

## **WARTIME SHEFFIELD**

To celebrate the very first Invictus Trials in Sheffield this July, we are sharing a little about Sheffield's wartime history.

We'll be releasing a full info pack in time for the Invictus Trials in Sheffield on 22nd - 26th July, so you can explore the city's history, but in the meantime, please use this as inspiration for your **Never Such Innocence** competition entries.

### **FIRST WORLD WAR**

#### **Sheffield's Steelworks**

Long before the First World War, Sheffield was known for its steelworks and was a world-leader in the industry.

When the war started in 1914, Sheffield became a crucial cog in the British war machine, producing ammunition shells, body armour, bayonets, cannons and guns for ships, aeroplane parts and torpedos. The war was a lucrative time for steelworks and Steel, Peech and Tozers and Cammell's were able to build whole new steelworks.

While the men went off to fight, women began working in the factories for the first time and became known as 'Munitionettes'.

As the factories played such a crucial role in the British war effort, they became prime bombing targets. On 25th September 1916, a German Zeppelin was sent to destroy Sheffield's steelworks. The air raid lasted just 15 minutes - the raid hit houses and buildings near the steelworks; 28 people were killed, mainly women and children, but the steelworks remained undamaged.

After the war ended, the demand on the steelworks dropped immediately. There was a surplus of steel and the factories now turned their attention to improving their production and their products, as their 'Munitionettes' returned to their pre-war lives.

## **Pal's Battalions**

Sheffield was one of many cities that produced 'Pal's Battalions' - men were encouraged to sign up with the promise that they would be able to serve alongside their friends and colleagues.

The Sheffield City Battalion was formed at the University of Sheffield in September 1914 and in just 2 days, over 1000 men had joined. Most of the men had never done any type of manual labour before - they were journalists, academics, stockbrokers. This gave them their nickname 'The Coffee and Bun Boys'.

The crowds cheered them as they marched through Sheffield and their early drills were conducted on the Sheffield United pitch on Brammell Lane - until the directors complained about damage to the pitch.

By 1916, the Sheffield Pals were in France and on 1st July they were sent to recapture the hamlet Serre as part of the famous Battle of the Somme.

512 men would die on that first day, many of whom were never recovered for a proper burial. The people of Sheffield came together to raise money for a memorial to their men in Serre.

A survivor of the Battle, John Harris, later wrote that the Sheffield City Battalion were 'Two years in the making. Ten minutes in the destroying. That was our history.'

## **SECOND WORLD WAR**

### **The Mi Amigo Crash**

You've probably already heard about Mi Amigo crash in Enfield Park, as it **made the news** earlier in 2019 when there was a flyby to commemorate the American airmen who died.

On Tuesday 22nd February 1944, just before 5pm, Lt John Kriegshauser found himself in trouble. John was an American pilot, 23-years-old, and the B-17 Flying Fortress - Mi Amigo - he was piloting had been badly damaged by enemy fighters.



He managed to get Mi Amigo and her 10-man crew home from Nazi-occupied Denmark and was on his way back to base in Northamptonshire when he realised he wouldn't make it and started looking for somewhere to land.

He was above the city of Sheffield at the time and the only place he could see that was safe to land was in Endcliffe Park. As the engines began to fail, he realised that there was a group of schoolchildren gathered in the park below him.

The airmen waved to the children, to try and get them to run - but the children, mostly under 10, didn't realise and cheerfully waved back.

To save the lives of the children in the park, as well as civilians in nearby houses, John crash landed into woodland. Mi Amigo exploded - killing John and his 9 fellow airmen instantly. He was posthumously awarded the US Distinguished Flying Cross.

One of the children, Tony Foulds, would later come to understand what the waving meant and has dedicated his life since to commemorating those airmen. A memorial stone was laid and ten oak trees planted in their memory in 1969, and a memorial has been held every year since.

Tony, now in his 80s, has tended the memorial ever since. In 2019, after a media campaign, fighter jets from the United States Air Force and the RAF conducted a flypast, which saw 10,000 people gathering in Endcliffe Park to see.

### **The ten men on board Mi Amigo were:**

First Lieutenant John Kriegshauser

Second Lieutenant Lyle Curtis

Second Lieutenant John Humphrey

Staff Sergeant Harry Estabrooks

Second Lieutenant Melchor Hernandez

Staff Sergeant Robert Mayfield



Sergeant Charles Tuttle

Sergeant Vito Ambrosio

Sergeant George Williams

Sergeant Maurice Robbins

### **The Sheffield Blitz**

London is well known to have faced severe bombing raids during the war, but it was not the only city that was bombed.

As a city responsible for munitions and aeroplane parts, as it had been in the First World War, Sheffield was very much a target. The factories located on the River Don were the main targets of the raids, including Atlas Steelworks, Meadowhall Iron Works and Tinsley Park Collieries.

However, the civilian population did not escape the bombing.

On 12th December 1940, Fitzalan Square came under attack. C&A and Burtons Buildings were destroyed and barely an hour later, the Marples Hotel took a direct hit. Even today, we do not know how many were killed in the hotel, but approximately 70 bodies were recovered from the rubble - the single biggest loss of life in the attacks.

On 15th December, the bombers switched to incendiary devices - 11,520 were dropped in less than an hour. The steelworks, Hadfields, Brown Bayleys and Steel, Peech and Tozer Ltd were targeted, but the damage did not affect their production.

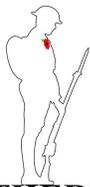
In this second raid:

660 people were killed

1,500 people were injured

40,000 people were made homeless

During these attacks, 6 citizens committed acts of such bravery they were awarded the George Medal. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited the city shortly after the attacks, to boost the public morale.



**THERE BUT NOT THERE**  
— COMMEMORATE. EDUCATE. HEAL —

We hope that you have found this info pack useful in inspiring your entries to the **Never Such Innocence** competition.

You will be able to download our full info pack - with more stories and more details - from 22nd July from our website **There But Not There**.

You can also find out more about our current D-Day 75 campaign, download **our educational resources** and get your school involved in our **Bootprints** installation.