

# Whipps Cross Voices

November 2022



Many thanks if you came to see us at Leytonstone Library last week. It was great to see you!

As we approach Remembrance Day on 11th November we can remember the history of Whipps Cross as a military hospital from 1917 and some of the events that happened there during World War One. See below for something that was recently brought to our attention by Whipps Cross Hospital Radio manager Phil Hughes - thanks Phil!

Over the winter months we will be concentrating on cataloguing the many new donations we have received for the archive, including from the hospital radio (see below). If you have anything to show us - maybe posters, pamphlets, news cuttings or photos - now is the time to dig them out and [let us know!](#) We're particularly interested in any staff newsletters that might still exist before we all went digital.

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## Whipps Cross Military Hospital

105 years ago, on Saturday 17 November 1917, the Royal Family paid an official visit to mark Whipps Cross's new status as a war hospital treating wounded men from the WWI frontlines.

Earlier in the year, the war office had sent an inspector to Whipps to assess its potential use, with the inspector reported to be impressed by its "complete and modern equipment" and requesting an entire infirmary block to deal with rising casualties. Whipps, along with nearby King George Hospital and Valentine Mansion, was affiliated to Colchester Military Hospital and 240 beds were given over for military use. Between 1917 and 1918, 6000 men were treated.



This photo taken in 1917 shows the players of a football match between wounded men and laundry girls. The men at the back are wearing their hospital blues, a soft flannel suit with white lining, and a few regimental caps are visible including an Australian hat worn by the man third from the left. The women's kit includes a shirt, necktie and hat. (Left: RLHWX/P/4/7)

We recently became aware of an extraordinary Pathe film of another football match at the hospital during this time. You can [watch the short silent film](#) of this fundraising event that shows a marching band, match kick-off and hundreds of spectators. It's likely that both of these matches were played on the sports field where outpatients is today.

## Roots of the Forest

Do you remember the staff newsletter Roots of the Forest?

If you have any copies hiding in your loft or tucked away in a cupboard we would love to see them. Please [be in touch](#) if you can help.

## Behind the scenes at the archive



We are delighted to have received a donation of material from Whipps Cross Hospital Radio. WXHR was established in 1969 and for many years was the leading hospital station in the area, winning many awards. As a registered charity, the volunteers served the health community both within the hospital and in the wider area, but after 50 years the station will be closing at the end of 2022 due to technical issues and the impact of Covid-19.

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An [illustrated history](#) of the station is available online written by station manager Phil Hughes. Items donated to the archive include sound recordings, newspaper cuttings and copies of the WXHR magazine which will be catalogued and available to look up on the [Barts Health Archives](#) soon.

### Dates for your diary

We won't be running any events over the winter months but will be back in the spring for our final dates at Whipps Cross and an invitation to join us at the archives at West Smithfield. Keep an eye on the [website](#) in the meantime.

Very best wishes,

Kate and Claire

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