

RESTORATION OF THE SHEDFIELD WAR MEMORIALS

The War Memorials are located at the cross-roads of the B2177 Winchester Road, and Upper Church Road opposite Ford's Corner in the South West corner of Shedfield Recreation Ground.



There are two War Memorials on the site: one to the fallen of the Great War 1914-18, and, one to those who lost their lives during the Second World War 1939-45 and in later conflicts.

The 1914-19 memorial was unveiled and dedicated on Sunday 9th October 1921 by Vice Admiral R. F. Phillimore and the Lord Bishop of Southampton.

It is approximately 4 metres high with an octagonal shaped shaft with a cross incised at its top. The names of the fallen and the dedication are on four faces at the base. The whole memorial is constructed of Lower Greensand Sandstone, which unfortunately is a soft material and this has resulted in the erosion of the names and dedication.

Work began on trying to arrange the restoration in mid-2005. No stonemason could be found who was prepared to carry out the restoration in situ, and the monument was too large to be moved to a workshop. So, an impasse seemed to have been reached, with no practical way forward. Fortunately, J. C. Landford, the Monumental Masons in Wickham Road, Fareham, came up with a practical solution to the problem. They suggested attaching Portland Stone plates to the four faces. This proposal was agreed by the Parish Council and work began in October 2007.

These two photographs clearly show the poor condition of the memorial prior to restoration.



The names of the fallen are virtually illegible.



These two photographs clearly show the vast improvement achieved with the Portland Stone faces that were fitted in December 2007.



Attention then turned to the Second World War memorial which is in the form of an open book. It was made from the same soft sandstone as the 1914-18 memorial, and therefore suffered from the same erosion, but, to a lesser extent as it was not as old. No details could be found about its unveiling and dedication. It would be appreciated if anyone with information could contact the Parish Clerk so that the details can be added to the Website.



Once again, Langford's were able to supply a solution, this time, quite different from the 1914-18 memorial solution. It was proposed that the whole memorial be removed to Langford's workshop where it could be 'skimmed' and the names, plus some additions, be re-carved. This was agreed by the Parish Council and work started in January 2008. The refreshed memorial was replaced in April 2008.

Unfortunately, there was an unforeseen problem. The memorial is natural stone and as such has imperfections within it that were not visible until it was 'skimmed'. They are probably caused by sea shells trapped in the stone and as can be seen in the photographs below and unfortunately they spoil the whole memorial. It was therefore reluctantly agreed by the Parish Council that a quotation should be obtained from Langford's for a new memorial in similar stone to the faces of the 1914-18 memorial so that the two memorials matched each other.



The original 1939-45 memorial will not be wasted as the intention is to move it to the cemetery and place it in the hexagonal centre-piece

The final work was completed by Langford's in February 2009. This photograph was taken the day after the installation of the 1939-45 memorial. It looks rather 'bright' but will quickly tone down with time to match the faces of the 1914-18 memorial as it is made from the same stone.



This photograph clearly shows the new 1939-45 memorial, with an additional name added, plus the name of the soldier killed in Northern Ireland in 1972.



Having replaced the 1939-45 memorial with the newly created one, Langford's moved the old one to the cemetery and placed it in the hexagonal herb garden.

. The photo below was taken in July 2008 before the memorial was relocated.





So, in February 2009 the work on the restoration of the War Memorials was finally completed.