

Training for War

Exploring the history of Shoreham
Army Camp 1914 to 1919



Behind the Scenes
by Gail Mackintosh

“A very human approach to history”

Visitor feedback



Find out more

Explore our research, discoveries and behind the scenes

work at: www.worthingmuseum.co.uk/shoreham-army-camp

“It all began with the discovery of a cheeky postcard, a Canadian big band poster and some rusty nails...”

Hamish MacGillivray

Curator of Arts and Exhibitions,
Worthing Museum & Art Gallery

In September 2014, 100 years after the outbreak of the First World War, Worthing Museum began a project in collaboration with Worthing College called ‘Training for War: exploring the history of Shoreham Army Camp 1914-1919’. We wanted to bring together and discover new stories about life in this First World War camp and raise awareness of its history in the community. With a generous £38,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the support of a range of local community organisations, we have been able to discover some amazing stories.

Investigating the history of Shoreham Army Camp and uncovering its hidden stories were a dedicated team of volunteers, students and staff supported by museums, archives, archaeologists, libraries, private researchers, collectors and generous families.

left: Bell tent and hut with display photo of bell tents in 1914 at Slonk Hill, August 2015

“some
rusty nails...”



Archaeology

The physical footprint of Shoreham Army Camp has disappeared over the years.

Inspired by Shoreham resident **Brian Drury's** discovery of mystery items under his garden, we undertook two small archaeological investigations. This was led by experts **Justin Russell** from Archaeology South-East and **Luke Barber** from Sussex Archaeological Society that revealed there are traces of the Camp still to find.



page 2: Digging out objects like cut-nails with a metal detector, in a garden near Buckingham Park, March 2015.

above top: Worthing College students interview local resident Brian Drury about finds in his garden, September 2014

above: Volunteers explore a garden near Buckingham Park for clues with archaeologist Luke Barber, March 2015.

left: South African General Service coat button found by Worthing College students metal detecting on Slonk Hill, September 2014



“Really interesting
and thought provoking
... first time I have
seen anything like it”

Dudley Sawyer

reaction to garden dig,
project volunteer, 2015

Archaeology



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top left:

A Worthing College student films his metal detecting discoveries, Slonk Hill, September 2014.

top right:

Archaeologist Justin Russell interviewed on Mill Hill site of Shoreham Camp by BBC Radio, February 2015.

bottom left:

Volunteers excavate a garden near Buckingham Park with archaeologists Luke Barber and Justin Russell, March 2015.

bottom left:

Worthing College students and their tutor Jason Lee uncover objects with metal detectors on Slonk Hill, September 2014.



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top right:

Farrier Peter Ibbotson makes a comparison between a rusty First World War horseshoe found at Slonk Hill and a clean version at the Lightbox, Woking, January 2015.

bottom right:

Worthing College students discuss Slonk Hill finds with local resident Brian Drury, September 2014.

below:

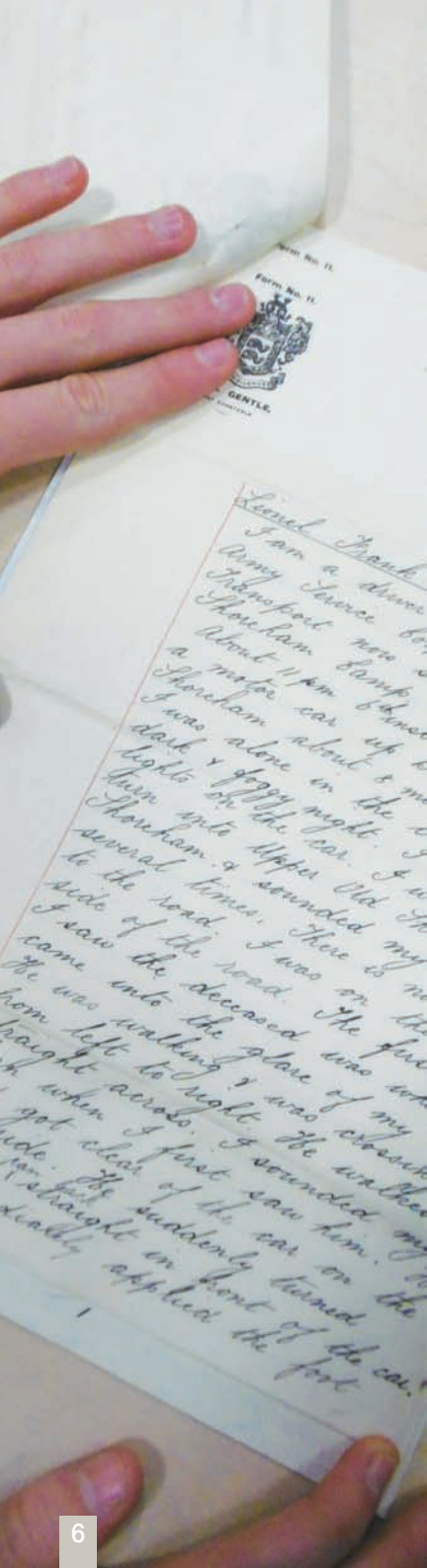
Archaeologist Justin Russell teaches a Worthing College student about metal detecting, Slonk Hill, September 2014.



Archives, libraries and museums

Hunting for stories about Shoreham Army Camp took our volunteers and students to archives, museum and libraries all over the Southeast ...

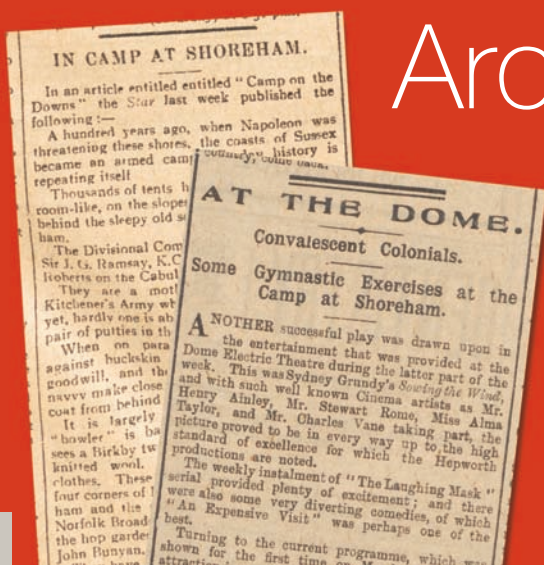
... including Worthing Museum, the Royal Engineers Museum, West Sussex Record Office, the Keep archive, Marlipins Museum, the Suffolk Regiment Museum and the Bury St Edmunds Record Office. Stories about the local reaction to the Army Camp were also found in abundance in the local papers by our volunteers, with the support of **Martin Hayes** and West Sussex County Council Library service.







Archives ...



Volunteers and students also learned new skills in conservation and paper handling thanks to Elizabeth Hughes and Melissa Williams at the Keep archive at Falmer – the site of the East Sussex Record Office.

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Project Co-ordinator Gail Mackintosh shows Worthing College students Worthing Museum's collection of First World War Posters, November 2014.

page 8

top:

Worthing College students behind the scenes at the Keep with archivist Elizabeth Hughes, September 2014.

bottom:

Our volunteers spent many hours searching through old newspapers at Worthing and Horsham Libraries.

page 9

top:

Worthing College students meet older volunteers to discuss research for exhibition films, November 2014.

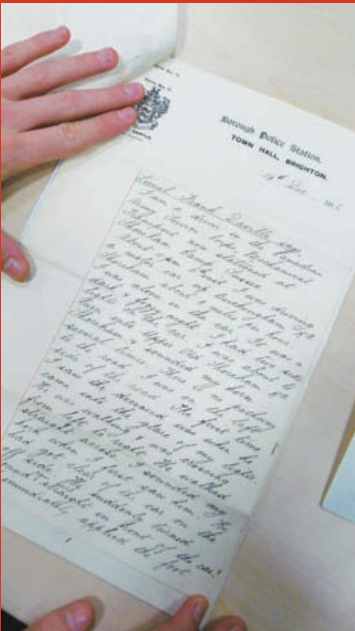
middle and bottom right:

Worthing College students and older volunteers learn about conservation techniques from Melissa Williams at the Keep archive, Falmer, September 2014.

below:

Brighton Police witness statement from the Keep archive into the death of Canadian soldier George William Day who was killed by a car in Buckingham Road Shoreham in December 1916.

... Libraries & Museums



Personal Stories

Personal stories and experiences were a key part of this project. Thanks to generous local collectors, we discovered postcards sent from soldiers in Shoreham Camp. Connections were made through local families. They shared their ancestors' memories, letters, photographs and their family memories.



The veterans associated with the **Queen Alexandra Hospital Home** as patients and volunteers, then gave oral history interviews to the students revealing insights into army camps and training across the years since the First World War.

Local experts helped us understand the evidence we were uncovering like farmer **Peter Ibbotson**.

The Friends of Shoreham Fort helped students understand what life was like for the First World War recruits by demonstrating drills and original First World War equipment.

“ready, aim, fire!”





Personal Stories



pages 10 & 11

Worthing College students practice bayonet drill with Gary Baines from the Friends of Shoreham Fort, October 2014.

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top:

A young veteran from the Afghanistan conflict shares his experiences with Worthing College students, December 2014..

bottom:

A veteran from World War Two at the Queen Alexandra Hospital Home shares his experiences with Worthing College students, December 2014.

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top right and below:

Gary Baines from the Friends of Shoreham Fort teaches Worthing College students about the training experience of First World War recruits, October 2014.



Private collectors shared their Shoreham Army Camp postcard collections with the project. (courtesy of Drina Green).

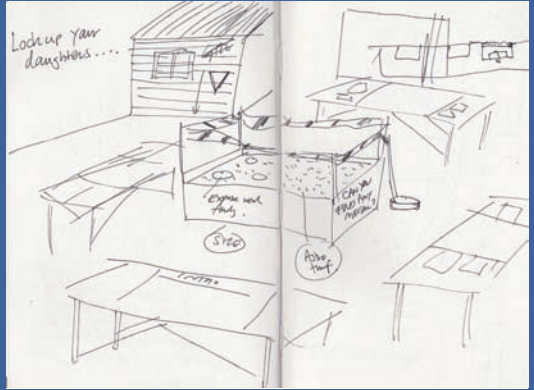


Exhibition

In the build up to the exhibition, our volunteers and students got involved in the process



Creative Media and Production students from Worthing College produced short films about different aspects of life at Shoreham Camp. Behind the scenes volunteers of all ages used their skills to support the project – from creating our boxing dummy to designing the kid’s activity leaflet.



The exhibition ran in Worthing Museum from 25th April until the end of May, moved to Worthing College mid-June and small parts of the display popped up at our events over the summer. The exhibition appeared in full again at Marlipins Museum in Shoreham, 2nd September until 3rd October 2015.





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Inside display case of horseshoe and related items including hut nails at Worthing Museum, April 2015.

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top right:

Rough plan of exhibition layout, sketched by Hamish MacGillivray, Curator of Arts and Exhibitions at Worthing Museum, prior to work commencing.

middle right:

The finished exhibition - not far off that original sketch!

bottom:

Volunteer and student setting up display at Worthing Museum, April 2015.



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top left:

Volunteers create an exhibition display from archaeological objects at Worthing Museum, April 2015.

top right:

One of our volunteers from NADFAS creating a boxing dummy for the Worthing Museum exhibition, March 2015.

bottom left:

Setting up the boxing dummy for the exhibition at Worthing College, June 2015.

bottom right:

Worthing College tutor Jason Lee installing objects in the Worthing College display, June 2015.



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top right:

Technician Jason Powers and Gail Mackintosh install pop-up hut display at Slonk Hill for guided walk, August 2015.

right:

Visitors explore the exhibition at Worthing Museum, April 2015.



The display panels will be used in the future by Worthing Museum as part of its Education programme.

Exhibition literature including kids' activity leaflet designed by Worthing College graphic design students.



Events

Several talks about the project were delivered to local groups and at local libraries. Small sections of the exhibition appeared at the Ropetackle Arts Centre and Shoreham Market. There were also more ambitious events that included building a trench with the 3rd Shoreham Sea Scouts with the help of the Friends of Shoreham Fort. An archaeology open day led to great discoveries and two guided walks at Shoreham were very popular.

Over the summer of 2015 we delivered a series of events and pop-up displays to raise awareness of the project and the history of the Camp in the local community.

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Young visitors learn about First World War artefacts in a hands-on workshop with archaeologists Justin Russell and Luke Barber, July 2015.

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top right:
Curator Hamish MacGillivray examines the maps of the Camp with locals at Shoreham Market, August 2015.

middle right:
Guests on our guided walk squeeze into a bell tent similar to those occupied by up to 18 recruits in Shoreham Army Camp in 1914. Slonk Hill, August 2015.

below:
Volunteers and guests relax at the end of our guided walk, Slonk Hill, August 2015.

page 20 and inside back cover

Shoreham 3rd Sea Scouts defend the trench they built at Shoreham Fort, July 2015.

outside back cover

Fence and poppies from Slonk Hill site during metal detecting, September 2014



Lessons learned whilst running a Community heritage project:

Flexibility – don't stick to rigid forward plans. Be prepared to be diverted by the generosity of local people wanting to share their research or family history.

Technology – never mind if the computer crashes. Count to 10, brew up some tea and find a friendly expert. Also get a stand alone hard drive to back everything up.

Interpretation - experiment with different ways of sharing research. As well as exhibitions, websites and leaflets try leading a guided walk for instant feedback.

Bureaucracy – be prepared for dull form filling and banging your head on Excel spreadsheets before, during and after the project.

Celebration – end the project with a party to thank all the volunteers and partners who helped to create the project.

Our supporting partners:

Adur and Worthing Councils
Heritage Lottery Fund
Archaeology South-East
Friends of Shoreham Fort
The Keep archive, East Sussex
County Council
National Art and Decorative Fine
Arts Society
Oral History Society
Queen Alexandra Hospital Home
Sussex Archaeological Society
West Sussex County Council
Library Service

“thank
you!”



Worthing College:

Jason Lee and his Creative Media and Production class 2014 -2015, and art students Shabanna Brown, Carley Bucknell and Kristal Valerozo.

Our volunteers:

Graham Dewsall, Steven Gerry, Janet Green, Debbie Malins, William Matthews, Nicola McDowell, Marion Ramble, Dudley Sawer, Julie Wade and 3rd Shoreham Sea Scouts.

Oral history interviewees:

Brian Coward, Ryan Caslake, Neil Hall, Dixie Dean, Ted Bullen, Michael Donin and Russell Suthern.

Private collectors, researchers

and local families: Graham Booth, Neil Deville, Brian Drury, Henry Finch, Nick and Patricia Gardner, Drina Green, Hilary Greenwood, David Hilton, Peter Ibbotson, Keith and Green Family, Brian McLuskie and Rosemary Pearson.


And to the many museums and archives in the UK, Canada and South Africa who supported our research.

Technicians: Mike Lawrence, Jason Powers and Worthing Theatres staff

Local business: Bearded Bros Removals, CPO Print, Elford's Sheds, Kenads Printers, Park Cameras, Sig Roofing Supplies, Subway EPS Ltd.

And a big thanks to Jennie Osborne graphic designer and to Gail Mackintosh project co-ordinator.





Explore our research, discoveries and behind
the scenes work at:
www.worthingmuseum.co.uk/shoreham-army-camp

This project was produced by Worthing Museum
working in partnership with Worthing College from
September 2014 to September 2015.

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Museum | and Art Gallery

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