

Newsletter - May 2005

Issue no 10

WORLD WAR 2 REMEMBERED

By over 200 people

Congratulations and thank you very much to all those who helped make such a great success of the World War 2 Remembered Day at Ewell Library on 11th May.

We counted 215 visitors, which is a record for one of our events (we actually know there were more as some people slipped in without taking a food ticket). Better still, they all seemed to enjoy themselves. We had people queuing to come in at 12 Noon and the last visitors were being ushered out when we closed the doors at 4.00 pm. Some people stayed for almost the whole event because they were enjoying swapping reminiscences of the War and VE Day; or perhaps they were just enjoying the ambience of the 'Street Party'. We know of one lady who worked at Bletchley Park, the Enigma code-breaking centre, who met with a lady who had been based at a radio receiving station in Scarborough, where the coded messages were intercepted and sent on to Bletchley. They chatted for ages and there seemed to be many more such conversations going on.



Some of the team from the Library and the History Centre who made it happen.

Many visitors wanted to record their stories for the BBC's World War 2 People's War Project. And we collected some twenty stories on the day with a promise of more to come.



Preparing for the 'Street Party'

Thanks to our many helpers

A special thanks go to our 'co-opted' volunteers:

Tim for his help in setting the atmosphere dressed as an ARP Warden and for chatting knowledgeably to our visitors;
to Charles Peall, from the Burma Star Association, for reminding us that for some VE Day didn't mean the war was ended, it was still going on in the Far East;
and to Maureen and Denise for their listening and computing skills and recording so many of the stories from our visitors.
Also we thank Rosemary, Surrey County's Senior Manager for History Centres, who was our door keeper and bouncer who gave out the "meal vouchers" and also collected comments as our visitors left. We are delighted to say there were many favourable comments and Rosemary has promised to let us have a typed record.

We must not forget those who worked in the background – Eileen, wearing Jean's grandmother's apron (see picture above) for presiding over the tea urn and Jeanne and others who dealt with an endless stream of washing up!

It was amazing how the Wartime food for the 'Street Party' lasted out the day – it was a bit like the 'loaves and fishes' – as soon as plates were emptied, replacements arrived. In fact, it just proved Wartime food must have been pretty good because people came back again and again for Spam Fritters and some delicious cakes, even if they didn't have any eggs in them.

Our visitors found our storyboards, posters and displays very interesting and from comments overheard, they certainly triggered lots of memories, and provided people with a great deal of information.

And finally, we attracted the media, with Adrian Harms from BBC Southern Counties Radio broadcasting live interviews from the show, and a photographer from The Post taking pictures, which we look forward to seeing in print soon.

Other Good News

Our Grant Application with the Big Lottery Fund is Approved

The Big Lottery Fund has fully approved our grant application for equipment and other items to support our WW2 Commemoration Events. So now we can purchase our own display boards, laptop computer, printer/scanner, digital camera and various other items. Thanks go to Bert, Carol and Ian who put the application together.

Supported by



Forthcoming Events

Our next event is on Wednesday, 18 May from 10.00 am – 3.00 pm at Ewell library. It's another 'WW2 Remembered' Schools Day, by request from those schools who visited last year.

As a last 'WW2 Remembered' event there will be another public story-gathering day, this time in the Learning Centre at Epsom Library in the Ebbisham Centre, Thursday, 7th July, from 10.00 am – 4.00 pm, for all those people who can't easily get to Bourne Hall.

Other news

In the next newsletter, we will have a report on the visit to the British Library Newspapers at Colindale and a report on the WW2 Schools Day.