

Keston Village War Memorial Centenary Commemoration Project

Saturday the 20th October 2020 will mark the centenary of the unveiling of the Keston Village War Memorial and the Keston Village Residents' Association (KVRA) has embarked on an ambitious and exciting project to commemorate this event. The project has five key work streams:

1. To hold an event to closely replicate the original unveiling ceremony followed by a social gathering at the Village Hall.
2. The restoration of the Memorial to remove copper staining and decolourisation of the stone fabric.
3. Installing an information board near to the Memorial which explains its history.
4. Mounting an additional plaque on the Memorial that commemorates an additional twenty-three men associated with the Parish who died while serving with the Armed Forces during the Great War.
5. Installing a 'There But Not There' silhouette in the vicinity of the Memorial adjacent to the information board.

The planned commemorative event at the Memorial will involve members of the Church and local faith groups, the Armed Services and Cadet Units, the Royal British Legion, the Mayor and Local Councillors, local schools and parishioners.

As the Memorial is Grade 2 listed and situated on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, plans for cleaning it are being drawn up with the support and guidance of The Friends of Keston Common and under the supervision of Bromley Council's Principal Conservation Officer. Help has been sought from the War Memorials Trust and Natural England who have provided additional guidance. Burslem Memorials of Tunbridge Wells, who are specialised stonemasons, will be asked to carry out the work at the end of this year.

Students from Ravens Wood School have been invited to support the project and are designing the proposed information board. They presented a draft of their work at the KVRA AGM in June which was praised by residents and received very positive feedback.



The names of an additional twenty-three men associated with the Parish who died while serving with the Armed Forces were discovered by Edward Williams and Peter Zieminski while researching their book *'For King & Country – Keston Parish and the Great War.'* The KVRA project aims to honour the sacrifice of these men by mounting an additional bronze plaque bearing their names on the Memorial.

The final project work stream is to install a *'There But Not There'* silhouette in the vicinity of the Memorial adjacent to the information board. These metal silhouettes are of a British Infantry 'Tommy' bearing a poppy.



The above photograph shows a representative image of the proposed location for the silhouette (which is transparent) and information board.

The Project Team is applying for a grant to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the project which will cost just under £10,000 to complete and are delighted to have already received donations totalling £1,000 from people who have heard about what is planned and £750 from Bromley Council specifically towards the cleaning costs. Heritage Lottery Funding cannot be guaranteed however so the Project Team is exploring other sources of funding including, amongst other things, sponsorship from local businesses. Every penny counts though and if anyone would like to help and make a donation then this can be done by Bank Transfer marked up to the KVRA Account as 'War Memorial' to Sort Code 09-01-29 Account Number: 35321237 or by cheque made payable to 'KVRA' and 'War Memorial Fund' on the rear and sent or dropped off to 85, Heathfield Road, BR2 6BB.

The KVRA hopes that the project provides a fitting tribute to those who gave their lives for others in all wars and echoes the words of Laurence Binyon's poem *'For the Fallen'* ...

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*