



CDA Journal

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'Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow'



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BRCS Community Reserve Volunteers 2019
Gravesend Civil Defence Control Centre (Part 1)
Halstead Industrial Air Raid Shelters
Isle of Man Civil Defence Corps
WW2 Air Raid Shelter found at bottom of garden

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Front Page Photograph:

One of the hazards in responding to a flood emergency is the chance that either your vehicle or equipment may fall victim to the high volume of water. This happened to a Civil Defence van as it bobbed along following a fire engine up the road in the village of Laxey, Isle of Man. Thankfully nobody was injured, although the van was written off.

(Photograph: Courtesy of Isle of Man Government)

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the February 2020 issue of the CDA Journal.

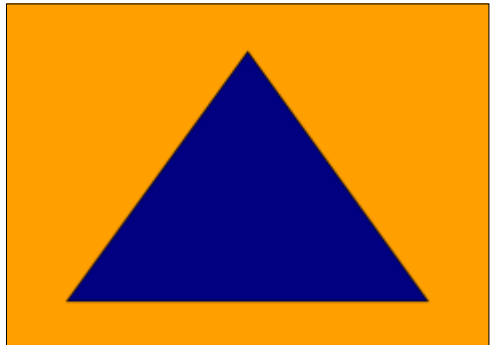
Hardly had the new decade commenced, when a major natural disaster occurred, this time in Australia. The widespread bushfires have led to hundreds of people being evacuated, severe damage to business and domestic property, devastated fauna and flora, and catastrophic loss of wildlife. The Australian emergency services, especially their professional and volunteer firefighters are making valiant efforts to bring the fires under control - a very demanding and often dangerous task given the present ultra dry conditions and dust clouds in some states. We wish them well in their endeavours.

In this issue, we commence telling the story of the construction and operation of the (now) preserved Gravesend Civil Defence Control Centre. This is the most complete and detailed overview of a CD Control which I have seen for many years. It is thanks to the diligent research of Victor Smith that we are able to feature it. It originally appeared in the magazine 'Subterranea Britannica', the journal of the UK's principal society devoted to the study of underground and other places (including nuclear bunkers). The author has kindly made this material available for publication by the CDA. Victor is very keen to meet former Civil Defenders who took part in exercises during the 'Cold War'. Their knowledge and expertise would be greatly valued as he would like to organise a series of re-enactments of the work undertaken by CD Controls for both visitors and parties of schoolchildren. If either you, a relative or friend worked in a CD Control and would be prepared to assist this project, please contact either the Journal Editor or Secretary, who will put you in touch with him.

It is a pleasure to report on the recent activities of our friends in the Isle of Man Civil Defence Corps. I know I'm one of many members who look forward to reading about their training and operations on the Island.

Finally, many thanks to our contributors for their invaluable support.

Graham Whitehead



BRITISH RED CROSS COMMUNITY RESERVE VOLUNTEERS - 2019



In 2019 community reserve volunteers supported at 10 emergencies:

- A rest centre for an unexploded bomb in Kingston
- A large building fire in Barking
- A substation fire in Chelsea
- Flooding in Lincolnshire
- Gas outage in Southwark
- Flooding in Yorkshire
- A missing person search in Kent
- A building fire in Sutton
- A water main burst in Haringey
- Widespread flooding across Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire

Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire floods

In November, thousands of people were forced from their homes across northern England due to wide-scale flooding. The British Red Cross were called to support those affected and those at risk. 17 of our community reserve volunteers were deployed to support our staff and Emergency Response volunteers. While the Emergency Response volunteers provided emotional support, checked on vulnerable people and manned helpdesks, our community reserve volunteers helped out behind the scenes.

Community reserve volunteers went door to door to flood-hit homes, checking everyone was okay. They also distributed donated items to families in need, as well as delivering sandbags.

For many volunteers, the experience of working alongside the emergency

services reminded them of the bigger picture and of just how many people are involved in trying to help. Others said how they found it inspiring to see how many people are involved in emergencies, from the emergency services to volunteers from different places and organisations.

An exercise turned real-life incident in London

In October, a planned training exercise with our community reserve volunteers was suddenly interrupted when a real-life incident occurred!

A burst water main near Finsbury Park resulted in around 120 flats being affected with 5 severely flooded. A rest centre was set up to provide information while the council found accommodation for all those evacuated. Some of our community reserve volunteers stayed and supported the response, while the others continued with a smaller version of the exercise.

With thanks to Andy Smith

BERWICK COASTWATCH



During 2019 we have installed new double glazing, a new storm door and more recently a new wind turbine so can run small heaters over these winter months.

The late Leslie Wooler left us in good shape and we have continued his strength and passion for what we do and he never feels far from us when we are on watch at the tower.

Stephen Simon

SANDRA SCOTTING MBE



Sandra Scotting, accompanied by her husband Lee, outside the gates of Buckingham Palace following the Investiture Ceremony.

Sandra Scotting was recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2019 for her tireless community work over 50 years. She led the team charged with the task of raising money to create a memorial in memory of the 173 people who were crushed to death at Bethnal Green Tube Station on 1 March 1943. .

Her vision drew her into 10 years of exhausting voluntary work to gain planning applications, policies, insurance etc. which also included support letters from former London Mayor Boris Johnson.

She helped support the survivors and relatives to come to terms with their dreadful experience by organising gatherings and events, and the memorial was eventually unveiled in December 2017.

Sandra said: "I am very humbled to get this award. It really wasn't just me, this has all been a team effort from lots of people over all those years. "I still don't know who put me forward for this, but I am truly amazed."

Congratulations Sandra, well deserved recognition for all your hard work.

Our Standard Bearer Nick Ridsdale will be representing the CDA at the Annual Memorial Service on Sunday 1 March 2020.

Babs Clark told her Bethnal Green story on Tony Robinson's 'History of Britain' on Saturday 25.1.2020 on Channel 5. If you didn't see it it is worth looking for on Catch-Up.

Editor.

CIPROVOT



Professor Tasos Dagiuklas, Head of Computer Science, London South Bank University recently contacted the CDA with reference to the European Project CIPROVOT concerning Civil Protection Volunteers Training.

The aims and objectives are:

- to develop a Trans-national training course module for Civil Protection Volunteers (partly peer-education/partly with the use of external expert trainers).
- development of disaster prevention and awareness in the Civil Protection.
- create networks with and broader awareness among other key stakeholders and the public on risk-management, disaster prevention and preparedness.
- develop training seminars for Trainers of CP Volunteers, the project will motivate them to obtain new training guidelines for CP Volunteers.

The CDA contact with CIPROVOT is Colin Harmsworth.

GRAVESEND CIVIL DEFENCE CONTROL CENTRE (1)

Introduction

Gravesend Civil Defence Control Centre is a well-preserved example of a command post for the local coordination of civil defence, whose operations were largely reflective of the pattern of organisation across the country. The bunker, which was built in 1954, was established as one of a network of many now almost forgotten local civil defence control centres which formed the nerve-centres of a national infrastructure of preparedness. Drawing upon the experience and organisation of the Second World War, such centres were not only for directing the rescue of survivors from bomb-damaged ruins but also for coordinating a broader range of civil defence responses in the community.

Civil Defence planners recognised the implications of the overwhelming and apocalyptic scale of atomic and then thermo-nuclear destruction likely to occur in the event of an attack. With this came the prospect of millions of war dead and injured and of irradiated and displaced people across a destroyed and poisoned landscape, so many indeed as to be beyond the practicability of assistance in the probably very extensive worst-hit areas. To support surviving local resources there was, for a time, national provision for the use of mobile columns of personnel drawn from the armed services, fire brigades and the police to do what they could or seemed justified in the outer areas of destruction. Painful choices about who to help would have had to be made. From the mid-1960s there was a pragmatic shift in the purpose and operation of civil defence more towards providing a communications and command focus for the survival of those in the less obliterated parts of Britain, compatible with the need to re-establish viable communities, essential services and, indeed, the country and the state from whatever remained after an attack.

The Civil Defence Act of 1948 laid a local duty on councils to begin the re-establishment of civil defence, including formation of a Civil Defence Corps made up of civilian volunteers, whose predecessor organisation had been so familiar a sight in communities during the war of 1939-45. At the same time the wartime Auxiliary Fire Service was reformed. Despite the demolition of large numbers of wartime air-raid shelters across Britain in the years following 1945, during 1950—51 occurred the first of a number of national surveys of what remained of them to determine their possible future utilisation for civil defence purposes. Civil Defence was officially defined as ‘including any measure not amounting to actual combat for affording defence against any form of hostile attack by a foreign power of the whole or part of its effect, whether measures are taken before, at or after the time of the attack’, and primarily expressed in local schemes of organisation and preparedness. Yet in a wider sense as well as providing humanitarian assistance to people and communities, civil defence helped the ability of the country to continue to function and to fight. As such it sat alongside a wider suite of defensive preparation for the homeland.

As in Britain more generally, first came the setting up in Gravesend of a local organising secretariat and the appointment of its permanent staff. Then followed

the recruitment of the mainly volunteer personnel into five sections to perform the specialised services and tasks so familiar from the Second World War:

- HQ Section: manning static and mobile controls, undertaking reconnaissance in the community after an attack, as well as providing scientific advice to controllers.
- Warden Section: manning warden posts, providing a link with the community and rescue services, reporting on bomb damage and casualties to controls.
- Rescue Section: helping with recovery and rescue assistance, alongside fire and other services.
- Ambulance and First Aid Section: giving first aid to casualties and organising their evacuation to Forward Medical Aid Units and on to hospital. This was to work in liaison with the National Health Service and the National Hospital Service Reserve.
- Welfare Section: helping with schemes of evacuation and providing shelter in rest centres and elsewhere for the bombed-out.

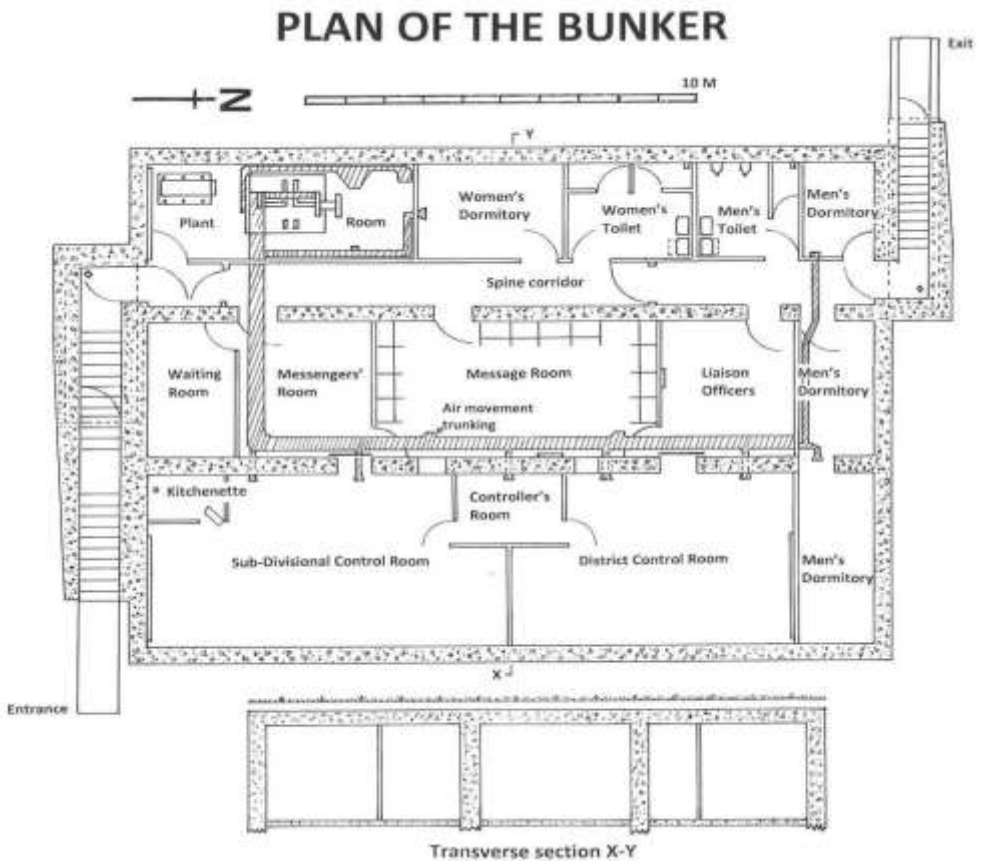
Courses of civil defence training started to be given. Parallel with this was the gradual designation of premises at which civil defence volunteers could be based. To direct them in the event of war, a control organisation under the HQ section was to be re-formed. Taking civil defence forward within a frame of reference and experience of the Second World War must initially have seemed workable. Parts of the country considered vulnerable to the effects of an attack were categorised as Evacuation Areas. Given the vulnerability of London, Thameside and Gravesend among many other areas and communities were so designated. Numerous localities in Kent then perceived to be safer were earmarked for the reception of evacuees.



The outside of the bunker viewed from within Woodlands Park

In these early years it was thought by some planners that a war combining the use of conventional and atomic weapons might be fought and won or, at least, survived. Central Government commenced issuing guidelines for the design and working of control centres, their components being reflective of Second World War practice. But for Gravesend it was not until April 1952 that a permanent location for a control centre was agreed. This was away from the town centre, partly on the site of an underground Second World War public air-raid shelter near the northeast corner of Woodlands Park south of Gravesend. Even then there were difficulties over an apparent insistence by the Home Office on the ability of control centres to be resistant to a direct hit by a conventional high explosive bomb.

Completion of the bunker led to a ceremonial opening on 7 July 1954, by Sir Arthur Hutchinson, Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office. In the presence of other dignitaries, he inspected uniformed civil defence staff and their vehicles,



after which the bunker was opened to viewing by members of the public. The occasion was marked by the unveiling of a wooden plaque which remains on the wall of the bunker's spine corridor.

Under the sloping eastern edge of Woodlands Park, the north-south oriented bunker is, in effect, a buried and compartmentalised 65ft (20m) x 45ft (14m) reinforced concrete box. From the outside the bunker presents as a modest grassy mound, with several protruding low concrete ventilation structures and, at either end, a concrete entrance and exit, the former being metal-fenced.

Within the building are thirteen 9ft (2.7m) high rooms reached down the blast-baffled entrance staircase from the adjacent Wrotham Road. At the opposite end of a spine or axial corridor is an emergency exit with egress up a second flight of steps into the park.

The interior of the bunker is divided into four functional elements: (1) emergency power plant for lighting and ventilation; (2) dormitories for male and female staff; (3) communications and (4) control rooms for receiving information about the extent of damage and casualties in the locality and for decision-making by the command staff about how to deploy the resources they controlled.

Description of individual rooms and features

The entrance and exit

The entrance and the exit consist, respectively, of descending and ascending concrete steps roofed by a flat canopy, partially in the first case and entirely in the second. The entrance canopy is formed of precast panels of a type that might have been recycled air-raid shelter sections from WW2. A right-angle turn at the bottom of the entrance steps gives access to the bunker through two wooden doors. These are pierced by flapped letter-box-like openings.

The spine corridor

The 4ft (1.2m)-wide spine corridor between the entrance and the exit provides access to all rooms of the bunker. The names of the rooms are given on original signs either fixed to the walls of the corridor or suspended on chains from the ceiling.



Entrance to the Bunker

The plant room

This 22ft 3in (6.8m) x 9ft (2.7m) room has a pair of electric fan motors (one held in reserve) mounted on a concrete base to draw in air from the outside, passing it through carbon filters for cleaning and then circulating a flow through the building via metal ducting which runs round at the junction of the walls and the ceiling. This system, described in official documents as an anti-gas fan, would also have been able to filter out radioactive particles entering from outside, although this second function is never mentioned in documents. There was also a heating element which could, if necessary, be switched on to warm the circulating air passing through the

ducting. A former civil defence commander for Kent has commented to the writer that, however coincidentally, activation of the ventilation system applied a degree of positive pressure to the inside of the bunker, providing some resistance to the entry of any contaminated air outside the bunker through the entrance and exit doors. The ventilation plant was electrically connected to the national grid but in the event of the failure of the latter, an emergency Petter 6 KVA diesel generator was fixed onto another concrete base. Fuel was stored in jerrycans inside the plant room (diesel being a lesser fire hazard than petrol).



Spine corridor looking back towards the entrance doors with their flapped apertures.

Dormitories and toilets

The dormitories have no integral fittings other than wall-hangers for clothing. Two-tier bunk beds were to be placed against their walls, together with free-standing cupboards for clothing and personal effects, as well as chairs. There were three rooms for men and one for women. It has been suggested for bunkers that a 'hot bed' system might have operated, with staff going off duty getting into the bed just vacated by someone going on duty. The features common to both male and female

toilets were cubicles for Elsan chemical buckets, ceramic sinks and 'Sadia' electric water heaters.

Communications

These were the means of receiving and sending messages from and to, the outside world, whether by telephone, teleprinter, wireless or by messenger. Knowing what was going on outside and being able to influence a local civil defence response through the issue of orders was the essence of the function of the bunker. Communications were performed within the four rooms along its centre. Based in the bunker there was also a field telephone cable unit. The private manual branch exchange (PMBX), which included direct lines was positioned in the corner of the 12ft 6in (3.8m) x 11ft 6in (3.5m) Liaison Officers' Room and, on the wall next to it, was a cabinet containing the marked telephonic connections, including one for the WB400 attack warning system. The latter would have been introduced in the early 1960s. It would normally emit a steady ticking sound but when the national attack warning system was triggered it sounded a chilling wailing note. This room was furnished with desks, chairs and filing cabinets, as well as wall-boards. The liaison function was to provide space for a small number of staff who would act as intermediaries with the public services outside, such as fire, police and the military, possibly through the agency of the Territorial Army.

Victor Smith

Part 2 will be featured in CDA Journal No. 71

WW2 AIR RAID SHELTER DISCOVERED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GARDEN

A family was amazed to discover an intact World War II air raid shelter hidden beneath tons of rubble in their back garden. Kelly and Sean Webb found the 80-year-old Anderson shelter after clearing out a mass of rocks and weeds with a mini digger at their detached house in Ashford, Kent, which was built in the 1930s.

Millions of shelters made from corrugated steel were handed out to families between 1939 and 1945 to protect them against German bombs. But the Webb's shelter was found encased in concrete - which is unusual - and local historians believe it may mean it was converted into a garden shed by a previous owner.

The family, who have lived in the house for three years, watched in amazement as workmen lifted away soil and rubble to reveal the shelter. Mrs Webb, 41, said: 'It was exciting to see such a big concrete structure emerge at ground level and to see the steps to the shelter exposed after all the soil was removed. It's a piece of history and it makes you wonder why the shelter was covered in concrete and if it was used by more than one household in the street. 'The shelter was connected to an electricity supply, which was all degraded and even had the old Bakelite switches inside.'



Kelly Webb, pictured with son Riley, four, was stunned to discover a World War II Anderson shelter, pictured, in the back garden of her home in Ashford, Kent.

The IT project manager added: 'I was expecting to have a nice piece of flat lawn there.' She plans to keep the Anderson shelter for her son Riley, four, and stepson Daniel, 17, to use either as a play den or a teenage hideaway. She said: 'I'm thinking of putting benches in the shelter, but I don't think I will go as far as getting the electricity restored.' I'd like to keep it and it can just be landscaped into the garden.'

Mrs Webb said the shelter was a reminder of the constant threat that families lived under during the Second World War. She added: 'The way we live now you can't imagine how people used to exist with doodlebugs flying overhead and having to rush into their garden shelters.'

Ashford was heavily bombed in World War II and the centre of town was devastated on March 24, 1943, during a massive raid that killed 54 people and injured more than 200. The town

was the worst-hit in Kent during the war and that raid also flattened a primary school, although all the children had safely made their way to shelters.

Ian Sharp, the curator of Ashford Museum, said the town centre was a target for German bombs as Howitzer field guns had been positioned at the town's railway works. He said: 'Most Anderson shelters were put over a hole in the garden that was dug around four feet deep with steps down.' It was usual for the corrugated roof to be covered in sandbags and soil.' He added: 'If a shelter had concrete around it then it's possible it may have been used later on as a garden shed.'



Kelly Webb and her son Riley pictured inside the shelter, which was likely encased in concrete so it could be converted into a shed.

Anderson shelters were designed by William Paterson and Oscar Kerrison in 1938 after the Home Office requested air raid protection amid concern over German aggression. They were made out of 14 corrugated steel panels and named after Sir John Anderson, then Lord Privy Seal who was responsible for preparations against air-raids.

Shelters began being issued in February 1939 and around 3.6million were given out by the end of the war. Families on low incomes were provided them for free, while higher earners had to pay £7 for them.

The shelters were 6ft high, 4.5ft wide,

and 6.5ft long. They were buried 4ft deep in the soil and then covered with a minimum of 15ins of soil above the roof. The design of the shelters meant they were effective at absorbing impact from blast and ground shocks, but they were also problematic because those buried in the ground often flooded in rainy weather.

Families were allowed to buy their shelter and many survived after the war in use as sheds and storage space.

With acknowledgements to
MailOnLine June 2019.

‘DAN, THE ARP MAN’



During our Bank Holiday Living History weekends I don an original ARP uniform,(manufactured by Montague Burton, Leeds), take on the persona of ‘Dan the ARP man’ and give a presentation about ARP. (see photo)

Having access to such first-hand accounts about the duties that ARP wardens undertook are so valuable when passing information on to our visitors.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say many thanks for continuing to list our Special Events in the back of the CDA Journal.

Nick Hill
Museum Manager, Eden Camp, Malton, North Yorkshire, YO17 6RT
Tel: (01653) 697777, Email: nick@edencamp.co.uk

CIVIL DEFENCE ALIVE & WELL IN ISLE OF MAN



2019 has been a year of change for the Island's Civil Defence Corps. In March, Ian Young retired as the Emergency Planning Officer (EPO) and head of the IOM Civil Defence Corps after 44 years' service with the Isle of Man Government, the last 8 years in this role. His replacement is Jane Kelly, who comes into the role from within Government working in the Emergency Services Joint Control Room. Jane had served in the Royal Air Force for nearly 24 years as an Air Traffic Control Officer and was also the CD Commandant at the time of her

appointment. Norman McBride takes on the role of Commandant and Dr Andrew Foxon the Deputy Commandant.

During this time we also had to move into our new purpose built premises which was down to the hard work of Ian Young during his last 3 years in the role of EPO. He has a few more grey hairs after what can be described as a monumental task, still ensuring that CD maintained its capability while equipment was moved from locations and building snags were completed.

However we are extremely proud to announce that our new building was officially opened by the Minister for Home Affairs, Hon Bill Malarkey MHK on Wednesday 11 December and we even made the BBC News!

We now have all our equipment in one place which enables us to respond more quickly and in an organised fashion. Previously we have had to store items around several locations in Douglas which meant that we were having to open up various stores depending on the incident. The building has a training room which can be used as a major incident room if required, garaging for all vehicles and trailers and a mezzanine where all our stores are now kept.

During the period October 2018 – September 2019, was extremely busy and involved some 5878.5 volunteer hours through callouts, training and moving home. We currently have 43 volunteers and are continually receiving requests from people who are interested in joining us. We continue to support on island events, The Parish Walk, Manx Mountain Marathon, Fireman's Walk and others, providing first aid cover, manpower, marshals and basically enabling these events to run. These also provide us with a training opportunity which is always appreciated.



Flood water pouring through Laxey village

In 2019, 5 volunteers also received their Long Service Medal for 15 years' service which is a great achievement and they were presented with them by the Minister for Home Affairs at an awards evening. We also had 2 members climbing the Himalayas to Everest Base Camp to raise money for Relay for Life and our Volunteers are also Community First Responders, members of the Search and Rescue Dog Association and the RNLI as well as volunteers who sit on committees for other charities and events on the island.

The 1st October kick started the callout statistics with flooding of a local village, Laxey. From the initial call at 0715 to stand down at 1700 we had 30 volunteers working throughout the day helping the residents whose properties were flooded. Teams initially started sandbagging and assisting with pumping but it quickly became too dangerous as a wall gave way and a surge of water swept down the road.

Our van starred on the BBC news as it bobbed along following a fire engine up the road but thankfully nobody was injured although the van was written off. We opened a rest centre to deal with the residents who were unable to get to their homes and being a small island all managed to either return to their properties or to relatives.



Civil Defence volunteers preparing additional sandbags

The residents are still dealing with the aftermath of this incident as many were unable to continue to occupy their homes and building work is still on going. We returned the next evening to assist with more sandbagging and to check on the welfare of those affected and carried out more pumping of cellars for the residents and removing damaged items.

We have had a group away in the Lake District who also managed to squeeze in some training with Langdale/Ambleside Mountain Rescue Team which was really appreciated and we have another group away in March doing some walking in the Lakes and a group away in October to North Yorkshire. This is excellent training for us as it hones our navigational skills and fitness for the Hill Search and Rescue Team role that we fulfil on the Island.

And in November we were the proud winners of the Isle of Man Newspapers Awards for Excellence 2019 - PokerStars Award - The Third Sector: Supporting our Community, recognition for all the hours and commitment that the CD volunteers continue to give to the Island.

We continue to be supported by the Department of Home Affairs and the Chief

Executive Officer Dan Davies and we appreciate this on going support both financially and in raising our profile across government and the island.

As the old advert used to say “The future is bright, the future is Orange and Blue”!

Jane Kelly MCGI
Emergency Planning Officer
Emergency Planning and Civil Defence Unit
Dept of Home Affairs
Isle of Man Government

BOOKSHELF



town of Alfreton, Derbyshire. His return to the UK saw his enlistment into the Army during WWII and his involvement in the Civil Defence Corps and The Royal British Legion. This tells of my relentless efforts to find the answers to the missing pieces of the puzzle.

Author: Dawn E Amos
Publisher: New Generation Publishing
ISBN: 9781789556650 Hardback
Number of pages: 130 Price: £14.99

The CDA Secretary assisted the author with information relating to her grandfather's service with the Derbyshire Division, Civil Defence Corps.

Editor.

Who was Noel Joseph Amos? As a child I was told he was an orphan, born on Christmas Day, and given a pile of photographs, that was it! This was all I knew about my grandfather, who I never had the opportunity to meet. Who were his family, who adopted him, where did he live?

The journey of his life has taken me from the suburbs of Manchester, to the prairies and Wild West of Cochrane, Alberta, Canada, and back to my home



Dawn's grandfather is pictured at the far right of members of the parade.

Editor.

EVENTS

**Sunday 1 March
Stairway to Heaven
Memorial Trust
Annual Service**

St. John on Bethnal Green Church,
London
(CDA participation)

**Saturday 28 March
CDA Annual General Meeting**
Toby Carvery, Stonebridge

**Sunday 5 April
Commemoration of
formation of RAF**

St. Clement Danes, London
(ROCA participation)

**Sat/Sun 11/12 April
Living History Easter
Bank Holiday Weekend**
Eden Camp, Yorks

**Monday 4 May
Firefighters Memorial Trust
Firefighters Memorial Day**
(Fire Stations in UK)

**Saturday 16 May
ROCA
Annual Commemoration**
The NMA

**Saturday 13 June
CDA Annual Commemoration**
The NMA

**Saturday 27 June
National Armed Forces Day**
Scarborough
(ROCA Display)

**Sat-Sun 27/28 June
Western Super Mare
Air Festival**
(ROCA Display)

**Sat-Sun 4/5 July
Wales Airshow, Swansea**
(ROCA Display)

**Sunday 12 July
Battle of Britain Memorial Day**
Capel-le-Ferne, Kent
(CDA & ROCA participation)

**Fri-Sun 17/19 July
Royal International Air Tattoo**
RAF Fairford
(ROCA Display)

**Sat/Sun 29/30 August
1940s Living History
August Bank Holiday Weekend**
Eden Camp, Yorks

**Sunday 6 September
Firefighters Memorial Trust
Annual Service of
Remembrance & Wreath
Laying Ceremony**
Holy Sepulchre, London,
Holborn Viaduct
(CDA participation)

EVENTS

Saturday 12 September
Bentley Priory
Battle of Britain
Commemorative Day
(ROCA Display)

Sat/Sun 12/13 September
11 Group, Fighter Command
Battle of Britain
Commemorative Days
(ROCA Display)

Sunday 13 September
All Services Parade
Eden Camp, Yorks

Sunday 20 September
Battle of Britain Service
Westminster Abbey
(ROCA participation)

Saturday 31 October
Wreath Laying
CD Memorial
The NMA

Thursday 5 November
Field of Remembrance
Westminster Abbey

Sunday 8 November
Remembrance Sunday

CDA East Midlands Branch

The East Midlands Branch hold meetings in and around Lincoln. All CDA members and supporters are cordially invited to attend.

For more information contact:
Patrick Stanton, Co-ordinator
Tel: 01205 280144
E-mail: pstanton280@btinternet.com

Birmingham Air Raids Remembrance Association

Meetings are held every third Thursday of the month at 12 noon. Updates on Association projects, tea and a chat. Venue: Cophorne Hotel, Queensway, Birmingham. All welcome.
Contact:
Barbara Johnson 0121-749-2009

It may be of some comfort and reassurance for next of kin of deceased CDA members to know that arrangements can be made for a Civil Defence coffin flag to be despatched, often at quite short notice, to be used at the funeral. Please be assured that such a request will be handled with sensitivity and discretion.

In such instances, the Secretary should be contacted on:
01629 55738.

Members and Families may also like to know that Deceased Members of the CDA have been added to the roll of the Perpetual Mass Association at the Benedictine Monastery of the Holy Cross in Chicago. Thus they will share in the spiritual benefits of the monthly mass and the daily office of the monks.

HALSTEAD INDUSTRIAL AIR RAID SHELTERS

In an area of woodland, just to the east of the High Street, Halstead, Essex lie sixteen air raid shelters. The shelters were built by Courtaulds in 1939 to protect their workforce from the Luftwaffe. Courtaulds' Halstead factory worked directly on war production during WWII, including weaving fabric for parachutes. There were no air attacks on the factory although 170 visits were recorded in the factory's log of time lost to air raids.

The two offset lines of shelters are close to the former factory. Fifteen of them are Costains, a semi-sunken type, built from preformed concrete arcs and designed to hold up to 50 people. A sixteenth shelter, was built in brick on the surface and had several uses: as a first aid centre, a communications centre and an ARP Warden's post.

Informal research has shown that a surviving group of so many air raid shelters is very rare. Industrial WWII civil defence structures are disappearing at an alarming rate, so Halstead is very lucky to still have this piece of history. Their significance has earned them a place in the Local Heritage List and they are included in Save Britain's Heritage's Buildings at Risk register.



The entrance to one of the WW2 Industrial Air Raid Shelters

The verdant land the shelters lie on is part of Halstead Conservation Area but has been promoted for development for 50 years. An outline planning application (ref: 018/02084/OUT) for the whole site was submitted to Braintree District Council in November 2018. The plan proposes the construction of up to 73 dwellings comprising of 32 houses and 41 apartments, with associated car parking, amenity spaces and external works. The developer has suggested that any the shelters preserved would be decided at a later date as a 'reserved matter'.

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