



Friends of War Memorials *Bulletin*

SUMMER 2004

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British Troops go ashore on Sword Beach

D-Day 6 June 1944

- ◆ Our latest successful grants
- ◆ St James' Church war memorial window
- ◆ War memorial in Arnold (part II)
- ◆ The Melton & District war memorial hospital
- ◆ Obelisk war memorials

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Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum
London (B5114)

The last post ceremony at Menin Gate - by Gavin Oliver

Photo by Gavin Oliver



It is now more than a decade since I first attended the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres. On that first occasion it was a bitterly cold night in mid December that seemed to promise, and indeed later delivered, heavy snow. I was one of just a handful of people who gathered to hear the buglers as they delivered their nightly tribute to the fallen of the Great War.

For those that do not know of the Menin Gate, it is a memorial set into the ramparts of the city of Ypres, upon the walls of which are inscribed the names of 55,000 British and Commonwealth troops who died between 1914 and 1917 in the Ypres salient and have no known grave; the names of a further 35,000 missing are carved on the memorial panels at Tyne Cot CWGC cemetery near Passchendaele. The tradition of the the Last Post ceremony was the brainchild of

the former Ypres police chief, Pierre Vandenbraembussche, who wanted to instigate a very personal tribute by the burghers of Ypres to the British and Commonwealth troops that died in the salient defending their tiny corner of Belgium. This tribute came in the form of the Last Post ceremony that began in the 1920's when each night volunteer buglers would halt the traffic passing through the gate to sound the haunting melody of the Last Post. With the exception of those years when Ypres was occupied by the Germans in WWII, this simply touching and nightly tradition has continued since.

My return visits have increased greatly in number since that first occasion and often number up to 10 a year as I regularly guide parties of visitors around the Ypres salient. While many of the people I guide are fair weather touring types, there is a

small hardcore group that like to visit out of season, during the worst of the weather as, to use their words, they want to experience the salient as Tommy did; frequently cold, often windy and usually wet.

What these out of season visits have allowed me to do is monitor, in a very unscientific way, visitor numbers year round. If attendance at the Menin Gate ceremony is a guide, then the numbers are increasing. Crowds numbering hundreds and sometimes even a thousand are not unusual in summer and my most recent winter attendance in December 2003 saw a crowd of nearly a hundred despite freezing weather.

A word that I hear constantly and that is expressed to me in countless conversations when touring and guiding is 'important'. People think it is important that our war dead are remembered, they think it is important that their memorials are maintained and they think it is important that young people are educated in the sacrifices made by their forebears.

So, if this seemingly increasing interest in our war heritage is anything to go by then it has a clear message for both the Friends of War Memorials and, in particular, national and local government. For the Friends, it validates what we do and everything the charity stands for. For local and national government it reinforces the importance of continued, and ever increased, expenditure on the care and preservation of war memorials.

With British and Commonwealth troops engaged all over the world, and especially at this time in Iraq and Afghanistan, while we must ensure that we care for the living, we also continue to have a duty to care for the memorials to the dead for, truly, our tomorrow cost them their today.

REGIONAL VOLUNTEERS

Regional Volunteers are members who act as FoWM's eyes and ears locally and inform us of war memorials and rolls of honour in their area that need attention. We very much appreciate RVs assistance in a number of tasks. We may let them know of cases that need local knowledge, or they could relay details of war memorial problems and local contacts to us. We also ask RVs to attend re-dedications on our behalf and perhaps to lay a wreath where appropriate. RVs do as much or as little as they are able and, in effect, act as "reservists" to be called upon when needed, as well as being correspondents when they see fit.

We now have nearly 200 Regional Volunteers countrywide and extend a warm welcome to new RVs who have joined us recently. For a full list of RVs by area and to find out about becoming a Regional Volunteer, please contact Frances Moreton at FoWM. We are always delighted to welcome new RVs in any area but would be particularly pleased to hear from potential volunteers in North Wales and Scotland.

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THE OBJECTIVES OF FRIENDS OF WAR MEMORIALS

1. To monitor the condition of war memorials and to take steps to ensure that local authorities and other relevant organisations are alerted to such condition with a view to their undertaking any necessary restoration, essential maintenance, repairs and cleaning.
2. To liaise with secular and ecclesiastical authorities, regiments and other responsible bodies with a view to their accepting responsibility for, and undertaking repairs to and restoration of war memorials.
3. To publicise and to educate and inform the public about the spiritual, archaeological, artistic, aesthetic and historical significance of war memorials as part of our national heritage; to encourage support groups and to inspire young people to cherish their local war memorials and the memory of those who sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom.

DIRECTOR GENERAL'S MESSAGE

Sir Donald Thompson

This issue is dedicated to "D-Day", which was perhaps the most significant European experience; not just of the 20th century but of many other centuries. Even more far reaching than Waterloo for, although the battle involved Great Britain, Russia and other allies, D-Day brought together the European allies and our Transatlantic American and Canadian comrades.

In retrospect, one of the most amazing aspects of D-Day is the fact that the enemy had no idea of the specific target for the landings and, although the ensuing battles were bloody, these would have been even more so had those laying in wait had been forewarned.

The sacrifices the American, Canadians, free French made along with the British allies were outstanding.

It is now all 60 years ago but those hard fought toe-holds became bridgeheads and eventually the landing ports for the allies armies. Giving up the impetus to sweep on to Paris and to the frontiers of the enemy. It is a day that will be remembered forever but perhaps this is the last occasion that can be properly remembered by many that took part.

Friends of War memorials are proud to be associated with this special event in our own way.

After these remembrances fade away, the memorials to those who fell remain to be cherished; refurbished and respected by future generations.

I know you will all help with your tributes, to those brave men and women with your donations, subscriptions and legacies. For which we thank you.

We are very grateful to

DFS Furniture

For their sponsorship of the
FoWM Bulletin

www.dfs.co.uk



Women of World War II war memorial - London

Westminster City Council has granted planning permission for the erection of a war memorial to commemorate the women of WWII. This will stand in Whitehall close to the MoD and on axis with The Cenotaph. However, the revised design (as shown in the artist's impression) is proving quite controversial among groups representing women who served in all capacities in the war and among the wider public. FoWM would like to know your views on this revised proposal.

We welcome our reader's views!



© Proposal for the Memorial to the Women of World War II

Apologies

In the last issue of the FoWM bulletin we wrongly named Stansted Mount Fitchet (The Stansted Mount Fitchet Roll of Honour, pg 11).

Our apologies for this misprint.

The Arnhem Roll of Honour database

The project of the www.marketgarden.com website is now finished and can be accessed. Worldwide, people can log in at the website and, via a link in the database, all the 1891 soldiers fallen in the Battle of Arnhem can be traced. Pictures of individual headstones, photograph of the soldier and of his fieldgrave are also included.

This project is the result of 25 years of research by Jan Hey, who collected all the data recorded in print.

STANDING ORDERS

Joining Friends of War Memorials or renewing your existing membership?

Why not consider paying your subscription by standing order?

It's easy and convenient for you and also help FoWM to keep its administration costs down.

Contact Frances Morton at FoWM for a standing order form!

A Fond Farewell

March saw FoWM bidding a fond farewell to our Head of Fundraising Jill Jokel, who moved to a new post with another organisation. We wish her every success with her new projects.

BE GREEN & RECYCLE FOR CHARITY

If you would like to help Friends of War Memorials in a different way, then why not recycle your printer cartridges (laser, toner or inkjet) and your old mobile phones and help raise money in a new and ecological way.

FoWM collects these goods and recycles them through Office Green. You can send your goods directly to FoWM who can act as a central collection point, or visit the Office Green website www.officegreen.co.uk, order some bags or boxes to collect cartridges in, and send them directly to the company. They will ask you to nominate a Charity and we hope you will state;

Friends of War Memorials
Registered Charity Number 1062255

And remember, you can collect empties wherever there is a computer - home, work, school. And the more we can collect, the more we can raise.

Be Green and Help FoWM

Office Green
at the heart of recycling

FoWM Events Calendar 2004

| Day | Date | Event | Location |
|-------------|-----------------|---|--|
| Sat | 5 June | Shropshire Family History Society | Shirehall, Shrewsbury |
| Sun | 6 June | D-Day Commemorations | Around Europe |
| Sun | 6 June | D-Day Show | Duxford, Cambridge |
| Sat/Sun | 12 - 13 June | Belvoir Castle Country Fair | Belvoir, Leicestershire |
| Sat | 19 June | Faslane Fair - Navy Day in the North | Helensburgh |
| Sat/Sun | 19 - 20 June | Foxfield Steam Railway - 1940 Potteries War | Foxfield, Cumberland |
| Sat/Sun | 19 - 20 June | The Muckleburgh Collection | Weybourne Military Camp, Holt, Norfolk |
| Sat/Sun | 26 - 27 June | RAF Waddington - International Air Show | Waddington, Lincoln |
| Wed | 30 June | D-Day Exhibition - Hendon Town Hall | Hendon |
| Sat | 3 July | Marple Locks Bi-centenary | Greater Manchester |
| Sat/Sun | 10 - 11 July | T.B.C. | Tidworth Polo Club, Wiltshire |
| Sat/Sun | 10 - 11 July | Flying Legends Air Show | Duxford, Cambridge |
| Sun | 1 August | Larkhill Open Day | Wiltshire |
| Sat/Sun/Mon | 28 - 30 August | Military Odyssey TBC | Kent |
| Sat/Sun | 4 - 5 September | Duxford 2004 Air Show | Duxford, Cambridge |
| Sun | 12 September | Frampton Country Fair | Frampton on Severn, Gloucestershire |
| Sun | 10 October | Autumn Air Show | Duxford, Cambridge |

FoWM plans to be involved with these events over the summer and autumn of 2004. If you would like to help out on any of these occasions please contact Frances Moreton and she will provide further details. Please note changes, alterations and cancellations may be made at short notice.

LEGACIES

The very essence of our work is all about preserving war memorials and respecting the memory of those who died whilst serving their country.

Legacies are an important way for charities to receive funds.

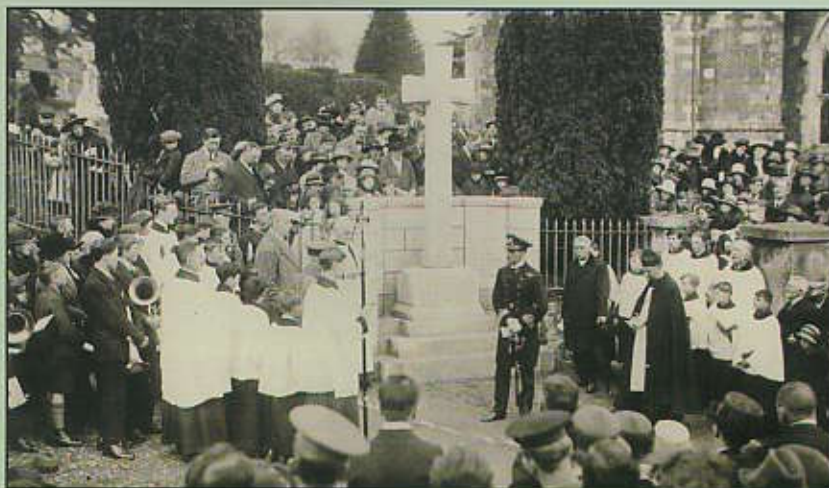
Did you know that only 13% of Wills include a charitable bequest, yet that 13% produces an amazing £1.5 million in funding each year?

For many of the more established charities, legacies form an important aspect of regular fundraising. As Friends of War Memorials is still a relatively young charity, we have yet to receive regular legacies - on the one hand we are delighted to report this fact, but it should be remembered that all legacies have the advantage from Inheritance Tax, and enable donors to plan their giving.

Please consider remembering war memorials in your Will. By leaving a legacy with Friends of War Memorials in your Will, you

can ensure that your name will always be remembered with respect and your legacy will be your lasting memorial. It will be used to preserve some of the many memorials around the country, which may otherwise have fallen into disrepair losing the names of those whose lives were cut short through the war.

All you need to do is advise your solicitor of the amount you wish to give, FoWM's name and its registered charity number. For further information contact FoWM.

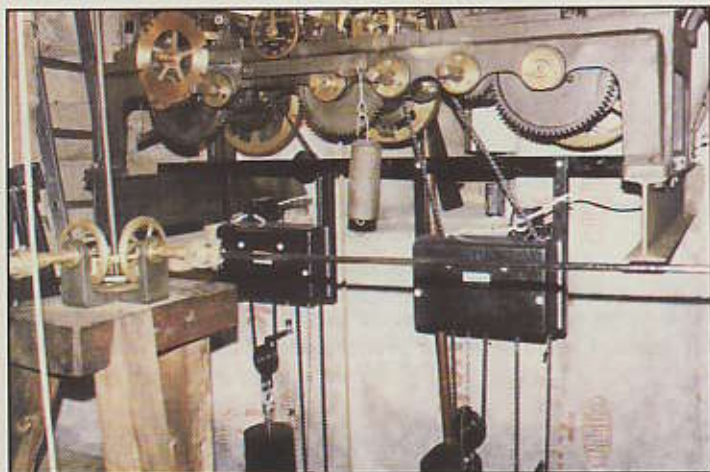


Lympstone war memorial dedication (1920) © FoWM

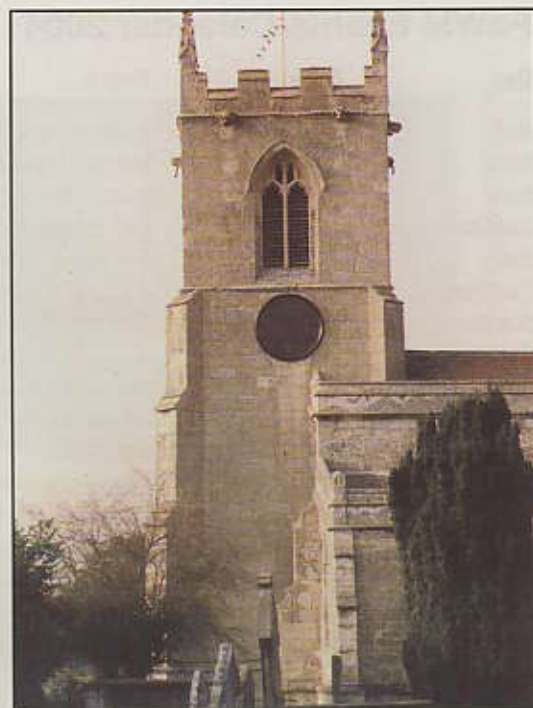
Friends of War Memorials Small Grants Scheme

FoWM continues to support war memorial projects of all types through the Friends of War Memorials Small Grants Scheme. We have so far awarded over £26,000 to 143 projects. The number of applications keeps rising!

Our latest successful projects include the conservation and restoration of war memorials, the addition of names and relettering of inscriptions, hardlandscaping and the creation of new war memorials. We show here a selection of these projects:



Photos by D Wright



Restoration of the war memorial clock at All Saints church in Mattersey (Nottinghamshire). A £250 grant was awarded for this project.



Photos by P Taylor

Restoration of the Tylorstown (Wales) war memorial at Holy Trinity church. A grant of £250 was awarded to this project, which involved the relocation of the war memorial shrine (as a measure of prevention conservation) and the creation of a new war memorial garden.

Restoration of the Dove Holes (Derbyshire) war memorial.

This included structural work (by dismantling the war memorial and reinforcing the foundation), relettering and improvement of access, a main concern when dealing with war memorials. This project was awarded a grant of £250.



Photo by S Stockdale

Friends of War Memorials Small Grants Scheme is able to give grants of up to £250 per project to assist war memorials of all dates and types.

The Small Grants Scheme is primarily targeted towards the conservation and repair of existing war memorials, but related work such as addition of new names, landscaping and the creation of new war memorials are also eligible for assistance. There is no listing requirement or geographical restrictions.

Please contact the Conservation Officer at FoWM for more information, to request an application form or to discuss a potential application.



A grant of £250 was awarded towards the cleaning and relettering of the Belper (Derbyshire) war memorial.

◀ Photos by A Clifford ▼

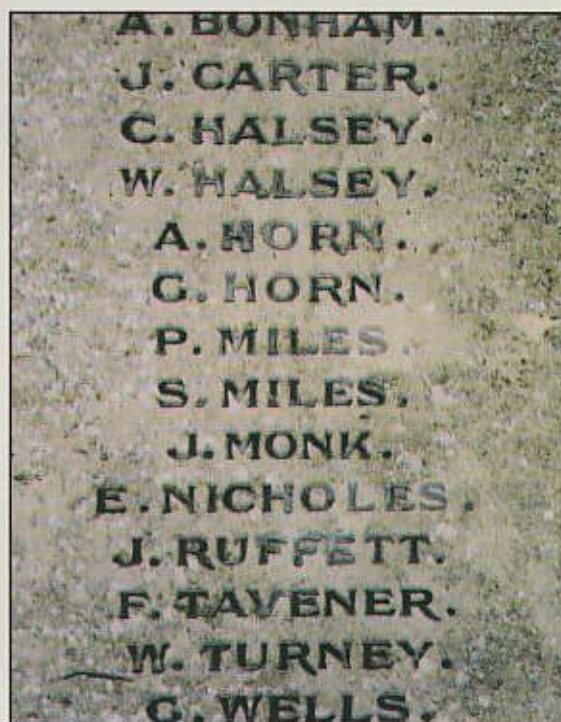


The FoWM Small Grants Scheme is one of the most successful elements of our work, which allows us to fund many projects that fall outside the remit of other grant schemes. Our grants and professional advice have been central in helping the restoration of war memorials countrywide.

Your donation is important and will help us in assisting the many projects we receive each year. Please consider sending a donation to : Sir Donald Thompson, Friends of War Memorials, 4 Lower Belgrave Street, London SW1W 0LA



▲ Photos by P Gaspar ▼



A grant of £250 was awarded towards the restoration of the Ivinghoe (Bedfordshire) war memorial. This project involved the cleaning and relettering of the memorial, which included the reinstatement of lost inscriptions.

Restoration of the Sidlesham (Sussex) war memorial. This project was awarded a £175 grant towards the restoration of the war memorial and relettering of inscriptions.

Photo by A Jenkins ►



English Heritage Grants for War Memorials

To stem the tide of decay that threatens this unique aspect of our national heritage, and to ensure that they can remain as a reminder to future generations of the price paid by so many for the freedom we enjoy today, English Heritage, in association with the Wolfson Foundation and Friends of War Memorials, is making funds available for the repair of free-standing war memorials in England. There are no listing or conservation area requirements.

The types of work which may qualify for grant aid include:

- repairs to fabric, including works of structural stabilisation
- recutting and recarving of eroded inscriptions and detail
- relettering, releading and regilding
- cleaning where appropriate and clearly beneficial
- reinstatement of lost elements, particularly decorative features
- works to associated hard landscaping, where this forms part of the overall design

This scheme awards grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum of £10,000. Please contact the Conservation Officer - Dr Pedro Gaspar - for further details, application form, advice or to discuss a potential application.

Work which has begun before a formal grant offer has been made and accepted is not eligible for grant aid.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

THE
WOLFSON
FOUNDATION



Friends of War Memorials

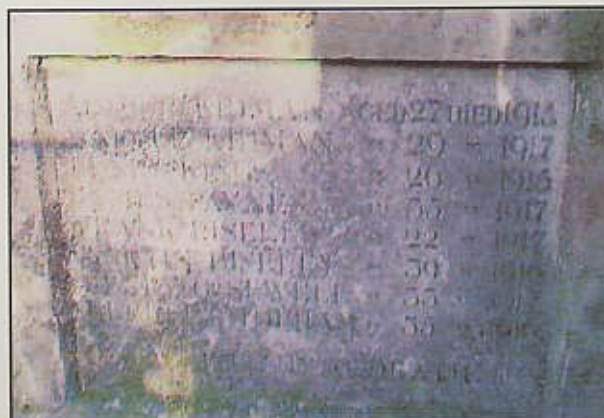
Our latest successful projects

A £350 grant was awarded for a condition survey of the Tattenhall (Cheshire) war memorial. This study will address the structural condition of the memorial and analyse the ground's condition and soil's properties.

Photo by J Dutton ►



A grant of £1,835 was offered to the restoration of the Eltisley (Cambridgeshire) war memorial lychgate. This included the repair of the entrance gates (with English oak), cleaning and relettering of inscriptions.



◀ *Photos by G Stoehr* ▶

The UK National Inventory of War Memorials has estimated that there are over 60,000 memorials throughout the United Kingdom.

A grant of £2,300 was offered towards the cleaning, repairs and surface treatment of the "Destiny" Peace Memorial (Kent), designed by Gilbert Bayes.



Photos © Thanet District Council

Photo © UKNIWM



Buntingford (Hertfordshire). A grant of £2,800 was offered to assist with the cleaning, restoration and surface treatment of the stonework and repair of surrounding pavement.



All Saint's Cavalry war memorial (Cheltenham). A grant of £3,385 was offered to cleaning and consolidation of the stonework and restoration of statuary elements.



Photos by Stephen Gregory

St James' Church war memorial - a restoration appeal

Our beautiful war memorial, believed to be one of only two in the country, is now in a sad state of disrepair due to salt and water ingress.

The memorial takes the form of a glass mosaic, and is embedded in the wall of the southern transept of our church. It depicts the list of men who lost their lives in the 1914 - 18 war. A soldier and sailor are standing guard on either side, and beneath this is the Lusitanian, the Cunard liner that was sunk with the loss of 1100 lives in May 1915. The mosaic is surrounded by sandstone, a later addition, upon which at the bottom are engraved the names of the 35 men from St James' who fell in the 1939 - 45 war. The mosaic is made from opus sectile and smalt glass, and takes the form of a stained glass window.

The damage to our memorial had been caused by an undetected water pipe leaking into the sandstone wall, over time this has caused the memorial to bulge, (as the glass was set in wood), causing pieces of glass to fall out.

The First Stage of any further damage to the Memorial has been halted by the kind help of the award winning Liverpool Museum Conservation Centre. The second stage is to repair the Memorial and return it to its former glory. The restoration work is also to be undertaken by the Conservation Centre, at a cost of £21,000 plus VAT. This does not include the treatment and preparation of the wall, which houses the memorial - we are facing a more realistic figure of £30,000!

John Larson from the Conservation Centre said that *"this memorial is beautiful - it's extremely rare and the quality is superb, we are keen to see*

Photo by Rowena Cain



it conserved and we have mummified it free of charge because we were so worried about it."

Mr Larson said a painstaking restoration could take 6 months; but it would then be saved for at least another century. Sadly, it is going to take a lot longer than 6 months, as we, like many other churches struggle to make ends meet. Up to date we have raised £4,500 for the First Stage, which was to remove the memorial from the wall. We have done this on our own by the usual church methods of fundraising. This is a mammoth task for us on top of raising money for church as usual, we are only a small Parish.

So, we are now seeking help from further afield, and by applying for any available grants. We really want our Memorial to be saved, not only for the men of our parish who lost their lives, but for future generations to see what a sacrifice these men made. We don't want them to be forgotten. We feel confident that somehow, and with God's help, we can achieve our goal, however long it takes.

If your wish to contribute to our appeal, please send your cheque to; St James' War Memorial Fund, c/o Rowena Cain, 71 Marlowe Drive, West Derby, Liverpool L12 7LR.

War Memorial in Arnold, Nottinghamshire (part II) - by Arthur Clarke

In the Spring 2004 issue I described how, in 1993, I was appointed vicar of Arnold in Nottinghamshire where I discovered that there were several memorials in the local borough to the men who were killed in WWI but none commemorating the men who fell in WWII. I decided to launch a nationwide search to try and discover the names of all the men and women of Arnold who had been killed or died in WWII as a result of enemy action. At the end of our search in January 1995 we had come up with 84 names. 1995 was significant, being the year in which the 50th anniversaries of both VE Day and VJ Day fell.

In the first place, we decided to produce a memorial, to be placed in the parish church, very similar to the one which commemorated the 284 men who fell in the 1914 - 18 conflict. The WWI Memorial would be placed immediately underneath the older one.

The day chosen for the dedication was Sunday 7th May 1995, the same day that the National Service of Thanksgiving commemorating VE Day was being held in St Paul's Cathedral. We were very fortunate to secure Sir Michael Nall to give the Dedication address. Sir Michael was a former naval officer who served on HMS Hood until 6 weeks before it was sunk in May 1941 and then on destroyers for the remainder of the war.

The church was packed for the service, which we combined with a VE Day 50th anniversary service. Afterwards, people stayed behind to study the Memorial which had been inscribed, like the older one, with the names in completely random order, without giving any indication of rank, which we felt to be appropriate.

The next job was to complete the Memorial Register, which we had decided to compile. This Register would contain the name, rank, number, unit, squadron or ship, age at death, details of how, when and where and in what action each man was killed, home address and next of kin. In addition, one of the more moving and poignant letters we received, which, remember, was written 59 years after the event, was framed and placed on the window ledge next to the Memorial Tablet on the wall.

Some two or three months after, I received a telephone call from a man telling me that his mother had just died and asking me if I would take the funeral. When I went round to see the family I immediately recognised the man. He told me that he had been at the Memorial dedication

Photo by Arthur Clarke



with his mother and that his father had been killed in February 1944 at Cassino. He said that attending the service and seeing her husband's name on the plaque had given her a great sense of peace and she had told the family that she was now ready to die.

About two years after the Memorial Tablet and the Registers had been dedicated the president of the Arnold branch of the Royal British Legion approached me and raised the question of getting the names of those killed in WWII engraved on the blank North face of the stone monument on the town park, commemorating those killed in WWI. I immediately agreed with his suggestion and Gedling Borough Council generously agreed to pay for the cost of engraving. When the monument was complete we organised a parade through the streets of Arnold led by the band of the South Notts Hussars. Standards were carried, representative sections of the regular army and navy, TA Battalions, cadet units and Royal British Legion plus several non military youth organisations contributed a marching contingent and all ex-servicemen and women were invited to parade informally behind the 'more organised marchers.

Sir Andrew Buchanan, the Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire performed the re-dedication of the Monument. It was a glorious October day for this final act of remembrance and brought the whole enterprise to a very fitting conclusion just over 50 years after the end of WWII.

Save for the community!

Campaign to save Melton & District War Memorial Hospital - by M. de Faria



At the end of last year it finally dawned on the residents of Melton Mowbray that our local Primary Care Trust was to sell off our old and much neglected Grade II listed War Memorial Hospital.

There had been a mention of this in the press over the previous couple of years, but I confess that it was one of those items that passed me. Now we were faced with the imminent loss of one of the town's few remaining buildings of heritage, set in 15 acres of fine parkland - an example of one of the last hunting "lodges" built in Melton to house the many who came for the sport of the chase, from the 1700s until the outbreak of WWII.

In November last a group of residents, concerned at the likelihood that the land would be sold to become a large housing development - and very possibly a gated community, got together to do something about preserving the site for the people of the town.

The Melton & District Cottage was bequeathed to the people of Melton in 1921 by Lt Col Richard Dalglish, who purchased Wyndham Lodge in memory of his son, a casualty of WWI. The Unitary Authority of the day had been looking for a suitable memorial to recognise the town's war dead, and determined to make Melton Cottage Hospital into a War Memorial.

The NHS Act of 1946 caused the Melton & District War Memorial Hospital to pass into the hands of the National Health Service in 1948. Over the years the parkland and its

amenities has remained fully accessible and greatly enjoyed by the public the children and young people, of the town.

It may not be politically correct nowadays, but hunting made Melton rich and famous - it wasn't unusual to have several princes and a couple of kings in the hunting field at one time.

As well as becoming a shopping and service centre equipped to supply all the needs of its clientele, Melton became a hub of gentlemen's clubs and gaming houses, with three race courses nearby, including one at Burton Lazars where the first Grand National was run.

Melton Mowbray remains a market town and according to the Leicester Mercury, is one of three areas in Leicestershire with a significant number of £1m+ homes. But sadly the centre of the town is dying. Much of the local population commutes, and their shopping is done in the larger cities where there is perceived to be more choice. Hunting and farming, which accounted for the area's vibrancy over several centuries, have suffered greatly in recent years. Food processing remains the predominant industry, grown out of the continuing popularity of Melton Mowbray pork pies and Stilton cheese.

Over the years the townspeople have destroyed their built heritage in the name of progress. Only now, with the forthcoming sale of the War Memorial Hospital, have the townspeople banded together to halt this ominous trend - **Melton First**.



As well as sending out media stories with a new different angle each week (ensuring that Melton First is featured consistently) we've targeted hospital consultants and GPs for letters of support, and sent local businesses Support Melton First posters, which are currently to be seen in shop

And the message I'd leave for any other would-be Memorial saver-groups is GO FOR IT! Do it for your community, for the future. Those who fell and in whose name War Memorials are erected would, I'm sure, be happier if they knew that their sacrifice was being recognised as a living, active and youthful memorial not only to those who are past, but those who are our future.

Crimestoppers
0800 555 111
Your call is free

You do not have to give your name

Obelisk War Memorials - by Richard Barnes

The Obelisk feature is well known to Friends of War Memorials. It has a long history which began when English travellers saw and admired in Rome the obelisks which the emperors of old had pillaged from Egypt. Obelisks arrived in Britain in the 16C and by the 18C were used to commemorate the feats of statesmen and military leaders.

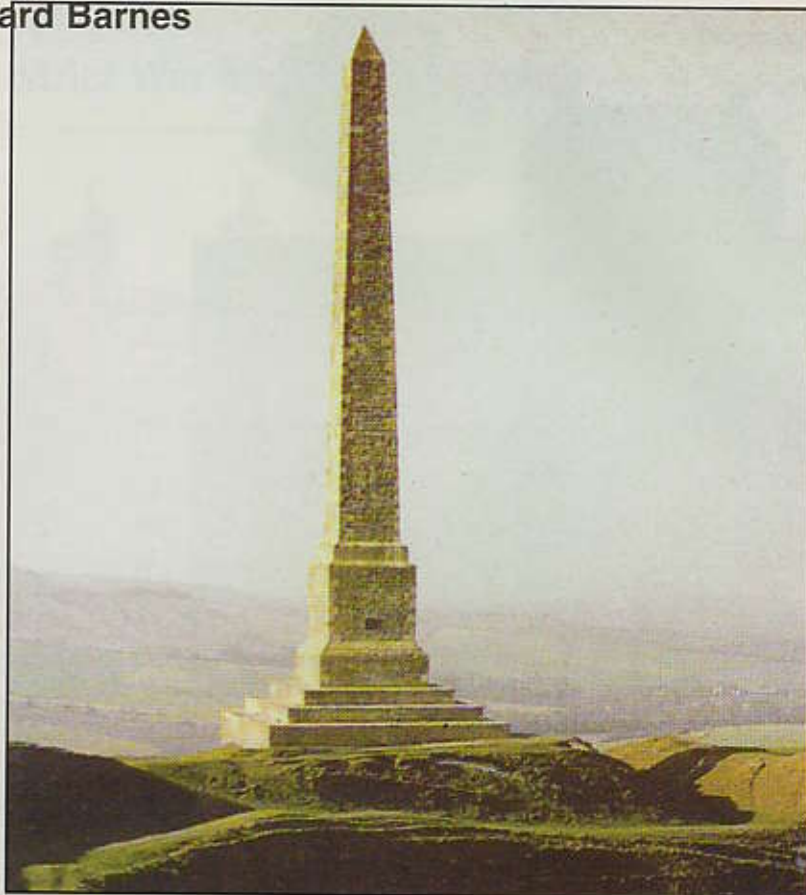
Wellington was honoured with a number of monumental obelisks. As the 19th century progressed, Britain's overseas interests met with conflicts; the obelisk feature was increasingly used in memorials to those who died in foreign lands. An early example was the Chillanwallah Column of 1853, a tall obelisk at London's Royal Hospital, remembering officers and men from the 2nd Anglo-Sikh War. Others were raised on hill tops in the countryside, commemorating individual officers, or by the sea, remembering Naval losses. Significantly, other advances were afoot, illustrated in the Lancaster Crimean War Memorial of 1858. This was one of Britain's phenomenal new cemeteries and it was all in one single piece of polished granite, one of the first available from Aberdeen.

As the Victorian age faded Britain was faced with large fatalities in the South African War. Now memorials were in earnest for all volunteers, named or not. Obelisks were raised in many places, with large ones in Worthing, Barnet, Oxford, Nottingham, Llandudno, Flint, Preston, Dunbar and elsewhere.

No sooner were these in place than Britain entered the Great war and the flow of memorials became a torrent. To facilitate the link to Art the Royal Academy hosted a War Memorial Exhibition in 1919 and three of the finest architects were appointed to the Imperial War Graves Commission. One of them Edwin Lutyens, in addition to designing the Cenotaph, made numerous memorials. Some of these, at Manchester, Northampton and at York railway station, used the obelisk feature in a most dignified manner. Manchester's War Memorial consisted of a pair of obelisks standing on either side of a taller pylon cenotaph, itself topped by a stone figure of a soldier lying beneath his greatcoat.

About a thousand war memorials involved the obelisk as the main feature, and in the case of countless others it was the background. The larger obelisks spring to mind: Blackpool (at 100 feet the country's tallest War Memorial), Southport, Harrogate, Scarborough, Southend (Lutyens), Bishops Cleeve, Cowbridge and Dunoon. Naval

Photo by R Barnes



obelisks standing in Portsmouth, Chatham and Plymouth were identical.

Why did so many Memorial Committees of 1919 chose the obelisk? There were practical reasons as well as considerations of religion, tradition and location. Possibly it was the solid simplicity of the thing, an appropriate memorial when seen as an emblem of the regenerating power of the sun.

At the smaller end of the scale were villages where the Memorial Fund amounted to no more than £150 - £250. Here the choice might have been between a smaller ready made obelisk or a cross. In stone working regions, the committees preferred to use local workmen, and in this way obtained fine obelisks for less money. Though all regions received obelisk war memorials, they seem to be favoured in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Wales and Scotland, reaching far out to the Isles, to Stornoway, Shetland and three of the Orkneys.

When World War II provided another generation of fatalities the long memorial procedures on 1919 were avoided because, in practically all cases, (as FoWM readers will know,) the names of WWII casualties were added to the existing WWI memorials. There were a few new ones,

mostly RAF, and others such as the Dover Patrol obelisk.

Standing out in our landscape, they are a national treasure, a great addition to the existing collection of obelisks.

The author, Richard Barnes, who has previously written about public sculpture, gives full recognition to their importance in the overall review. His new book *THE OBELISK - A Monumental Feature in Britain* is the first and only review of Britain's obelisks, with a full gazetteer; it is intended for historians, architects and gardeners and anyone who has wondered about these things.

Readers are invited to telephone, post, or email to the contact address shown here, to receive a printed prospectus with full details about the book and a post free pre-publication subscriber's offer.

THE OBELISK - A Monumental Feature in Britain.
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