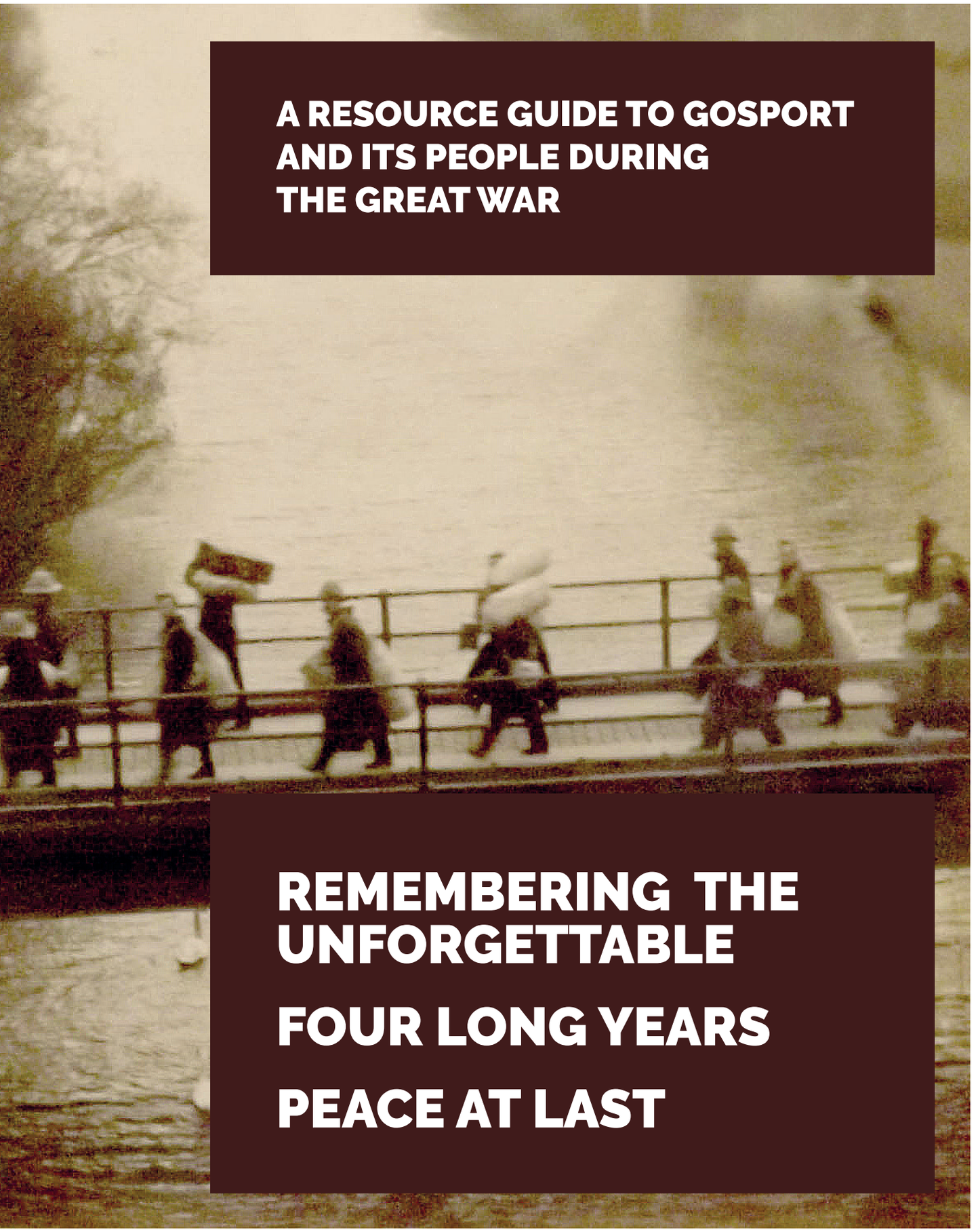


A RESOURCE GUIDE TO GOSPORT AND ITS PEOPLE DURING THE GREAT WAR

REMEMBERING THE UNFORGETTABLE

FOUR LONG YEARS

PEACE AT LAST

heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

GOSPORT
heritage open days

Splodge Designs

INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides an overview of three large heritage-based art projects, focusing on the people of Gosport in Hampshire. It covers the town's important role in the First World War, also known as the Great War, between 1914 and 1918.

Gosport Heritage Open Days (GHODs) in collaboration with Splodge Designs, were fortunate to secure grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund "First World War: Then and Now" programme. The research and creative activities ran from 2014 through to 2018 to commemorate the centenary of the 1918 Armistice which came into effect on 11 November.

The aim was to increase general awareness of Gosport's contribution to the war effort on both military and civilian fronts. It was also important to capture the learning and creativity from the projects so that they could be easily accessed for generations.

Splodge Designs motivated local community groups to explore their heritage through workshops using interactive methods to share information and images.

These groups responded in a variety of ways to contribute artwork and content for display pieces. Some of the displays were in the form of textile pieces, 3D models and digital collages. Many participants contributed towards the soundtracks by reading out research or by singing songs from the era.

To make these displays usable and enjoyable to a wide range of people, including those with sensory or cognitive impairments, a variety of accessible techniques were used. These included information boards with tactile sections, descriptive images, large and easy-to-read lettering and good contrast to background. Most of the written information is provided in audio format, accessible for personal or group use or via Discovery Pens, which are a great aid for people who have a visual or hearing impairment. The GHODs website also provides images of the displays online with audio description and transcriptions suitable for e-readers.

Fleet Review

In July 1914 a large mobilisation and review of the fleet, in the presence of King George V, was held in the Solent. The review contained 24 Dreadnoughts, the latest and particularly powerful battleships, 35 other battleships, 49 cruisers, 26 submarines and 78 destroyers. The fleet was manned by around 100,000 sailors.

In Gosport the Commander of the Military Garrison lined up his men from Haslar Hospital to Gilkicker Fort. Aircraft from the Royal Flying Corps based in Gosport flew overhead. It was even advertised that Gamma, a British airship, would be taking to the skies but unfortunately, she remained stuck in a field in Fort Grange. An audience of thousands crowded Portsmouth vantage points and Stokes Bay for a view of the spectacle. Three weeks later, on 6th August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany and The Great War commenced. Early thoughts were that this would be a short war with all involved home by Christmas. However, with four years of fighting and around 800,000 British troops killed this was a war of change - new ways of fighting, new machinery, great hardships.

Gosport's Unique Position

Due to Gosport's strategic location, activity in the area drastically increased with the onset of war. As troops were drawn to arms, villages full of tents were set up to house them. These were known as 'Tent Cities'. Large groups of families and friends came to Gosport railway station to wave off the thousands of soldiers who were transported to Southampton Dock to board ships taking them off to war.

Entertainment in Gosport

With the influx of military personnel into Gosport there came the need to entertain and boost the morale of troops and civilians alike. Gosport had many places of entertainment, such as theatres, cinemas and pubs. With so many people gathered together in one place, they were the ideal locations for recruitment drives. Many more soldiers were needed to boost the ranks and a variety of tactics were used to persuade men to sign up, even so far as inviting them up on stage and convincing them to demonstrate their loyalty to protecting England in front of the whole audience.

Ammunitions Manufacturing

Prior to the war Priddy's Hard was already an established ammunitions manufacturer. During the Great War the need for ammunitions was greatly increased. Because many men had gone away to fight, the demand was met by employing thousands of women to work on a shift basis 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Royal Clarence Yard was traditionally one of the Navy's main victualling establishments, which meant that it supplied much needed food. Again, this provided countless job opportunities for local women.

Family Life in Gosport

Families were greatly affected by the ongoing war, not just emotionally but financially as well. The average wage for a soldier with the rank of Private was a shilling a day whereas, before the war, a labourer could earn 26 shillings a week. In 1914 the National Relief fund was set up, the Gosport branch was chaired by George Dukes, Gosport District Council and it was supported by the Portsmouth Evening News. It met at Thorngate Hall, which was then in the town centre, where applicants would have to go to be assessed. Funded by local charity drives The Gosport and Alverstoke Soup Kitchen distributed soup to people in need. Women and girls were encouraged to show their patriotism by forming knitting groups making jumpers, socks, scarves, gloves and balaclavas for the army and navy. This not only helped the servicemen but also allowed the women to share their fears and anxieties within the support of the group.

Casualties and Hospitals

As the war proceeded, its ugly side revealed itself as numerous casualties were transported back to England and in the South initially to Southampton. The 5th Southern General Hospital was the term that covered all the military controlled hospitals in Portsmouth and Gosport. As casualties mounted other premises were commandeered including The National Children's Home in Alverstoke. When casualties arrived in Gosport they were taken to Haslar Hospital by steam launch.

REMEMBERING THE UNFORGETTABLE

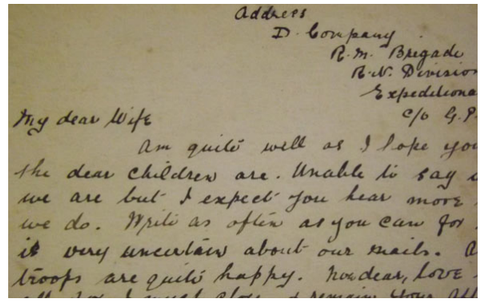
The Great War is a subject so broad and diverse and this project is just a starting point. Through recordings, photographs and personal stories, it investigates the start of the war in 1914 and Gosport's involvement. Through community workshops, five large textile displays along with accompanying soundtracks were made to depict this period.

We hope that through the findings we keep 'Remembering the Unforgettable' and honouring the part that Gosport and its community played in our history.

HOME

Fort Brockhurst

At the end of the war Fort Brockhurst was used as a discharge depot for soldiers returning from service abroad. The photograph above is taken of Lynne Thomson Chreiazomenou's grandfather with a group relaxing at Fort Brockhurst.

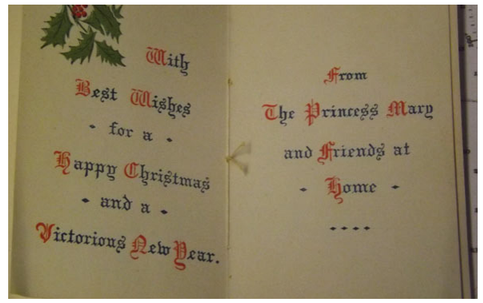


Letters

During the Great War communication was so important for morale and an estimated 2 billion letters and 114 million parcels were sent keeping families in touch.

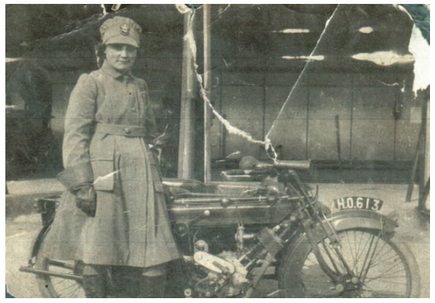
Memorial Plaquette

1,355,000 of these plaques were issued to the next of kin of Empire and British service personnel who died in World War One. Due to its sad associations it was known as the Dead Mans' Penny. Created out of bronze, it was 12 cm (5 ") in diameter.



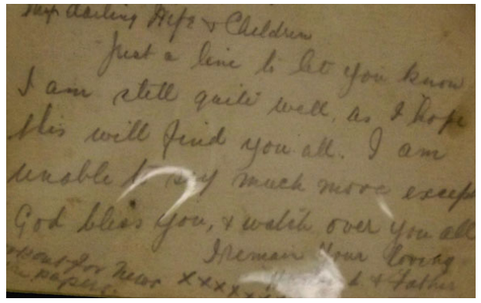
Christmas Card from Princess Mary

The 17 year old daughter of King George V decided set up a fund so that every person serving away could receive a gift from 'home' paid for by donations from the public. During Christmas 1914 gift boxes were sent to those serving. As well as Christmas cards, the boxes also contained gifts such as tobacco, cigarettes or chocolate.



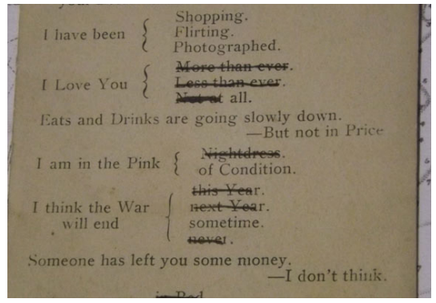
Alice Rebecca Penfold

As a Dispatch Rider who worked at Grange Airfield, her job was to deliver important military documents to and from the base. One of the most important deliveries was the official paperwork, which informed the airfield of the official end to the war. She was reported as being a bit of a rebel in a local newspaper when she was caught exceeding the speed limit of 20mph!



Letters from the War

A personal correspondence between a husband and wife. It reads:
"My Darling Wife and Children, Just a line to let you know I am still quite well, as I hope this will find you all. I am unable to say much more except God bless you and watch over you, I remain your loving husband and father Tom xxx Look out for news in papers."



Field Postcards

These postcards showed pre-typed phrases, so that soldiers would cross out what was not applicable. These postcards were a form of censorship and the soldiers were not allowed to add any other information to the cards. It was important that they did not divulge information of their whereabouts when fighting on the frontline.

Priddy's Hard Ammunition Workers

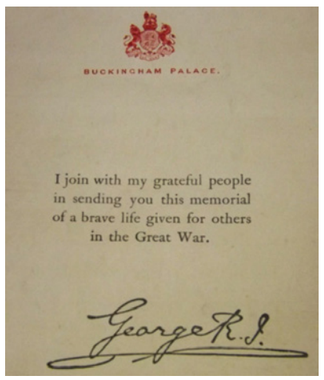
Around 12,000 women worked in Royal Clarence Yard and Priddy's Hard on a shift basis 24/7. The Royal Clarence Victualling Yard provided food for the Navy. The Royal Naval Armament Depot (RNAD) supplied ammunition. This photo shows Priddy's Hard ammunition workers in their white overalls and hats. They also wore clogs to reduce the risk of a spark that might trigger an explosion. After a few weeks of working with chemicals, the colour of their skin turned yellow and they were affectionately nicknamed "canaries" or canary girl.

Kitty McCarthy 1917

With the new roles women took on, it was important to wear more practical clothes and it was often frowned upon if fashion was thought to be too frivolous. Many women were now wearing uniforms as they had replaced many of the men who had gone to war. Across Gosport, women took on jobs that had traditionally been done by men, such as engineers, postal workers, bus conductors and ammunition workers.

Memorial Scroll

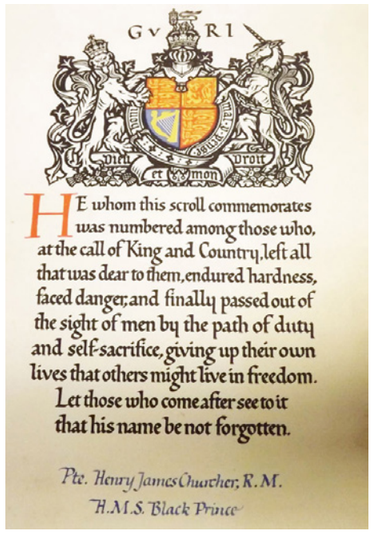
Signed by King George V which came with the Memorial Plaquette to the deceased serviceman's family.



Embroidered Postcards

These postcards were generally known as 'WWI Silks'. Hand embroidered onto strips of silk mesh, they were mostly created by French and Belgian women refugees who sent the finished strips to the factories for mounting onto the postcards. Due to their wide popularity with British and American servicemen, they often showed British, American and French Flags and symbols to be patriotic.

SEA



Scroll

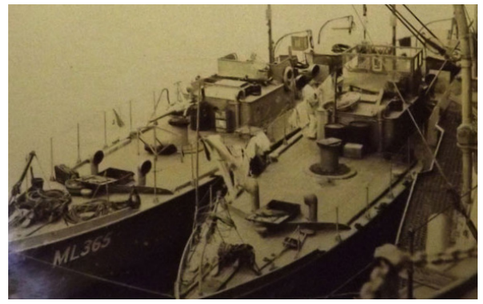
This scroll that was sent to the family of PTE (Private) Henry James Churcher RN who was on HMS Black Prince. The cruiser was sunk during the Battle of Jutland in May 1916 with all hands lost.

Naval Town

From its origins as a small fishing village, Gosport developed into a Naval town with establishments such as HMS Dolphin. The Royal Marine Light Infantry was stationed at Forton Barracks, which is currently St Vincent's Sixth Form College. These marines were highly trained troops who formed landing parties, protected ships and provided communications on the battlefield via a bugle call or drum.

Sea Catch

As part of the Search collection this photo taken during the Great War shows 60 men of the HMS Hermione with a large catch of fish.



Battle of Jutland

One of the most famous sea battles was the Battle of Jutland in which more than 6000 sailors went down with their ships. The majority of which were from Gosport and Portsmouth. During the war, there were very few families in Gosport who were not affected by the loss of a loved one.

Fort Blockhouse (HMS Dolphin)

Gosport was the home of the Royal Navy Submarine Service and base for many of the Great War submarine classes. The memorial chapel was built in 1917 on the North Bastion to commemorate all the submariners lost in the war. It is dedicated to Saint Nicholas; the patron saint of sailors and it is also the home of the Book of Remembrance which lists the name of every submariner lost since 1904.

Arthur Woods

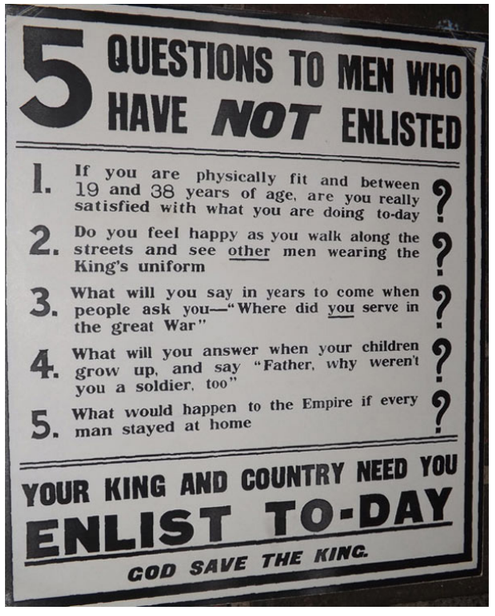
Arthur Woods from Gosport is shown here proudly wearing his medals, including the Campaign Star, Victory Medal and the Imperial War medal. The three medals were commonly referred to as Pip, Squeak and Wilfred. Arthur served as a soldier in the Great War having joined up when he was just 14. Later, he married the widowed Alice Penfold.

Gosport Sisters in Service

Florence Penfold (Left) worked in The Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) during the Great War. Her sister Alice Rebecca Penfold (Right) was a Dispatch Rider at Grange Airfield. Alice's first husband was George Waterfield who was in the Navy and unfortunately was one of the casualties of the ill-fated L24 submarine, which was sunk accidentally during an exercise in 1924.

Percy Alfred Rendle

Percy was a Gosport lad and joined the Dorchester Regiment in 1916. He served in Flanders and also fought in Arras and the Somme. In 1917 he was collecting water from a newly captured well when he was struck by a burst shell. He sadly died at the young age of 17.

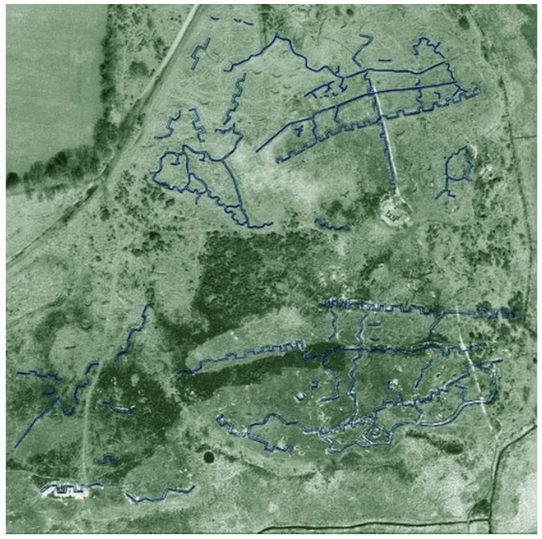


Enlistment Poster

A diverse range of recruitment materials were produced to convince men to enlist, typically in written form or a captioned picture. This example is a list designed to make men feel obliged to 'do their bit'. Many illustrated posters also applied this guilt tactic although often they incorporated it into a charming or comedic illustration. Men attending the local music halls would often be convinced to enlist on the spot, partly out of flattery, guilt and the desire to fight for their country.

Trenches

Troops were trained at Browndown ranges with respect to digging trenches, boarding them up and putting in guard posts etc. This strategy was highly important as trenches formed a major part of their protection. Remnants of some of the trenches are still there today. A Gosport Veteran of a later war involving trenches described the terror of the enemy attacking across no man's land as "Death coming closer, one step at a time".



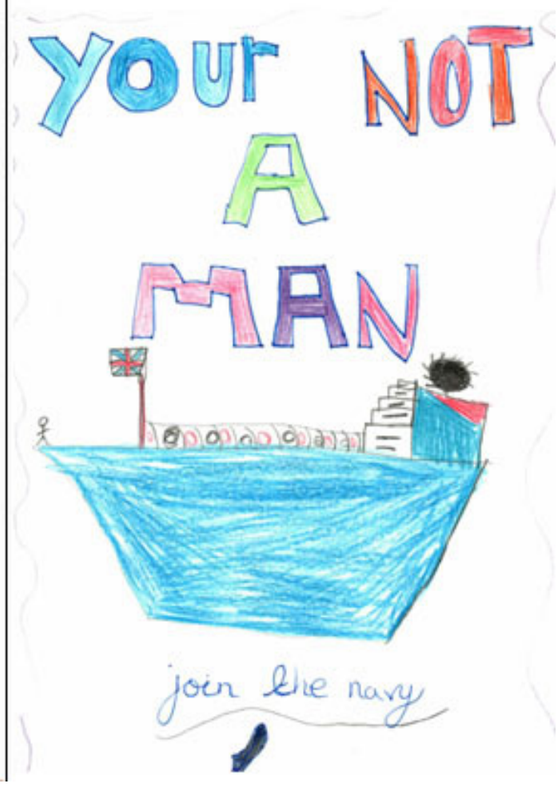
FUMS UP FOR LUCK

Fums Up Mascot

These little lucky mascots first came into existence around the end of the 19th century, but enjoyed a heightened popularity during the Great War. Due to the way they stick up both thumbs, they were referred to as “Fums Up Dolls”. Fums up dolls were small enough to be carried safely around in your pocket and endearing enough to bring a little cheer to those serving in the armed forces. Replicas of the Fums Up have been individually created by children from Leesland Junior School.

Work created by year 5 children from Leesland Junior School

Over seven weeks we worked with an enthusiastic group of 20 young people to look at the Great War and Gosport. We enjoyed a visit from a re-enactor who portrayed a Great War soldier and told us about his uniform and equipment and we wrote letters to our loved ones at the frontline. We also looked at other jobs in the services and the role of women during this time. We made our own felt and created fuzzy felt people in uniforms from the era. Our group also visited Explosion Museum and learnt all about the ammunition workers based at Priddy’s Hard. The young people helped us recreate recruitment posters and investigated the way that young men were encouraged to join the services.



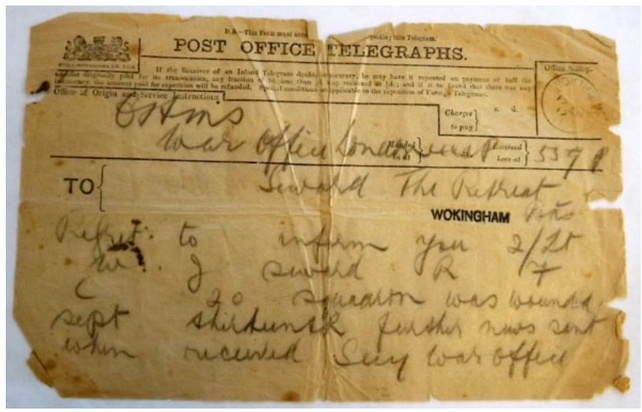
SKY

Walter John Seward

Walter John Seward from Gosport was a reconnaissance pilot with the Royal Flying Corps (RFC). He flew over Passchendaele with a heavy camera and took photographs, which aided strategy of future battles. Due to bad weather during a mission, he crashed his plane yet survived and went on to fight in both world wars. Throughout his career he worked his way up from the bottom of the RFC to almost the top of the RAF when he retired as an Air Vice Marshall. We constructed a model of the type of planes used in the War with a community group- Give, Gain & Grow. They appreciated that our construction methods of a thin frame coated with material was not much more elaborate than the designs of the real thing!

Medals

The medals shown have all been awarded to Walter John Seward. When the WW1 medals were issued in the 1920's it coincided with a popular comic strip written by Bertram J. Lamb and drawn by the cartoonist A.B. Payne. Pip was the dog, Squeak the penguin and Wilfred the young rabbit. For some reason the three names of the characters became associated with the three campaign medals being issued at that time to many thousands of returning servicemen.



Telegram

Sent to the mother of Walter John Seward, with respect to his temporary disappearance, reading as follows: 17th September 1917. "*Regret to inform you Second Lieutenant W J Seward Royal Flying Corps 20 Squadron was wounded September. Further news sent when received. Secretary War Office.*"

Naval Town

“Ferdie” Waldon (Left) was the Commanding Officer (CO) of 60 Squadron. Unfortunately he was killed during the Somme offensive. He was succeeded by Major Robert Smith Barry (Right). The new CO revolutionised flight training in Gosport. He emphasised the importance of teaching instructors and trained them to teach pupils how to get out of flight difficulties as opposed to avoiding them.

He encouraged the use of dual control planes in which the instructor and student could communicate by means of a rubber tube headset system known as the Gosport Tube. Today’s wireless version is still referred to as the Gosport Tube. The principles of “The Gosport System” of flight training are still the basis of training throughout the world today.

Gamma and Beta

Airships Gamma and Beta, similar to the German Zeppelins were so visible that they could be viewed from wherever you were in Gosport. This image shows one over Gosport Harbour.

Plane Painting

The plane portrayed was taken from a print that was hung in the Officers Mess, Alverbank, Stokes Bay. It represents a typical World War One plane. People of Gosport witnessed planes training in the air and practicing their dog fights. Grange airfield was instrumental to flight development and training for the war effort. The site has evolved over the years under various names including- RNAS Gosport, RAF Gosport, HMS Siskin and HMS Sultan. The group Loud and Proud helped us create a number of models representing tanks, planes and boats of the era.

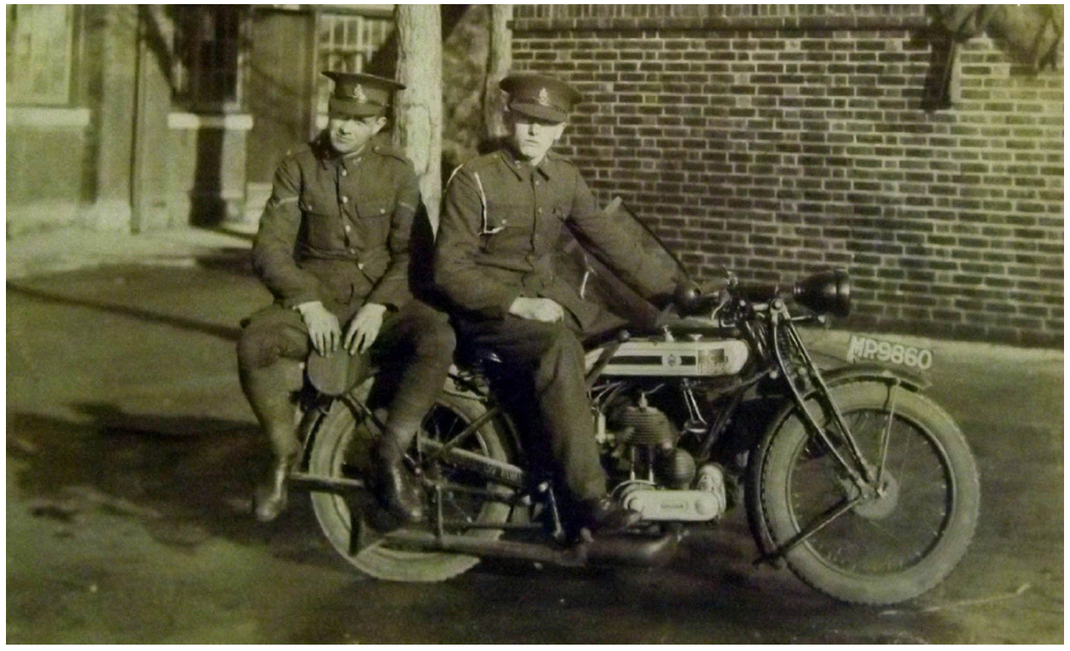
FOUR LONG YEARS

How the project unfolded

The ‘Four Long Years’ project commenced during Heritage Open Days in 2016 by holding drop-in craft sessions at Fort Brockhurst. Paul & Clare from Splodge Designs outlined the project to visitors and encouraged youngsters to make replicas of ‘fumsup’ mascots to take home. A ‘fumsup’ doll was a small lucky charm of a baby with it’s thumbs up. Soldiers would carry the charm on them for good luck.

Early in 2017 Splodge Designs led community workshops which involved research, learning and making. Participants collected photographs, newspaper clippings, documents, letters and photos of keepsakes, as well as family tales passed down to help them build a clear picture of what life was really like. Plus each group visited a local historical site/museum and had a local expert/historian talk.

We created an 8 page period styled newspaper, ‘The Gosport Gazette’, to capture some of the war stories and local home front news from this time. We also produced 2 interactive panels showing outline stories from the newspaper, imbedded with audio narration via Discovery Pens. A striking timeline on 4 pull up banners, adorned with drawings made by local children, leads through events of 1914-1918 in relation to Gosport.

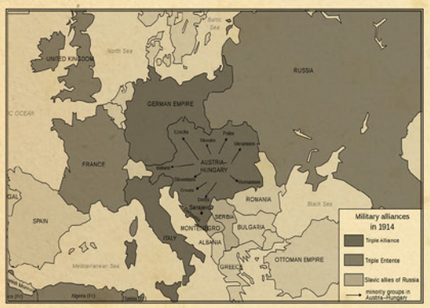


The Gosport Gazette

No. 187. Registered for transmission abroad Wednesday 6th August, 1918 Price 1d

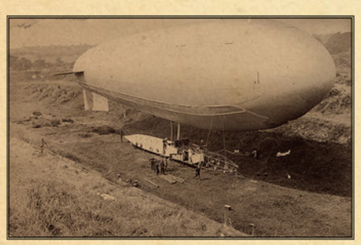
WHEN WAR WAS DECLARED

On the 4th August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. People in Britain opened their newspapers in the morning and found out that war had begun. The two opposing sides were the Triple Alliance - made up of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy against the Triple Entente - made up of Great Britain, France and Russia. Gosport is a significant sea port and Naval depot, with many government factories and installations based here. It is also very significant in aeronautical development. Gosport will play an important part in the Great War.



THE FORT GRANGE MONSTER

In early 1914, just before the Great War, airships such as Gamma were given to the Admiralty and mainly used for patrolling the sea. Gamma operated from Fort Grange airfield in Gosport. Local people must have rubbed their eyes in disbelief as this giant monster drifted around their area.



Rumour has it that a twelve year old Gosport resident, W. North helped to anchor the Gamma Airship at Fort Grange by swinging on her ropes. The view of the airship's crew must have been fantastic as they flew over Gosport's green pastures taking navigational sightings from farms and railway lines. During this war since 1914 the Royal Navy has built 213 airships. They have a remarkable war record serving as submarine scouts, patrol ships and escorts. Not a single surface vessel has been lost while under escort by airships.

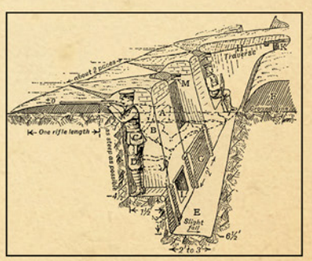
SPITHEAD FLEET REVIEW

We think back fondly to when King George V watched the Spithead Fleet Review on the 18th July 1914, which lasted three days. The fleet had been mobilised in preparation for war and it was in a fitting position, because war was declared only ten days later, on the 28th of July. Thousands of people came to the south coast to view the Fleet review and test mobilization. Many gathered together watching from Stokes Bay, Gosport. The spectacle included 100,00 sailors manning the 24 Dreadnoughts, 35 Battleships, 49 Cruisers, 76 submarines and 78 Destroyers, there were 40 miles of ships arranged in 12 long lines. Also included for the first time were 17 seaplanes.
On the 4th of August, Winston Churchill, the First Sea Lord, addressed all Royal Navy ships and stations. He issued an order for them to "Commence hostilities against Germany".

BROWNDOWN TRAINING TRENCHES

You may be relieved to know that our British soldiers have not been sent to the Western Front without some training in trench warfare. The Army has attempted to provide soldiers with realistic training experiences all over Britain. They have set up elaborate training trenches, instructional models and full-size mock-ups of the German lines.
Gosport has played its part at the Browndown site with two sets of opposing trench systems, with a no man's land between them. Each trench system has a 660ft long front line, supply trenches and dugouts and the area covers 1,640ft by 1,640ft.

TYPE OF TRENCHES



Fortunately not all of our men in trenches are absolutely on the front line. Our typical trench system is built as a network including the front line trenches, called 'fire trenches'. These are connected to 'support trenches' in rows about 300ft behind. These connect to 'reserve trenches', which are about another 660ft behind that. There are 'communications trenches', that connect the three rows together. Soldiers and supplies can move along the communications trenches.

No. 187. Wednesday 6th August, 1918

ROBERT SMITH-BARRY

Robert Smith-Barry is believed to be the man that is teaching the air forces of the world to fly.
As Squadron Commanding Officer in 1916 he was appalled at the poor flying skills of British pilots.
At the time of the Battle of the Somme the RFC had lost approximately one-third of its total force of airmen and aircraft.
Smith-Barry was deeply concerned that pilots knew only the most basic manoeuvres and typically received only around 7 hours of flying experience. He insisted that pilot training should be more comprehensive and was granted permission to set up The No.1 School of Special Flying at Grange Airfield in Gosport from 23rd August 1917. Lieutenant Colonel Smith- Barry became commanding officer of the training Squadron with his own revolutionary flight methods. He wanted to enhance the way that experienced pilots taught novices to fly. As well as the basics, he taught them how to deal with engine stalls, spins and crosswinds. His preferred plane for training was the Avro 504K. This 2 seater, was ideal for having a student and trainer in the same plane with dual controls.
Whilst living at Alverbank House, the officers' mess with his wife, Smith Barry developed 'The Gosport Tube'. This was a communication tube in which the trainer could speak into a mouthpiece which was a bit like a stethoscope. This passed the sound to the earpieces over the ears of the trainee. Before this invention they had to stall the engine so they could hear orders, because of the loud aircraft noise.
'The Gosport Tube' now means trainees can hear instructions from the trainer more safely during flying lessons. We hope that it becomes a great success and perhaps become a standard device throughout the world. It is also hoped that the pioneering achievements of Robert Smith-Barry and the School of Special Flying at Grange will inspire air forces all over the world.

HMS DAEDALUS

At Lee-on-the-Solent Naval aviation began, because the Admiralty wanted a series of coastal air stations to support the coastguard system and warn our shore defences of sea and air invasion.

The HM Naval Seaplane Training School is controlled by the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). The main purpose of the RNAS is for reconnaissance, coastal patrol, attacking of enemy coast and defending our country from enemy air-raids.
In November 1917 the seaplane base became permanent, complete with hangars, workshops, accommodation and a new double slipway.
Robert Smith-Barry's system of training is also used at Lee-on-Solent. Pilots are efficiently trained in a very short space of time. Due to the pressures of war, pupils are often pushed through with only a few hours of dual instruction time, however some of the brighter pupils fly solo after as little as 40 minutes of dual control. After going solo they are often taught aerobatic manoeuvres, such as- loops, spins and rolls.
Lee-on-Solent takes on students from around the world and influences aviation in many countries.
The instructors at Lee-on-Solent are beginning to inspire military aviation across the wide reaches of the British Empire.

HASLAR HOSPITAL PUTS OUR BOYS ON THE MEND

Haslar Hospital in Gosport has been caring for the sick and injured since 1754. The hospital was designed by Theodore Jacobsen and building commenced in 1745 during the reign of King George II. Haslar has seen servicemen casualties from all major wars; Trafalgar, Corunna, Waterloo and the Crimean.
Now the staff and nurses are working hard throughout this war, looking after our brave soldiers and sailors.
Our brave injured boys will certainly not be left "Up the creek without a paddle", which is ironic because it is thought that this phrase originated in Haslar Creek nearby during Napoleonic times.

Haslar Heritage Group ©

THE ROYAL FLYING CORPS (RFC) AT GRANGE AIRFIELD

The first Royal Flying Corps aircraft came to Grange airfield in July 1914. They stayed there only briefly as they were sent off to France for action as this war commenced.
Grange airfield wasn't used much until October 1914 when the Royal Navy Air Service based their aircraft there until around January 1915.
The RFC continued to control airfield until the Royal Air Force (RAF) was formed in April 1918.
The airfield was then named RAF Gosport.
The RFC & RAF staff & aircrews stayed in the barrack rooms at Fort Rowner and possibly at Fort Grange.

SILVER WAR BADGES

We may all be familiar with the practice of young girls handing white feathers, for cowardice, to men not wearing uniform. Surprisingly even war veterans and injured servicemen are not immune. However, there is a way to counteract the fears of these brave men. They can repel accusations of neglecting to do ones duty. The War Office has awarded silver badges that can be pinned to their civilian clothes as a clear display to declare to potential accusers that they have done their duty.
The Silver War Badge was instituted in 1916 and has been awarded to honourably discharged men under certain regulations. The circular badges are worn in the lapel and they carry the royal cipher of George V along with the inscription: "For King and Empire: Services Rendered". It has a pin so it can be worn as a brooch.
There are 29 reasons for military discharge, such as- reaching the service age limit, having originally been irregularly enlisted, but perhaps the rarest, despite the need for more troops is "not being likely to become an efficient soldier".
The badge is awarded to all military personnel that have served overseas or at home and have been discharged from the army under King's Regulations. It doesn't count if their normal term of engagement has expired. The main reason for being discharged is when a soldier is released for being permanently physically unfit.

Women's Land Army

Because 100,000 British male land workers had gone to war, by January 1915 food production was under threat. Farmers found it difficult to manage the seasonal work. Also in 1915 Germany mounted naval blockades against us. Because food imports make up about 50% of Britain's requirements, our country faced a great problem. To rub salt in the wounds, the 1917 harvest failed and Britain only had three weeks of food reserves. Famine was a real threat.

The Women's Land Army was set up by The Board of Agriculture and over 250,000 woman volunteered. 23,000 women have been recruited as full-time land workers, which has helped to compensate for the men who have gone to war. For the duration of this war, the main objective is to increase food production.

Although this is a form of National Service for young female civilian farm workers it has been misleadingly called the Women's Land Army. Within the Women's Land Army there are 3 sections- agriculture, forage (haymaking for horse food) and timber cutting. Most of the agricultural workers are milkers and field workers. Also some woman are carters, market gardeners and ploughwomen (working with horses). Women over 18 years of age typically train for four weeks and then their healthy youthful energy is channeled into farm work. The pay is typically 18 shillings a week, which could increase to 20 shillings a week if they passed an efficiency test.

Women In The Munitions Factories

In order to make munitions during this war, hundreds of British factories have been adapted.

The British Army couldn't continue their brave efforts without the vital role of women in the munitions factories. Over 890,000 women have joined the industry, consisting of teenagers, wives, mothers and even grandmothers.

They have boldly taken on jobs once believed to be too strenuous for women and filled the gaps left by the men that have gone away to fight. Their tireless efforts are especially appreciated because of the unpleasant, uncomfortable, and often dangerous conditions in the factories. The women often work long shifts up to 12 hours both day and night, because of the demands of war production. Throughout the grueling day, they don't have many breaks. Some of the better factories have canteens, washrooms and toilet facilities for the workers, but not all factories have thought to be so considerate.

As the factories are an essential part of the war production line, they are often targets for enemy air raids, creating an additional risk for the workers.

In Britain at the start of this war, there were strict controls over the types of work that women could do. The increased demand for more men in the armed forces led to the removal of these controls so that women were able to take over many of men's jobs. Even though women were already working in factories, the type of work that they did was limited, but they started to take over what was traditionally thought of as 'male' work. Some women experience hostility and resentment from male co-workers, who don't believe that the women should earn the same wages as men.

Munitionettes and Canary Girls

'Munitionettes' is one of the nicknames for female munitions workers. Another is 'Canary Girl' due to them using TNT explosives that turns their skin yellow. Women who are in regular contact with it have a bright yellow appearance. One local Munitionette told us 'Everything we touch turns yellow – the chairs, the tables, we even have to have our own canteen. Our mouths are yellow, our faces are yellow!'

Unfortunately, due to the high amount of explosive material kept in munitions factories there have been a few explosions. On 19 January 1917 one of the largest disasters happened at Silvertown, in London's East End. It is thought that 50 tons of TNT exploded which injured 400 people and killed 73.

The disaster began when a fire broke out in the melt-pot room. They tried to put it out, but the TNT plant was soon destroyed along with many nearby buildings, including the Silvertown Fire Station. It caused terrible damage in the local area and up to 70,000 buildings were damaged.

Strict regulations are in place to reduce the risk of explosions. The workers are not allowed to have any metal items which might cause a spark, such as jewellery and hairpins. On arrival at the factory they have to change into wooden clogs in case their shoes have any metal in them. Matches are prohibited and bringing them into the factory floor can lead to dismissal.

The jobs in the munitions factories are varied and could involve- cleaning, filling, painting, stacking shells, operating machinery, weighing powder, assembling detonators, filling bullets, lacquering fuses and making shell cases.

The women have developed a sense of teamwork from the repetitive tasks and hardship of the work. The production of munitions requires physical labour, such as operating machinery and lifting heavy shells, which is back-breaking and risky The factories are often a very noisy place to work in, with workers shouting, heavy machines operating and the moving around of heavy equipment.

To help the workforce to focus on munitions production, it is believed that the young women need burn off their excess energy in a form of sporting release. Sports games are squeezed into their daily lunch breaks. Games of football are popular in the work-yard and some women have even started their own football teams.

Hats off to our Brave Canary Girls here at Priddys Hard in Gosport!

No. 187. Wednesday 6th August, 1918

Recipe Corner

Are your loved ones on the front line... Bake them this delicious Trench Cake. It travels well and its ingredients are not too difficult to come by.

Trench Cake Ingredients

1/2lb flour
4 oz margarine
1 teaspoon vinegar
1/4 pint of milk
3 oz brown sugar
3 oz cleaned currants
2 teaspoons cocoa
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
nutmeg
ginger
grated lemon rind

Method

Grease a cake tin. Rub margarine into the flour in a basin. Add the dry ingredients. Mix well. Add the soda dissolved in vinegar and milk. Beat well. Turn into the tin. Bake in a moderate oven for about two hours.

Readers' Recipes

This week's recipe is from Kitty Lamming nee Malone of Tollbar Cottages, Brockhurst Road, Gosport. Kitty has been collecting a wide range of cake and wine recipes perfect for every occasion.

Harry Lamming and Kitty Lamming (nee Malone) on their wedding day.

Mock Port Recipe

Wash down your lbs of beetroot and cut into small pieces. Put them in cold water one quart to each pound.

Leave until all colour is extracted then drain off the liquid and add 1lb loaf sugar to each quart. Next add 4 or 5 cloves, a piece of crushed root ginger and the strained juice of a lemon. Pour into a pan and leave for 14 days. After 14 days strain and bottle, cork loosely until fermentation ceases.

Martin Snape

The pictures of Martin Snape, the Gosport artist, give great pleasure to many people. However with respect to the military, Martin Snape didn't consider himself to be very service-minded. When he joined the Volunteer Training Corps during this war he admitted that he was the world's worst soldier. Perhaps he was a bit unfair to himself because he is an ideal scout. He has an excellent understanding of topography and a keen eye for the country, which are perhaps intrinsically linked to his artistic skills. As an artist he is considered to have an almost photographic accuracy of local scenes and an unrivalled knowledge of the flora of Hampshire.

Patriotic Pub Landlord 'Doesn't Touch A Drop'

Richard Walter Richardson has been landlord of the 'Robin Hood' for 39 years - but is a life-long total abstainer! Mr Richardson's family have been running the pub in Mayfield Road, Seafield since February 1874. Richard took over the licence from his brother Henry in 1878.

Mr Richardson runs the pub with his second wife Mary (his first wife Clara and their daughter Cecilia having both died in March 1897).

Not content with pulling pints and keeping order in the 'Robin Hood', Mr Richardson has served on Gosport and Alverstoke Urban District Council since 1904 and is a founder member and trustee of the Royal Marine Lodge of Oddfellows.

He also has a keen interest in football and cricket, including Gosport United Football Club.

Playing cards in the saloon of the Robin Hood Mr Richardson is in uniform, keeping up morale.

Spring Garden House

Before Spring Garden House had become a private residence it was known as the New Railway Tavern. Back in 1844, the hotel was once packed with visitors who had come to witness the train arrival of Louis Phillipe (The French King) along with Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

More recently in 1915 it witnessed more contrasting scenes as the people of Gosport dealt with the horrors of war. Initially the cheering crowds waved off the troops as they marched to the station on their journey to France. As this war has progressed the scenes have become more harrowing when the ambulance trains started to arrive.

Spring Garden House then became a haven for the refugees from Belgium as every town took its quota. Could there have been a better home for new residents of Gosport? The Coffee-room played host to concerts and for three years the sound of foreign tongues echoed the building. The children were welcomed into the local schools.

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE WITH THANKS TO:
Funded by the Heritage Lottery
Supported by Gosport Heritage Open Days & Splodge Designs

Speakers and Information Providers:
Pam Braddock, John Fletcher, Tony Elbourn, Irene Elbourn, Jeanette Mae Perry, Terry Rhodes, Terry Hinkley, Dave Rowland, John Fletcher, Roger Glancefield, World War One Remembrance Centre, Explosion! The Museum of Naval Firepower.

All the Groups Involved:
Siskin Junior School, Bivol Trust, Haslar Heritage Group, Woodcot Lodge Care Home, Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum, Square Pegs Charity.

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Splodge Designs

The Gosport Gazette

Four Long Years 1914 - 1918

Price 1d

Place the discovery pen on this ear symbol for instructions	**Transport yourself back in history to discover more about Gosport and the Great War via these interactive boards.**

War Declared

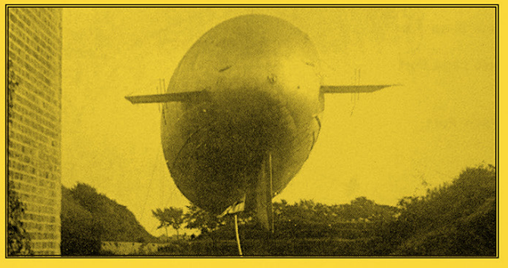
On the 4th August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. People in Britain opened their newspapers in the morning and found out war had begun. The two opposing sides were the Triple Alliance - made up of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy against the Triple Entente - made up of Great Britain, France and Russia. Gosport is a significant sea port and Naval depot, with many government factories and installations based here. It is also very significant in the aeronautical development. Gosport will endeavour to play an important part in the Great War.

Spithead Fleet Review

Prior to the start of the war, King George V watched the Spithead Fleet Review on the 18th July 1914, which lasted three days. Thousands of people came to the south coast to view the Fleet review and test mobilisation. Many gathered together watching from Stokes Bay, Gosport. The spectacle included 100,00 sailors manning the 24 Dreadnoughts, 35 Battleships, 49 Cruisers, 76 submarines and 78 Destroyers. There were 40 miles of ships arranged in 12 long lines and 17 seaplanes were included for the first time. On the 4th of August, Winston Churchill, the First Sea Lord, addressed all Royal Navy ships and stations. He issued an order for them to "Commence hostilities against Germany".

The Fort Grange Monster

In early 1914, just before the Great War, airships such as Gamma were given to the Admiralty. Gamma operated from Fort Grange airfield in Gosport. Gamma could be seen flying at the Spithead Review from the 18th-22nd July.



Royal Naval Air Service

This image shows the Royal Naval Air Service lining up some of its aircraft on the beach at Lee-on-the-Solent. They are perhaps posing for a publicity shot as one of our brave boys flies overhead.

Haslar Hospital

Haslar Hospital in Gosport has been caring for the sick and injured since 1754. The hospital was designed by Theodore Jacobsen and building commenced in 1745 during the reign of King George II. Haslar has seen servicemen casualties from all major wars; Trafalgar, Corunna, Waterloo and the Crimean. Now the staff and nurses are working hard throughout this war, looking after our brave soldiers and sailors. Our brave injured boys will certainly not be left "Up the creek without a paddle". This is ironic because it is thought that this phrase originated in nearby Haslar Creek during Napoleonic times.

Four Long Years 1914 - 1918

The Royal Flying Corps

The first Royal Flying Corps aircraft came to Grange airfield in July 1914.

Robert Smith Barry

Robert Smith-Barry set up the School of Special Flying at Grange Airfield in Gosport from 23rd August 1917. He insisted that pilot training should be more comprehensive. Novices were taught advanced manoeuvres, such as how to deal with engine stalls, spins and crosswinds.

The Gosport Tube

Robert Smith-Barry helped to develop and design the Gosport Tube. This is a communication tube in which the trainer can speak into the mouthpiece of a device that looks a bit like a stethoscope. The sound travels to earpieces over the ears of the trainee.

Training At Browndown

British soldiers have been sent to the Western Front prepared for trench warfare. The Army provides soldiers with realistic training experiences all over Britain, including Gosport. There are various types of trenches being used on the battlefield. You may be somewhat relieved to hear that not all of our men in trenches are absolutely on the front line.

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heritage lottery fund LOTTERY FUNDED
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The British Tank

In the autumn of 1917, following the successful utilisation of Tanks within the Battle of Cambrai, tanks were used as a fundraising tool. The tank is an icon of British success on the Western Front. The tank is idolised by the public with great fascination. Innovate designers have even created handbags in the shape of a tank which have been sold in a shop in Regent Street.

Working Women In Gosport

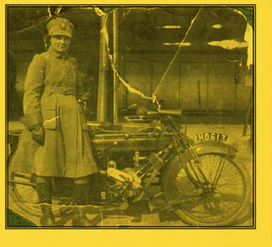
In addition to the two million already working in factories, over 890,000 women consisting of teenagers, wives, mothers and even grandmothers have joined the industry. Here at Priddy's Hard women are working daily to provide our military services with munitions. 'Munitionettes' is one of the nicknames used for the female munitions workers. Another is 'Canary Girls' due to regular contact with TNT explosives that turns their skin yellow.

Women's Land Army

The Women's Land Army was set up by The Board of Agriculture and over 250,000 woman volunteered. 23,000 women have been recruited as full-time land workers, which has helped to compensate for the men who have gone to war. For the duration of this war, the main objective is to increase food production.

Alice & Her Motorcycle

Alice Penfold began her career as an Aircraft Fitter at Grange Airfield, however she was crazy about motorcycles and then became a dispatch rider. She was notorious for riding around the streets of Gosport whilst transporting messages, aircraft spares and officers in her sidecar.



4 Long Years 1914-1918
The Great War in Gosport
1914

January 1914
Grange Camp Field was selected as the fifth Aerodrome for the Royal Flying Corps.

February 1914
Preparation began of the airfield for the RFC at Grange.

1914
The internal railway system was extended to Priddy's Hard. The line went through Elson and Hardway. The Royal Naval Armaments Depot railways in Gosport saw the first successful use of a fireless steam locomotive in Great Britain.
These operated on steam with no use of coal or fire due to the risk of causing a fire at the munitions depot.

1914
Camper & Nicholsons, Gosport built many Motor Torpedo Boats and Steam Pinnaces during World War One.

26th May 1914
Launch of Sir Thomas Lipton's yacht 'Shamrock IV' for the 1914 America's cup at Camper & Nicholsons, Gosport.

28th June 1914 - Franz Ferdinand assassinated at Sarajevo.

1914
The Gosport Aircraft Company on Beach street first built flying boats/ seaplanes in 1914. As the war progressed they continued to fulfil the growing requirement for the war effort.

23rd June 1914
The HMA 'Gamma' airship returned to Grange. King George V had been on a flight over the Isle of Wight in this airship around this time, before the outbreak of the First World War.

E.6

July 1914
Thousands of people came to the south coast to view the Fleet Review and test mobilization. Many gathered together watching from Stokes Bay, Gosport. The spectacle included nearly 100,000 sailors manning the 24 Dreadnoughts, 35 Battleships, 49 Cruisers, 76 Submarines and 78 Destroyers, there were 40 miles of ships arranged in 12 long lines.

28th July 1914 - Austria declared war on Serbia.

6th July 1914
Number Five Squadron moved to Fort Grange Airfield from Netherhaven.

20th July 1914
The first fatal flying accident.

28th July 1914
The ferry services to/from Stokes Bay Pier were stopped because of the declaration of war (WW1).

1914
The construction of mock trench warfare battlefields commenced at Browndown. This enabled soldiers to train and prepare for the trench battle strategies. The trenches were the size of 17 football pitches.

1st August 1914 - Germany declared war on Russia.
3rd August 1914 - Germany declared war on France and invaded Belgium. Germany had to implement the Schlieffen Plan.
4th August 1914 - Britain declared war on Germany.

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amber pip

1914

1914
A German merchant steamer showing the white flag came through the Solent. Its 120 occupants were taken by tug to Royal Clarence Yard. They were marched to Fort Elson to be imprisoned.

1914
Thousands of troops came through the transit camp in Gosport located in The New Barracks (later St George Barracks). They were then taken by rail to the troopships at Southampton.

1914
The Red Cross and St John Ambulance ran convalescent homes in Brookfield House in Alverstoke and the National Children's Home was commandeered to be run by the VAD – Women's Nursing Voluntary Aid Detachment.

1914
Gosport Station was filled almost daily with soldiers being seen off by wives, friends and families. A marching band would accompany them as they marched from the Barracks to the Station.

26th May 1914
In Gosport thousands of war wounded arrived in Clarence Yard, then to be transported by steam launch to Haslar Hospital.

6th September 1914 - Battle of the Marne started.

6th August 1914
The German spy Heinrich Grosse was again imprisoned under suspicion of anti-British activities. He had been found guilty and placed in jail in December 1911 of suspected espionage. Whilst fishing off Gosport close to Fort Blockhouse submarine base he had tried to ascertain if the new submarines were fitted with guns and where they were mounted.

14th August 1914
No 5 Squadron move to France.

August 1914
A National Relief fund was set up by the Prince of Wales. In Gosport George Dukes, the Chairman of Gosport District Council represented the fund locally. The fund was to support the families of serving men who were suffering hardships.

1914
Reverend Tanner, vicar of St Matthews set up a recreation room for soldier's and sailor's wives in the Victoria Hotel, so that instead of going to a public house they could spend time with other wives, alcohol free, talking about their worries.

1914
Marching down Gosport High Street the Royal Marine Band drew a crowd to the recruitment meeting at Thorngate Hall. Local Gosport MP, Arthur Lee Miller, addressed the crowd to encourage the men to sign up and serve for their country.
The Citzens Patriotic Recruiting Committee for Portsmouth and District, chaired by Mayor Corke, steered the regular recruitment drives in Gosport.

1914
Extension of Bedenham/Frater railway to Priddy's Hard.

October 1914
First use of Grange airfield by the RNAS (for about 3 months).

18th October 1914 - First Battle of Ypres.
29th October 1914 - Turkey entered the war on Germany's side. Trench warfare started to dominate the Western Front.

1915-1917

15th January 1915

Return of the Royal Flying Corp to Grange Airfield.

19th January 1915 - The first Zeppelin raid on Britain took place.
19th February 1915 - Britain bombarded Turkish forts in the Dardanelles.
25th April 1915 - Allied troops landed in Gallipoli.

7th May 1915 - The 'Lusitania' was sunk by a German U-boat.
25th September 1915 - Start of the Battle of Loos.

30th October 1915

The last passenger train ran to Stokes Bay.

19th December 1915 - The Allies started the evacuation of Gallipoli.

1915

60 Belgium refugees arrived at the Hard in Gosport to be given asylum from the atrocities. Some were housed in The Victoria Temperance Hotel in North Street.

27th January 1916 - Conscription introduced in Britain.

26th March 1916

The Picturedrome Cinema in Avenue Road burnt down.

21st Febuary 1916 - Start of the Battle of Verdun.

31st May 1916 - Battle of Jutland.

31st May 1916

As the Battle of Jutland happened, regular casualty lists were posted at Thorngate Hall in Gosport.

July 1916

The 14th Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment (the Portsmouth Battalion) arrived in the Somme.

1st July 1916 - Start of the Battle of the Somme.

7th December 1916 - Lloyd George becomes British Prime Minister.

1917

The increased demand for more men in the armed forces meant that more women took on jobs that were traditionally thought of as 'male' work. This encouraged women to 'do their bit' in the form of working in jobs such as post women, Land Girls (on farms) and munition workers (in places such as Priddy's Hard in Gosport).

1917-1918

1st February 1917 - Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare campaign started.

6th April 1917 - USA declared war on Germany.

30th July 1917

Opening of the RNAS Seaplane Training School at Lee-on-Solent (extension of school at Calshot).

31st July 1917 - Start of the Third Battle at Ypres.

2nd August 1917

The School of Special Flying was formed under the command of Major, later Colonel, Robert Smith-Barry. The airfield at Gosport became the foremost flying training establishment in the world. The aim of the establishment was not to train new pilots but to train instructors. In May 1918 the School of Special Flying was renamed No 1 School of Special Flying and in July 1918 it became the South West Area Flying Instructors School.

1917

Robert Smith Barry invented the 'Gosport Tube', this was a communication tube in which the trainers of pilots could speak into the mouthpiece of the device which would be heard in the earpieces of the trainee. This piece of equipment revolutionised the training of pilots.

6th November 1917 - Britain launched a major offensive on the Western Front.
20th November 1917 - British tanks won a victory at Cambrai.
5th December 1917 - Armistice between Germany and Russia signed.

28th January 1918

HMS Mercury Submarine Depot ship was sunk in action. Just before the war she was moored at Haslar were she was used as a submarine depot ship.

1st April 1918

The Royal Flying Corp and the Royal Naval Air Service are combined to become the Royal Air Force.

9th April 1918 - Germany started an offensive in Flanders.

15th July 1918 - Second Battle of the Marne started. The start of the collapse of the German army.

1918

Start of the Admiralty using Stokes Bay Pier for the observation of torpedo dropping in the Solent by aircraft.

1918

New Gosport ferry 'Ferry King' enters service.

11th November 1918

Alice Rebecca Penfold was a Dispatch Rider who worked at Grange Airfield. One of her most important deliveries was the official paperwork, which informed the airfield of the official end to the war.

11th November 1918

Peace at last. Street parties were held across the land.

29th October 1918 - Germany's navy mutinied.
9th November 1918 - Kaiser William II abdicated.
11th November 1918 - Germany signed an armistice with the Allies – the official date of the end of World War One.

PEACE AT LAST

Fort Brockhurst

The central focus of this project has been Fort Brockhurst in Gosport, one of the local Victorian Forts built in the 1800s. They were utilised for various military purposes during the Great War. Fort Brockhurst was used as a recruitment centre and later served as a demobilisation centre in 1918.

Fort Gomer was used as a training facility preparing troops for trench warfare. A detachment of the 3rd Battalion Hampshire Regiment was based at Fort Gilkicker.

In August of 1914 Fort Elson was utilised to imprison 120 men who had surrendered in The Solent from a German merchant steamer. Fort Rowner, Fort Grange and their surroundings became the School of Special Flying (1 Reserve Squadron) founded by Major Robert Smith-Barry.

Fort Brockhurst's rich and varied military history, and keeps an archive of

First World War photographs and records, which were made available to our groups during the projects.

The End of the Great War

There were many reasons that the war came to a cease fire in 1918. Germany was losing the battle in France and the German Navy had gone on strike and refused to carry on fighting and when the United States joined the war in April 1917 it gave the Triple Entente greater power. Germany was struggling to continue fighting and their leaders told their government to end the fighting. On the 9th November 1918, Kaiser Wilhelm, the German leader, abdicated and two days later, Germany signed the armistice and hostilities ceased.

The war had lasted four years and four months. Across Britain people celebrated but the Great War had a huge impact of families throughout Britain.

On 11 November 1919, one year after the war ended, a newspaper announced that it was "Peace Day".

> *"It's wonderful how Gosport people support our Heritage Open Days and, I believe this, once again, has helped gain the confidence of the Heritage Lottery Fund. It's great to know that we are a step closer to preserving Gosport's Heritage for another century."*
>
> *- Ralph Booker, Project Manager*

Peace Parties

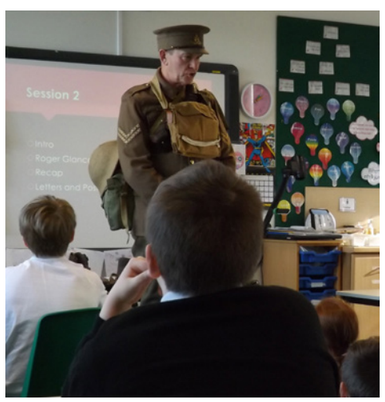
Peace Parties were held to commemorate the end of the Great War. Some neighbourhoods held parties in the streets and others held them in their local halls. People decorated the streets with bunting and flags. Mothers prepared a special tea and fun and games were arranged.

As part of our commemoration we have held our own Peace Party at Fort Brockhurst. Participants from local community groups plus local dignitaries and even re-enactment soldiers were present.

The room was decorated with period-styled bunting created with the help of local young people. A newly made textile depicting a Peace Party was unveiled and two specially written songs were performed. Also, artwork and information all of our Great War projects was displayed.

Conclusion

In 1918 The Great War ended with a feeling that there was peace at last. To commemorate this important historical event, GHODs and Splodge Designs created the Peace at Last project. The aims were to increase public awareness of Gosport's contribution to the war effort and to make the history more accessible to all.



Our Peace at Last project was funded by The HLF's "First World War: Then and Now programme".

On receiving the grant, Ralph Booker, Project Manager for GHODs, said *"We are delighted to have been awarded the HLF grant and we look forward to working with our local organisations to tell the story about Gosport's role in the War and how peace was celebrated in 1918".*

Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, we were able to complete work which focuses on the history of the last year of the First World War. As with our previous projects, local community groups were invited to participate in a series of interactive workshops which resulted in our creation of textile and audio depictions of that era. The project enabled people of Gosport, from a wide range of ages and abilities, to come together to preserve the memories and heritage of people, stories and history of the area in 1918.

Outcomes

Our findings from all three of our First World War commemorative projects have been gathered together into this single study pack for use by schools, groups, residential homes and local study centres. To further compliment this, all of the creative outputs such as textiles, information panels, audio tracks and songs, interactive boards and timeline banners are available to loan on request.

Please email: outreach.resources@gosportheritage.co.uk
or tel/text: 07531 001003 to discuss your needs.

Our online resources are freely accessible to everyone from Gosport Heritage Open Days website www.gosportheritage.co.uk

Please do not publish any part of these resources without giving credit to Gosport Heritage Open Days and Splodge Designs.

THANK YOU

Our thanks to everyone involved for making these projects possible:

Heritage Lottery for funding, Splodge Design for creation;

For all the individuals who helped us with this project from personal stories and recollections to informing our research, these include: Pam Braddock, Gareth Brettell, Terry Rhodes, Pam Rhodes, Terry Hinkley, John Fletcher, Reg Norton, Brian & Allyson Rendle, Christine & Tim Seward, Lynne Thomson Chreiazomenou;

The Gosport Area: memories and photos, past and present Facebook group;

To all the organisations including English Heritage, Search, Discovery Centre, Hampshire Archives, Pallant House, Explosion Museum, Royal Naval Dockyard Museum, HMS Sultan Airfield Museum,Submarine Museum, Fort Brockhurst, Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum, Square Pegs charity, Haslar Heritage Group, Give Gain & Grow, Loud & Proud, Leesland Junior School, Siskin School, The Key Pupil Referral Unit, Northcott House, Bivol Group, Rowner Beavers, Woodcot Lodge Residential Home;

All the members of the public who came to our drop in workshops during Gosport Heritage Open Days at Fort Brockhurst.

Other formats of this booklet are available at: www.gosportheritage.co.uk or tel/text 07531 001003

heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

GOSPORT
heritage open days

Splodge Designs