

BRITISH JEWS IN
THE FIRST WORLD WAR
We Were There Too

Image: Robert Barnett (Raphael Glitzenstein) credit: British Jewry book of honour

We Were There Too Project Update Summer 2023

Welcome to the August 2023 edition of our newsletter. The summer is a time we remember the outbreak of the First World War and the surge of patriotism that followed it. The summer also marks the anniversary our project, now entering its 8th year. *We Were There Too* was created to preserve and share the war experiences of Jewish men and women and their families and it seems only fitting that we open this newsletter with a personal profile, to stress the nature of our project. [Raphael Glitzenstein](#) was one of the many who rushed to enlist, although in his case his patriotism was inflated by a family conflict which saw him run away and join the British Army under the assumed name of Robert Barnett. He died in combat two months later. Raphael Glitzenstein was 15 years old.

VETERANS IN COMMUNITIES

Over the past 12 months we have developed a close relationship with Veterans in Communities (VIC), a charity providing support for East Lancashire men and women who served in the Armed Forces and their families. We have presented our project at events in [Haslingden](#) and, most recently, in [Clitheroe](#), where WWTT's Rodney Ross and Colonel Martin Newman gave a talk on the topic of the [Jewish Legion](#). This was a good opportunity to introduce our project to wider audiences. The talk was organised by Ron Flowers who is a long-term supporter of our project and who has also helped organise events at the [Lancashire Fusiliers Museum](#). Discussing our project, Ron said: "As service personnel we have an understanding of the sacrifice that being a member of the armed services has on a community irrespective of how long ago it was or what religion we are. We are all brothers and sisters in arms. The talks have gone down very well and we hope to organise further talk with our other groups in the future"



Veterans in Communities event in Clitheroe

LEEDS ROADSHOW

Continuing our community engagement programme, we returned to [Leeds Jewish Housing Association](#) on the 14th July with another presentation held at Sheila Saunders Lawn Lounge. Some of the residents in attendance had been to our previous events and returned with more information and photographs. Among them was Sally Brown, whose mother, [Lizzy Minkin](#), worked as a munitionette at Barnbow Factory in Leeds. The work typically involved filling shells with a mixture of TNT and cordite which temporarily turned the workers' skin yellow, resulting in the nickname 'Canary Girls'. Lizzy died at 43, likely as a result of TNT poisoning. We are currently working with Sally's son who has been entrusted with the family 'archive', and will be adding more photographs to the website in the coming weeks. Community work has always been the most rewarding part of our project. Returning to Leeds after a year to present some of the personal profiles we have since added to the website elicited an emotional reaction from the audience and generated significant engagement.



Sally Brown speaking to project researcher Tereza Ward

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE WEBSITE

Our staff and volunteers continue to work hard to populate the website with new material. Recently, we have been fortunate to acquire a very special collection of postcards exchanged between [Eva and Myer Newman](#). Most were sent by Eva ('little Eva'), typically starting with a variation of "glad to hear that you are well, same as it leaves the kiddies and myself".

They rarely contain more than assurances that all is well, brief messages from Sydney and May, the couple's children, and well wishes from wider family in Liverpool, but they are intimate in their tone and capture the anxiety of a young family separated by war. In one postcard Eva writes: "I feel quite well, especially when I receive a letter or card from you, those days I enjoy best so write as often as you can."

One postcard, dated 30th January 1918, mentions a welcome visit by Eva's cousin Louis and "his young lady" who made a big impression on the children: "They came Friday afternoon and go back Sunday night. I was glad to see him. He took us all to the Empire and had a good time. Sydney loves him because he is a soldier like his daddy." This refers to [Louis Allonowitz](#), who died 8 months later of pneumonia and malaria and is buried at Damascus Commonwealth War Cemetery.



Myer and Eva Newman

BARBARA ROSS Z"L

Barbara Ross, wife of our much loved colleague and friend, Rodney, sadly passed away last month. Barbara was a staunch supporter of the project and helped us on many occasions. To Rodney and his family, we wish them the traditional 'a long life'.

Thanks for reading, we hope you enjoyed it! Make sure to visit the website jewsffww.uk to upload your family stories, and to learn more about our project.

To get in touch, email contactus@jewsfcw.uk or you can find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) @jewsfcw

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