

# DISCOVERING BINGHAM

Quarterly NEWSLETTER of the **Bingham Heritage Trails Association**

BHTA: Increasing public awareness of our heritage in Architecture, Folk & Natural History, Archaeology & Geology

[www.binghamheritage.org.uk](http://www.binghamheritage.org.uk) Registered Charity No. 109475 Issue No.65 January 2020

This is issue 65, and assuming they have all gone out quarterly, then this newsletter has now been going for 16 years. Its purpose is to inform and educate the members of the group and to spread information about the group and their work in and around Bingham. Copies of this newsletter are delivered to members of the group and are left at various sites in Bingham including the library, the council offices and all the pubs in Bingham.

I have taken over the creation of the newsletter and would welcome any appropriate articles and information to include in future publications. Do you have information, records or photographs of the history of Bingham and its surroundings?

The members of the BHTA would also welcome new members. Our web site gives all the information you need to join us. We endeavour to undertake 3 lectures every year for the public and this year these will be Feb. 27th, March 27th and May 7th. These will be held in the Methodist Hall and doors open at 19.00. *Rowan Bird*

## **Margaret Sibley, My Memories of Wartime**

I was born in 1936 in a nursing home at West Bridgford. My parents moved to Burton Joyce in April 1939.

On Sunday, 3rd September 1939 I went to the Methodist Chapel in Burton Joyce with my mother. My father, a Chapel Steward, had stayed at home to listen to the radio. He walked into the Chapel and up to the pulpit. The minister was the Reverend Tarr, who then told the congregation that war had been declared.

My father made the shutters for the Chapel windows, wooden frames covered with tarred paper. These were put up each time the chapel was used in the evening, held in place by wooden fixtures. House windows were all taped, to prevent them shattering in bomb blasts and blackout curtains were put up at all windows.

There were a number of ways of collecting money for the War Effort, such as a line of pennies around the village and a bomb shell placed in the chapel to collect money.

We had no shelter during the early part of the war.

We had a wooden screen placed between the fireplace and the door in the dining room, with a mattress on the floor.

We would go behind this screen when the siren sounded. It was supposed to protect us from the blast!

Later we had an old car body buried at the bottom of the garden as a shelter. It was brought over the fence from next door as it couldn't come down the side of our house as we had a shed in our drive. I don't remember ever going into the car in a raid. A gate was made in the fence so that our neighbours, the Hebblewaits, could come through if necessary.

When war broke out my father was too old to join up so he became a member of the Home Guard. In the early days they had no uniforms or guns so they paraded with whatever equipment they had to hand. I remember seeing them parading outside the chapel on a Sunday morning on Meadow Lane, my father with his hockey stick (he used to play for Notts) others with broom handles or whatever they could find. A real Dad's Army!

I believe my father enjoyed being in the Home Guard. He knew every hedge and ditch in the area, having scrambled in and out of them so many times. He knew every inch of Burton Joyce and Bulcote, but never said what he was doing.

My father worked in Nottingham and would cycle to and from work every day. He had a lamp on his cycle which ran by dynamo and had louvres so that the light could not be seen from the air. Everywhere was dark as all street-lights had been turned off.

We had quite a big garden where my father grew vegetables and we also kept chickens. As everything was rationed, we had to use our egg ration for buying bran for the chickens which we had delivered. This was then mixed with waste food, vegetables peelings etc. and boiled in a large iron pan on the cooker. I can still remember the smell! If the hens laid more eggs than we needed in the summer my mother would preserve the surplus in Isinglass and store them in a large pancheon under the slab in the pantry for use in the winter when the chickens laid less.

We had an allowance of reconstituted (dried) eggs with which my mother made omelettes. As food was rationed, she saved small amount of ingredients to make a Christmas cake every year. One year as usual she made a cake, put 'marzipan' on the top, then iced the cake. What a disappointment! The cake was inedible! It tasted like soap! The marzipan had been contaminated at the shop and the whole cake was affected.

When we went visiting, we took a screw of paper with tea leaves in, and another with sugar. Butter was mixed with ground rice to make it go further. Butter was always put round the edges of sandwiches to make it seem that there was butter all the way over. If we asked what we were going to have for a meal often the answer was "bread and if it". (If it goes round you can have some)!

In September 1941, I started school. As there were many evacuees in Burton Joyce, the school was not large enough, so the infants were taught in the Village Hall.



There were two classes which were separated by low screens, about four feet high. The classes were very large. We used slates and slate pencils or chalk. Paper was very scarce. We frequently had Air Raid Practice. We all had to lie on the floor near the walls, hugging the pipes. In this way it was thought the blast would go over us.

Later air raid shelters were built in the Village Hall yard. The evacuees were housed in the Hall on Main Street in Burton Joyce and a house on Crifftin Road. The Hall boys came from poor homes in the East end of London and some of them had no shoes.

At potato picking time children were allowed off school to help, and also at harvest time. We went for Nature Study Walks in the Autumn to collect Rose Hips which were sent off to make Syrup, a good source of Vitamin C.

When the war ended on V.E. Day there were a great many celebrations with parties in the Village Hall. The main thing I remember was a huge bonfire on the recreation ground. Then, of course, the street-lights came on again.

## ***Do you recognise these names?***

2020 will see the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Regular readers will know that BHTA is currently researching the town's part in World War 2. We have traced the history of those men named on the War Memorial and are now turning our attention to finding out about those men and women who served in the armed forces and returned. The Roll of Honour we used for World War One named all those who returned from service then with enough information for us to trace their family and service histories. There is no such list for WW2!

All we have is a list of names (with a page missing) of those who received a grant from the returning soldiers' fund, but this only gave name and address with no information about which military unit they served with. We have some additional information from the British Legion records. We have traced many of these names and found out something about them but have no information on what they did in the war itself or what they did after the war.

The following is a list of some of the names we are trying to trace.

If you recognise any of these please get in touch with us. If so, we would love to hear from you, especially if you or someone you know have family records, photographs and memorabilia that would add to the richness of the story we hope to tell.

The project leader David Mason can be reached on 01949 876635 or by email via the BHTA website:

<http://www.binghamheritage.org.uk>

- Arthur Maurice Abraham; 11 Long Acre East, D 29<sup>th</sup> September 1969; local authority accountant
- Albert John Baker, Probate: 5 Edinburgh Drive Bingham d 30 December 1978
- Arthur H Whitlock, d. 4 January 2009, decorator by trade 16 Nottingham Road
- Eddie Sheppard, roofer
- Eric Green, ex-mayor of Bingham, d 18 May 1999
- Ernest Lamb, d. 1981, Probate address 5 Orchard Avenue Bingham, probate Manchester 23
- John Henry Burrows Flowers, died in Bingham July 1984
- George William Mumford, Prisoner of War in Japan, died Nottingham 1993
- George Singleton, died in Beauvale Nursing Home 2003
- William Harwood, was a tobacconist and hairdresser, lived in Fosters Lane in 1939, died 1966
- Henry Lancelot Wilkinson, aka Lance,
- Henry Squires, brother of Dot Mabbott
- James Henry Gray, merchant navy, born 14 Oct 1911, died Nottingham 1979
- Reginald Lamb, last known address 18 Fosters Lane, died 1989,
- Norman Francis Whitlock, born 2 March 1921, died 29<sup>th</sup> August 2006, cremated at Wilford
- Ernest C Robinson, PoW 1942 at Cyrenaica

We would also love to hear from you if:

- you have a relative or friend who served in the armed forces in WW2, about whom you have information?
- someone you know served in the Land Army, the Home Guard or as an ARP warden?
- your family took in evacuees?
- you have memories of life in Bingham during the war or the post-war period?

## BHTA Lectures for 2020

The BHTA lectures this year will be:

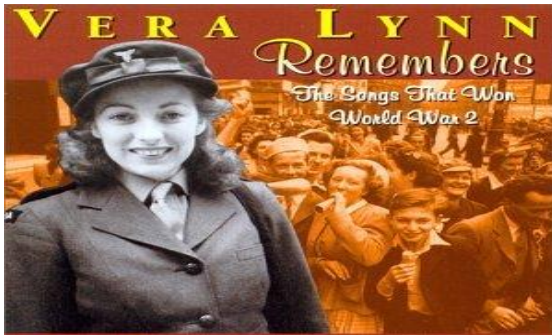
*Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February – The recent archaeological work at Nottingham Castle.*



*Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March – History of Navigation or “Where the hell am I?”*



*Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May – World War Two – A Commemoration Evening.*



**At the Methodist Hall, Bingham.**

**Doors open at 19.00. Start 19.30.**

### BHTA CONTACTS

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