

Parish Peace Garden



Granville Road July 1944 (Courtesy Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Culture, Libraries & Learning))

Early in the morning of Sunday 16 July 1944 a V-1 'Flying Bomb' fell on Granville Road, killing 15 people and seriously injuring 35 others. Twelve houses were destroyed; 100 others were damaged; Holy Trinity church, which stood just to the east of this notice, was badly damaged.



Postcard of Holy Trinity Church, 1907

Those who died that night in Granville Road :

No. 22: Frances Rose Linda Chapman, 48; Harold Edric Chapman, 51; Hilda Muriel Tongue, 48.
No. 24: Ruby Isobel Cook, 35; Frederick John Cook, 36; Ethel Emma Walker, 48; William Walker, 59.
No. 26: Margery Ethel Allum, 37; Miriam Goldblatt, 26; Samuel Goldblatt, 33.
No. 28: Margaret Anne Plummer, 44; Daisy Seammen, 65; Pearl Seammen, 70.
No. 30: Dorothy Fox, 59.
No. 33: Annie Gertrude Tyler, 75.

This Peace Garden commemorates the event, the people who died, and the reconstruction of the area following the end of the war.

At Holy Trinity church, windows and doors were blown out and there was a large hole in the roof above the organ, but the vicar, Father Connerton, asked that any tarpaulins be used first on people's houses rather than the church. The church hall was already used as a rest centre for people who had been bombed out. Thirty-two people stayed in the bunk beds until they could be housed elsewhere.



Catherine Burgess (l) and Valerie Turner (r) in Valerie's front garden, 1948. Valerie and her family were bombed out by the V-1 in 1944 and were the first family rehoused in the Granville Road prefabs.



Granville Road prefabs, April 1979 (Courtesy Alexander Smith, local resident)

In 1946 nineteen Arcon Mark V 'prefab' factory-built bungalows were erected on the Granville Road bombsite. Clad with corrugated asbestos cement, each was pre-wired, came with ducted air heating and had two bedrooms and a fitted kitchen including a refrigerator. They had a modern and compact look. Designed to last for 10 years, they actually stood until 1980. Local people remember prize-winning front gardens including one with a fishpond.

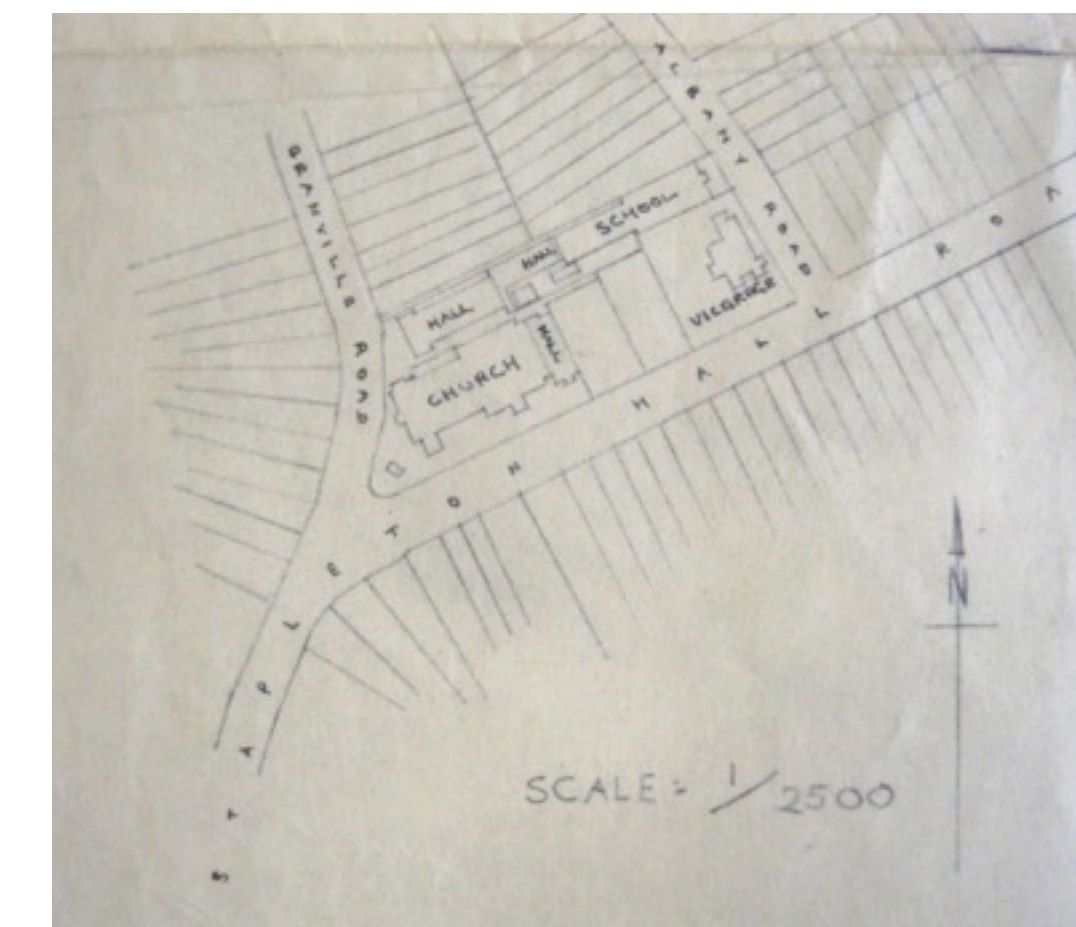
The prefabs were replaced by new housing on the east side of Granville Road and, after a campaign by local residents, the Spinney wildlife area on the west side.

Between 1939 and 1945 the UK, its empire, and its allies the United States and the Soviet Union, were at war with Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan. Each side bombed the other.

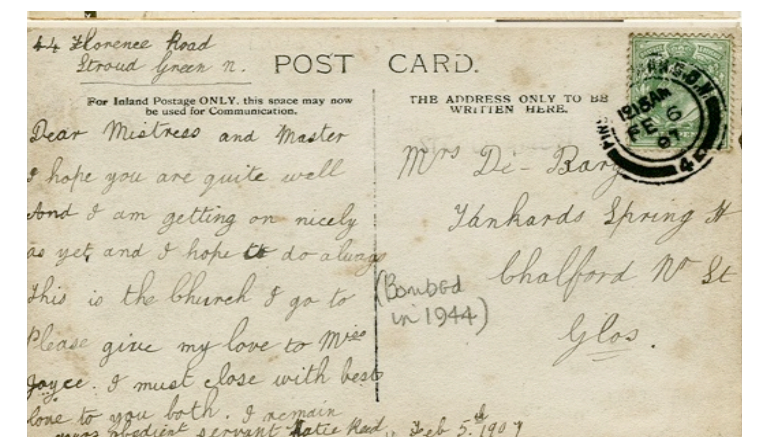
The V-1, 'Doodlebug' or 'Buzz bomb' attacked London between June 1944 and March 1945. It was the first cruise missile, launched from Nazi-occupied Europe, flying pilotless at high speed and low altitude to its programmed target. The jet engine sounded like an un-silenced motor bike and cut off just before impact, leaving an eerie silence before the huge explosion of the 850 kg bomb. Their purpose was terror: almost all the six thousand casualties in the UK were civilians.

Because of wartime censorship – imposed to deceive the enemy about the effect of the bombs – the Hornsey Journal only reported 'More Women than Men in Bomb Incidents', mentioned a 'residential area in the South of England', 'damage and casualties', 'cheerful victims' and an ungrateful cat that scratched his rescuer.

Holy Trinity Church (architect EB Ferrey) was consecrated in 1881 when the area was developed as a north London suburb, and took its place amongst other similar parishes in the rapidly growing city with its own loyal and active worshippers. In 1913 a church hall (architect J S Alder) was added.



Site plan of old church (Courtesy City of London, London Metropolitan Archives and Holy Trinity Church)



The 1944 bomb damage proved so severe that in 1950 the church building was declared unsafe. Parishioners moved the altar and other fittings, including the organ, into the church hall, and a chapel was created in the vicarage. The church was pulled down in 1960 and a Service of Dedication in 1961, led by the Bishop of London, established a new place of worship in the former church hall, just up Granville Road from this notice.

In the same year a new vicarage was built on the site of the old church and this garden was leased to the council, with the World War One memorial, damaged by falling trees in the gale of 1987, as a centre-piece. The old vicarage was demolished to make way for St Aidan's School, opened by the Queen in December 1972.

The cobbled surface near the edge of this Peace Garden marks the entrance to the old church. A post from a washing line, hidden deep in the Spinney, is a trace of the people who lived in the prefabs. This garden is a memorial to those who died.

Please use this garden to reflect and to join us in the hope for peace.

Thanks to Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Culture, Libraries & Learning), Holy Trinity Church, Hornsey Historical Society, London Metropolitan Archives and the local people who researched and contributed to this board. Funded by Haringey Council, Making the difference fund, March 2011.

