

Memories on a Monday: Peace

Monday 11 May 2020

Welcome to Memories on a Monday: Peace - sharing our heritage from Bruce Castle Museum & Archive.

Following the commemorative events last week of VE Day, we turn now to looking at some of the ways we have marked peace in our communities in Haringey, alongside the strong heritage of the peace movement and activism in the borough.

In July 2014, a memorial was unveiled alongside the woodland in Lordship Recreation Ground in Tottenham. Created by local sculptor [Gary March](#), the sculpture shows two hands embracing a dove, the symbol of peace. Its design and installation followed a successful campaign initiated by Ray Swain and the Friends of Lordship Rec to dedicate a permanent memorial to over 40 local people who tragically lost their lives in September 1940. They died following a direct hit by a high-explosive bomb falling on the Downhills public air raid shelter. It was the highest death toll in Tottenham during the Second World War. (You can see the sculpture and read more about this tragedy [here](#) and also [here](#) from the Summerhill Road website).

Three years before, in Stroud Green, a Peace Garden was named and unveiled in 2011. It commemorates the 15 people who died, 35 people who were seriously injured, the destruction of 12 houses and the severe damage of Holy Trinity Church and 100 other homes in the area. The details below, can be read on the attached PDF. The Peace Garden Board can be found in the garden, at the junction where Stapleton Hall Road meets Granville Road, N4.

Parish Peace Garden



Granville Road July 1944 (Courtesy Bruce Castle Museum, Harfingey Culture, Libraries & Learning)

Early in the morning of Sunday 16 July 1944 a V-1 'Flying Bomb' fell on Granville Road, killing 15 people and seriously injuring 35 others. Twelve houses were destroyed; 100 others were damaged; Holy Trinity church, which stood just to the east of this notice, was badly damaged.



Interior of Holy Trinity Church, 1937

Those who died that night in Granville Road :

- No. 22: Frances Rose Linda Chapman, 48; Harold Edric Chapman, 51; Hilda Muriel Tongue, 48.
- No. 24: Ruby Isobel Cook, 35; Frederick John Cook, 36; Ethel Emma Walker, 48; William Walker, 59.
- No. 26: Margery Ethel Allum, 37; Miriam Goldblatt, 26; Samuel Goldblatt, 33.
- No. 28: Margaret Anne Plummer, 44; Daisy Seammen, 65; Pearl Seammen, 70.
- No. 30: Dorothy Fox, 59.
- No. 33: Annie Gertrude Tyler, 75.

This Peace Garden commemorates the event, the people who died, and the reconstruction of the area following the end of the war.

Between 1939 and 1945 the UK, its empire, and its allies the Soviet Union, were at war with Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan, among others.

The V-1, 'Doodlebug' or 'Buzz bomb' attacked London between 1944 and 1945. It was the first cruise missile, launched from Nazi-occupied territory at high speed and low altitude to its programmed target like an un-silenced motor bike and cut off just before impact. It was the largest explosion of the 550kg bomb. Their purpose was to cause six thousand casualties in the UK were civilians.

Because of wartime censorship - imposed to deceive the enemy - the Home Office only reported 'More Women than mentioned a residential area in the South of England', 'damaged cheerful victims' and an ungrateful cat that scratched his paw.

Holy Trinity Church (architect EB Ferrey) was consecrated in 1881 when the area was developed as a north London suburb, and took its place amongst other similar parishes in the rapidly growing city with its own loyal and active worshippers. In 1913 a church hall (architect J S Alder) was added.



The plan of old church (Courtesy City of London, London Metropolitan Archives and Holy Trinity Church)

At Holy Trinity church windows and doors were blown out and there was a large hole in the roof above the organ, but the vicar, Father Connerton, asked that any tarpaulins be used first on people's houses rather than the church. The church hall was already used as a rest centre for people who had been bombed out. Thirty-two people stayed in the bunk beds until they could be housed elsewhere.



Catherine Burgess (l) and Miriam Turner (r) in Miriam's front garden, 1946. Miriam and her family were displaced by the V-1 in 1944 and were the first family rehoused in the Granville Road prefabs.



Granville Road prefabs, April 1947 (Courtesy Alexander Smith, local resident)

In 1946 nineteen Arcon Mark V 'prefab' factory-built bungalows were erected on the Granville Road bombsite. Clad with corrugated asbestos cement, each was pre-wired, came with ducted air heating and had two bedrooms and a fitted kitchen including a refrigerator. They had a modern and compact look. Designed to last for 10 years, they actually stood until 1980. Local people remember prize-winning front gardens including one with a fishpond.

The prefabs were replaced by new housing on the east side of Granville Road and, after a campaign by local residents, the Spinney wildlife area on the west side.

The 1944 bomb damage proved so severe that in 1950 the church was deemed unsafe. Parishioners moved the altar and other fittings, including the church hall, and a chapel was created in the vicarage. The church was closed in 1960 and a Service of Dedication in 1961, led by the Bishop of London, marked a new place of worship in the former church hall, just up Granville Road. In the same year a new vicarage was built on the site of the old church. The vicarage was leased to the council, with the World War One memorial, damaged in the gale of 1987, as a centre-piece. The old vicarage was demolished and Aidan's School, opened by the Queen in December 1972.

The cobbled surface near the edge of this Peace Garden marks the site of the church. A post from a washing line, hidden deep in the Spinney, is a tribute to a woman who lived in the prefabs. This garden is a memorial to those who died in the war. Please use this garden to reflect and to join us in the hope for peace.

Thanks to Bruce Castle Museum (Harfingey Culture, Libraries & Learning), Holy Trinity Church, Hornsey Historical Society, London Metropolitan Archives and local people who researched and contributed to this board. Funded by the Council, Making the difference fund, March 2011.

The [Holocaust Memorial Garden of Remembrance](#) at Bruce Castle Park, had an olive tree planted, symbolising peace, in tribute to and remembrance of [Roman Halter \(1927 - 2012\)](#). In 1987, another tree was planted at Tottenham Green (East Side) to honour the memory of [Olof Palme](#), the Swedish PM who was assassinated in 1986. The accompanying plaque reads: 'This part of the park is dedicated to the memory of Olof Palme 30th January 1927 - 28th February 1986'. There was also a space dedicated as a Peace Picnic Area at Alexandra Palace that same year and was opened by the Mayor Cllr Andreas Mikkides, as seen in the photograph below by Henry Jacobs.



From the collections Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)
© Henry Jacobs

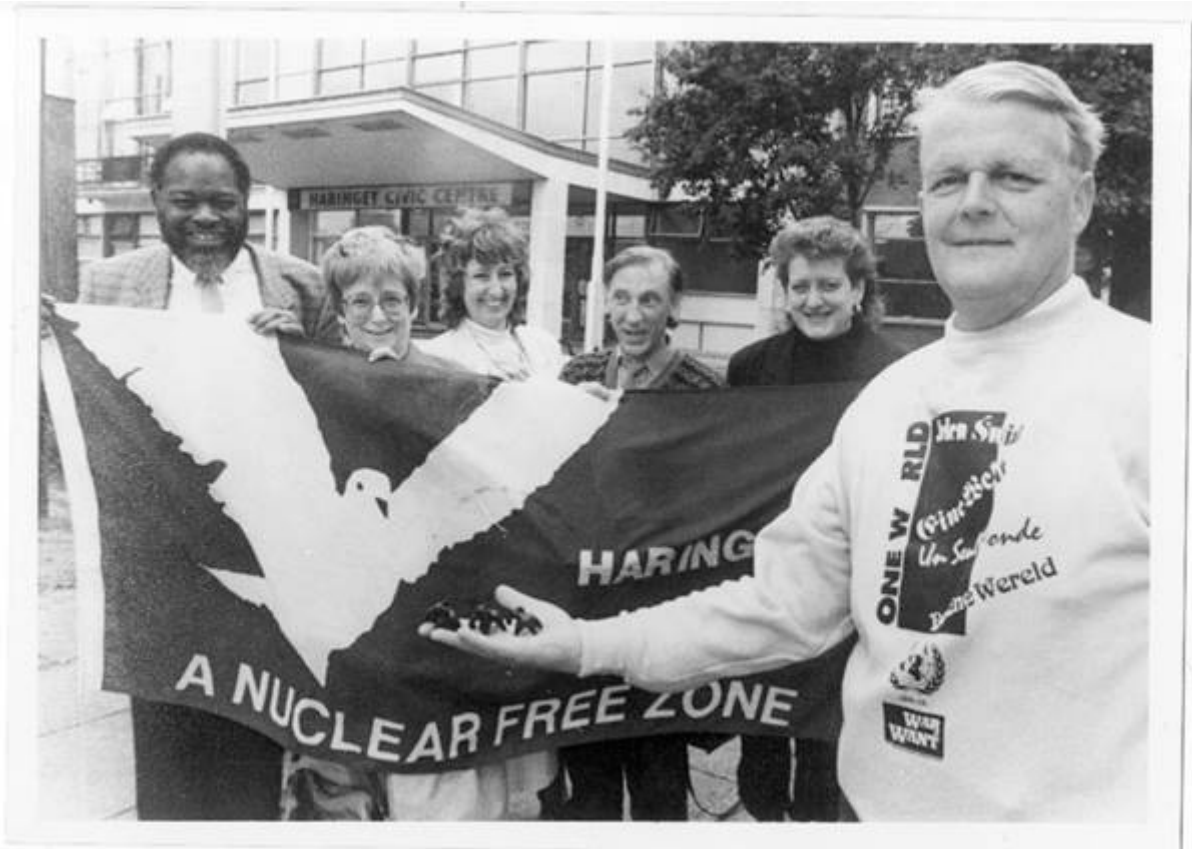
In July 1998, Bernie Grant MP with Dolly Kiffin attended the opening of the Peace Garden at Broadwater Farm in Tottenham, as seen below in this photograph also taken by Henry Jacobs.



From the collections Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)

© Henry Jacobs

The Nuclear Free Zone Movement in this country was strong in the early 1980s when up to 200 local authorities declared themselves to be 'nuclear-free', with Haringey of course in that number. Here, in the photograph below, Bernie Grant joins peace campaigner, activist and Haringey resident [Bruce Kent](#) and Haringey councillors to raise the flag to Haringey being a Nuclear Free Zone, standing outside the Civic Centre.



From the collections Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)

For those of you who recall ['The Art of the Gestetner' exhibition](#) - curated by the art group [Alt Går Bra](#) - at Bruce Castle Museum in 2018, you would have seen one of the ['Spies for Peace'](#) pamphlets produced by two members of the group, Nick and Ruth Walter. This group of young radicals broke the Official Secrets Act in 1963 when they duplicated 3,000 copies on a Gestetner machine. This clandestine printing device (The Gestetner was made in Tottenham) was used to expose the government's secret plans to run the country in the case of nuclear war, in response to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1963. Their story and use of the Gestetner machine can be seen on the *'Hidden History of Britain'*, on catch-up [here](#) (at 42 minutes into the programme).

Campaigning for peace and opposition to war can be traced back over several centuries in Haringey, with the strong Quaker presence in the area, particularly in Tottenham. For a history of the Tottenham Quakers, follow the link (via the 'History' tab) to this great resource [here](#).

Before and during the Second World War, there were those locals who associated themselves with the Quakers, but were not Quakers themselves. One such individual was Herbert Granville Hawkes (1907 – 1998), known as Bert. His name might be known to us today as he was a much-published local historian and member of the [Edmonton Hundred Historical Society](#). Growing up and living for most of his life at 20 Linley Road, Bruce Grove, during the Great War, Bert and his family lost his uncle in 1917 in France. Private Francis Victor Hawkes was 33 years old and served with the 12th Battalion Middlesex Regiment. He was the son of Elijah and Elizabeth Hawkes of 242 Philip Lane, South Tottenham.



Herbert Granville Hawkes, c.1947.

From the collections and © Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)

After the Great War, Bert went to Risley School for Boys. It is very likely he knew fellow pupil Archie (or 'Mac') McClellan (who became the Director of Libraries and Museums for Tottenham later in life). In the [recently-published biography](#) about Archie, we learn he hated war and told his mum that he was going to join the Youth Group at the Quakers when he left school – and he did so, attending Quaker camps in the summer holidays. In 1924, Archie joined a group from the youth section of the 'No More War' movement on a cycle ride across Holland to meet similar groups and demonstrate their demand for a peaceful world. You can see Archie standing in the front row with his arms crossed [here](#).

On leaving school too, Bert Hawkes joined up with like-minded people interested in the peace movement, and during the 1920s and 30s went on walking holidays known as 'International Tramping Tours'. By 1939, things were to change for them both. The 1939 England and Wales Register (at The National Archive) saw Bert listed in Lancashire working on 'electrical engineering leaflet production'. He was designated as being on the 'Pacifist Service Bureau'. For Archie, he had become a librarian and had taken a job in Chelmsford. He worked with the Ministry of Information and, although his position was constantly reviewed, his work was considered to be essential war work.

As the document below shows, during the Second World War Bert had become a registered conscientious objector in Tottenham. We don't know much else about this period of time for Bert, but we do know he would have been required to submit reasons and have his case heard before a military tribunal. His pacifist beliefs and activities before the war are a simple indicator to us of the views that he held.

KEEP THIS CARD SAFELY
NATIONAL SERVICE ACTS

Certificate of Registration in Register of Conscientious Objectors.
R.O. *London* Case No. *19778* Date *25.1.1945*

Holder's Name *Hawkes Herbert Giovanniello*
Home Address *20 Conley Road Bruce Grove Tottenham N.17*
Date of Birth *24.6.1907* Holder's Signature *B. G. Hawkes*

This is to certify that the above person by order of the competent Tribunal is—

*Delete alternatives before issue.
 (a) ~~registered unconditionally in the Register of Conscientious Objectors.~~
 (b) ~~registered conditionally in the Register of Conscientious Objectors.~~
 (c) ~~registered in the Register of Conscientious Objectors as a person liable or prospectively liable to be called up for military service but to be employed only in non-combatant duties.~~

awstock
L.S.E.

(Regional Controller, Ministry of Labour and National Service Region.)

READ THIS CAREFULLY.

Care should be taken not to lose this certificate, but in the event of loss application for a duplicate should be made to the nearest Office of the Ministry of Labour and National Service.
IF YOU CHANGE YOUR HOME ADDRESS OR YOUR NAME YOU MUST COMPLETE THE SPACE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS CERTIFICATE AND POST IT AT ONCE. A new certificate will then be sent to you.
 A person who uses or lends this certificate or allows it to be used by any other person with intent to deceive, renders himself liable to heavy penalties.

N.S. 62. J1939 M16981/6093 9/44 3,000 D&Co. 40/1

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Bert was not the only local person to be described as a conscientious objector in Tottenham. The 1939 Register also highlights others including Louis Dore, a builders' labourer, originally from 20 Edith Road in Tottenham, but by the time of War was living at 66 Stamford Road, N15 with his wife Rosina.

Being a conscientious objector (CO) meant sticking to principles, despite the enormous pressure to join the army and facing public disapproval. It was a difficult and brave choice that saw men shunned by their families and even attacked in public, all for believing that war was wrong. For men like Bert and Louis, as registered COs, it was hard. But there were those who had gone before them and had led the way.

Here Joanna Bornat and Valerie Flessati, of the [Haringey First World War Peace Forum](#), profile one CO who went before - **Isaac Goss**, a CO from the First World War.



Courtesy and © The estate of Isaac Goss

‘Born in 1881, Isaac was a tailor living at 16 Connaught Road, Stroud Green and married with four children. He was the son of Jewish refugees originally from the Russian Pale of Settlement. He became a Quaker in 1911 and was a conscientious objector, supporting others who were opposed to war as they appeared before tribunals and were imprisoned. Though arrested for absenteeism after Hornsey Tribunal refused him absolute exemption, he never served a sentence. During this time, he was Secretary of the London County Council School Care Committee and involved in running boys’ clubs and summer camps at the Peel Centre in Clerkenwell.

After 1918 he continued with youth work and also with peace activities and was very much involved in helping Jewish refugees escape from Germany. His commitment to peace continued into the Second World War when he was a member of the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors. His tailoring premises, near St Paul’s Cathedral, were destroyed in the Blitz and though he restarted in the West End, he died in 1943 not long after. He was buried at the Quaker Burial Ground at Jordans. His family continued his beliefs. His son, Arthur, was a founding member of CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) and his granddaughter, Philippa was on the first Aldermaston march in 1958.’

A near-neighbour of Isaac Goss was also a CO – as this Military Exemption Card of 1916 (below) shows for Herbert Walker of 17 Connaught Road in Stroud Green.

Local Tribunal: Name Spornsey
Address Town Hall, Highgate rd.
Certificate No. 174.

This is to certify that:—
Name (in full) Herbert Richard Walker,
Address (in full) 17. Connaught Road,
Stroud Green. N.

Age 31 years.
Occupation, profession
or business Accountant and Cashier.

is exempted from the provisions of
the Military Service Act, 1916.

The exemption is* from combatant service
only.

The ground on which the exemption is granted is that
conscientious objection to combatant service
has been established.

Signature J. A. Ashbee
(Town Clerk)
for the Tribunal.

Date 26th May, 1916.

* State whether the exemption is absolute, conditional (in which case the conditions should be stated) or temporary (in which case the period of time should be stated).
If the exemption is granted on conscientious grounds and is from combatant service only, this should also be stated.

From the collections and © Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)
Another well-known figure and local CO was Fred Murfin. Joanna and Valerie continue:

‘Fred Murfin, was a printer, originally from Louth in Lincolnshire, living at 47 Summerhill Road, Tottenham. This was where he was arrested in 1916 for refusing to join up. He had applied for exemption at Tottenham Tribunal stating that ‘*I believe in the sacredness of all human life*’. He describes what happened to him next in [Prisoners of Peace](#). He had refused to wear uniform or carry a kit bag. With some thirty others he was taken to France under sentence of death for refusing to obey military orders. At the last moment this was commuted to ten

years' penal servitude, spent with other COs, in Winchester and Maidstone prisons. Released in 1919 he went back to Tottenham and to printing.

The [Tottenham Quakers website](#) tells of how he gave an overcoat as his contribution to the 'Appeal for Famine Victims in Europe', putting a note into one of a pocket with his address. A note came from back from 'Willi Plaffe' thanking him for the warm coat and wanting to correspond so that he could learn English which they did until the Second World War. In 1960 Will Plaffe came to England and met Fred who had by then had retired to Cornwall, where he died in 1972.

During World War Two conscientious objectors were given, 'more consideration' as Fred puts it. This was largely due to the example he and around 20,000 others who stuck to their principles about peace with dignity and commitment.'

Whatever the motivation these men had for becoming COs, they shared a common belief; that war, with all its death and horror, was a crime and that they would not only refuse to participate in it but would also work to make a better and more peaceful world. With the end of the War, COs continued to worked for peace. When conscription returned in 1939-1960, they supported a new generation of peace activists and peace movements that followed.

For a fuller picture and more details of the many more COs who lived in Haringey, you will need to look at the wonderful research and activities undertaken by the [Haringey First World War Peace Forum](#). The website shows fascinating and hidden stories of these men from Haringey - a part of London which saw the highest proportion of conscientious objectors in Britain between 1916 and 1918. The individual stories of these brave men can be seen on their research pages by following the links here – for [Tottenham](#), for [Hornsey](#) and for [Wood Green](#). You can also explore these individuals on the Layers of London website [here](#).

There are also additional resources on the website, including a link to the [CO heritage peace walk](#) from Finsbury Park to the Salisbury Hotel on Green Lanes.

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION REMEMBERED



A walk exploring the hidden
history of Haringey's First World
War Conscientious Objectors



FREE

The laying of the memorial stone to the COs of the First World War was unveiled outside the Salisbury Hotel on 15 May 2019. This commemorative stone (below) was [unveiled by local councillors as a permanent memorial](#) to the men of the Haringey area who said 'No to War'.



The date 15th May is International Conscientious Objectors Day, organised each year by the Peace Pledge Union (PPU). This year, due to the lockdown, the same gathering at Tavistock Square cannot happen of course. Therefore, this year the event is going to be online on Friday 15th May. To find out more, please [follow the link here](#).

We will end here with our thanks to Joanna Bornat and Valerie Flessati for their invaluable contributions and support for today's post.

Another topic tomorrow. Until then, take care and stay well

Best wishes

From us all at Bruce Castle

Deborah Hedgecock
Curator

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