



Beckingham cum Saundby History Group Open Day - 15th September 2012

The Old Willow Works, Beckingham, was once again used as venue for the Beckingham cum Saundby History Group Open Day and this year the subject was WW2. The History Group dressed in '40s style, from the very glamorous to the scullery maid, land girl and soldiers and even a 'spiv' selling his counterfeit stockings and watches.

Special guests 'We'll Meet Again' (run by Paul and Linda Britchford) travelled from Boston with their massive collection of memorabilia and weaponry, their display filling the downstairs area. 'We'll Meet Again' are a mobile museum for schools that travel across the country providing a living history experience offering a full days teaching and showing many of their rare and valuable artefacts. This is very much a 'hands on' experience for all ages. Please follow the [link](#) for more information.

Other guests, James Roffy and Brian Charles (who run an Evacuee Reunion Association based at Gringley on the Hill), shared their experiences during the war with members of the public. James and Brian had both been evacuees and formed the association in 1995 to ensure that the true story of the great evacuation would become better known and reserved for future generations. Their charitable association has over 2,600 members worldwide - for more details [click here](#) to be directed to their website.

Displays by the History Group included an aerial combat display, the Home Front, a collection of photographs and artefacts from the late Peter Mason's collection, a map showing where bombs fell in Beckingham and many items that had been loaned or donated on the day from families of serving soldiers from Beckingham.

A kitchenalia section included a mock-up 1940s kitchen fully equipped, complete with citchenette, various kitchen utensils, provisions and a list of wartime weekly food rations. Next to this display Caroline Thomas held two demonstrations of chicken plucking

Ex Beckingham resident, John Taylor, brought his collection of traditional wood-working tools and Alan Holmes loaned his collection of 'prisoner of war' memorabilia which included his father, Norman Holmes's, items that he had retained from the war. In 1942 Norman Holmes was in campo PG 65 Italy, no 4346460 POW no 154887, then in 1944 he was in Stalag 101 XVII A Germany and also Stalag 398 ARB KDO 01345/L, he was a

prisoner of war from 1942 to 1944 and his friend from the village, Pte Thomas Parkinson of Beckingham, was also in the same camp in Italy.



Children were encouraged to dress as evacuees and were supplied with name tags, suitcases, food coupons and an old penny to purchase sweets on the day.

Louise Kay (Bumble Vee Ice Creams from Gringley on the Hill), provided traditional ice cream from her 1940s tricycle which proved very popular on the warm sunny day that it was

In addition, refreshments were served throughout the day in traditional 1940s fare using wartime coupons issued on entry and tables were set out as in a VE street party celebration. More than 300 visitors were welcomed during the day exceeding the previous year and proving what a popular event this continues to be.

Click [here](#) for History Group History.
Click [here](#) for History Group Diary of Events.

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