

War Memorials, Newtongrange

Report by Director, Resources

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek to appraise the Committee of a proposal that additional names be added to the War memorials at Newtongrange.

2 Background

Newtongrange Community Council have requested that the names of two servicemen who died during the second world war be added to the War Memorial; and, in addition, intend to add another name to the Memorial that they erected in the year 2000, in respect of the First World War and have indicated that funding is available for this. The information about the three servicemen is contained in the **Appendix**.

In terms of the War Memorials (Local Authority Powers) Act 1923, as amended, the Council is enabled to incur reasonable expenditure on maintenance, repair, alteration, and protection of war memorials whether or not they belong to the Council. In most cases, the decisions to erect or provide World War 1 Memorials in public spaces were taken by the Council's predecessor authorities and the costs met through public subscription; and the Memorials were adapted after the Second World War.

From time to time, requests are received concerning servicemen killed in action or who had died of wounds whose names do not appear on the War Memorial in the town or village where they lived at the time of their death. In such cases, established practice involving consultation with the National War Memorial, etc takes place and generally speaking, such requests have been dealt to the satisfaction of the person making the request. Not all requests, however, have been granted eg where it was not possible to establish the connection with the community, where there were practical difficulties, etc.

This is a sensitive topic and requires careful handling. The definition of who would qualify for inclusion may also be less than straightforward eg would those who are suggested for inclusion need to have been born in the locality, resident there at the time of enlistment, or resident there at the time of death.

Unusually, in this case, the initial Memorial in respect of those who fell during the First World War was erected in the Church. In 2000, the Community Council erected another First World War Memorial in the Welfare Park, reflecting the information contained in the Memorial in the Church but also containing other names which the Community Council added following research which was carried out on their behalf.

The complete rationale for the erection of the World War 2 Memorial in a public space ie Welfare Park is not currently available but it is thought likely that there would have been some form of public subscription, albeit one organised by the Women's Section of the British Legion.

3 Resource and other Implications

3.1 The Funding referred to above relates to assistance which is available ie 75% of eligible costs with a maximum of £7,500 per project. Match and other funding may be needed. As the Community Council appear to have the promise of funding, there are no financial resource implications.

3.2 Risk

The Risk implications relate to the failure to act in the public interest, to honour those who perhaps ought to have been recorded on World War 1 and 2 Memorials who may have reported as missing in action or died of other cause. On the other hand, given the passage of time, there can be no certainty that there is any reason for their non-inclusion.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- x ☒ None of the above

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

There is no impact.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Regulating the activity is self evident.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Whilst contact has been made with the Community Council, there has been no direct consultation yet.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

Equality of opportunity is inbuilt.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable.

3.9 IT Issues

None.

4 Conclusion

The matter is brought to the attention of the Committee with a view to establishing whether further action should be taken ie authority given for the addition of the names of the three servicemen.

Whether an individual was killed in action or died of wounds in a theatre of war and the connection with the village eg place of domicile / residence where native, at the time of death are the material considerations.

8 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee consider the matter and confirm whether the names should be added to the Memorials.

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Background Papers – Scottish National War Memorial Registers
Contemporary Newspapers
Certificates of Births, Deaths and Marriages

Newtongrange War Memorial

Request for inclusion of additional names.

WWI

LCpl George Ross, Gordon Highlanders, 109 Dean Park Newtongrange - joined up 5 June 1915 in Aberdeen. Reported as having been missing and later died in the field on 25 September 1915.

Two Persons named George Ross appear on the Roll, namely LCpl S/10615 (born Peterhead); and LCpl S/9912 (born Jamestown, Dumbartonshire). Until recently, it was not certain that the named person was either of the Newtongrange nominees.

It has been established that Mr Ross was born in Peterhead, married Marion Burnett on 29.3.13 in Edinburgh where the home address was 109 Dean Park Newtongrange. They had two children, Marion in Arniston and Agnes in Stobhill. He is described as having died in the field on 25.9.15 at Loos.

There is no information about his address at the time of death.

WWII

Spr James Holgate RE 60 St David's Newtongrange D o D 07.01.1943
Brookwood *Panel 6

3063637 listed as having died at sea

Mr Holgate was born on 1 July 1913 at 25 St David's to John and Elizabeth Holgate ms Halliday who were married at Stobhill on 29.12.06.

Died at sea on 7.1.43.

Listed as resident then at 60 St Davids.

***The BROOKWOOD MEMORIAL** commemorates nearly 3,500 men and women of the land forces of the Commonwealth who died during the Second World War and have no known grave, the circumstances of their death being such that they could not appropriately be commemorated on any of the campaign memorials in the various theatres of war. They died in the campaign in Norway in 1940, or in the various raids on enemy occupied territory in Europe such as Dieppe and St Nazaire. Others were special agents who died as prisoners or while working with Allied underground movements. Some died at sea, in hospital ships and troop transports, in waters not associated with the major campaigns, and a few were killed in flying accidents or in aerial combat.

LS Assis JSA Dea, RN Newbattle D o D 06.08.1945

P/MX722375 James Simpson Alexander. Died HMS Vulture, Cornwall. Born Newtongrange.

Mr Dea dob 1.4.27 at 3 Main Street, Newtongrange is described as having died by accidental drowning on 6.8.45 whilst on war service at HMS Vulture, a navy base in Cornwall at Merryn Ben, St Ferryn, Nr Padstow.

The background to **HMS Vulture** was that In October 1937 St Merryn opened as a 52 acre civilian airfield and was operated by St Merryn Aerodrome Ltd. In December 1939 the airfield was surveyed by The Admiralty and rebuilt as a Fleet Air Arm Station. The runways were rather short as they were built to simulate what Fleet Air Arm crews would experience when taking off and landing on carrier decks. Between 1940 and 1952 the Fleet Air Arm operated from the airfield. During this time the station was known as HMS Vulture and many first and second line naval squadrons flew from the airfield. In Autumn 1940 & Spring 1941 the airfield received the attentions of the Luftwaffe who on several occasions bombed the station to disrupt training activities. Rebuilt and extended in 1942 the station incorporated the School Of Air Combat. In 1944 further extension took place with a new control tower being built.