

Mrs. Ruth Robinson has researched and compiled a history of the Dorney War Memorial Garden.  
Serialization starts here:-

#### HISTORY OF DORNEY WAR MEMORIAL GARDEN

The first record found relating to the creation of a War Memorial for the Parish of Dorney is in the form of a letter dated 30th December 1947 and addressed to the National Council of Social Service, requesting information on grants for War Memorials and a booklet entitled "How to Obtain a Playing Field". This letter was sent by the then Clerk to the Parish Council A. Webb Esq. The reply was not too helpful regarding the War Memorial, but very helpful with information on Playing Fields.

In February 1948 the NCSS informed the Parish Council as follows:-

"The War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, enables a Parish Council to incur reasonable expenditure in the maintenance, repair and protection of any war memorial in their district which may be vested in them. Expenditure thereon is limited to an amount which will not involve a rate exceeding 1d. in the pound, in any one year and is subject to the approval of the County Council."

Therefore it is not possible for the Parish Council to provide for a War Memorial from the rates.

On 19th February 1948 a letter to parishioners announcing a meeting at Dorney school was sent including a request for the Names, Rank, Regiment, Decorations and date of casualty of any parishioners lost in the war for inclusion on the Memorial.

The first response gave a total of seven names to be remembered and at a Parish Meeting held at Dorney school on 8th. March 1948 it was proposed that seven oak trees be planted on a site in the centre of the village, with an inscribed seat beneath and an inscribed tablet placed in St. James Church.

Mr. Evins was elected Chairman of the War Memorial Committee and Col. Palmer Hon. Treasurer; a report in the local paper announced that it was hoped to open a fund to raise not less than £100 to erect a suitable Memorial on ground opposite the Palmer Arms. By this time the number of names to be included had increased to ten.

At a meeting held on 15th. February 1949 the Committee agreed the cost of the ten oak trees and the inscribed seat, and after a keen debate of the suitability of two sites that had plans drawn (one opposite the Palmer Arms, the other opposite the School), and taking into account advice from Bucks County Council the School site was chosen.

The Committee met on 31st March 1949, when the siting for the oak trees was planned and the seat with inscription was approved. Also the hedging was decided upon, taking into account that it must not be poisonous to beasts. The church tablet design submitted by Mr. Nye was agreed and a site on the east wall was suggested, approval for which was to be sought from the P.C.C. There had by this time been one more addition to the list of fallen bringing the total to eleven.

In April 1949 Col. Palmer generously offered a gift of the land for the War Memorial Garden and the Deed of Gift was duly drawn. After a request from the Parish Council the County Surveyor agreed to extend the footpath on the south side of the road through the village to cover the frontage of the Memorial site.

By September 1950 the Parish Council was writing to the War Memorial Committee expressing its concern at the slow progress of the site and suggested more members be co-opted onto the committee in order to expedite the completion.

During 1951 the land was cleared, levelled and prepared for planting. Then in January 1952 the Parish Council requested a full report from the Committee for discussion at the February Parish Council meeting.

A joint meeting between Parish Council, Parochial Church Council and War Memorial Committee was held on 14th February 1952. This meeting was to decide the following:-

- a) A date for the dedication
- b) Outline a programme
- c) Appoint a committee to be responsible for the ceremony

The 4th May was decided upon.

Lt. Col. Ames described and proposed a ceremony of Standard bearers with 2 buglers, this was adopted.

Lt. Col. Ames, Major Williamson, Mrs. Edwards, and the Rev. Adcock were elected to form the committee, with Mr. Evins, chairman of the old committee, agreeing to attend meetings "to give such help and advice as able."

The Parish Council in March invited the Bishop of Buckingham to the Dedication Day on May 4th., and Lt. Col. Ames invited the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry to nominate two buglers to attend and perform at the ceremony. The final details were agreed by the Ceremony Committee and approved by the Parish Council.