

Then and Now: Worle War Memorial



The War Memorial and Clock Tower on the north side of Worle High Street is familiar and a comfort to all of us, but how much do we know about it? When the village, the country, the empire and the allies were recovering from World War One, communities everywhere were erecting memorials to the men and women who had lost their lives in the conflict. Worle was no exception and the local community raised the £500 needed to pay for the unique clock tower memorial. Mr. T. Bradford Ball was engaged to design the new building, overseen by a committee drawn from the Parish of Worle.

On 14th September 1922, the memorial was dedicated in a service attended by large numbers of villagers, as seen in the photograph, above left. The dear little building was right next door to the very old vicarage and provided a fore taste of the Church of St Martins, which was further up the hill. The second picture was taken between the wars with local people clustered around the clock tower. In the early years, the building was open to visitors. Sadly, then as now, some folk took advantage of the facility and it became necessary to provide wrought iron gates to protect the marble memorial slabs. The new gates, made by Frome Metal Workers Guild, were paid for by Weston Corporation and the British Legion and four corner seats were also installed. The gates were dedicated on 29th May, 1959 and on that day the keys to the memorial were passed to British Legion secretary, Mr. H. C. Wiltshire, who deposited them for safekeeping with Messrs. Skidmore and Sons where they could be obtained during the day between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. by anyone who wished to go into the memorial for rest or meditation. This arrangement still exists today, so that the 53 names on the plaques can be recalled.

In 2017, on 6th June, Historic England awarded the building a Grade 2 listing. The listing number is 1446117. Worle History Society has had an information board installed outside the War Memorial. It was unveiled the day before Remembrance Sunday in 2018, to celebrate the centenary of the end of Worle War One.

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