



NORTH EAST WAR MEMORIALS PROJECT

CHARITY NO 1113088

NEWSLETTER NO 6

SUMMER 2007

YESTERDAY BELONGS TO YOU

COUNTY HALL DURHAM

Television programmes such as *'You Don't Know You're Born'* highlight the increasing interest there is in tracing your Ancestry. However have you ever thought about your local War Memorial? Have you ever wondered if your ancestor or a family relative is on a War Memorial?

The **NORTH EAST WAR MEMORIALS PROJECT** will be at *County Hall, Durham* on Saturday, May 12 from 10.30am until 4.00pm.

We will be available to answer questions and supply information you require about War Memorials, relatives and ancestors that we hold on our files. You may be surprised what you find out!

If of course you have any additional information that you wish to add to our existing files we would be only too happy to add these to our records. Your input will be acknowledged.

If you want to know about your local community or the surrounding area this History Fair could be of assistance to you. For more information about **'Yesterday Belongs to You'** contact *Julie Hawthorn* on **0191 370 8845**.

So please come and see us, we will be more than happy to see you.



NEWSLETTER APPEAL

Website Activity

Since the last Newsletter the level of activity on the Website has increased significantly. During March the average daily number of unique visits to the Website was 84, with a maximum reached of 121.

During April - up until 24th - the daily average had increased to 98, with a maximum on any one day achieved of 154. The figures are based on counting each user of the Website once each day - regardless of how many times that day the Website was accessed by that individual.

The number of people who have signed up to receive the Newsletters electronically has now reached 135. Only another 640 to go before we can stop posting hard copies!! Remember - when the formal Project period comes to an end the Newsletter will probably only be available via the Website - don't miss out - sign up now at www.newmp.org.uk

AN ANSWER FROM GERMANY

To further confirm the growing International role that the Project is playing, we have just received a message from a lady in Germany who has provided the source of one of the War Memorial quotations about which we were uncertain.

The quotation reads "Love conquers all things even Death" and *Anja Slowinski* discovered it on the mausoleum of Graf Ernst zu Munster in Derneburg, Niedersachsen in North Germany. It seems to be the final lines of the poem "All's Well" by *John Oxenham* - perhaps not so surprising, as the Graf had English ancestors. We are grateful for her help, and for the photograph of the Celtic Wheel-Cross outside the Graf's Mausoleum.

Our collection of local quotations can be found on the Website - can you help identify any more of them?



NEWMP BOOKING

Our Chairman *Janet Brown* has been invited to give a talk in Belsay First School on Friday 9th November. This will be her second school talk, but it's **NEWMP's** first official booking.



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AROUND THE NORTH EAST

Sherburn Village (NEWMP REF S121.08)

The site of the new War Memorial at Sherburn village has been chosen and the site is being prepared as this early photograph shows..



A Query From Australia

The Project was e-mailed recently by *Donald Richardson*, from Australia, who was particularly interested in the "soldier statue" on the Billy Row War Memorial (Reference NEWMP CDB159.01).

Donald explained to us that his interest in War Memorials went back over some 15 years. He is a retired art/design teacher, and university lecturer, and explained that the War Memorial is often the only example of sculpture in an Australian town. They are, by now, part of the "local furniture" and no-one remembers who made them.

But, he is dedicated to revealing, and commemorating, the sculptors. Many of these memorials are in Carrara marble, made in Italy, and purchased by Oz stone-masons from catalogues. The catalogues illustrated soldiers from many countries - including the UK. He noted that the poses of the UK soldiers were very similar to those of the "Diggers". So, maybe they were made in the same factories?

The Oz "Diggers" statues were imported, via London, and, in 1999 Donald sought to trace the firms concerned, but the records were all destroyed in the Blitz. Donald thought that records of these statues might have survived in towns and cities outside London, hence his inquiry to **NEWMP**.

Donald adds that, in his opinion, the form of these marble Memorials has its origin in ancient sculpture. Many of them rest their weight on one leg, the other being relaxed, which is the stance of Michelangelo's "David", and its many Roman ancestors in the museums. The tree-stump behind one leg is certainly a Roman convention, it being needed to support the weight of the body when the Roman sculptors translated their marble copies from the Greek bronze originals.

Donald is travelling to Italy in October, to try to trace these workshops, and has promised to feed back to us any names, addresses etc to add to our database details on individual War Memorials.

This type of initiative is exactly what we need to add to our knowledge, and we are particularly grateful to *Donald* for his offer. We have included a picture of the First World War Memorial in Houghton, a small town in South Australia - an

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image which will strike a chord with many people in this country.

Donald can be contacted at donaldar@ozemail.com.au

If any reader has any specialist knowledge of War Memorial sculpture, we would appreciate being kept informed of any extra information on local Memorials which is shared with him.

We can be contacted at our usual address of

enquiries@newmp.org.uk



Seaton Delaval Air Training Corps (NEWMP REF S7.09)

Following a talk by *Janet Brown*, she was approached by a lady who wanted to know what had happened to the Air Training Corps Memorial, formerly at Seaton Delaval.

Janet wrote to the local paper seeking information from the public, and immediately received a reply from the A.T.C. at Cramlington, to say they have it in their care.

In the form of a propeller, it is accompanied by a photograph and small plaque. However, there are now proposals to place a new plaque at the ATC HQ at Cramlington in the near future.

Newburn (NEWMP REF N13.01 TO N13.06)

This village's War Memorial had been missing a plaque for some years, as names starting with letters at the latter end of the alphabet were conspicuous by their absence.

Now the names have been researched by a trawl through local newspapers and there are plans to replace the missing plaque.

The fire that ravaged the church at Newburn did not affect the War Memorials inside.