



# NEWSLETTER

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## RENOVATION OF THE CRANSTONE WATER FOUNTAIN

Dacorum Heritage Trust, Hemel Hempstead Local History & Museum Society and South Hill School, have successfully obtained a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant for £9,500, plus a £500 contribution from Dacorum Borough Council, to restore the dilapidated water fountain and lamp outside Boxmoor Hall.



Craftsman, Tim Millard (T. M. Studios, Melrose) has renovated this noted local monument, which has a decorative metal outer layer over a wooden frame, and was made by the Crantone iron foundry, then based in the High Street (Market Street). It will become the focus of local history displays and a history trail through the town.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said, "Sharing Heritage is a wonderful opportunity for communities to delve into their local heritage and we are delighted to be able to offer this grant so that the Dacorum Heritage Trust can embark on a real journey of discovery. Heritage means such different things to different people and the HLF funding offers a wealth of opportunities for groups to explore and celebrate what is important to them in their area."

Mike Penning MP believes this is an opportunity to highlight our rich local history and, since the Remembrance Day parades pass the fountain, to reflect on the past contributions of local people.

Joseph Cranstone (senior) was born in 1747 in Surrey, married Sarah Pollard of Hemel Hempstead in 1782. The Cranstone family came to live in the town in 1798, at first renting a shop and house in Market Street. On Joseph's death his widow and son (George) ran the ironmongery business very successfully. Subsequently, Joseph (junior) also set up an iron foundry on the premises, known as the Phoenix Works.

The Cranstone family were Quakers and attended the nearby Meeting House in St. Mary's Road. The

Quaker tradition of service to the community was upheld by Joseph Cranstone (junior), who took on many public service roles in the locality.

The Grade II listed 'fountain' and gas lamp standard (converted to electric) has the inscription: "Erected for the public benefit October 1835 to commemorate the third centenary of the printing of the English bible". It also has a quotation from St. John 4: v. 13-14 that describes Jesus being like a well of water springing up into eternal life.

South Hill School pupils hope to produce a DVD on the Cranstone family, and the fountain's history and renovation. Later in the year an exhibition will be held in Boxmoor Hall about this innovative project, and will bring together our community partners including the Society of Friends, Roman Fields School, and St. John's Church.



*Based on an article by Joan Hands, Hemel Hempstead Local History & Museum Society*

**Photo:** Top - taken c.1985. Bottom – Taken May 2014 following the renovation.

### THE DACORUM HERITAGE TRUST LIMITED

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## WAR IS DECLARED – 4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 1914

As part of our commemorations to mark the start of The Great War, we take a look at how the outbreak of war impacted our local area, and how the press reported events. The following reports from the Gazette paint a vivid picture of preparation, anticipation and excitement during the lead up to the start of the conflict.



Extracts from the Gazette Saturday August, 1<sup>st</sup> 1914.

During early July, a canvas town was set up on the grassland in front of Ashridge House, for the Territorials from the Cambs, Beds, Northants and Hertfordshire forces, this would be the temporary home for over 4,000 men. Officers and men would be trained in the art of warfare, in readiness for the call to arms, in the event of an invasion or enemy attack.

The Cambridgeshire's arrived first with the Bedfordshire's a week later on 25<sup>th</sup> July, and the following day the Hertfordshire Battalion. They came in intervals as they marched from Berkhamsted station with the bands playing at the head of the companies. A large number of people visited the camp, curious to see such a gathering.

As soon as they arrived bedding was served out, and the Hertfordshire men each received a nice, new, warm-looking grey flannel shirt. A bugle called them to the cookhouse, and they were served a hot meal. Subsequently they made up parties, saw that everything was snug in their respective tents. Some preferred to remain in the vicinity of the camp but others donned walking-out dress, with their attractive scarlet coats, and walked to Berkhamsted, where the Picture Playhouse has been very well patronised. The afternoons were mostly set aside for recreation and sport of all kinds, football being most popular.

Throughout the week they were engaged in instructive field work, including skirmishing out towards Hudnall Common and past the camp at Ringshall and out onto the Beacon and Ivinghoe Hills, with its slope, hollows, and a fair quantity of cover, this ground presents admirable opportunities for manoeuvring tactics, in fact in years gone by the grand manoeuvres used to be held here. On the way to the Beacon one passes through Ringshall, and here was found the 1<sup>st</sup> East Anglian R.A.M.C. from Ipswich, who were also in camp, and who had made this a base hospital.



The Y.M.C.A. have erected two large tents, which the men have found a great boon. In them the men take full advantage of the provision of writing materials, and the religious services, and "sing-songs" have been very well patronised.

The discipline of the men has on the whole been excellent. There has, however, been rumours of a raid on the pheasants that abound in the Park.

It is exactly nine years ago since a similar camp was held at Ashridge, and then, of course, it was under the old Volunteer conditions.

### SPECIAL SERVICE MEN CALLED UP

A scene having no precedent in camp life with East Midland Brigade has been witnessed to-day amongst the troops at Ashridge Park. Notices were

served on the special men of the Cambridgeshire and Beds Battalions to proceed to various destinations with a view to carrying out precautionary duties, which are considered advisable and occasioned by the European crisis.

Within an hour of the "warning" being received these Territorials were on parade, and left Ashridge with the strains of "Auld Lang Syne" ringing in their ears.

Territorials capable of driving transport are being enquired for in the lines, and if the situation does not improve it is considered likely that the Ashridge camp may remain standing longer than the usual 15 days.

The crisis has caused great excitement in the camp, and there is much speculation as to what may happen.

Captain Parrott, R.N., of Berkhamsted, was called, and left for Chatham to-day, and Captain Blount, of Northchurch, has also left for duty.



The Hertfordshire Regiment has been engaged for several hours to-day in a war game in the vicinity of the Beacon, Ivinghoe. Last night a rehearsal of the military tattoo attracted thousands, who were much interested in this impressive spectacle.

Reports extracted from the Gazette of Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> August 1914 - **GREAT BRITAIN AT WAR.**

#### **LOCAL EFFECTS AND SCENES - DEPARTURE OF THE TERRITORIALS - ASHRIDGE CAMP STRUCK.**

The first intimation that matters were regarded seriously, was the order to strike camp at Ashridge and return to their homes to await further instructions. They did so, and the call to mobilise came on Tuesday evening, when notices ordering the Territorials to report themselves to headquarters were posted on the post office and other prominent places. There was an immediate rush to respond to the call, and the first to reach the Drill Hall at Hemel Hempstead was Mr. R. Evans. Others quickly followed, and soon the hall was filled with members of the local Company, all highly delighted at the prospect being able to serve their county.

At Berkhamsted remarkable scenes were witnessed. The Territorials quickly responded to the summons, and a huge crowd gathered. At one time Lower King's-road was completely blocked with people. The Territorials left Berkhamsted by the 9.8 p.m.



train with the hearty cheers of the public ringing in their ears. They had been joined by the Ashridge and Gaddesden contingents, and on arrival at Boxmoor they marched to the Drill Hall, being greeted by another large crowd. Orders were given to assemble at the Drill at 9 o'clock the following (Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August) morning, and most of those who had come from a distance spent the night in the Drill Hall, so as to be ready in time.

#### **THE DEPARTURE.**

On Wednesday a large crowd gathered in the Bury-road to witness the departure. Inside the Drill Hall the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. The men were thoroughly happy and sang patriotic songs. They looked very fit and bronzed as the result of the week they had spent in camp. Departure

preparations were speedily completed, and the contingent marched out under Lieutenant Lovel F. Smeathman, to catch the 12.8 train at Boxmoor for Hertford, the Regiment headquarters. There was much cheering and handkerchief waving as the men swung along Marlowes in fine style.

Hertford was safely reached in the pouring rain, and the men were accommodated in the schools for the night. Each man had to undergo a medical examination. And several had their hopes dashed, as they were rejected unfit, mainly with poor eye sight.

The calling up of the Reservists has also meant that many residents have had to leave to join the colours, some travelling long distances to reach their depots, and a number of sailors have joined the Fleet.

**Photos:** Facing page Top – Ashridge Camp; bottom – Drum Head Service (Ashridge House in background). This page top – volunteers marching in Berkhamsted High Street (white house far left is now Robert Martell & Partners), first 3 images from Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society collection cared for by DHT. 2<sup>nd</sup> image this page – the Drill Hall, Hemel Hempstead taken c. 1985 (M. Stanyon) from Hemel Hempstead Local History & Museum Society collection cared for by DHT.

## FUNDRAISING QUIZ NIGHT

We held our annual Quiz Night on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April at our usual venue, Hemel Hempstead Community Church.



Ten teams took part, it was a close contest, but the overall winning team were from Radio Dacorum. The John Nichols Memorial Trophy (awarded to the Trust's highest scoring constituent society or group), this year it was won by DHT's Collections Manager and Store Volunteers team.

The funds raised from this year's quiz night will go to the Piccotts End Cottage Appeal; we are very pleased to have raised over £350.

We couldn't have done it without the support of all those who attended and helped on the night. Particular thanks go to Mick Claxton from Tring, who kindly agreed to be our Quizmaster for the evening and did a brilliant job. Thanks also to everyone for

supporting our fundraising event and for the raffle prize donations.

*Photo: Radio Dacorum Team – including Matt Hatton (centre back) and Lorretta Anderson (centre front).*

## CURATOR'S CORNER

**Quiz Sheet.** We have produced a 'Dacorum Quizzer' at £1 each (+ 50p P&P) in aid of the Piccotts End Cottage Appeal. Available from us directly, downloadable from the appeal page on our website, look out for posters at different outlets around the Borough.



We need your support. Closing date is 22<sup>nd</sup> August, with a £20 token prize. Cheques (payable to The Dacorum Heritage Trust Ltd.) or via PayPal.

**Public Consultation.** During April we held four open days at The Bury in Hemel Hempstead to promote the plan to convert The Bury into a Dacorum Museum & Art Gallery; questionnaires were available to complete, this public consultation and your views are important to us to support the Heritage Lottery Fund grant

application. We have put the questionnaire on our website; you can still fill it in and have your say on what a museum and art gallery would include and what would interest you. Please go to our website and click on the above image in the banner. (Image – Engraving depicting The Bury, HHLH&MS collection cared for by DHT)

**Tours of The Museum Store.** As part of the Heritage Open Days we will be holding tours of The Museum Store in Berkhamsted, Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 14.30 and 16.30 pm. and Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30 am. Places are limited, to book a place on one of the tours please contact Nina, our Collections Manager. Come along to see more behind the scenes (image right).

**August Bank Holiday – Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August.** Dacorum Heritage Trust will have a WWI themed display at the Lions Fete at Berkhamsted Cricket Club ground. Come and visit us in the marquee.

**Piccotts End Cottage Appeal.** Since the last newsletter £11,703.25 (incl. Gift Aid) has been raised for the appeal. We would like to thank everyone who has generously donated. It is not too late if you would like to donate to the appeal; you can find the details on our website, click on the banner with the picture of the wall paintings, (<http://www.dacorumheritage.org.uk/dht-news/piccotts-end-cottage-appeal>), or contact the editor.



The Museum Store is open by appointment only. For enquiries please contact Nina Glencross, Collections Manager 01442 879525 (answer phone) or [collectionsmanager@dacorumheritage.org.uk](mailto:collectionsmanager@dacorumheritage.org.uk)



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