KINGSWOOD HOUSE RESEARCH PROJECT

This research was produced as part of a collaboration between the Dulwich Society Local History Group and Kingswood Arts, the community group that runs Kingswood House in Dulwich. We researched the servants who worked in Kingswood House when it was a private home and a community artist then made an exhibition to share the stories, which now hangs in the café at Kingswood House. If you are related to one of the families who served the house please get in touch, the Dulwich Society would love to hear from you. Email history@dulwichsociety.com
For details of the house and the other servants who worked and lived there please go to https://www.dulwichsociety.com/local-history/kingswood-house-who-worked-in-a-house-like-this

GANNON family at Kingswood Lodge

Narrative for Henry Gannon
Henry George Gannon was born in 1885, one of six children of James, a labourer, and Alice. We don't know when he arrived at Kingswood but he was a young footman here in 1901. He may not have liked being a footman as later the same year he signed up for three years with the army.
When Henry joined the Hampshire Regiment he was 5ft 6½ inches tall, average height for a man at that time, with brown hair, grey eyes and a scar on his left wrist. He fought in South Africa in the Boer War. Around half the volunteers to the army at this time, mainly, like Henry, from working class backgrounds, had been rejected on medical grounds. The British government's discovery of the poor health of the recruits led to more active state intervention to improve public health including free school meals. While in the army Henry gained a 3rd class certificate of education, which was necessary for promotion to corporal, and a 2nd class certificate, required for promotion to sergeant. He also served in the officers' mess – no doubt his footman training at Kingswood came in handy.
In 1904 he left the army and became a postman. The following year he married Maud Scott and their first child George was born two years later.
When WW1 broke out in 1914, Henry rejoined the army and was sent straight out to France to fight with the British Expeditionary Force. In August and September the same year, he was involved with the Retreat from Mons, for which he was awarded the Mons Star. In a war where life was cheap and many foot soldiers perished in their first battle, Henry fought in many battles, including the Battles of the Marne, Aisne, Ypres and Passchendaele. At the Battle of Ploegsteert, he was severely injured and was invalided home but returned to France to continue to fight.
In February 1917 Henry's son John was born but sadly only lived for three weeks. Henry may not have even met his son, given he was away fighting in France.
In August 1917 Henry was promoted to corporal and a month later he was promoted to sergeant. In November 1917 he won the DCM for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in an attack. Owing to heavy machine gun fire only six of his party reached their objective but in spite of this they bombed a dugout and captured 38 prisoners and two machine guns. Henry displayed the greatest courage and devotion to duty in consolidating the position and holding it under heavy fire. [London Gazette 6 Feb 1918]. For receiving the DCM he got a pay rise of 6d per day. Other medals he was awarded include the General Service and the Victory medals.
Henry returned from France after the war, resumed his job as a postman and lived for the rest of his life in Tyneham Rd, Battersea.
Maud died in 1940 aged 56 and Henry in 1947 aged 62.

Research names in red lived at Kingswood Lodge

1885 Henry George Gannon born in Battersea one of six children of James, a general labourer, and Alice.
1901 Census (March)

Henry Gannon	1883	18	Footman	Battersea

1901 June: Henry signs up with the army, the 15th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, for 3 years. He is aged 18, 5ft 6.5 inches tall and with brown hair and grey eyes. He has a scar on his left wrist. He fights in South Africa in the Boer War and is awarded the Queen's South African Medal with clasp. While in the army he gains a 3rd class certificate of education, necessary for promotion to corporal, and a 2nd class certificate, required for promotion to sergeant. He also served in the officers' mess – no doubt his footman training at Kingswood came in handy.
1904 Henry is discharged from the army and put on the reserve list
Feb 1905 Henry joins the Post Office
Dec1905 Henry married Maud Elizabeth Scott in Battersea. He is a postman. Two children: George born in 1906 and John who lived for only three weeks in 1917.
1911 Henry, his wife and 4 year old son are boarding in Worthing. He is a postman
August 1914 Henry rejoins the army and fights with the British Expeditionary Force in France.
Aug/Sep 1914 Retreat from Mons and is awarded the Mons Star
Battle of the Marne
Battle of Aisne
Battle of Ypres
1914 Battle of Ploegsteert: he is severely injured on his arm but continues to fight in France
Battle of Ypres
Passchendaele
August 1917 Henry is promoted to corporal
Sept 1917 Henry is promoted to sergeant
Nov 1917 Henry wins the DCM for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in an attack. Owing to heavy machine gun fire on six of his party reached the objective but in spite of this they bombed a dug-out and captured 38 prisoners and two machine guns. He displayed the greatest courage and devotion to duty in consolidating the position and holding it under heavy fire. [London Gazette 6 Feb 1918]. For receiving the DCM he got a pay rise of 6d per day.
1918: Henry discharged due to wounds. Other medals won include the General Service and the Victory medals
1919-39 Henry, Maude and son living in Tyneham Rd, Battersea. he is a postman
1921 Census 91 Tyneham Rd

Henry George Gannon	1885	36	Battersea	Postman
Maude Elizabeth Gannon	1884	36	South Lambeth	
George William James Gannon	1906	14	Wandsworth	Telegraph Messenger

1939: 91 Tyneham Rd

Henry G Gannon	12 Jun 1885	Postman General Post Office
Maude E Gannon	06 Nov 1884	Unpaid Domestic Duties

1940 Maude died
1947 Henry died at St Thomas's Hospital aged 62. He had been living in Tyneham Rd, Battersea