

WHO IS CLARE HOLLINGWORTH?

Clare Hollingworth was born in Leicester on the 10th October 1911. When she was a teenager her parents sent her to a Domestic Science College where she was supposed to learn cooking, sewing and other domestic tasks. She hated it and left early.

She flew to Croatia to study at the university of Zagreb – Clare loved to travel!

Soon after she finished university, she took a job in Poland helping refugee's find somewhere safe to live, but she was forced to stop doing this job as it became too dangerous.



In 1939, she started looking for another job and got a call from The Daily Telegraph. They wanted her to start work as a journalist immediately. The bosses at The Daily Telegraph told Clare to go to Poland and meet with the British Ambassador named Anthony Thwaites.

Clare met Thwaites in a small town named 'Katowice' which was right on the border between Poland and Germany.

Acting on instinct Clare borrowed Thwaites car and travelled to the German border to see what was going on. By chance she saw a bit of fencing blow upwards in the wind and hiding behind this fence were hundreds of German tanks, ready to drive into Poland and start fighting. Clare quickly drove back into Poland to tell everyone the news. Thwaites helped her report the news back to England, and The Daily Telegraph put the story in the newspaper the next day. The next morning Clare was woken up by the sound of the German army invading Poland. She quickly rang The Daily Telegraph and told them the news. They didn't believe her at first, until Clare held the phone out of the window and they heard the sounds of the tanks. The Daily Telegraph quickly printed the news to let the world know that Germany had invaded Poland. Three days later, Britain declared war on Germany.

This was Hollingworth's 'Big Scoop'. She was 27 years old, and had only been working as a journalist for five weeks.

From then on, Hollingworth forged a significant international career as a war journalist. Travelling through Poland, Greece, Romania, Turkey and Cairo during WWII, she was intent on reporting from the frontline and dangerous places.

Clare died in 2017 at the age of 105 – she was one of the most dedicated journalists of her time. We only discovered Clare's amazing story when we read her obituary. If you would like any more information you can see this here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/jan/10/clare-hollingworth-obituary>



WHY DID WE MAKE THE SHOW?

Clare Hollingworth and the Scoop of the Century aims to interpret, explain and celebrate the life of Clare Hollingworth – educating children and families about Clare Hollingworth and World War two.

Clare Hollingworth’s contributions to our heritage are extremely significant, as both a pioneering female war correspondent, and the first journalist to report on the start of WWII. There is a real risk that her extraordinary role within British history may be forgotten with her passing, as many key female historical figures have been - she does not appear in history textbooks covering the period, and she is greatly under-celebrated as a woman who challenged and defied expectations.

The trailer for the show can be found here:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMK1E52n6DQ

WHERE AND WHEN DOES THE STORY TAKE PLACE?

Our story takes place in the lead up to the outbreak of World War Two in 1939

This is a complex period of history with many moving parts, but below outlines some of the key moments and characters that we highlight in our play.



Refugee Crisis

The first thing the play touches on is Clare Hollingworth trying to help refugees in Poland. This is a complex topic and many children may not know what a refugee is. Here is an article that highlights the importance of Clare's work. This might be an interesting point to begin a conversation with your class

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37606306

Though for very young children, we have found that Paddington Bear is a good introduction to the concept of a refugee that children will easily understand. The refugee in our story that Clare helps is Jewish and leaving Berlin because of persecution that he, and others on his street are beginning to face. We discuss how Jewish people were made to present The Star of David on their clothes and shops, but don't go into any other details than this.

Neville Chamberlain

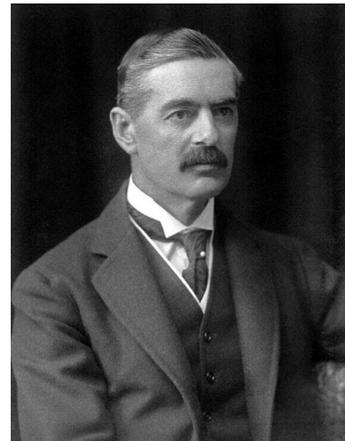
Throughout the performance we use a number of recordings of historical speeches, from key political figures of the time.

The first of these is Neville Chamberlain saying that England plans to live peacefully alongside Germany and will do whatever it can to prevent war. The full speech is attached here

www.youtube.com/watch?v=hO95ffnU4Sw

Later we will hear from Chamberlain again. After Germany invades Poland this is the final straw for the British people, and England declares war on Germany.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2qlZHW-fDI



Hitler

During the play we do not go into much detail about the rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany, but before the invasion of Poland the audience will hear a recording of one of Hitler's famous Rally's. Here is an example attached:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=gu7n0_gVgTc

It will be important for children watching the play to understand that Hitler was the leader of Germany at this time.



Churchill

This will be a name that many young people know. Churchill does not appear in our play, but it is useful for children to know that he became the prime minister during the war years and has a number of famous speeches:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkTw3_PmKtc

World War Two

Clare Hollingworth was the woman who was there at the beginning of it all. Our story will detail some of the lead up to this event including when German tanks first entered into Poland, how the news reached England and how this officially marked the beginning of the war. But this was just the beginning of six more years of fighting that spread across the whole world. It might be useful for children to have an overview of what happened in these years, but this is not essential.

Greece

Our play ends in Greece, with Clare following the British Soldiers who are training out in the Desert. This is a less known aspect of the war which Roald Dahl writes about in detail in his book 'Going Solo'

Personal histories

We find with young children that there are a lot of misconceptions and confusions around WWII. Some of the more common are:

- Confusion between WWI and WWII
- That there was ground fighting in England
- The term 'bombing' to young minds is usually now connected with ideas of terrorism, rather than air raids and the blitz.

However we have always found that children are very keen to share stories of their own families personal involvement in the war. This could be a fun homework task for the class with a follow up show and tell exercise. This will go a long way to helping debunk/clarify how the class think about WWII

