

Ashford Borough Council

Proposals

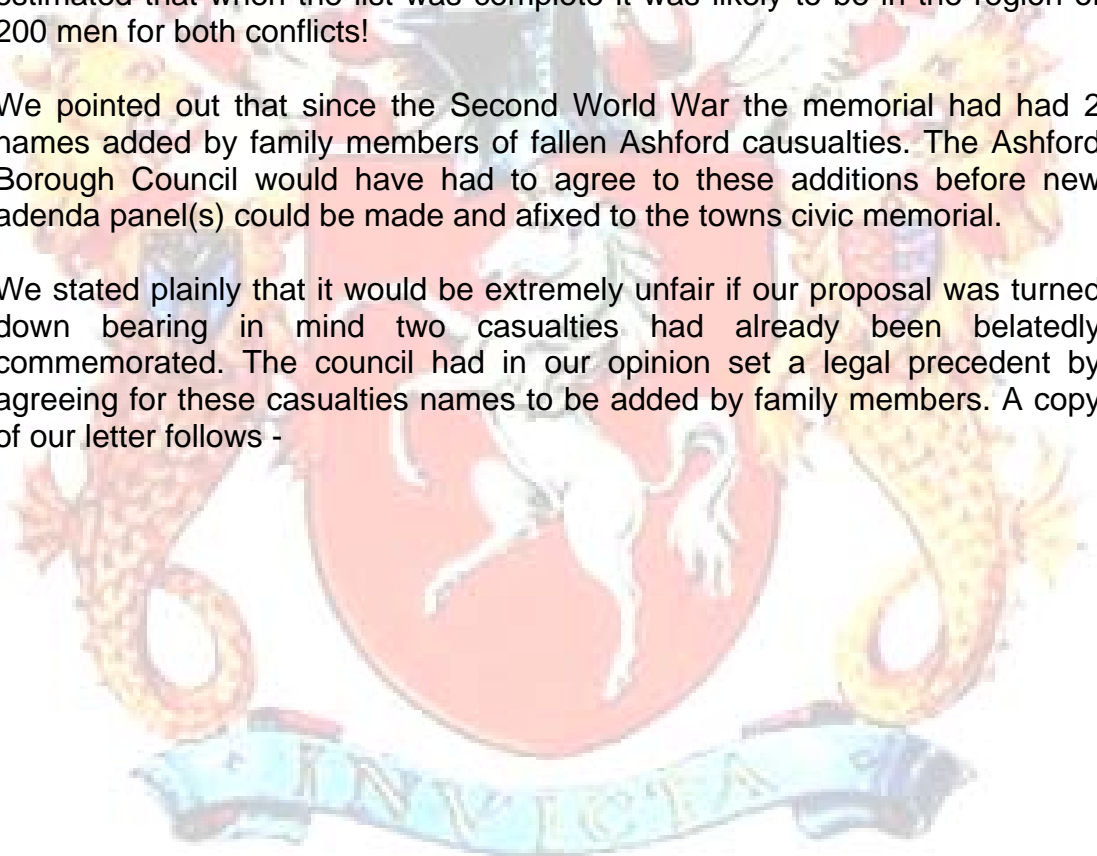
September 2006

- 1. Add forgotten local casualties of the Great War to Ashford's civic tribute.**
- 2. Add Forgotten local casualties of the Second World War to Ashford's civic tribute.**
- 3. Add Post World War 2 casualties to Ashford's civic tribute.**

In September 2006 we politely wrote to the Chief Executive of Ashford Borough Council pointing out the fact we had managed to identify about 120 fallen casualties of the Great War whose names were missed off Ashford's civic tribute in the 1920's when the memorial trustees formulated their list of local men who fell during the war. Additionally Dave Hughes was working on a list of similarly forgotten local casualties from the Second World War. We estimated that when the list was complete it was likely to be in the region of 200 men for both conflicts!

We pointed out that since the Second World War the memorial had had 2 names added by family members of fallen Ashford casualties. The Ashford Borough Council would have had to agree to these additions before new adenda panel(s) could be made and affixed to the town's civic memorial.

We stated plainly that it would be extremely unfair if our proposal was turned down bearing in mind two casualties had already been belatedly commemorated. The council had in our opinion set a legal precedent by agreeing for these casualties names to be added by family members. A copy of our letter follows -





David Hughes : Neil Clark : Kyle Tallett

Kent Fallen

www.roll-of-honour.com

www.ashfordsfallen.com

www.kentfallen.com (soon to come online)

www.cwgc.co.uk

Mr David Hill
Chief Executive
Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Tannery Lane
ASHFORD
Kent
TN23 1PL

Re: Missing Men - Ashford Civic War Memorial

You will probably already know that we found 13 men on the town's civic memorial whose deaths were NOT recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. So far 11 of these men have now been given this honour and will now get new war graves (particularly pleasing given that 5 men had no headstone at all and all the rest were falling apart). We submitted their cases to the Ministry of Defence in 2003. I regret to advise you that we are still waiting for adjudications on 2 sailors. We have funded this project ourselves.

English Heritage has recently decided to protect the monument by way of a listed buildings order. This order was made following an application by David Hughes and myself which we submitted in 2005.

We are working on a further list of 40 men whose names appear on other civic war memorials within the geographic boundary of Ashford Borough Council.

*Last year (2006) a man's name was belatedly added to the town's civic tribute - **E BETTS**. I understand that this was done with the full permission and support of the **Ashford Borough Council**? Indeed without your say so this would have been impossible. Another man's name was belatedly added in the 1980's - **C.W SIMMS**. Both these addenda panels seem to have been attached to the monument by private contractors.*

First of all we would like to point out that a sizable proportion of the men whose names ARE commemorated on the town's civic tribute had very tenuous links to Ashford when alive. Some were the relatives of Ashford inhabitants who moved into the area after the Great War and some others were merely billeted in Ashford years before being killed. Nevertheless these men's names were included by the trustees of the war memorial in 1924.

Following 4 years extensive research we are now in a position to put forward a number of men's names who were similarly forgotten in the years following the Great War. All the

men whose names appear here are Ashford Men. By this we mean they were either born in Ashford or resided here at the time of their death. There can be no doubt that all are entitled to have their names commemorated locally.

We would like these men to be similarly honoured much the same as **E BETTS** was honoured last year and **C.W SIMS** before him. These two private additions have undoubtedly set a legal precedent and it would be terribly hypocritical if this proposal was turned down without recourse to the people of Ashford (who incidently actually own the land where the memorial stands).

Herewith a comprehensive list of 102 sons of Ashford (Great War) whose sacrifices appear to have been completely forgotten. You will see that a sizable proportion of these men are actually buried in Ashford (J.G Pinkerton, J.H.C Griffiths etc.). We are at a total loss to understand how this happened in the 1920's. A walk round the local cemeteries would have "flagged up" many of these missing men!

The civilian war dead of the Second World War appear on the town tribute but poor Gladys Sparkes has been left off! It is extremely unfair to commemorate civilians killed by enemy action in WW2 but not the Great War!

David Hughes is still working on the Second World War list of forgotten men. This list should be complete soon and is likely to number at least 80 additional men. This gives no less than 200 names.

We understand that in the past on Remembrance Sunday the local Royal British Legion has made a verbal tribute to the men whose names appear on the war memorial. We feel that it would be appropriate from now on if these men's names could be included on any list of men given this honour. It would be helpful if the Ashford Borough Council would make a case for this so that these forgotten men can be properly remembered. We mere mortals are usually ignored by some old soldiers who prefer to believe in a myth.

Perhaps you would agree to the siteing of a couple of Addenda Panels – One for each war? Once we have your permission in principal, we can then try and raise the funds to have the work costed and eventually completed. The work will obviously be subject to approval by English Heritage now that the monument is listed.

These addenda panels could be attached to the **inside** wall of the existing war memorial and will be in keeping with the panels that were similarly added after the Second World War. Alternatively the town might consider remembering these additional men in another suitable manner?

We would be more than happy to assist the people of Ashford by making a case in front of a full council meeting...

Thanking you in anticipation....

On 16 April 2007 we received a very welcome reply from the Ashford Borough Council agreeing to our proposal. The letter itself was from Christine Smith which delighted us because Christine has assisted us numerous times over the years and has singlehandedly traced all the lost men's graves. Whoever asked Christine to liase with us made a very sensible decision. A copy of that letter follows -



HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Paul Jackson

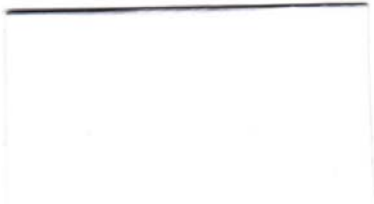


ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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ASHFORD,
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(01233) 331111

<http://www.ashford.gov.uk>
Minicom service

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Ask For Christine Smith
E-mail chris.smith@ashford.gov.uk
Fax No (01233) 330620
DX 151140 Ashford (Kent) 71
Our Ref CS/War Memorial/Ashford
Your Ref
Date 16 April 2007



Dear Mr Clark

MISSING MEN – ASHFORD CIVIC WAR MEMORIAL

Your letter concerning the War Memorial in the Memorial Gardens has been passed to me to deal with. I should mention that the War Memorial is not normally my area of work, but as we have been in communication for some time I have been asked to assist in this matter.

I am pleased to inform you that the Borough Council are willing to provide the new panels commemorating those people who lost their lives in the First World War and are not included on the memorial. As you suggest, the new panels could be attached on the inside of the wall. Please can you let me know if the 102 people detailed on the CD you have sent is the complete list, or are you investigating others who may need to be commemorated? Obviously it is impossible to predict the future, but at this stage I would like the panels to be in alphabetical order and as up to date as possible.

A meeting will be held with a stonemason to find a suitable material and the number of panels that will be required to accommodate the names. Ideally it would be preferable if two sections of the wall could be used for the First World War casualties and the remaining two sections for the Second World War casualties, which your colleague David Hughes is investigating.

It is my understanding that C W Simms and E Betts are casualties of the Second World War. When David Hughes has a comprehensive list I think it would be a good idea to investigate whether the "add-on" inscriptions could be removed and included in alphabetical order on the new panels.

As soon as the stonemason sends in his quotation it can be ascertained whether it will be possible to fund this from the current budget. However, if the cost is prohibitive, it will be necessary to include a special item for this in the budget for 2008/09.

I will be writing to English Heritage regarding the new panels. As soon as I have more information I will contact you again.

Yours sincerely

Cemeteries Officer
for Head of Environmental Services



2005-2006
Asset Management



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Ashford
best placed in Britain

We wrote back to the council stating that it would be very nice to bring the memorial right up to date and to include all local casualties of more recent conflicts –

1. Northern Ireland
2. Korean War
3. Cyprus Insurgency
4. Kenya
5. Malaya
6. Borneo
7. Falklands Conflict
8. Iraq
9. Afganistan
10. All other conflicts where Ashford men had lost their lives on active service

The council again very sensibly agreed with us.

We are in the process of trying to trace all these men by a variety of special methods. If you are able to help us identify local fallen men, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

We feel sure the people of Ashford will support these proposals and that most people will recognise the importance of this type of work...

It is quite possible we may not be able to trace every single casualty and therefore we propose to erect an adenda panel on the memorial so that new names can be honoured as they fall or are traced.

We would like to thank the Ashford Borough Council for agreeing to our proposals here. It's a very refreshing change to come into contact with a very sensible and honourable local authority. We look forward to working with Christine Smith on this project too...

