

West Kirby Primary School

What signs of the war can be seen locally?



World War II in Wirral

RAF West Kirby was a training camp located 3 miles (4.8 km) from West Kirby village, from which it took its name. It was set up in WW2 to train new recruits. Approximately 150,000 conscripts went through its gates up until 1960.

The War Memorial on Grange Hill commemorates the men and women of West Kirby and Hoylake who gave their lives in WW1 and WW2. It has two bronze figures representing war and peace.

During the war, the Hoylake shore was out of bounds; sealed off with barbed wire and anti-tank obstructions with big guns sited on the Promenade. The Lifeboat slipway had moveable barriers so that it could still operate and throughout the war.

During air raids many people slept on the platforms at Liverpool and Birkenhead on the underground sections of the Mersey Railway. The railway suffered severe damage to stations as far out as Bidston where there was a gun site.

The guns were removed from most of the gun-sites near the end of the war when the danger of Luftwaffe bombers has passed. The barracks at some sites were used as Prisoner of War camps, housing German and Italian prisoners. The inmates were allowed out to work on local farms during the daytime. Some sites were also used as temporary housing for people who had lost their homes in the bombing on Merseyside.

Poppies are used as a symbol of remembrance and commemoration for those who have died in war. The remembrance poppy was inspired by the World War 1 Poem, 'In Flanders Fields.'



Year 3 and 4 (Autumn 2)

Vocabulary Dozen

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| Barracks | A large building or group of buildings used to house soldiers. |
| Historical source | An artefact from a period of history, which tells us about that time. |
| Radar | A system for detecting objects by sending out radio waves. |
| U-boat | A German submarine (Short for unterseeboot). |
| Wireless | An old-fashioned name for a radio (because they were originally powered by batteries). |
| Civilian | A person not in the armed forces or police force. |
| Morrison Shelter | A moveable air raid shelter shaped like a table and used indoors. |
| Infantry | Soldiers who fight on foot. |
| Capture | Take into one's possession or control by force. |
| VE Day | Victory in Europe Day – The day Germany surrendered. |
| Memorial | A statue or structure to remind people of a person or event. |
| Commemorate | Recall and show respect for someone or something. |

Ideas to think about...

Some fields on the Wirral were used as decoys. Fires would be started to try to make the German planes drop their bombs there. Why do you think this was?

Entertainment was very different during war time. People didn't have the technology or the resources we have now, but they still had ways to have fun and relax. Can you research some wartime toys and games?

Did you know that an RAF plane crashed in the West Kirby Marine Lake during the war? Take a walk down to the lake with an adult. Can you imagine what it would have been like to see it? Use all of your senses....This will help you with a piece of writing this term!