

*Banstead Remembers*  
*Telegraphist Albert Nash*  
*of 13 Lyme Regis Road*

*HMS P40*  
*Served in Home Waters*  
*Died, aged 19*



**TUESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER**

at All Saints Church, Banstead

11:50am: a short service of remembrance will be held

Noon: a church bell will be tolled 100 times

The churchyard flag will be raised to half mast at 7:30am and lowered at 5:30pm

Albert Nash was the first of Banstead and Burgh Heath's servicemen to die after the Armistice as Spanish Flu continued to strike down military personnel and civilians alike. Please come and remember the sacrifice our local community made in the Great War.

*We will remember **each** one*

## *Telegraphist Albert Nash* *13 Lyme Regis Road*

Albert Nash was born on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1899 at Witley, Surrey, and baptised at the parish church of All Saints, Witley, on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

He was the son of George and Letitia Annie Nash. George was a bricklayer from Witley, near Godalming but had been living in Shamley Green, another village south of Guildford, when he married a local girl, Letitia Billingham on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1893. They made their home at Mere Hill in George's home village of Witley and went on to have five children.

Sadly, George died, aged 33, just a month before his final child, a daughter, Mabel, was born. Albert was only three years old when he lost his father. Letitia and her girls moved in with George's younger brother, Arthur, in Walton-on-Thames; they would go on to have at least three children of their own. The boys, however, went elsewhere and Albert came to Banstead to stay with his aunt Olive, his father's younger sister.

Olive and her husband, Thomas Wallis, had moved to 2 Lulworth Cottages, in Lyme Regis Road by 1906 and were probably the first occupants of the new semi-detached villa next to a row of purpose-built maisonettes. Today the house is 13 Lyme Regis Road. At that time, the houses in Shrubland, Diceland, Ferndale, Lyme Regis and Pound Roads were new, almost all of them built in the 25 years leading up to the First World War, and were a separate village in their own right, with their own shops and pub. They were as much part of Burgh Heath as they were part of Banstead and so it was that Albert attended the Burgh Heath Church of England School, opposite St Mary's. Most of the school building still stands and is today called *Chips Folly*. He was a bit of a naughty boy at school but nevertheless did well enough academically.

He became a telegraphist after leaving school, almost certainly working for the Post Office, probably at either Banstead or Burgh Heath's sub-post office, and so when he was conscripted at the age of 18, in 1917, he became a telegraphist in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. After conscription came in, the only freedom of choice you had as to which unit you were to serve in was to express a preference to join the Royal Navy, so it may well have been his choice to serve with them.

Albert trained at Crystal Palace and then served at an auxiliary patrol shore base at Grimsby, Lincolnshire, before completing his training at Chatham, in Kent. His first operational posting was to the *P40*, a patrol boat serving with the Portsmouth Escort Flotilla. The 'P' Class boats were slower than destroyers and lightly armed but were small, shallow and highly manoeuvrable, perfect for working in close to shore. Their main weapon was their hardened-steel prow, used for ramming submarines. Albert was probably one of three telegraphists aboard.

On 13<sup>th</sup> November 1918, two days after the Armistice, Albert died of pneumonia at Haslar Royal Naval Hospital, probably after contacting Spanish Flu. He was 19.