

This week in 1916

Each week we look back in our archives to chart the progress of the First World War and how the conflict affected those left at home

A bank holiday sports event on the cricket field at Hitchin Grammar School was widely advertised, and the programme included 100 yards scratch and one mile scratch races which were open to those serving in the military. There was also a promenade concert with dancing planned for the evening.

● Local farmers met to talk over how the new Summer Time Act would affect their work. There were those who favoured the old arrangements and others who saw benefits from the switch. Some were clearly determined not to change their clocks while others said they would leave it to their workers to decide. The new arrangements had just been confirmed, partly as a wartime measure to encourage increased production.

● The self-styled 'world's biggest grocer' International Stores took out advertising space to proudly trumpet that it had increased the number of women on the payroll from 1,000 to 3,000, releasing 2,000 men for military service.

→ To see newspapers published 100 years ago this week in digital format, log on to www.thecomet.net/news/first-world-war

When theatrical pioneer Gordon Craig passed away 50 years ago, nobody could have predicted just how fast the world would change.

Stevenage, his birthplace in Victorian times, was already taking shape as a new town, but the media was still pretty much in the dark ages.

You could count the number of TV channels on the fingers of one hand, newspapers relied on outdated hot metal technology, and phones were firmly tethered to the wall if you were lucky enough to have one at all.

But the team putting together an exhibition and other events to mark the cultural contribution of the man who gave his name to Stevenage's main theatre is switched on to social media.

There's already a Twitter account for followers to keep in touch with all the latest news - you can follow @GordonCraig1872 for updates - and a website address set up to lead people in the right direction.

That address - whoisgordoncraig.co.uk, which for now takes online visitors to the Stevenage Museum website - tackles the central aim of the programme. Everyone in Stevenage knows where the Gordon Craig is, but not many can say with any confidence who Gordon Craig was.

Project manager Andy Purves said: "Despite Craig being an important figure in the history of theatre, 93 per cent of a sample of

Modern media harnessed to revive Craig's reputation



■ Edward Gordon Craig, left, his mother Ellen Terry and the familiar theatre which bears his name.



audience members at the theatre told us they knew nothing or only very little about him."

That's one of the reasons the team has been able to secure a slice of lottery cash to fund the £65,000 project which aims to create and rekindle interest in Edward Gordon Craig's life and work in his birthplace and beyond, 50 years after his death.

And it's fitting that one of the

first events to be confirmed - on Sunday, July 31 - will be held at the venue which has helped to keep his name alive.

It's billed as a day of fascinating talks, demonstrations and discussions on the man, his extraordinary parents and his inspiring visions for the "art of the theatre."

The son of Ellen Terry, one of the most revered actresses of the

English stage, and architect Edward William Godwin, Edward Gordon Craig was born in 1872.

The Stevenage Arts Guild project is setting out to celebrate the life and work of the town's forgotten son and his status as a radical and visionary theatrical pioneer.

It includes a new exhibition at Stevenage Museum, volunteer opportunities and events which will continue into the new year.

For more information the event and about volunteer opportunities with Stevenage Museum for those aged 14 to 114, email takepart@whoisgordoncraig.co.uk.

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