

Thame Remembers!

Introduction

Aim

- ◆ To commemorate the centenary of WW1 by researching all the names on Thame War Memorials to discover more about their lives, to identify the location of their grave or memorial and place a "Thame Remembers!" cross on each resting place, wherever in the world that may be.
- ◆ To bring home to the people of the town how many people have lost their lives and how important it is that we never forget what they have done for our country.

Scope

- ◆ Initial scoping shows that the memorials in the town are:

Memorial / Honour Board	WW1	WW2	Boer	Korea	No unique
Thame War Memorial	94	23			117
St Mary's Honour Boards	71	24	5		4
St Mary's Churchyard memorials	15	6	1	1	4
All Saints' Honour Board	76	0			2
Christchurch Honour Board	13	1			0
Moreton War Memorial	6	2			0
Lord Williams's School Honour Board	29	30			51
Blue Plaque (2014) (FH Kirby VC)			1		1
Total	(to date)				179

Partners

- ◆ Thame Museum will be the lead body for the project and deal with all claims and payments. The main partners in delivering the project will be "the people of Thame" and Thame Town Council who will front and administer the delivery of the project.
- ◆ Initial identified partners will be: St Marys Church, British Legion, Thame Cricket Club, U3As, Fire Service, RAFA, RN Association. Army Cadets, ATC, RAF Halton, Soldiers of Oxfordshire, Thame Round Table, Thame Classic Car club.

Schools Programme

- ◆ The town primary and secondary schools will be invited to be partners in the project and to assist where possible with the research, particularly where family relatives of current pupils are named on the memorials.
- ◆ Researchers will co-ordinate with particular pupils in researching their family relatives.
- ◆ Schools will be kept up to date with the progress of the research and delivery of the crosses with presentations and displays as requested.

Timescales

- ◆ The project will aim to start research in March/April 2014, with a public launch in August 2014 and run for the next two years. HLF funding has a two year limitation therefore all placements should be made by April 2016.

Budget

- ◆ A full budget expenditure projection is at Annex A and income at Annex B. This is as accurate as possible but many of the costs and income are only indicative at this time. Some later parts of the project may need to be trimmed to meet funds available. It is not intended that there will be a final surplus but if there is then this will be donated to British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Research

Research Volunteers

- ◆ A team of Thame Museum volunteers will carry out the initial research, building on the scoping work carried out a few years ago by Thame Museum.
- ◆ This team will consist of: David Bretherton, Hugo Brooks, Sandra Davison, Jenny Dodds, Mike Dyer, Mary Anne Evans, Pauline Hawsett, Allan Hickman, Sue Jenkins, Andrea Kachelleck, Linda Simon, Carol Thompson, Derek Turner, Charlotte Woodruff. The team will encourage more people to join as the project progresses.

Research methodology

- ◆ Initial research will be "on-line" through free websites such as:
 - ◆ www.cwgc.org (Commonwealth War Graves Commission)
 - ◆ www.familysearch.org
 - ◆ www.freeBMD.org
 - ◆ www.london-gazette.co.uk
- ◆ Further "on-line" research will be necessary through subscription websites such as:
 - ◆ www.forces-war-records.co.uk (£)
 - ◆ www.ancestry.co.uk (£)
 - ◆ www.findmypast.com (£)
 - ◆ www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk (£)
- ◆ Whilst a great deal of information is available "on-line", there will be a need to visit libraries and archives. Initial scoping shows that, at a minimum, these will be:
 - ◆ Oxfordshire History Centre, Cowley (£)
 - ◆ Soldiers of Oxfordshire Archive, Woodstock, Oxford (£)
 - ◆ The National Archives, Kew. (£)

- ◆ For the more difficult to research people it will be necessary to place adverts in local papers and to write speculative letters. It may, as a last resort, be essential to employ a professional researcher to complete the project. (£)

Publication

Notices and leaflets

- ◆ Once the project has received the go ahead, then the public will be notified through a press release and notices around the town. (£)
- ◆ An A4 leaflet will be available to inform the press and members of the public about the project and how they can get involved. (£)

Website

- ◆ A Web-Site will be developed to publish the research, keep the public up to date with progress and provide a mechanism for the public to contribute to the research, particularly with stories and photographs of the people remembered. (£)
- ◆ The website will be continually updated with details of all placements made and will relate the experiences of those making the placements. Where available, photographs and videos of the placements will be posted. Visitors to the website will be invited to register to receive regular updates and newsletters by e-mail.
- ◆ The website should remain available for at least the duration of the World War 1 commemorations.

YouTube Video

- ◆ A short (3-4mins) video will be commissioned to help publicise the project and the role of HLF. The video will explain the concept of the project, encourage people to join in and will be used on the website and as an introduction to presentations about the project. It will be child focussed and be especially useful in getting the message over in schools (£)
- ◆ If funding allows, a further Video will follow showing how the project has evolved and the outcomes for the community and schools. (£)

Powerpoint Presentation

- ◆ A short (3-5mins) presentation to accompany the short introduction video will be produced to assist with presentations to prospective funders and partners.

Exhibition

- ◆ An exhibition is planned for Thame Museum to mark the centenary of WW1. Details of the project and its progress will be displayed at the Museum together with a world map showing all the grave and ship wreck locations identified to date. (£)

Thame Museum Thame Remembers! Project Specification

- ◆ The exhibition at the Museum will close in August. A smaller display, including the world map, will then travel to various locations about the town, such as library, schools, sports halls, market community stall, and local events such as Thame Show and Thame Food Festival. (£)

Public launch event

- ◆ A public launch event is planned for Sunday 3rd of August 2014 which is the eve of the anniversary of the declaration of war. The ceremony will take place at the Graveyard of St Mary' Church and centre on a small marquee placed on the adjacent Cricket Ground. In line with the solemnity of the occasion a bugler will play the last post before dignitaries and families place a "*Thame remembers!*" cross on each of the war graves there. A piper will greet visitors and play a lament as the crosses are placed. Refreshments will be available after the ceremony. (£)
- ◆ Families with relatives of veterans buried in St Mary's Churchyard will be invited to take part in the cross placement ceremony. (£)

Permanent Records

- ◆ A permanent record of the research and *Thame Remembers!* cross placements will be maintained in albums held at the Museum and Thame Town Hall. The *Thame Remembered* albums are intended as permanent records and will be produced on archival quality materials. (£)
- ◆ We will request that, where possible, the person making the placement leaves a message in the cemetery/memorial Visitor Book and an information leaflet about the project and information about the person who is remembered.
- ◆ Small folders will be created for each of the Thame memorials to be made available close to that memorial showing information about each person named.
- ◆ At the end of the project we will share the information with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Imperial War Museum and any similar organisation that may request it and with the archive, museum or visitor centre at each cemetery and memorial.

Delivery

"Thame Remembers!" Cross design

- ◆ The wooden cross will be in the shape of the double bar Thame cross with poppy. Material and size will be similar to that which is currently produced by the British Legion. (£)
- ◆ Each cross will bear the words "*Thame Remembers!*" and carry a tag with these words and the name of the casualty.

In commemoration of the centenary of World War I this small cross is placed here by the people of Thame, Oxon in remembrance of the wartime sacrifices made by its citizens.

Thame Museum Thame Remembers! Project Specification

- ◆ The exact number of crosses needed for the project is not yet known but a reasonable estimate is 200. To cope with the anticipated local demand for the crosses for private use a total of 250 will need to be purchased.

Wreath Design

- ◆ The wreaths will be British Legion poppy wreaths with the Thame town crest in the centre. They will bear tags with the wording as above. The exact number of wreaths needed for the project is not yet known but a reasonable estimate is 40. (£)

Delivery Challenge

- ◆ Crosses will be placed on the graves in St Mary's Churchyard on 3 August 2014 (the eve of the centenary of the declaration of war) at a public launch event. (£)
- ◆ The people of Thame are then challenged to place all other "*Thame Remembers!*" crosses and wreaths on the correct grave or memorial, wherever in the world that grave or memorial might be. The method of delivery will be left to the imagination and inventiveness of the people, but must be appropriate and in keeping with the project. Each delivery will be approved by the project managers.
- ◆ For Naval personnel who are remembered only on Memorials the challenge will be to identify where their ship wreck lies and place a *Thame Remembers!* cross on the sea at that site. For this purpose the cross may be contained within a wreath. RNLI and other services will be invited to become delivery partners for UK offshore crosses and wreaths.
- ◆ Organizations, families or individuals who take up the challenge will first register their intent at Thame Town Hall. They will be provided with as much information as possible about the grave (mainly from CWGC website), a letter of authority, recording instructions and a cross for each individual grave site, and a wreath where appropriate.
- ◆ If, during the research, family members are discovered who would wish to have a funded visit to their ancestor's grave/memorial outside the UK, then this would be beyond the initial scope of this project. The project team will however support a separate bid to HLF for that funding.

Recording

- ◆ Each placement should be fully photographed and include at least:
 - ◆ a general photograph of the cemetery/memorial.
 - ◆ a photograph of the cross in place on the grave and/or wreath at the memorial.
 - ◆ a photograph of the person making the placement at the site.
 - ◆ their thoughts on the project and the delivery.
- ◆ Certificates will be given to those who place "*Thame Remembers!*" crosses on graves/memorials. (£)

- ◆ A record of when and who made each of the placements will be held at Thame Town Hall. At the end of the project albums with details of all placements will form a permanent record.

Placement on Memorials and Graves

- ◆ Where possible the "*Thame Remembers!*" cross will be placed in front centre of the headstone of the grave.
- ◆ Where a person is only remembered by name on a memorial, then a wreath will be placed at the memorial and also the "*Thame Remembers!*" cross should be placed on the grave of an un-named serviceman nearby, where possible identified by appropriate rank and regiment/unit.

Transport costs and Insurance

- ◆ It is anticipated that persons will combine the journey to the grave/memorial locations with a planned holiday or business trip and so it is expected that transport costs to the region should be borne by the person/group undertaking the journey. Persons placing crosses or wreaths should ensure that they have adequate insurance for the journey. *Thame Remembers!* cannot cover any insurance claim resulting from these journeys.
- ◆ The additional costs for transport to travel from the holiday/business area to a cemetery and memorials when overseas and for transport costs to the various grave/memorial sites in UK may be covered to a maximum of £40 per placement (overseas) and £25 (UK). (£)

Research Team Visits

- ◆ The research team plan two visits to make their own contribution (£)
 - ◆ One to Ypres and the Menin Gate Memorial.
 - ◆ One to Arras, the Somme and Thiepval Memorial.
- ◆ The people of Thame will be invited on these visits, although places will be limited. (£)

Remembrance Day

- ◆ The Research Group will take part in the annual Remembrance Day ceremony and ensure that a display of the project's progress is available either at the Memorial Gardens or in the hall at nearby Christchurch, which usually hosts refreshments on that day. (£)

Family Requests

- ◆ There may be requests from Thame families to place a *Thame Remembers!* cross at a grave of a family member who served in WW1, WW2 or other wars. These requests will be agreed to, together with the requirement to record the placement in the same way as those who are remembered on memorials. A donation to cover the costs of administration and the cross will be requested, say £15. (-£)

Achievement ceremony

- ◆ There will be a final public event to celebrate both the end of World War 1 and the completion of the project. The main aim will be to enable those who have taken part to share their experiences with others and with the community. This will be held at a suitable venue in the town and should involve at least all those who have placed Crosses and Wreaths, together with family members and civic dignitaries. Details of this event are yet to be finalised. (£)

Making a difference

- ◆ The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) describes the differences that they wish to make through a set of outcomes. We report here how these outcomes will be achieved.

Outcomes for people

The people will have:

- ◆ **learnt about heritage.** The people of Thame will have learned about the names on the many war memorials around the town, who those people were and the debt that the town and country owe to them. The knowledge gained will be permanently available to future people researching the heritage of the town.
- ◆ **developed skills.** Many of the volunteers are new to this area and type of research and so they will need to acquire new skills to use the resources available on the internet and when visiting archive centres. Some will also have acquired new skills in presentation and delivery. Others in completion of funding bids and papers. Many children will have acquired new skills beyond normal curriculum requirements.
- ◆ **changed attitudes and behaviour.** The information presented to the public and made available by the research will dispel many of the myths and false messages that have previously been spread about the people who fought and died in the wars. Children's study of WW1 and 2 will have been enhanced by its immediate relevance to their communities and in some cases their own families.
- ◆ **had an enjoyable experience.** All our researchers are volunteers who would not be doing this if they did not enjoy what they are doing and discovering the fascinating stories behind the names.
- ◆ **volunteered time.** The total amount of time that will have been given by our researchers and deliverers is difficult to collate but even if it is only 12 hours per name that is a total of 300 man/woman days and we expect that it will be considerably more.

Outcomes for heritage

Heritage will be:

- ◆ **better interpreted and explained.** The project is fundamentally about, recording, interpreting and explaining the significance of the various war memorials around the town and therefore the memorials will be better understood, respected, interpreted and explained.

- ◆ **in better condition.** The better understanding and respect created will ensure that the memorials are better looked after and so in better condition. The Memorials around the world will be better known to a wider range of people and in many cases visited by people from the town.
- ◆ **Identified / recorded.** All the memorials in the town will be recorded and known to a greater number of people. The identity and stories of the people will be recorded permanently at the location of the memorial and in public repositories.

Outcomes for communities

- ◆ **more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage.**
The project is aimed at the whole town as a community and will bring people together. Because of its specific research targets people from many circles and families who may not have previously considered history relevant to them will engage with a heritage research project.
- ◆ The challenge to the town to deliver the crosses will draw in children and families and businesses who may not have previously engaged with their town's heritage.

D Bretherton / Mike Dyer
6 Feb 2014

Annex A: Expenditure Budget
Annex B: Projected income streams