

ACTIVE REMEMBERING



You will notice a new sculpture has been installed near the top of the north steps at Holy Trinity. This has been paid for by Heritage Lottery Fund grant that we received for repairing the steps. Part of that grant had to be allocated to community engagement. The new sculpture has been positioned there, precisely to draw attention to the steps (as a way in to Holy Trinity) and to invite participation.

It is a silhouette of a World War 1 “Tommy”, in a classic pose. Clearly it is highly appropriate for this centenary year. The plan is to install this in the same position each year for the weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday (and therefore not to have it in position permanently). I want to pay tribute to

Ken who made the plinth and had the light installed, and to Corinne who had the backdrop made. Both make the silhouette stand out beautifully in a striking way, in daytime and at night.

By placing the statue in an accessible position, my hope is that people will engage with it: perhaps leaving mementos or poems or tributes or poppies. Someone has already knitted it a scarf (as the poor man looked so cold). The only trouble is that a passer-by immediately removed the scarf, saying that it looked like a vandal had defaced the statue! Therein lies a problem: if we merely remember the past as events long gone, we are in danger of glamorising it. Active remembering requires us, in the light of what happened, say, 100 years ago, to think about how we want to behave today – how we might do things differently, or how we need to admire the courage shown years ago.

Robert Cotton, November 2018

Guildford 
Remembers

Holy Trinity Church  LOTTERY FUNDED

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