



Glenfrome Local Learning

WW2 Heritage Trail for Year 2

Two Year 2 classes to explore their local area and in groups learn about specific aspects of WW2 history.

Five groups to each take responsibility for a specific area of learning and disseminate their findings on a subsequent trail that will be led by the students.

Searchlight



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Might have been a cluster of large searchlights, shone up into the sky. They would have been managed by local residents. The searchlights would have been the only lights on anywhere in Bristol. These lights would have been the only ones on this area. Everywhere else would be pitch black at night time.

- What lights can you see at night time?

So, no car lights, no street lights, houses had to be blacked out (all windows covered in big, thick heavy curtains or boards making sure there were no gaps) so no light could be seen from outside.

- Why was there a blackout at night time?

So that enemy aeroplanes flying over the area could not tell that this was a city with lots of people living here and factories and docks. It also made it more difficult for the pilots to get their bearings flying over foreign land in night time conditions.

- Why were the searchlights allowed?

The searchlights were there to help the gunners up on Purdown shoot down enemy aircraft at night time.

Possible outcomes:

Props might include a searchlight perhaps illuminating text and showing the blacked out buildings all around and enemy aircraft in the night sky.

Performance during subsequent trail to convey:

- Local men managing the searchlights
- The blackout
- Local men managing the gun (one of whom, Tom Allen, lived on Cottrell Road – Black group, listen up, remember that name.)
- The gun being deliberately placed on Purdown to prevent the enemy reaching Filton aircraft factory and destroying the place where aeroplanes were being produced for the war.



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Barrage Balloon



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The location used to be where a bandstand once stood. During the war, the bandstand was removed and replaced with the barrage balloon. This was a big, gas filled balloon (hydrogen) that was tethered to the ground by a long, metal cord. It is there to protect the searchlight from the enemy planes. It is quite high, though not as high as the aeroplanes, so that if an enemy aeroplane tries to come down lower to fire at the searchlight it would get tangled up in the barrage balloon.

- What was the balloon made of?

It was before rubber balloons, but would have been made from a lightweight fabric like silk. Probably similar to the more modern material used for hot air balloons today.

- What shape were they?

Egg shaped with fins on the back.

- How big were they?

Easily fill the school hall. About the size of 3 cricket pitches.

Possible outcomes:

Props might include balloons on sticks and/or scale model of a barrage balloon on stick.

Performance to convey:

- The shape, size and position of the barrage balloon.
- The barrage balloon was there to protect the searchlight from enemy attacks from the air.
- The metal cables did sometimes come loose and the barrage balloons would become untethered and could knock off roof tiles and bump into things. Consider how people might react to such a thing happening.



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Cottrell Road

Link to image on
[Know Your Place](#)

Tom Allen (circled in picture below), one of the local men who managed the anti aircraft battery (the big gun to shoot down incoming enemy planes) up on Purdown lived along this road.

Performance to convey:

Props might include a blue plaque dedicated to Tom Allen.

- Tom Allen lived on Cottrell Road.
- Tom Allen was one of the local men who regularly manned the gun throughout the night, whatever the weather, whatever conditions.
- Might have the unveiling of the plaque, a short speech from the mayor, proud, tearful grandchildren.





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Allotments

During the war, almost all of Eastville Park would have been allotments. There wasn't enough food, particularly in the city and shops had to ration the amount of food that they could sell to each customer. People used whatever spare land there was (and there were fewer houses and roads then and more fields) to plant fruit and vegetables to add to the food they could buy in the shops.

- Who has an allotment in the class?
- Which is the best allotment and why?
- What can be grown in the allotments and when?
- How big is each allotment?

Performance to convey:

Props might include labels for the various veg, perhaps in the shape and colour of that veg. Something to indicate the boundary.

- What was grown.
- People had allotments to supplement their rations.
- The allotments covered most of Eastville Park.

Could show a possible dispute over the best allotment. Could show their produce and could have people pleased or disappointed with their yield.



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Prefabs

The prefab houses were built immediately after the war because there weren't enough houses. Many had been bombed during the war. They were made in a factory and then the ready made walls and roofs were delivered to the site by lorry on top of a concrete base. They were only meant to be temporary, not intended to last as long as 70 years. There aren't many left in the country.

- Has anyone got a doll's house?

It would be like building a doll's house where you just screw the walls together.

- Has anyone ever had any building work done on their street?
- How long do you think it takes to build a house?
- Why does it take so long?
- These houses were in fact bungalows. What is the difference between a bungalow and a house?

Performance to convey:

Props might include the parts of the house ready to assemble – or a series of just fronts of houses with doorway and windows.

- These prefabs were quick to assemble.
- They were made out of prefabricated parts.
- They were only supposed to be a temporary solution to the lack of housing after the war.

Could have a couple of families describing their new home and how happy they are with it. Explaining what happened to their old home.



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