

St Paul's Church War Memorial Names Now Restored

Anyone who read my story on the Research page about the above war memorial in Peterborough will know that I took on the challenge of renewing the names on the memorial which had all worn off since it was erected in January 1919. The local newspaper reported at the time that this was probably the first memorial erected in Peterborough after the end of the war.

Over the years the plaque on the front of memorial which carried the 84 names of the men from New England, Peterborough, who were killed in WWI, had worn completely smooth, and no names were visible any more. We did know the names as they are recorded in a Book of Remembrance in the church itself, and we could see some of them on an old postcard which showed the top half of the memorial taken at its unveiling. I had done some research for a book I wrote about the Peterborough war dead back in 1992, and this was used to add another 25 names to the list.

In 1992, when I first came across the memorial, I was saddened by the deterioration and thought then that someday, somehow, I would love to get the names restored. That day finally arrived this week, on Monday 3rd August 2026.

In 2023 I had just retired and found myself with some spare cash and immediately thought about contacting the church to ask if they would like a new plaque for the war memorial if I put up the finance. I used to be an Operations Manager and procuring building and repair work was something I was very familiar with. Reverend Ron Watkinson was delighted to accept. He is retiring next year (2027) and it is something he had always wanted to see completed before he left.

To cut a long story short, I contacted a local stonemason, obtained a quote, provided the information regarding what we wanted on the plaque and then waited almost a year for the granite slab to be cut to size, polished, and delivered from China (we don't mine this type of granite in this country anymore!) We visited the workshop to see the plaque in construction and on 3rd August this year we met Chad and Jack from 'The Memorial Craftsman' who had come to install the plaque.

This was a great day. 109 names, picked out in gold leaf, shone out from the polished granite. The guys did a wonderful job fixing it over the old one. Shortly, the whole memorial will have a full clean. Hopefully this will now last 100 years with no deterioration.

If you are traveling past St Paul's Church in New England anytime, it sits next to the traffic lights on the 'Triangle'. Park up and take a look at the memorial. It sits between two trees close to the fence, facing out onto Lincoln Road. You don't even have to go into the church grounds to get a really good look at it. I can't wait until Remembrance Sunday when there will be a lovely service at the memorial with all the names shining out for the first time in living memory.

See pictures on following pages.



The plaque is delivered



Drilling the old plaque commences



Heavy lifting



Jack and Chad with the plaque in position



(Left to right) Church Council Member Julie Avis, David Gray,
Church Warden Val Watkinson, Reverend Ron Watkinson