

Friends of War Memorials

Patron: The Countess Mountbatten of Burma CBE CD JP DL

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Director-General: Sir Donald Thompson

Secretary & Treasurer: Douglas R Johnston

Founder: Ian Davidson, Royal Marines (Retd)



Registered Charity Number: 1062255

Friends of War Memorials
4 Lower Belgrave Street
London
SW1W 0LA

Tel: 0171 259 0403

Fax: 0171 259 0296

NEWSLETTER

1998

The Objectives of Friends of War Memorials are:

~ To monitor the condition of War Memorials of all kinds. To work with local and ecclesiastical authorities plus other interested organisations in order to re-instate in any way necessary, memorials damaged, vandalised, eroded or at risk.



Defaced War Memorial

~ To educate, inform and publicise the spiritual, archeological and historical significance of war memorials as part of our national heritage, to encourage and inspire young people to cherish their local war memorials and the memory of those who sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom.

At Risk

Three Dangers - War Memorials at Risk

~ Traditionally understood war memorials are at risk of being vandalised, eroding, or just being neglected.

~ Rolls of Honour and plaques are being negligently disposed of, thrown away or destroyed.



*Aldershot memorial
now cleaned up*

~ Some names are omitted, others are not being added to existing war memorials some new memorials need to be commissioned.

Danger

There is a new and growing danger, which can only be challenged by local people. It seems that not only 'traditional' war memorials and rolls of honour are under threat.

After almost eighty years, memorial hospitals, village halls, footbridges, recreation areas and parks are being disposed of or are threatened with disposal by all sorts of authorities and quangos. There seems to be very little thought of their unique heritage.

It is simple enough to sell off a building given by a local dignitary and use the money and his name in another modern site. However, war memorials are entirely different.

They commemorate hundreds, thousands and occasionally tens of thousands of men who gave their lives. That huge sacrifice

should not be ended, being remembered by a boarded up building, a built over recreation area or a disposed of facility. Unfortunately, individual communities do not realise that this is a nasty and growing problem.

Friends of War Memorials have decided that if alerted, to pass fears on to government ministers so that they in turn can give serious consideration to this piecemeal chipping away of our heritage.



This Welsh war memorial is being reinstated by the local people of Dwygyfylchi

CRIMESTOPPERS

0800 555 111

*** Your call is free * You do not have to give your name * You may receive a reward ***

Friends of War Memorials is supported by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Imperial War Museum and use the theft alert service run by SALVO and TRACE.

If you hear of a war memorial or part of a war memorial which has been stolen, contact Ian Davidson and your local police immediately.

PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE

David Maclean MP's Ten Minute Rule Bill - 'War Memorial Preservation'

A Ten Minute Rule Bill is unlikely to reach the Statute Book, but does alert the Government in Westminster, civil servants in Whitehall and the media nationally to a specific problem. They can all gauge the reaction both in the House of Commons and in the country as a whole. Hopefully, that will lead to the incorporation of the Bill's ideas in other relevant legislation.

Friends of War Memorials would like to thank David Maclean, Alan Beith, Menzies Campbell, Frank

David Prior MP's Ten Minute Rule Bill on 'Rural & Community Hospitals' includes many memorial hospitals.

Cook, Sir Peter Emery, Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, Barry Johns, Sir Peter Lloyd, Reverend Martin Smyth, Nicholas Soames and Peter Viggers for their conspicuous support.

The Bill's aim was to provide for the preservation of War Memorials; to ensure their proper transfer to a suitable location if their present site is redeveloped; to amend the War Memorials (Local Authorities Power) Act 1923 and for connected purposes.

? It is Happening in Your Town ?

In a single Metropolitan area Tom Hornshaw and his friends have found:



*Roll of Honour
split down the centre*

~ 34 Plaques and Rolls of Honour in brass, wood and marble, stored in cellars or belfries and all are at risk. Each honours 1914-18 or 1939-47 heroes.

~ 3 Screens and 4 Stained Glass Windows are also stored away from view.

A local task force is now being set up to tackle the mammoth job of finding suitable and permanent homes for these momentos of our heritage and culture.



Abandoned Roll of Honour



Many Friends will find Patricia Utechin's book a model for their own projects.

'THE TRUMPETS SOUNDED' by Patricia Utechin

This book comprehensively describes every war memorial in the country from the 17th Century to the Falklands.

Published by Robert Dugdale c/o Corpus Christi College, Oxford, OX1 4JF 1996.

58pp (illustrated) £3.50 (plus 38p p&p)

The Colonade Hotel, 2 Warrington Crescent, London, W9 1EZ. Tel: 0171 286 1052

NOT ALL BAD NEWS!

Success

Many local War Memorial Action Committees have had or are achieving success. For instance, Winston Churchill, our president and Ian Davidson, our Founder, saved the Welsh Roll of Honour discovered in a Surrey auction house and mentioned by David Maclean in his House of Commons speech.

At an Armistice Day ceremony in Roath Park Primary School,

Cardiff, they rededicated the Roll of Honour containing the names of one hundred and nine Roath men killed in the Great War.



Roath Park Roll of Honour on wall in school

Nonetheless, Ian Davidson, our Founder, has also discovered more plaques over the last few months, one in a skip in a scrapyard and two in antique shops.

There is, we are glad to say, a growing awareness of

the sensitive way Roles of Honour should be re-sited when it becomes necessary to move them. We are discussing with the Civic Trust and others how best to tackle this problem.



Roll of Honour found in skip. More details to follow when known.

Friends of War Memorials are delighted that many local committees have been successful, some with our encouragement and advice.

Whiteley Bay have restored their

War memorial. Bill Nugent and his companions organised the replacement of stolen plaques.

Jack Field and Coalport Footbridge at Ironbridge Gorge in Shropshire have been saved by the pressure through local people and every sort of organisation. This bridge is one of many War Memorials which takes a local form rather than the traditional type. All must be preserved.

St Phillips Church Site, Worcester Park is to be upgraded in quite a dramatic way, after a great deal of lobbying by interested individuals and groups including Lady Olga Maitland.

Deal Victoria War Memorial Hospital opened by George V in 1924 was under threat but once again local action has ensured that the hospital will be kept open.

Sheffield City Council is working with the Royal Air Force Association to bring back up to its original standard, the America War Memorial in Encliffe Park.

The **Dane John,** Canterbury. This South African War Memorial is being restored by Canterbury City Council. Friends of War Memorials are delighted to be partners in this scheme.

A **Bus Shelter** built as a War Memorial is to be cleaned up at Barnards Green, Malvern. It is hoped to make it less attractive to vandals.

The **Royal British Legion** and the **Imperial War Museum** have identified for us War Memorials at risk and, in most cases, we have been able to offer advice.

We are co-operating with **West Sussex Probation Service** through David Scott and Carol Jones. With their good offices, other community action teams throughout the country

are tidying up in town and villages. The **Civic Trust** is helping to pull the legislation regarding all sorts of War Memorials together.

We have to thank dozens of individuals, charities and companies 'who have provided hard cash' so that we may get on with our job.

Friends of War Memorials are working with **Canda Smith** at the **Countryside Commission** in their £40 million pilot scheme for the Local Heritage Initiative. This is an exciting venture encouraging local communities to preserve everything that is worthwhile in and around their villages or townships and, of course, War Memorials are part of all that.

Salvo, the architectural antique dealers organisation are, with the active encouragement of Thornton Kay, urging their members to be on the lookout for misused or misplaced Rolls of Honour and other war memorabilia.

HALIFAX plc, exclusively through Friends of War Memorials, have made various donations to War Memorial Committees or Parish Councils to kick start or contribute to the renovation of local War Memorials:

- Llangunllo War Memorial
- Ash War Memorial
- Plymouth Falklands Maritime Memorial
- Cowpen & District War Memorial
- Walsoken Parish War Memorial
- Salthouse War Memorial
- Catshill War Memorial
- Minster - Ilminster
- West Tytherley War Memorial
- Exning War Memorial

Bromley Council Annual War Memorial report is a bench mark for every local authority.



Officers and Trustees of Friends of War Memorials



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Secretary & Treasurer: Douglas R Johnston (Scotland)
Director General: Sir Donald Thompson

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Director General: Sir Donald Thompson
4 Lower Belgrave Street, London, SW1W 0LA

Lord Cope of Berkeley: Parliamentary	Jill Jockel: Events
David Maclean MP: Parliamentary	Margaret Fenn: Charities
William Edge: Web Site	Val Ross: Public Relations
Peter Townsend: Church Sites	Nigel & Sarah Bishop: Computers
Nick Morse: Publishing	Louise Blackburn: Secretarial

This ad hoc Committee of Colleagues help the Friends of War Memorials with advice on their own specialities, either when asked or when they think they can contribute. We always welcome suggestions from any source.

* * *

REGIONAL VOLUNTEERS

Mr F W Goodchild, Farnham, Surrey	Miss Sarah Hays, Bexley, Kent
Mr Michael W Lyons, Croydon, Surrey	Mr Tony Martin, Scotland
Mr Graham Cox, Wirral	Mr C T A Stephens, Leicester
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Lord Cope of Berkeley, South Glos, N. Somerset, Bristol	Mr David R Hooper, Lincoln

We are very lucky to have these ladies and gentlemen who will, on a voluntary basis, help to investigate and report on any aspect of War Memorials of every sort in their vicinity.

For more information on becoming a Regional Volunteer please contact Sir Donald Thompson.



For Donations To Friends of War Memorials

Please find enclosed the sum of £ to be used exclusively for the aims of the *Friends of War Memorials*.

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Send by post to: Sir Donald Thompson, Friends of War Memorials, 4 Lower Belgrave Street, London, SW1W 0LA

Banker: Royal Bank of Scotland, Elgin Road Branch

Our thanks are due to individual donors and also Halifax plc, Dulverton Trust, DFS, Kennedy Construction Ltd., GNER, ScotRail, Virgin Trains, The Robertson-Ness Trust, The Gosling Foundation, BAT, British Telecom, Rank plc, Laing 'Charitable Trust', Tom Cobleigh, Charity Logistics, Midland Bank and Pen & Sword Books Limited.

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