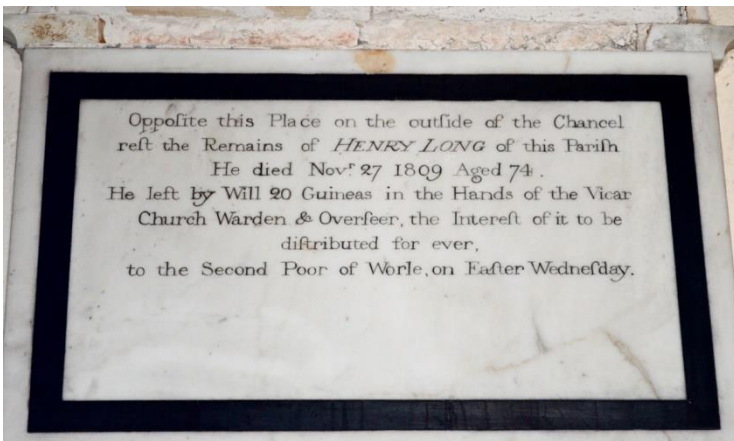


Worle Remembers

Worle History Society is almost ten years old, which is very young indeed. On the other hand the village of Worle has been around for at least 1000 years, and it's Church of St. Martins for almost 900 years. The celebrations of the centenary of the Armistice which marked the end of World War One, caused me to realise that, before 1918, Britain and the rest of the world did not have Remembrance Sunday, poppies, the British Legion or War Memorials in almost every settlement.

So how did people remember those who had gone on before? Memorial stones in the Churchyard were one way. We have over 1,600 such stones which are still legible in 2018 and the descendants of the dead often visit the graves and tend to them. Memorials in the fabric of the Church are much more rare, only 43 in number, and vary from wonderful stained glass windows to insignificant plaques – all given with love and hope.



This tablet remembers Henry Long who, on November 27th 1809, left 20 guineas to help the 'Second Poor' of Worle 'for ever'.

World War One shook the world to its roots. The people of Worle worked tirelessly to build this much loved Memorial Clock Tower to count the seconds, minutes, days, weeks, months and years of peace. It is still loved and cared for, 100 years on.

In the years between the world wars St Martin's Church had its own way of remembering. A large box, in the shape of a cross was placed on the grass to the west of the Church. It was slowly filled with British Legion poppies, brought from the cottages, farms and big houses to recall those who had died and to give thanks for the peace.



In 1950, the World was still recovering from 6 more years of fear, bravery and disbelief, during which the village of Worle was bombed. The Vicar of St Martin's, Rev. Eric Vallance Cook, decided that the Church should have a permanent memorial to remember the dead of both world wars. It was built on the same patch of grass where previously the poppy box had been placed. The picture is the only one available to us and appeared in the Bristol Evening World on 13th November, 1950.



Although the new memorial was dedicated with much ceremony, it was still the Clock Tower Memorial in the High Street that drew the people of Worle every November. It is still so today. It is the little house where family members, friends and strangers can visit the men, women and children who gave themselves for the peace. New plaques have been added to the original ones. There are seats in the corners to facilitate contemplation and prayer. The key to our little house of memories is kept by Skidmores in the shop opposite. The shop and the War Memorial are now joined by the zebra crossing.

Maybe, after 100 years, it is time to celebrate the peace – sadly not an unbroken peace, but it needs to be celebrated, nonetheless.

Pop in to the War Memorial. Sign the visitors' book in Skidmores and please remember to return the key. Say hello to the folk who have gone on before. Let them know that we remember, and that peace is wonderful. Tell them that the building is now Grade 2 listed, and it has its own information board at the garden gate, and that Weston in Bloom look after the floral arrangements.

Raye Green

www.worlehistorysociety.net