

Researching the Great War at the Trinity Newspapers Archive in Reigate

By Clive Gilbert.

The Great War of 1914-1918 cost the lives of some 750,000 United Kingdom citizens. Another 2,000,000 or so were wounded and/or maimed, and every family was affected, from the highest in the land to the most humble. Today, the most conspicuous legacy of this tumultuous period of our history lies in the many War Memorials to be found throughout the kingdom.



Bert Barnhurst and Peter Reed search the archives.

What's that got to do with Trinity Newspapers Archive, you may ask. Well, during my 'mission' to research every name on the Borough's Great War memorials, the Epsom Herald has been mentioned in several places. For example, the Vicar, writing in the St Mary's parish magazine said he would not write in detail about the remembrance ceremony held on Armistice day 1922, as the Epsom Herald had a very good and comprehensive write up, which he thoroughly recommended. Another instance was a letter written by an officer to the parents of Pte Joseph Edward Toms expressing his regret that their son had been killed. The officer was not with Pte Toms' unit at the time, but he remembered him from former days. Now, *the point* is that he found out about the demise of Pte Toms from the Epsom Herald.

Two examples of Great War information held in back issues of the Epsom Herald, so how much more might be hidden away? It was with this thought in mind that Bert Barnhurst, Peter Reed and myself motored to the Trinity Newspapers office in Reigate to see if we could locate any in the vast basement of the building. I must here express my thanks to Bert, who through his good working relationship with Patsy Payne (Content Editor of The Post) was able to arrange our visit.

The visit was an interesting but disappointing one, as we were unable to locate any Epsom Heralds from the Great War period. There are indeed many, many newspapers stored down there, very largely in bound volumes. If memory serves me well some going back to 1882, and badly in need of some kind of permanent archiving, i.e. filming or scanning.

A rather disappointing aspect was that there is no list of any kind as to which papers are held there, never mind what dates they might cover. However, undaunted by this the three intrepid 'Herald Hunters'



Some of the archives badly need rescuing.

set to work examining the multitude of bound volumes, only to find, as previously mentioned that no Epsom Heralds from the Great War era are stored down there. As they are not held at Colindale either, I think we must conclude that what might have been a wonderful source of information on that fascinating period no longer exist. For me this was very sad and disappointing, as information on people who gave their ALL for their country is probably lost for ever.

On a slightly brighter note, Sally Jenkinson from the Surrey History Centre at Woking has expressed an interest in some of the earlier papers and may be able to arrange for their permanent preservation. Judging from the condition of some of the papers, preservation would need to take place fairly soon, say the next five years, as some are in a quite delicate state already. Also, Trinity Newspapers is very likely to move premises within the year, so if anyone has any projects that would benefit from past newspaper articles, now would be a good time to have a look.

Needless to say, if anyone has any information about the memorials not already published on the Local History Centre's web site www.EpsomandEwellHistoryExplorer.org.uk please let Clive Gilbert know. You can email him at EpsomandEwellLHC@yahoo.co.uk

Report on 7th Annual General Meeting

There was a good turnout for the 7th Annual General Meeting of the Epsom & Ewell Local & Family History Centre which was held on 7th April 2008 at 7.00 pm in Ewell Library, Bourne Hall.

Chairman, Tim Bauckham, presented his report for the year and Peggy Bedwell, Treasurer, provided an update on the Annual Accounts; both were approved by the AGM.

We are pleased to announce that Tim Bauckham has agreed to continue as Chairman for next year and was unanimously re-elected. At the same time Hilary Marogna announced she was stepping down as Secretary and was thanked for her services. This role will now be in the capable hands of Angela Clifford.

The Epsom and Ewell Local and Family History Centre Committee now comprises the following volunteers:

Tim Bauckham	Chair
Peggy Bedwell	Treasurer
Angela Clifford	Secretary
Carol Hill	Projects Co-ordinator
Peter Reed	Webmaster
Ian Parker	Publicity Co-ordinator
Joanna Grant	Events Organiser
Linda Clark	Co-opted Member
Pat Lucas	Ewell Library



Jean Walsh, left, being thanked by Carol Hill.

It was also announced that Jean Walsh will be retiring from the library service in August 2008. She will be a considerable loss to the History Centre and was thanked for her considerable advice, help and guidance by the Chairman who said he hoped that Jean will return as a volunteer so we will not lose her breadth of experience.

The Story of the 'Great War' Camp at Woodcote Park

Following the AGM over ninety people attended a fascinating illustrated talk on 'The Story of the 'Great War' Camp at Woodcote Park' by Graham Deeprise, who has spent several years researching its history. Graham's talk, which informed, amused and entertained us all, followed the history of the camp from when Britain declared war on Germany in August 1914.

At the time Britain's regular and territorial soldiers numbered less than 750,000 men. The call went out 'Your Country



Graham Deeprise with part of the display.

Needs You' and two days later Parliament authorised the recruitment of 500,000 men to form Lord Kitchener's 'New Army'.



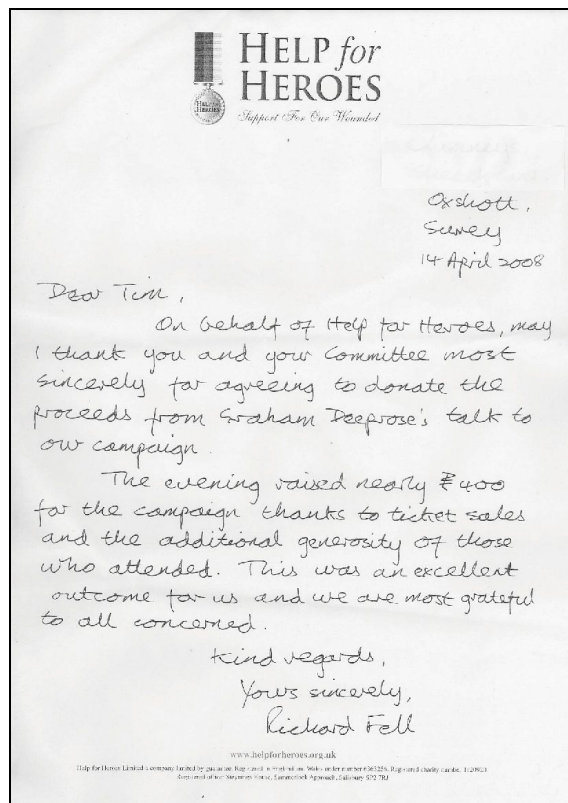
Tim Bauckham (left) handing the cheque to Richard Fell for 'Home for Heroes'.

Men flocked to join including three and a half thousand volunteers of The University and Public Schools Brigade who paraded in Epsom High Street. This quickly swelled to five thousand troops who were initially billeted in homes in Epsom and Ewell, Ashted and Leatherhead.

But a new military camp was urgently needed. The Royal Automobile Club had recently purchased the Woodcote Park Estate and it was an obvious place to train these new recruits. By February 1915, huts had been built to accommodate these men, and a church, shop and theatre were added.

The proceeds from the talk went to the charity: 'Help for Heroes – Support for Our Wounded' at Headley Court www.helpforheroes.org.uk. The charity was started in October 2007 to raise funds for a new pool and gym at Headley Court. Richard Fell from the Help for Heroes

charity has written to say that the evening raised nearly £400 made up of ticket sales, merchandise sales and generous donations. It was a great evening all round.



Isn't it nice when things turn out right and are appreciated.

Two responses recently show the satisfaction that comes from being a volunteer.

THANKS FOR A SUPERB SERVICE

The recent display by Hilary Marogna, Linda Clark, Anne Cheshire and Carol Hill on the Epsom Hospitals cluster raised considerable interest and attracted good attendance at the History Centre on 12th May. At the same time, the publicity around the event led to a number of enquiries from the public. One in particular was enquiring about a reported suicide at Long Grove hospital. Volunteer Hilary Marogna was able to source an article from the Epsom Advertiser about the incident, scanned it and

emailed it to the enquirer, who lived in Berkshire. The response by email was immediate, 14 minutes later, and said:

From: Berkshire
To: "Lucy Ewell" EpsomandEwellLHC@yahoo.co.uk
Subject: Long Grove Suicide
Date: 20 Mar 2008, 16:59Dear Madam,

What excellent service, and how unexpected to have the article sent straight to my computer. I congratulate you all, and thank you sincerely for such a superb service.

With warmest regards
Enquirer in Berkshire

PROVING RESEARCH PAYS OFF

Linda Clark and Hilary Marogna were on duty on Thursday, May 8th when a couple came in requesting help with tracing his grandmother. The man hadn't realised his grandmother had spent most of her adult life in Long Grove as a patient. His own father had died and this man was doing his family tree and discovered the fact about his grandmother. He and his wife had been everywhere they could think of to trace the whereabouts of this grave but were stymied at every turn.

Linda and Hilary spent almost all their 2 hour session in the Centre trying different methods to access this information. Finally, they remembered that Long Grove came under the control of London and suggested the couple try Kingston cemetery. They were on holiday from Milton Keynes so Linda persuaded them to go to Kingston there and then as time was getting a bit late.

On Friday Linda and Hilary came in to carry on with the Hospital project and there was a message from one of the librarians to say that the couple had gone to Kingston and had found their grandmother's grave. They were very pleased and said they would come to the Hospital display on Monday 12th May, which they did. Isn't it nice to get recognition for efforts made.

Were you Aware of an Outrage in Ewell in 1869

Peter Reed has come across some old newspaper reports about an unusual murder involving gunpowder that happened in Ewell in 1869. At the time this incident was described as an outrage but today seems to have been forgotten, as no-one Peter asked knew of the incident.

The Times, 24 Dec 1869

ATTEMPTED MURDER AND SUICIDE.

"Considerable excitement was created in the village of Ewell, near Epsom, on Wednesday morning about half-past 3, by a loud explosion, at first supposed to proceed from the powder mills close to the village. It appeared, however, that about the time mentioned a person named Spooner was preparing to come up to London with a load of flour, and his wife was getting breakfast for him. She went out of the house to get some coals, and saw a man waiting outside. She returned to the house screaming, and her husband closed in a struggle with the man who had followed her. In the struggle the stranger threw a bag of some explosive substance on the fire, and the house was blown pretty well to pieces, the wall dividing one house from the other being blown down. A man employed as a porter at the South-Western station at Ewell, who had recently come to the station, had some of his ribs broken and sustained other serious injuries. The husband was seriously hurt, and is not expected to recover. The author of the mischief afterwards committed suicide by stabbing himself. He died at half-past 10 yesterday. The motive of the outrage is stated to have been jealousy, and the suicide, we understand, confessed before his death that he had obtained the powder by breaking into the powder mills at Ewell-marsh. Globe."

Check this, and more articles about The Outrage at www.EpsomandEwellHistoryExplorer.org.uk/Outrage.html

If people ask you 'What Do You Do at The History Centre?'

- Just show them this.

Tim Bauckham recently showed us the entry for the Local History Centre he had placed in the Ewell & Stoneleigh Directory. We think it is such a good description of the Centre's work we reproduce it below. It explains exactly what we do and encourages more people to become volunteers.

Where to find out the history of Epsom, Ewell and Stoneleigh or to trace your ancestors

If you are interested in the history of Epsom, Ewell or Stoneleigh, or want to trace your family's history you should make your way to the Epsom and Ewell Local and Family History Centre located in Ewell Library at Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell.

Available for your inspection are more than 2,000 photographs of local buildings, some from the early part of the last century, Ordnance Survey maps of the area dating back to 1866 and others from earlier in the 19th century plus a considerable number of books, papers and memorabilia of local interest.

For those interested in Family History, the Centre has copies of the original Census records from 1841 to 1901 for both Epsom and Ewell and transcripts of baptisms, marriages and burials from the local churches, the earliest dating from 1695, and also local trade directories. Even if you ancestors did not live in the area the Centre can offer advice on where and how to seek information about them.

The Centre has an associated website- www.epsomandewellhistoryexplorer.org.uk which has items of local interest, personalities, places, life in bygone times and notable events in the district.

The Centre relies on volunteers to help with



The Lower Mill Timber Factory in Kingston Road, Ewell in 1920

the projects it is working on. As well as assisting the public with their enquiries on local and family history, volunteers also get involved with cataloguing and filing old documents, scanning old photographs, researching and preparing displays on subjects of local interest - the most recent was on the history of Pound Lane School to acknowledge its 100th anniversary - and transferring the data on the original census sheets to a computerized database.

If you think you may like to help with any of these projects, please come in to our address, shown above, to find out more. The Centre is open on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 2-00 to 4-00 pm and on Tuesdays from 6-00 to 7-00 pm. Or email epsomandewelllhc@yahoo.co.uk

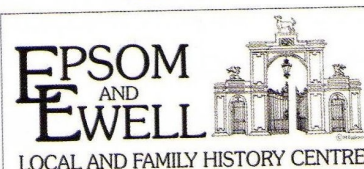


The Lower Mill Timber Factory was destroyed by fire in 1938

For more information contact
Tim Bauckham, Chairman,
on 08456 009 009

Two of more than 2,000 photographs of Epsom and Ewell held by the Local and Family History Centre in Bourne Hall Library, Ewell.

Copyright Images courtesy of Surrey Libraries and are held in the Epsom & Ewell Local And Family History Centre Collection





DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

FAMILY HISTORY DAY AT EWELL LIBRARY

Please make a note in your diaries. The next Family History Day will be on Saturday, 25th October 2008 from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm at Ewell Library.

Once again, the aim is to help people find out how to:

- Search the various Censuses, which are available at ten year intervals from 1841 to 1901
- Find birth, marriage and death certificates
- Understand military records
- Seek parish and probate records
- Use the Internet for searches
- Research local newspapers
- Learn what local resources and records about Epsom & Ewell are held at the Local History Centre

The event will also feature an archivist from The Surrey History Centre to give advice and assistance as well as members of the East Surrey Family History Society.

New Opening Times for Local History Centre

From 6th May, 2008 Surrey libraries introduced new opening hours which has also affected the opening hours for the History Centre. The new opening times are:

Monday:	Closed
Tuesday:	17.30 to 19.00
Wednesday:	14.00-16.00
Thursday:	14.00-16.00
Friday:	14.00-16.00
Saturday:	By appointment

Update on The National Archives, Kew

By Bert Barnhurst.

On a recent visit to Kew, on Tuesday 1st April, and this is no 'April Fool', the work was still very much in progress. There was a limited service just about everywhere, but it was functioning. The library is still to be worked on and the reopening of the Museum will be a long way off.

The good news is that there are a lot more terminals spread out over a larger area. The whole place looks larger than before, but please don't ask how they did it! There is a lot of new furniture and it looks good with more space for each of the new terminals. A lot more can be looked up on line and they have a link up with 'Find My Past' for birth marriage and death indexes, so no more trudging back and forth to the microfiche reader, and certainly no lugging down those large books like at Myddleton Street.

There is still limited seating in the main document section and no indication as to how close the work is to nearing completion. There could also be a 'waiting list' to get a seat if busy. The Map Room on the 3rd floor is as before with no plans to change anything, at the moment. The restaurant area is fine, larger and with terminals to hand, even if food prices have gone up.

While on the subject of prices, it looks very much as if TNA intend to charge for parking! There is a brand new barrier at the entrance, and although not in use at the moment, it is unlikely to be there just for fun!

It is worth going to visit TNA, if you have to, but don't expect too much. The staff while helpful have their hands full answering questions as to where every thing is these days. You have been warned!! Watch this space for further news.

Forthcoming Surrey Heritage Events and Displays

We thought you might like to know about some forthcoming events in Surrey as advised to us by the Surrey History Centre.

ANUAL FILM DAY: SURREY AND THE REGION AT WORK
Saturday 7 June 11am to 12.30. An illustrated talk by Frank Gray, Director of Screen Archive South East. Tickets £3 Places are limited. To book telephone 01483 518737

EARTH, AIR, FIRE AND WATER: INDUSTRIES IN THE ELEMENTS.
Saturday 14 June and Sunday 15 June 2008, 10am to 5pm
Displays, hands on activities and demonstrations showcasing Surrey's industries past and present including pottery, blacksmithing, woodturning, and the building of an Anglo-Romano kiln. At the Rural Life Centre, Reeds Road, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey GU10 2DL
Adults £6, Over 60s £5, Children (5-16) £4, Family £18.00 (2 adults + 2 children)
www.rural-life.org.uk Telephone 01252 795571. Organised by Rural Life Centre and Surrey Heritage

FREE SURREY HISTORY CENTRE TOUR
5 June 2008 2pm FREE
Take a guided tour of the strongrooms, archaeology processing room, document conservation facilities and searchroom. Booking is essential. Telephone 01483 518737.

BETCHWORTH CASTLE.
A Talk by Martin Higgins, SCC Historic Buildings Officer. 5 June 2008, 7.30pm. Tickets £3. Booking is essential. Telephone 01483 518737

ARTISTS, ANTIQUARIES AND COLLECTORS
Illustrations of Surrey buildings collected by Robert Barclay of Bury Hill, Dorking c1800-1832. A talk by Julian Pooley, Surrey History Centre Manager. 19 June 2008 7.30 pm
Tickets £3. Booking is essential. Telephone 01483 518737

BURIED BATTLES, VETERANS' VOICES
Surrey's military records and memories made accessible. 17 June to 19 July 2008.
Small display to celebrate the completion of this HLF funded project to make the records of the Surrey regiments accessible online. Free. During normal opening hours

CELEBRATE TRAVELLER'S MONTH AT BOURNE HALL
Saturday 28 June join Bourne Hall for a day celebrating the rich Gypsy History of Epsom.
Tel: 0208 394 1734 www.epsom.townpage.co.uk/bhmuseum.htm

ARCHAEOLOGY IN ACTION!
19 July 2008 10am to 4pm, FREE drop in activity day
For National Archaeology Week, the Surrey County Archaeological Unit is opening its doors to offer you the chance to get hands-on with the past. The units' archaeologists will be on hand, giving talks and specialist demonstrations about the work they do, covering recent excavations and fantastic finds! For more information call 01483 518772

SURREY'S RURAL INDUSTRIES & CRAFT DAY AT NEWLANDS CORNER
27 July 2008 10am to 4pm
An opportunity to see many local craftsmen at work, demonstrating the best of Surrey's Rural Industries. Demonstrations include: charcoal burner, woodworkers, pole-lathe turner, furniture maker, hurdle makers, flintknapper spinners, weavers, felt worker, leather worker, artists, ceramicist, and a musical instrument maker. This all day FREE event is run jointly by Surrey Heritage and Surrey Wildlife Trust. Call 01483 518772 for more information.

Information provided by:

Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6ND.

Tel: 01483 518737 Email: shs@surreycc.gov.uk

The Centre is open Tues, Wed, Fri 9.30 - 5.00; Thurs 9.30 - 7.30; Sat 9.30 - 4.00

Have You got News for Us?

We hope you've enjoyed reading this newsletter. Thanks to all those who provided information and stories. But to keep the momentum going we need more, so I make no apologies in repeating this message. If you have any

- reports on visits to various sites or centres
- intriguing Information Requests
- forthcoming projects or events
- interesting facts about local history or genealogy
- new research documents the LFHC has received
- or just strange tales to tell

please let Ian know - supporting photographs and pictures, if available, would be most welcome. It will help make the newsletter more interesting for us all. The next publication date will probably be in September 2008, so you have plenty of time to think of something.

IRP. 26th May 2008