



IN

RUHLEBEN CAMP

Lincs Inspire Libraries seek to tell the story of what life was like for local men and boys interned at Ruhleben, a civilian internment camp on the outskirts of Berlin during World War One.

A series of events during May, June, July and August:
Talks, Research workshops, Theatre, Exhibitions



LOTTERY FUNDED

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In Ruhleben Camp is a project run by Lincs Inspire Library Services with Heritage Lottery Funding.

As part of the programme of events, a theatrical production ***'With Love from Ruhleben'*** will be written and performed by Breakwater Theatre Company.



About Ruhleben Camp

Ruhleben Camp was a civilian internment camp set up on the outskirts of Berlin for the duration of the First World War. Many local men and boys spent all or the best part of the War in this camp. Through a series of talks, research workshops and a theatrical production based on this research, Lincs Inspire Libraries seek to show what this experience was like. Local people, many of whom descend from those imprisoned, will be given a real understanding of life in Ruhleben and what life was like at home for those awaiting the return of their loved ones.



Project Overview

In Ruhleben Camp will involve 11 workshops and a commissioned play utilising material collected from local descendants of the interned through two research workshops. These workshops will also serve as a forum for descendants to talk about their passed down family memories. Collected artefacts, in conjunction with Grimsby Library's existing Ruhleben collection, will be used to inform the play ***'With Love from Ruhleben'***, written and performed by Breakwater Theatre Company, as well as two exhibitions for the local community. All of the output from the project will be used to put together a School Education Pack.

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Background to Ruhleben

When the First World War started on the 4th August, 1914, many British citizens were in German territory. Seamen, businessmen, actors, jockeys, musicians, holiday-makers and many others, were pursuing their several occupations and pursuits.

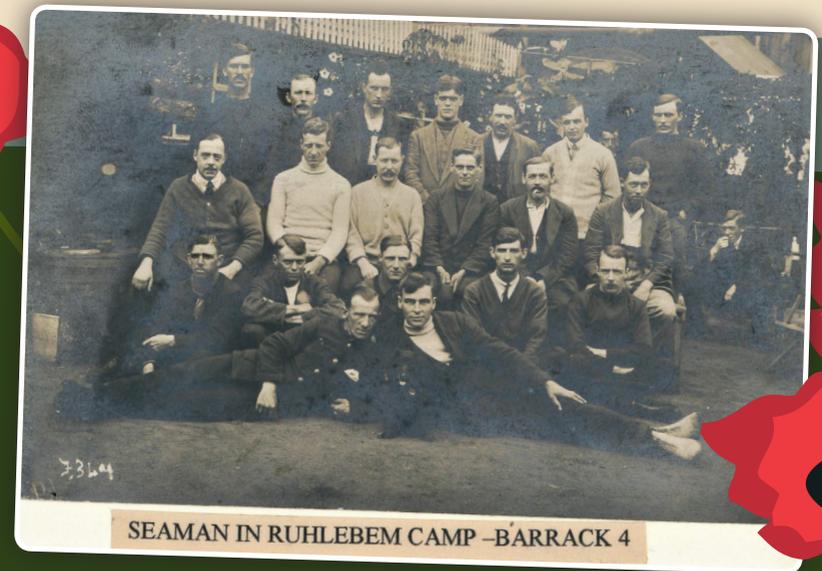
Personal accounts published later give widely varying pictures of what then ensued. Some speak of hostility from the Germans and others of compassion, but the over-riding impression is of worry over relatives at home, frustration over their inability to join in the national war effort, and anxious uncertainty over their eventual fate. The only sure thing they did know was that, with the exception of women and children, they were unable to leave German territory. The general pattern initially was of enforced regular reporting to the local police, with subsequent imprisonment. This came to end on the 6th November 1914 when a government decree ruled that all male British subjects, except clergymen, doctors, lunatics, and those with disabilities, between the ages of seventeen and fifty-five should be taken to an internment camp, of which Ruhleben Camp was one.



So began the saga of Ruhleben – Ruhleben, a trotting track set on the outskirts of Berlin and close to the heavy industrial quarter of Spandau. An English translation of Ruhleben is “Peaceful Life”, and one assumes that the pre-war race-goers found it a place of pleasant relaxation. But to those men who were brought from all parts of the German empire it could only be a prison.

Men from the **port of Grimsby** figure prominently amongst those interned. Many suffered the squalor and filth of being held in the infamous Hamburg “hulks”, before being sent on to the relative wholesomeness of the internment camps.

Internment camps at Celle and Sennelager also received their consignments of internees but it was in and amongst the stable blocks and grandstands of Ruhleben that men from Grimsby and the surrounding area participated in creating a society which caused the Commandant of Ruhleben to remark in 1916, *“You mustn’t suppose that the camp was always like this. When the men were first brought here, the place wasn’t fit to keep pigs in. All that you have admired in the camp they have themselves created.”*



Programme of Events

Ruhleben Introductory Talk	2 nd May 2019 2:00pm - 4:00pm	Waltham Library, Meeting Room	A potted history of Ruhleben Camp.
Workshop - Memories and Artefacts	7 th May 2019 2:00pm - 4:00pm	Fishing Heritage Centre, Fred Smith Room	Opportunity for the community to share and have recorded their family stories and have artefacts photographed for publishing on the project web page and use in final exhibition.
Workshop - Family History	8 th May 2019 10:00am – 12:00 noon	Grimsby Library, Local History Library	A chance to explore Family History resources and look at the family background of some of the interned men. Booking Required Please call Grimsby Local History Library (01472) 323635.
Ruhleben Introductory Talk	9 th May 2019 1:00pm – 3:00pm	Cleethorpes Library, Albert Room	A potted history of Ruhleben Camp.
Workshop - Memories and Artefacts	14 th May 2019 2:00pm – 4:00pm	Cleethorpes Library, Albert Room	Opportunity for the community to share and have recorded their family stories and have artefacts photographed for publishing on the project web page and use in final exhibition.
Workshop - The Men of Ruhleben	23 rd May 2019 2:00pm – 4:00pm	Cleethorpes Library, Albert Room	Who were the men, how did they live and what did they do.
Workshop - Family History	24 th May 2019 2:30pm – 4:30pm	Grimsby Library, Local History Library	A chance to explore Family History resources and look at the family background of some of the interned men. Booking Required Please call Grimsby Local History Library (01472) 323635.
Workshop - Camp Magazine	30 th May 2019 2:00pm - 4:00pm	Cleethorpes Library, Albert Room	The development and content of the Camps own self published magazine.
Theatre production - 'With Love from Ruhleben'	31 st May 2019 7:30pm	Cleethorpes Library, Albert room	Public will learn about history of and conditions in Ruhleben camp as experienced by men from the local area, in this newly commissioned theatrical play. Booking Required. Please call Cleethorpes Library (01472) 323650.
Workshop - Sport	4 th June 2019 2:00pm – 4:00pm	Cleethorpes Library, Albert Room	How sport played a huge role in the internment camp.
Exhibition	18 th - 29 th June 2019	Fishing Heritage Centre, Café Space	What was Ruhleben Internment Camp. Who was held there and how did they survive.
Workshop - The Home Front	21 st June 2019 10:00am – 4:00pm	Grimsby Town Hall, Bremerhaven Room	How did the internment of so many local men effect the local community?
Workshop - Theatre Music and Arts	18 th July 2019 2:00pm – 4:00pm	Cleethorpes Library, Albert Room	Theatre, music and the arts played a crucial role in the moral of the camp.
Exhibition	12 th - 31 st August 2019	Waltham Library, Meeting Room	What was Ruhleben Internment Camp. Who was held there and how did they survive.

Breakwater Theatre Company
presents

With love
from
RUHLEBEN

A brand new play
by
Andy Evans



Inspired by true stories of a civilian internment camp in Germany 1914-1918

Friday 31st May 2019 7:30pm

The Albert Room, Cleethorpes Library
Tickets £5 from Cleethorpes Library

<http://www.breakwatertheatre.co.uk>

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