to play with when I am bored. I would take a dozen drinks so I don’t go thirsty.”

“I would take batman toys because he’s my hero. I would take clothes to wear. I would take a dvd to watch when I’m bored. I would take food because I like food.”

LETTERS TO THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

Judgemeadow students have been writing letters to an unknown soldier and have over 100 letters on line. Here is what Hassan wrote:

Dear Ahmed, my brother,

I have been missing you so much. I cannot explain how I am feeling in words. Every time I walk past your room I am reminded of you and what you could be doing in the trenches. It is no fun without you being here. The weather is very hot here, as it always is. Do you remember when we used to play cricket with father? Father has been getting better lately and he isn’t so depressed about not being able to join the army because of his age. Father has started to help around the house a lot more. He was also wondering how uncle is doing and if you are still with him. You being gone has had a huge effect on our family. Everybody depends on me a lot more to do the jobs you used to do. You aren’t fighting on the front lines, are you? Because it’s your birthday soon, mother doesn’t want to do anything to celebrate it. I think it is too painful for mother to think of you. How is it to fight alongside these British soldiers? Have you made any friends? I can’t remember what you told me about the war. It feels like ten years ago even though it was about 13 months ago. Can you promise to play a game of cricket with me, when you return? We are all missing you so dearly and hope you will return someday and we will never lose hope you will return to our village in Pakistan in Karachi.

All the best,

Your loving brother,
Hassan.

To my heroic older brother,

How are you, Tim? It’s been ages since I saw you last. In fact, I’ve lost count: It seems like years since I saw your cheerful face.

This letter will not be able to show how proud I am of you. I know for sure. Everyday, I realise how lucky I am to have a brother like you. Even if you aren’t here at home, I know you will always be close to me, close in my heart. Although, I do miss the fun we’ve had. Remember those times when we had all day up in Mr. Thatcher’s peach tree? Nobody ever found out!

When I go to school, I can’t stop telling everyone about the day you proudly stepped foot on the train as we waved goodbye. Ma couldn’t stop crying. She was so proud of you, she really was.

Whilst you have been serving our country, I have been doing my bit too. Ma taught me how to cook lots of things. I’ve even learned how to make your favourite pea soup and bread baked in dripping! I promise I will make it for you on the day you come back home. You’ll just have to hold on till then. But I know you will, you are my brother.

My amazing brother.

Your proud sister, Megan.



Students at Judgemeadow are reading their letters to “The Unknown Soldier” in their schools’ memorial garden. There are now over 100 letters on the web

THIS BEAUTIFUL STAINED GLASS WINDOW AT ST. DENYS CHURCH REMEMBERS THE LIFE OF ARCHIBALD GORDON EDWARD BOWELL KILLED IN ACTION IN 1916



The Thiepval Memorial

Archibald is remembered here.
He was one of the many soldiers killed in 1916.

Evington War Memorial

Archibald is also remembered at the War Memorial in Evington village.

Second Lt Archibald Gordon Edward Bowell of the 8th Bn, formerly 9th Bn, Leicestershire Regiment is commemorated in a beautiful window in St Denys Church in Evington village and his name is on the Evington War memorial.

“Archie” as he was affectionately known was the youngest of the three sons of Charles William and Charlotte E. Bowell of “Leighwood” London Road Leicester. This house still stands, although now divided into flats.

He was 26 years old when he was killed at one of the Battles of the Somme at Bazentin-le-Petit on 14th July 1916. He is remembered with honour and his name is recorded on the Thiepval Memorial in France. This “Memorial to the Missing of the Somme” bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before March 1918 and have no known grave. Sir Edwin Lutyens designed the huge memorial which was built between 1928 and 1932 and unveiled by the Prince of Wales on 1st August 1932.

DRUM HEAD SERVICE IN EVINGTON

On Sunday 9th November, Remembrance Sunday, the Hamilton Air Cadets and 19th Leicester Scouts took part in a special religious ceremony in front of the newly refurbished War Memorial in Evington, to commemorate the centenary of the start of WW1 and to remember those that lost their lives serving their country.

The Drumhead Service was held in front of around 200 people, with representatives there from the local branch of the British Legion, as well as local churches, schools and other community groups.

A Drumhead Service was originally a church service given to soldiers on the battlefield, using a drum with a flag draped over it as an altar. The drum signifies the call to serve and the colours on the flag were to remind soldiers of their duty to serve God, King and Country. This service used six drums draped with military colours in place of an altar to replicate services held on the front line 100 years ago and that still take place on battlefields today.

At the end of the service, the Hamilton Air Cadets and the 19th Leicester Scouts paraded along Church Street, accompanied by some WW2 veterans and guests. After final prayers around the Field of Remembrance, the congregation was invited back to St. Denys Church for refreshments.

Rev. Anthony Lees-Smith, vicar of St. Denys Church said, "This was a very special and memorable occasion for Evington. People of all ages and from different faith groups and none, shared in an act of commemoration, remembrance and reflection. The rest of the service followed our usual traditions with hymns, readings and prayers. The names of the local War dead were read out from the memorial and we stopped for two minutes of silence. We were delighted to work in partnership with the Cadets and Scouts to put together such a special event for the whole community and I'm particularly grateful to Flight Lieutenant Andy Faulkner and Group Scout Leader Howard Sloan for their support and co-operation."



THE SOLDIERS ON EVINGTON'S WAR MEMORIAL WHO DIED IN WW1

The 'Evington Eight' recorded on Evington's War memorial, had all been resident in Evington at some time and all were killed in action between May 1916 and November 1918, with an average age of 27.

GEORGE FRIE BENSKIN

George was born in Leicester in 1889 to a large family, His parents were Alfred Benskin and Matilda Martha (nee Frie)

According to the 1911 census the family were living at 5 Upper Fox Street, Leicester and George was working as a tobacconist's assistant.

Private Benskin was killed in action in Greece on 18th Sept. 1918, aged 29. He was in the Prince of Wales's Volunteers (South Lancashire) Regiment, 9th Battalion. He enlisted in Leicester.

JOHN WILLIAM BILLESDON

John was born in 1881 in Oadby, John was an agricultural labourer who later moved to Chapel Street, Evington and then Old Evington, where he lived as a boarder at the home of George and Ada (his sister) Brewin.

In 1912 he emigrated to New Zealand, only to return to England in May 1914 as Private Billesdon in the 1st battalion of the Wellington Infantry Regiment.

John was killed in action only seven days before Armistice Day in November at Le Quesnay in France and buried at Cross Roads Cemetry Fontaine-Au-Bois.

Unusually he is honoured by three memorials: in Wellington NZ, St. Denys Church and the Evington War memorial.

ARCHIBALD GORDON BOWELL



Archibald (known as 'Archie') was born in 1890 in Norwich, Norfolk just before his family moved to Leicester. His parents were Charles W. Bowell (jnr) who was born in Salisbury and worked as a commercial traveller for a

machinery company and his mother was Charlotte E (nee Bissex) who was born in Bristol District, Glos. in 1880.

As a scholar at the Wyggeston Grammar School, Archie lived at 117 Evington Road and then the White House Evington. He became a Commercial Traveller before enlistment in the 8th Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment and becoming a commissioned officer in January 1915.

On the 14th July, 1916, Second Lieutenant Bowell was involved in heavy fighting at Bazentin during the early days of the Battle of the Somme and he was killed in action with no recovery of his body, aged 25. He is therefore one of the thousands remembered on the Thiepval Memorial.

JOHN JOSEPH BREWIN

John was born in Hinckley in 1883. His parents were John Brewin, who was born in Thorpe Acre and worked as a shepherd, and Harriet (nee King).

John Joseph married Sarah Jane Seal at Thurnby Church on 21st Nov. 1904. Sarah Jane was the daughter of Edward Seal and his wife Jane (nee Measures). Edward Seal worked as a shepherd and was born in Thurnby.

In the 1911 census John Joseph was working as a general labourer and living with his wife and father in law in Old Evington. John Joseph and Sarah Jane had a daughter Fanny, born in 1905 and a son Harry born in 1908.

Private Brewin died of his wounds on 24th April 1917 aged 34 after action near Arras. He was in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 1st Battalion, after being formerly in the Leicestershire Regiment.

LOUIS EDWIN KENNEWELL

Louis was born in Evington in 1887. His father was Francis Kennewell who was born at Spittlegate, Lincoln and worked as a shepherd and farm labourer and his mother was Mary (nee Brewin).

In 1901 the family lived at 23 Lancaster Street and Louis worked as a shoe tacker.

By the time of the 1911 census the family were living in Evington, but Louis was a boarder and was working as a milkcarrier in Kensington.

Louis married Margaret E. A. Mayes on 28th Sept. 1915 at Stratton, Swindon.

He was a Private in the Duke of Cambridge's own 17th Middlesex Regiment, 23rd Battalion. Private Kennewell died of his wounds on 28th Sept. 1916 in Flanders, France aged 29. On 15th Sept. 1916, he had had gun shot wounds to his chest, leg and buttock.

He is also remembered at St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, Grave B. 19.65.

GERALD EGREMONT TROLOVE

Gerald was born in Leicester in 1899 to Walter Henry, a bank clerk and his mother Violet (Wyndham) from London. By 1911 they were living at Linden Drive, Evington.

Private Trolove was killed in action on 31st July 1917 aged 18

He was a private (37884) in the Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Royal Berkshire) Regiment, 2nd Battalion having enlisted in Leicester.

He is commemorated at the famous Menin Gat at Ypres in Belgium.

REUBEN WAGSTAFF

Reuben was born in Evington in 1894 to John Henry and Jessie Wagstaff.

In 1901 they lived in Chapel Street, Evington and John Henry was a gardener by occupation.

By 1911, Reuben had become a groom gardener until war service saw him as a gunner in the 38th brigade of the Royal Field Artillery.

He died on 10th Nov. 1918 aged 24.

WILLIAM LESLIE WELLS



William was born in Leicester in 1892 to William Walter Wells (an architect surveyor) and Lydia Phoebe (nee Nock)

William married Kathleen McChristal at Holy Cross Church, Leicester on 10th Nov. 1912. They had two children, Samuel J. P. Wells who was born in 1914 and Phoebe K. M. Wells who was born in 1916

For the 1911 census, the family were living in Linden Drive, Evington. William worked as a bank clerk for Parrs Banking Co and London & River Plate Banking Co.

William enlisted in Aug. 1914 as a despatch rider and later he was a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery.

He was killed in action on 21st May 1916 aged 24. and is also remembered with honour at the Cabaret Rouge Cemetery in France. After the war his widow lived in Saxby Street, (formerly Saxe Coburg Street).

BUILDINGS AROUND IN EVINGTON VILLAGE AT TIME OF WW1

Note: Where the date when the photograph was taken is known, it is marked.



Burnaby Cottages 1983



The Cedars, Main St. 1985



The Lawns (demolished) Main Street



Shady Lane 1905



Old Cottage restored High Street 2012



High Street cottages (some demolished)



Mrs Smalley's cottage is in the distance. (demolished) The library is there today.



Evington House (known as Knighton V.A.D Hospital in WW1)



The Old Vicarage (demolished)



Evington chapel and manse



Main Street cottages 1898



Coronation Day 1911. The old cottage is on the site of the Co-op shop today



St. Denys Church and the old barn. Now said to be the oldest building in Evington. 1906



Evington Hall, where John Faire lived



The Old Village School (right) and Main Street Cottages

JOHN EDWARD FAIRE

John was born in Derby on November 17th 1843 and he died at Evington Hall, Leicester on October 14th 1929.

He became a J P in 1895, was High Sheriff of Leicestershire in 1921 and was given the Freedom of the City in 1926.



John came to Leicester in 1851 aged 8 years and was the second eldest of a family of eight boys and one girl. He married Helen Mary Black (of Frears and Blacks Bakery) at St Margaret's Church, Leicester on January 11th 1877. Their first home together was at 15 Seymour Street, Leicester. They had no children. John Faire's funeral service was held at Leicester Cathedral. He and his wife are buried at Welford Road Cemetery in plot uA950, along with his parents and other family members.

John went to work in his father's firm, Watkin Lewis Faire in September 1855 aged 12 years starting work at 6 am and working a 10 hour day. He rose to be senior partner and later chairman of Faire Bros. and Co. Ltd. He was remembered as a kindly and just employer.

He was also chairman of Black's Bread Company Ltd. – taking on this role after the death of Helen's father in 1884.

In 1925 he laid the foundation stone of the new bakery at the corner of Abbey Park Road/Blackbird Road.

Faire Bros & Co Ltd had warehouses in Leicester, London,



Northampton and Borrowash. On January 1st 1898 they moved to a new warehouse in Rutland Street, Leicester which was considered to be architecturally one of the finest in Great Britain. The main warehouse had six lifts, an internal telephone system of 100 telephones, plus five GPO lines. The company made and supplied laces and elastic webbing and small wares for the shoe trade becoming one of the largest firms in its field, selling a number of these products to Woolworth. In 1967 the company was acquired by Phipps and Son and the sales side was transferred to that company. They returned to Leicester in 1976 to their own building. It is now part of a company of the same name based in Powys. The Rutland Street premises save been converted into apartments.

JOHN FAIRE AND EVINGTON

John and his wife, Helen, bought Evington Hall in 1900 (see photo on page 13), and they lived there until his death in 1929. Helen Faire moved to a house on London Road and was there until her death, just 13 months later. Evington Hall was then sold and the estate broken up.

The Hall is Grade II listed . It was a ten bedroomed mansion in Italianate style with a stuccoed exterior, standing in 97 acres of land and built around 1830. It had a fine suite of 'entertaining rooms' including a large entrance lounge, inner lounge, morning room, drawing room, dining room; in addition there was a study, a billiards room, and plenty of accommodation for the household staff. Evington Hall was among the first houses to have a telephone – Oadby 10.

There were numerous out buildings including a large coal and wood store, a dairy, wash-house, a garage for four cars, a hunting stable block, dog kennels, glass houses and a garden house. There was also housing for farm animals – calves and pigs among others.

The estate was sold in 1930 in 19 lots which included 28 houses, cottages and 23 acres of land. During the 19th century most of the villagers in Evington would have worked on the estate. Soon housing estates were being built on former estate land – Spencefield Lane became a villa residential development. One 10 acre site became St Denys Road.

In 1937 Sisters from the Convent of the Nativity at Danehills came to Evington Hall to look after Basque children who had fled from the Spanish Civil War. Since then it has been used as follows:

- 1 The RC Convent School for Girls to 1968
- 2 A fee-paying grammar school
- 3 St Paul's RC School
- 4 In 2008 it was the junior department of Leicester Grammar School
- 5..2011 it became the Krishna Avanti School

JOHN FAIRE, VILLAGE BENEFACTOR



By 1911 it was clear that Evington needed a centre for village activities and at a meeting held in December that year a Trust Deed was drawn up. John Faire was made Chairman of the Trustees. A proposal to build a hall, porch, and ante-room with heating apparatus; and with toilets (detached from the main building at the corner of the site was drawn up and an allowance was made in the estimate for fencing, chairs and lighting. The cost came to approximately £1147, including £94-5s-9d to Mr Powys-Keck of Stoughton Grange for the site.

In March 1912 a meeting was called to arrange a public subscription, and to vote for a name for new hall. The decision was taken to ask every household in both Stoughton and Evington for a donation. In addition fetes were held in the



grounds of Evington Hall to help raise the money. At the same time the question of the name for the hall was discussed. The final choice was King George V Hall (the coronation of King George V had taken place on June 22nd 1911) and Mr Faire wrote to the King for permission to use his name.

On June 4th 1912 John Faire laid the foundation stone and on October 24th of that same year the hall was officially opened by the Duchess of Rutland. Every person under 21 years was given a medal.

After World War One, John Faire presented the plot of land previously known as King's



Orchard to Evington and paid for a War memorial to be erected on the site. In 1929 he conveyed the Village Green to trustees of the Village Hall except for 1000 yards needed for road widening
"The land upon which this memorial stands known by the name of Kings Orchard was given to Evington by John

Edward Faire Esq. J.P. of Evington Hall as a thanksgiving to God for victory and peace Aug 23rd 1919".

JOHN FAIRE, PHILANTHROPIST

As well as taking a keen interest in Evington John Faire was a businessman whose firm was rooted in Leicester and he extended his philanthropy to the city itself.

He was chairman of the Leicester Provident Dispensary, which had been established in 1833 by a group of businessmen as a charitable dispensary, to provide medical services for working class people. Drugs were made on the premises and sold over the counter. In 1862 it became a friendly society and was renamed Leicester and Leicestershire Provident Society. The first dispensary was at the junction of Causeway Lane and East Bond Street in Leicester; by 1903 the organisation had grown and had 13 branches around the town serving over 48,000 subscribing members. In the same year it opened the Provident Dispensary Hospital – later to be renamed the John Faire Hospital; built on the site of an old Boot and Shoe factory.

The John Faire Hospital was merged with the Bond Street Maternity Hospital in 1957. In 1971 when the new LRI Maternity unit was opened the Bond Street premises were redundant and later that same year one quarter of the building was destroyed by fire. The whole structure was demolished in 1974.

John Faire left bequests in his will to the Faire Hospital, the Maternity Hospital, the Dispensary, the Infirmary and to Leicester University College.

John Faire as president of Leicester Temperance Society continued the temperance work of his father, who had come to Leicester to support Thomas Cook, and younger brother, Samuel, later Sir Samuel Faire.

Diana Courtney



EVINGTON'S V.A.D HOSPITAL (VOLUNTARY AIDED DETACHMENT)

The building now known as Evington Park House was called Knighton V.A.D. Hospital or VAD Leicester 4 during WW1.

V.A.D. hospitals were set up through the Joint War Committee comprising the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem who had pooled their resources under the Red Cross emblem. Suitable buildings were set up as auxillary hospitals and by the summer of 1914 there were 2,500 VAD hospitals in Britain. Of the 74,000 V.A.D. members in 1914, two thirds were women and girls.

Knighton Hospital was attached to the Base Hospital in Leicester, which is now the Fielding Johnson building at the University of Leicester. They waited through the long autumn months of 1914, preparing lists of beds, saucepans, tables, etc. ready for the summons which came in December. The House was kindly lent for a hospital and fitted out quickly, so the first nineteen patients were received from the Leicester Base Hospital on 28th December.

The commandant of the hospital was called Miss Alice Henderson and in 1919 she wrote the following article for the Wyggeston Girls Gazette p. 282-283 about working in the V.A.D. hospital, which she described as a happy place.

"The day in the kitchen begins at 7am (approximately), when three somewhat sleepy individuals arrive to prepare breakfast of porridge, tea and cocoa, bread and butter, treacle, and on the welcome occasions when gifts have been sent, eggs, ham or tongue. Breakfast is ready in the dining room at 8 o'clock, usually for more than half the men who are in hospital, and at the same time the night nurses and some of the ward nurses take breakfast to those who cannot come down for it.

From breakfast all through the morning the kitchen is a very busy place. Soup has to be prepared as an alternative to milk at 10.30, the huge joints of meat have to be put in the oven betimes to be ready for 12.30 dinner, puddings made, potatoes and vegetables cooked, not to speak of gravy, sauces and special diets.

Besides, there is the dining-room to be swept and dusted at least thrice daily, the pantry and kitchen to be kept clean and last, but by no means least, there is the inevitable washing up after each meal. Tea at 4 o'clock, preparation of soup and milk for supper at 7.30, and of vegetables, or puddings, or anything that can be made ready for the following day, taken up the attention of the kitchen workers till eight o'clock, or thereabouts.

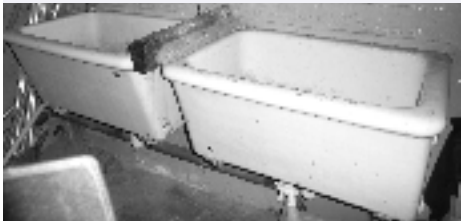
It will have been noticed that early to bed is the order at Knighton House. Last week, however, we celebrated the winning of a Distinguished Conduct Medal by one of the soldiers, with a special entertainment followed by a supper in the dining-room and the men were allowed to stay up till nearly nine o'clock!

Most of the men who have been in the Hospital have come from the Front, and include Regulars, some of whom have been for years in India or Africa, Reservists who rejoined in August and Territorials. Amongst the latter was one Scotch boy of 17, who had been no further than Bedford. He came in recovering from rheumatism, and was a great source of amusement. The other men in his ward tied him up in his sheets by night, played pitch and toss with him by day, and finally, on his last evening, presented him with a cigar, which he manfully smoked – with disastrous consequences. Another amusing person was a traveling show-man, who wrote in an autograph book a long list of engagements in which he had taken part – Ypres, Armentieres, La Bassee and so on; in reality he had been driving a traction engine from the coast to Headquarters, or some such comparatively safe route.

The readers of the 'Gazette' will be glad to hear that there are at least twelve Old Wyggestonians working in the Hospital, some regularly, some when other duties allow them. Several of them are in the wards, two bring the professional element into the cooking department, one is head stoker of the kitchen fire, another chief soup maker, whilst many are quickly becoming experts at potato peeling.

The thanks of soldiers and workers are due also to those Wyggestonians – staff, old and present pupils – who have contributed to the evening entertainments at the Hospital."

A. C. Henderson



Old sinks in the house that were probably there and used during WW1.



A reconstruction of how the dining room might have looked in WW1 at the V.A.D. hospital.

V.A.D. LEICESTER/4 REGISTERED – MARCH 18TH 1914

Commandant: Miss Alice Henderson M.B.E. (resigned April, 1919).

Quartermaster: Miss G. Whittingham (resigned September, 1919, Miss E. M. Arculus.)

Medical Officer: Dr. G. H. Crofts

Members:

E. Barlow, E. W. Barnley, D. Blackwell, M. Blackwell, M. S. Bond, D. F. Briggs, I. M. Brightland, E. E. Buckler, D. Crowther, L. I. Donaldson, E. D. I. Cornhill, H. M. Ellis, G. M. K. Thomson, D. V. Faire, V. D. Faire, D. Finburgh, D. Goodard, I Hartopp, E. S. Healey, N. Henderson, A. M. E. Statham, H. Johnstone, Z. Taylor, K. M. Lennard, E. M. Mason, E. M. Cross, M.C. Neale, I. B. B. Noel, M. Palfreyman, M. Paprill, A. B. Pritchard, B. Russell, E. L. Salter, M. E. Scott, D. E. A. Seymour, C. Simons, M. Simons, S. K. Sloane, D. E. M. Smith, C. Spencer, G. T. Spencer, B. Thompson, F. A. Tippetts, D. M. Turner, A. M. Collier, G. M. Cholerton, K. Wand, B. Wates, H. Wherry, M. H. Williams, L. M. Wykes, M. Bird, M. C. Burford, C. H. Jeffrey, M. C. Graham, B. Grant, C. E. Halford, D. Harrison, W. Hilton, M. Lee, G. H. Lupton, M. A. Pearson, E. Raven, L. C. Sorrell, P. H. Sutton, F. L. Tyler, C. S. Tough, M. G. Westropp, D. W. Whitehead, D. E. Wilson.

The following Members enrolled for Military Service:

France:

H. M. Ellis, G. M. K. Thomson, D. Goddard, C. Spencer, S. K. Sloane, A. M. Collier, B. Wates, D. V. Faire, V. M. Faire, M. Paprill.

Egypt: D. V. Faire, V. M. Faire, M. Paprill

Salonika: M. Paprill

Home Hospitals:

D. Crowther, L. I. Donaldson, N. Henderson, A. M. E. Statham, H. Johnstone, B. Russell, A. B. Pritchard, D. E. A. Seymour, C. Simons, M. Simons, D. E. M. Smith, C. Spencer, G. Spencer, L. M. Wykes, M. Bird, H. J. Clark, B. Grant, D. Harrison, G. H. Lupton, C. S. Tough, D. S. Whitehead.

The arrangements for providing refreshments for the patients on ambulance trains when they arrived at Leicester were first placed in the hands of this Detachment. With the opening of the Knighton V.A.D. Hospital the Members volunteered to undertake the kitchen and pantry work and carried this through most successfully. When the Hospital was removed to Evington Village, Miss A. C. Henderson held her position at the hospital until it closed. Miss Whittingham was the Quartermaster of the Hospital.

Miss Alice Henderson received the M. B. E. and Miss Whittingham was 'mentioned' for services in connection with the Knighton V.A.D. Hospital.

Providing refreshments at stations was a duty for this V.A.D. Hospital. The photo was taken at Humberstone Road Station, Leicester.



Date: c 1919 Reference 14D35/28
Humberstone Road Station

Missing Heartbeats



An old mans hands
Trembling in his lap
Feet tapping
On the cold bus floor
Not really an old man
But
Old hands
Used once before

But it's too late to pray
As the light in his eyes
Is mercilessly taken away

The scars that line these palms
All the routes this bus has taken
Picking up
Dropping off each soldier
But in the end we only have one
destination



On my right
An eager young mind
Sitting on the edge of his seat
Perched forward
Helpless
Defenceless
Feeble bones
Just about 18 years old
A driving passion to go in all guns
blazing
A craving
To come back a hero
To crowds of cheering and waving
Will he really come back
Or will he just be missing



I'm sitting in my own hearse
Does he know?
This young man in the next row
That this hearse is carrying him to his
resting place
The battlefield will be his grave
Where we will dig trenches
Our bare hands will mark the place we
will be laid

I don't want to go back
But I know what happens if I refuse to fight
One bullet to my chest
My child's eyes will be wounded for life
Tears clouding the white skies
Call me a coward
Can't a grown man cry?
I force the salty floods back into the black hole of fear
Closing the gates
Refusing my cowardliness to escape



I'm sitting next to a dead man
I'm an empty shell of a dead man
Ahead of me
No-man's land
Behind me
A forgotten road
Leading back home
Beside me
Ghosts of my past
Echoes vibrating off my bones

I'm a good man going to war
But I don't have the strength to fight anymore
Black and blue bruises
All over still sore
From the last time I went knocking on death's door

Missing heartbeats of war
Hidden in the sound of bombs
Revealed in the drumming of fingers
On triggers
As waves of bullets
Disturb the stillness of rivers
Hatred raining from the skies
Falling
Burying us
6 foot down under
We carry our own coffin on our shoulder
Missing heart beats of war
Merely shadows of ghosts lost on the moor
I've survived before
But this time
I don't know if I will rise after I fall...



My eyes have swallowed the taste of
war
My hands
Black burnt and scorched
My mind,
Plays back the sound of ringing bombs
Singing songs
Of death
As each one goes off
There's a fire blazing
Some one out there praying



Aikifar Aboobaker

