

Leicestershire & Rutland War Memorials Project

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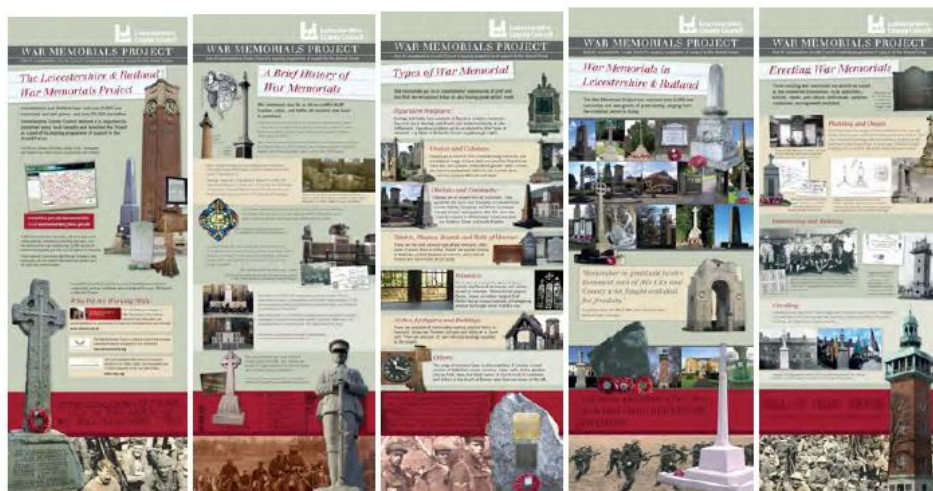


Whilst we are coming to the end of the WWI centenary period, the Leicestershire and Rutland War Memorials Project continues to grow and we are very grateful for all of the information about our Leicestershire war casualties that continues to be sent in.

Project website - www.leicestershirowarmemorials.co.uk

We receive many contributions from local historians and family members alike, which we are glad to be able to publish via our website - this information helps us to know as individuals the fallen servicemen and women from across the county and in doing so, allows us to understand the sacrifices that were made. In addition, our website provides public access to a vast database of information, providing a unique and valuable research resource for family, military and social historians.

If you know of any war memorial-related event in your village, or are helping to organising a commemorative event, please let us know. We would be glad to help publicise your activity through the news and events page of our website. If you would like to borrow our project banners for an event, please get in touch at war.memorials@leics.gov.uk.



Conservation Update

Leicestershire County Council has been offering free, expert conservation advice to war memorial custodians for over 20 years, and has contributed to the restoration of many county war memorials through the County Council War Memorial Conservation Grant Scheme.

We can help you to produce a list of maintenance or conservation issues that need to be addressed and help you to find a suitable contractor with specialist knowledge in the maintenance and repair of historic monuments.

Since the issue of our last newsletter in 2014, LCC has helped to fund the successful restoration of war memorials at Tilton on the Hill, Edmondthorpe, Plungar and Sharnford. Conservation advice and new grant scheme applications are currently underway at Great Glen, Countesthorpe, Shenton and Breedon on the Hill.

Under the terms of the Conservation Grant Scheme, Leicestershire County Council are currently able to offer 50% of approved repair costs, up to a maximum value of £2000. We are also able to advise on other potential sources of funding. Please send all enquiries to war.memorials@leics.gov.uk.

Listing of war memorials in Leicestershire and Rutland

In 2014, to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, Historic England (formerly English Heritage) embarked upon a five-year project to add 2,500 war memorials to the National Heritage List for England. The project is funded by the Government through the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

War Memorial listings 2009- 2015

War Memorial Portico at Market Harborough Cottage Hospital 2009
Dunton Basset War Memorial 2009
Castle Donington War Memorial 2011
Breedon on the Hill War Memorial 2011
Swithland Cross War Memorial 2012
Shepshed War Memorial 2012
Birstall War Memorial 2012
Hungarton War Memorial 2013

2015 Listings

Stoke Golding War Memorial
Sheepy Magna War Memorial
Ketton War Memorial
Morcott War Memorial

2016 Listings

Oakham War Memorial
Syston War Memorial Clock Tower
Church Langton War Memorial
Muston War Memorial
Edmondthorpe War Memorial
South Croxton War Memorial
Pickwell War Memorial

2017 Listings

Ibstock War Memorial
Queniborough War Memorial
Gaddesby War Memorial and Railings
Tilton on the Hill War Memorial
Great Dalby War Memorial
Sapcote War Memorial
Kirby Muxloe Stone of Remembrance and
War Memorial Gates
Bardon Hill War Memorial

2018 Listings so far..

Long Whatton War Memorial
Countesthorpe War Memorial
Desford War Memorial
Exton War Memorial
Hambleton War Memorial
Langham and Barleythorpe War Memorial
Manton War Memorial
Preston War Memorial
Shenton War Memorial
Thurmaston War Memorial
Twycross War Memorial

And currently under consideration for Listing....

Diseworth War Memorial
Donisthorpe War Memorial Gateway
St Peter's Roman Catholic Church War
Memorial
Kegworth War Memorial
Whetstone War Memorial

We are pleased to see that the number of County memorials listed under the Historic England scheme has greatly increased since 2015 and hope that this trend continues, as we feel that listing offers the best means of protection for these significant and historic monuments.

Anyone can nominate a war memorial for listing - for further information about this we recommend that you refer to Historic England guidance :

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/apply-for-listing/listing-priorities/war-memorials-listing-project/>



New Case Studies

Worker Brunetta Smith- Blaby

In the rather secluded location of the old Non-Conformist burial ground on Mill Lane in Blaby, lies the resting place of Worker Brunetta Smith of the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps.



Brunetta was born in Blaby in 1893, and was the daughter of John Smith, a framework knitter, and Sarah Ann Smith of Whetstone. Formerly employed as a silk bonnet maker, Brunetta enlisted as a Worker with the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and died in service at Endell Street Military Hospital in London. The hospital was established in May 1915 by Doctors Flora Murray and Louisa Garrett Anderson, both former members of the Women's Social and Political Union and militant suffragists- the hospital itself was run and staffed entirely by women suffragists.

The IWM war memorials register has records of a WW1 plaque that was originally located at the hospital site, but is now lost. We understand that 6 names were recorded on the memorial, but have not located a photograph or transcript of the memorial at this time.

Flying Officer Oswald George Day

In November 2017, historian Tobin Jones identified some fragments of metal that were found in a field close to Souldern, Oxfordshire. Having spent his formative years investigating and researching wartime aircraft sites and their crews, Tobin was able to identify the fragments as having come from a Handley Page Hereford Bomber.

The Hereford was a development of the Handley Page Hampden, a successful bomber used by Bomber Command during the early years of the war. The Hereford made use of an alternative engine (the Napier Dagger), in order to ease production problems if the usual Bristol Pegasus engines ceased to be available. 100 of the Herefords were built by Short and Harland in Belfast and delivered to the RAF between 1939 and 1940. However, the Dagger engine was not a success in the Hereford, being noisy, underpowered, prone to overheating on the ground and seizing when air-bound: it is not thought that any of the Herefords saw active combat

16 OTU (Operational Training Unit) was a training unit tasked with taking new pilots, who had recently completed their basic training, forming them into crews and training them in the systems and methodology that Bomber Command were using in the field at that time. The unit was formed in April 1940 at RAF Upper Heyford and went on to become a very successful training unit. In the early days of operation however, they were working under great time pressure, with many worn out and sub-standard aircraft and there were great numbers of casualties.

L6067 was issued to 16 OUT at RAF Upper Heyward and on the 1st August 1940, the plane took off from base for a low level formation flight, piloted by 24 year old Sergeant George Oswald Day 742004, of Leicester, with 2nd Pilot Flying Officer George Holland Thevenard 70668 of Hull, Sergeant (Wireless Operator) Sydney Nevil Baker of Dordon and passenger Aircraftman George William Rhodes of Sheffield. During the course of the flight, the aircraft experienced engine failure.

It is thought from his service number, that Sergeant Day is likely to have been a new recruit, tasked with flying a complicated and difficult aircraft whilst still very inexperienced. It seems certain that Sgt Day encountered engine problems whilst flying at relatively low altitude and in trying to rectify the situation, the plane lost speed and the engine stalled. Eyewitness reports record that at 3:10pm, the plane was observed to stall and plunge to the ground in a banked vertical dive near Souldern. The aircraft burst into flames and all four crew members were killed.



Photograph Courtesy: A Haines, 2015



Photograph taken by S. Clarke 2017

Sergeant Day is buried with his father in Gilroes Cemetery Leicester.

Thank you for your continued interest in the War Memorials Project.

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