

Remembrance Day 2019

Following the highly successful 100th Anniversary of the end of WW1 in 2018 we wondered if as many people would turn up for the service and talk on Sunday 10th November, but we needn't have. The service was once again a packed house, with almost standing room only. The parade formed up beside Sainsbury's and then marched through St Johns to the church. The Sea Cadet band led the parade and the crowds along the route were very welcoming.



Once again the Flower Ladies had done the church proud and there were some beautiful poppy-centric flower displays around the church to greet the congregation as they entered the church.



The service followed the normal format and after commemorating all those who had fallen everyone went out to the War Memorial at 10:50 where we formed up around the Memorial and waited for 11:00, as you can see it was packed. After the short service there the parade formed up again in front of the church and marched off down into Bromyard Road and then through St Johns back to Sainsburys. On the way back the crowds were clapping all the way along and being part of the parade was very emotional.



In the late afternoon over 60 people turned out on a cold Sunday evening to listen Paul Harding talk about the early phases of WW2 and attend the Poppy Drop. Margaret and Arthur Miller had produced a wonderful display about WW2 and had details about the people who were commemorated on the Memorial. Sue Hussell had provided documents, a helmet and Armband that had been issued to her father, who was a Fire Guard during the war.

Paul told us about the early stages of the War and how the people of Worcester and elsewhere had started to prepare for the coming war. Even before the war they started preparing for evacuees by seeing how many individual homes could take in. In the Great War there were no blackouts, so the attacking Zeppelins used road atlases to find targets as the roads and buildings were lit. So, when WW2 started the country was more prepared and blackouts and rationing were introduced almost immediately.



Britain started preparing for a second war after the Great War, the war to end all wars, in 1918. Paul showed us letters from the Chief Constable dated 1938 saying that there were courses available on gas attacks. People were provided with gas masks early on as they thought that they would be bombed with gas bombs. People could buy gas masks for their dogs. Before the war people were advised to put down their pets as they would get stressed during the bombing and some people actually did this. Luckily, they did not have to use the gas masks during the war.

The Royal Observer Corps was formed to look out for enemy attacks. Incredibly it was only disbanded in 1995 and in the later years it was more involved plotting nuclear fallout zones.

In the early years of the war people were recruited to take on various roles to support the War Effort on the Home Front. Uniforms were not initially made for the people, so they were issued with armbands to denote there were working on behalf of the war effort, including the Air Raid Precautions (ARP), Home Guard, First Aid, Civil Defence, Fire Guard and Rescue. The blackout was trialled in Worcester in 1938 and aircraft flew over to see what they could see. Churches had to blackout all their windows as well.



There was no enemy action in Britain really before the Battle of Britain. To help people get around in the dark lots of things were painted white, such as kerbstones, lampposts and trees. Also, ladies were advised to paint their shoe heels white and men were advised to walk with their shirttails outside their trousers.

In Worcester Cathedral King John's tomb and Prince Henry's Chapel were bricked up to protect them. The Council also

considered putting sandbags up the front of the Guildhall, but they decided not to as it would take too many and they would have gone out to the high street.

Paul showed us plans for air raid shelters, early ones were brick built and housed lots of people, but the problem was that if they were hit by a bomb then a whole community would be wiped out and there is evidence of this happening. The main ones used though were the Anderson or Morrison Shelters. The Anderson ones were made of corrugated steel and covered with earth whereas the

Morrison ones were made for people who did not have room for an Anderson, those with courtyards or living in flats.

Following the usual selection of cakes to go with the drinks the audience had time to talk to Paul and look at Margaret's display, which many people did.



Then about 6:50 we all moved outside to take part in a short service of remembrance. The Rev Sarah gave a very moving and relevant short address before the poppies were dropped from the top of the tower.



Another great success for the church, arranged by Tracey, Catherine, Sandra and Margaret.