

The War Shrine

The war shrine in the High Street is often regarded as the War Memorial. There is no record as to when or why this ugly brick wall was first used for this purpose. It was erected by the spitefully litigious Victorian lawyer George Eyre of High House to lampoon his many enemies, and as such seems a strange choice for so honourable a venue. In 1924 Mr Quixley the headmaster recorded in his daily log for November 11th that the school children attending a memorial at the 'war shrine', yet the church memorial was installed 3 years earlier. Cynthia Winfield, now 91, remembers the school's upper class marched there for an annual ceremony. Other brief memoir comments imply the shrine may have been used to remember all the combatants in the two World Wars, whereas the church memorial contains only the names of the fallen.



Above: The Shrine located just beside the Watercress Centre on The Street.

Parish Council Minutes

War Shrine (High Street)

03/06/57 069 Mrs Orpwood reported very little help offered. However, War Shrine cleaned up and Mr King of High Wycombe had re-written Scrolls of Honour - cost £5. British Legion donated £1 and rest to be collected from village.

21/05/70 - Ewelme Society had agreed to look after War Memorial.

24/09/70 - Wall by memorial had been knocked down. Mr Orpwood to find owner to have it fixed.

30/09/74 - Miss Young concerned at state of memorial. Vases were frequently broken. Suggested illuminated lists be removed and put elsewhere.

15/07/75 014 Crucifix broken and memorial generally untidy.

11/05/83 142 Cheque for £65 to EPCC for maintenance of war memorial and churchyard.

11/11/87 - EPC thought nothing could be done to put shrine back in original place.

11/03/89 - EPC responsibility confined to land upon which the Memorial was situated (if ownership can be established).

21/03/90 - EPC received several complaints about War Memorial. Mr Blakeley received a letter from British Legion. It was stated that the official War Memorial was in the church.

19/05/93 - Ownership of strip of land opposite High House unknown. Not an official War Memorial but set up as a shrine by then owner of High House (ie Mr George Eyres). EPC would look after it if it were a proper War Memorial.

09/02/94 - Ownership remains a mystery. Chairman will tidy up for time being.

13/04/94 - Horticultural Socy thanked for restoration work on shrine. Suitable brass plaque provided which reads
Greater Love Hath No Man Than This - John 15 v 3
1914-1918
When you go home
Tell them of us and say
For your tomorrow
We gave our today

1939-1945
At the going down of the sun
And in the morning

We will remember them.

The names of the fallen are commemorated on the War Memorial in the Parish Church

09/09/94	-	Letters from Chairman to Bill Edwards thanking him for donation of bricks and tiles to refurbish shrine. Also to Norman Winfield, Richard Best for their hard work.
10/08/94	-	£95.97 - to Norman Winfield for materials for War Shrine.
14/12/94	-	Work completed and a short act of Worship carried out.
19/04/95	-	Harry Keene provided crucifix for shrine. Rev Garner conducted memorial service.