

MORLEY

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY Newsletter

January 2017

Founded 1965

www.morleylhs.btck.co.uk



Tonight

First of all, greetings to you at the start of the New Year.

Once again you have the opportunity to learn about the skills and resources needed to research your own family history with the help of Jackie Depelle. Jackie is well known as a teacher of family history techniques and tonight she will be talking about her house and its contents. I think you will be fascinated by what you can learn of your own properties from the work that Jackie will be showing here.

The Society Trip

Just a short reminder that the Society Trip this year is to the Stockport area on Sunday, 11-June. We will be visiting Bramall Hall, a mansion dating from Tudor times and, also, the renovated air raid shelters which kept the inhabitants of the area safe during the numerous bombing raids which the area suffered during World War Two. Robert is taking bookings and it is estimated the trip will cost around £23 per person.

The Last meeting and War Hospitals in West Yorkshire

Helen Pratt talked with us about the work done at Temple Newsam in discovering how it was used in the Great War as a convalescent home for soldiers who were injured during the hostilities. Two of the images which she used are shown, courtesy of Leeds Museums.

One of the consequences of the Great War was the influx of large numbers of Belgian refugees and Dorothy Wood, Lady Halifax, whose husband had inherited the hall in 1904, helped by opening up the whole of the south wing in October 1914 for those wounded in the conflict. She continued this work, later housing British soldiers, until 1917.



Dorothy Wood with three of the nurses



Michael Hassell at Temple Newsam

Then, Helen told the story of Cyrille Dessager, a Belgian, treated at Temple Newsam, who had formed a relationship with a local woman, Lizzie Wark. Lizzie became pregnant but, for reasons which remain unclear, she chose not to marry Cyrille. He returned to Belgium and continued to write to her but she would have nothing to do with him. It was only much later that Lizzie's grandson, Michael Hassell, became aware of his grandfather and the video showed how he got to know more about him even though it has so far proved to be a difficult task. The story of Michael's search was extremely moving and full details can be seen on line.

For some time, we have been trying to find out about Morley women who worked as VADs in the Great War. Helen and Lucy Moore of the Leeds Museums service have given us some pointers but so far we have just a few details about two families, those of Charles Scarth and Ezra Holliday, whose daughters worked as such. Any help will be greatly appreciated. As the attritional warfare intensified after the Somme, it became increasingly necessary to expand the British hospital system. Great houses such as Temple Newsam and Lotherton Hall played their part but, as a local example, by August 1916, Dewsbury Board of Guardians were providing enough beds to care for over 100 wounded soldiers at their Staincliffe Infirmary. This was to relieve the pressure on Beckett's Hospital in Leeds.

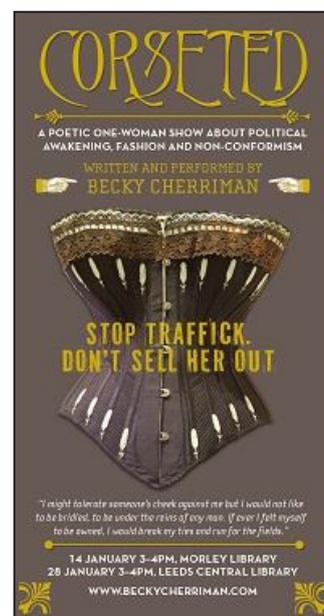
The Army authorities wanted more beds but the Guardians were in a quandry because much of the remaining space was taken up by old infirm people. There were also problems with the costs involved and who was to pay for them. In December 1916, the Town Clerk of Dewsbury asked Morley, as a part of the Union, to help pay for the displacement of the hospital inmates and erect extra pavilions. Morley's share would be £720 out of a total of £6000. This could not be taken from the rates but must be by voluntary contributions. Morley felt unable to meet this demand and The Council stated that the town had already contributed £3000 to hospitals in the Leeds area for which it felt socially closer. Morley stood firm despite strong criticism but supported the hospital in other ways. It is notable that the Government introduced a new War Loan Scheme at this time, offering 5% interest, and it is estimated that Morley people raised around £450,000.

The Story of Alice Cliff Scatcherd

This coming Saturday, Becky Cherriman, the local writer and social historian, will give a presentation of the life and work of Alice Cliff Scatcherd in the Morley Library building, starting at 3pm.

In the 2016 October newsletter, I have written about Becky's work on this locally-based pioneer of the Suffragist movement but now Becky will be putting spoken words to her presentation besides showing off an exhibition which details Alice's life and work.

She will be discussing the many facets of Alice: her fierce independence which led her to be a leading light in the 19th Century Suffragist movement; her keen interest in the fashions of the time; her marriage and partnership with Oliver, the last of the Morley Scatcherds; their travels all over the world; and their contributions to Morley life which were many and varied. Becky is a skilled presenter and I urge you to attend this view of local and national life in the 19th Century from the perspective of a remarkable woman.



John Goodchild

We have learned that John Goodchild, the well-respected local historian and archivist, died on 6-January. John visited our society to lecture many times and was particularly supportive during its early days. His output was prolific and his archive has been bequeathed to and accepted by the West Yorkshire Archive Service. It will undoubtedly serve as a permanent record of his fine work.

Clive McManus