

# ASPIRE TO SUCCESS



MBNA's Aspire Awards were created to recognize monument builder companies that have drawn favorable attention to their companies, and in turn, to the industry through their specialized marketing and/or public relations campaigns.

All MBNA members in good standing are invited to submit entries for the **2014 MBNA Aspire to Success Marketing & Public Relations Contest**.

Any publicity you've received during the contest year (November 1, 2013 through November 1, 2014) is eligible. This includes coverage by newspapers, magazines, television, new acquisitions, celebrated anniversaries or testimonial letters.

Up to three (3) winners will be awarded the handsome granite MBNA Aspire Award, a tall, polished trophy that adds elegance and interest to any member's lobby or bookshelf. Honorable mention entries will receive a certificate of merit suitable for framing. All winning entries will be featured in *MBNews*.

## ENTRY FORM

**Deadline to submit material is November 14, 2014.**

### 2014 MBNA Aspire to Success Marketing and Public Relations Contest

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- Detail your experience. Use a separate piece of paper. It can be one item or event, or multiple events, or a year-long ad campaign.
- Please attach any photographs, clippings, brochures, letters, invitations or company branded materials that relate to your entry. We need original photographs (prints or electronic), but please photocopy your clippings, letters or invitations if you need them returned as we cannot return the material. *Photos can be black and white or color.*

Events should have taken place between November 1, 2013 and November 1, 2014. Deadline for receipt of materials at MBNA Headquarters is November 14, 2014. Materials may be submitted on-line or by postal service.

If you have questions or need additional information, contact MBNA headquarters at (800) 233-4472 or via email at [info@monumentbuilders.org](mailto:info@monumentbuilders.org).

## Granite memorial set to honour the fallen in Blackburn

**Brent Stevenson**, right, and mason Jason Price position the first of the memorials



(12443238)

TWO large granite plaques containing the names of all First and Second World War graves in Blackburn Old Cemetery have been installed.

The plaques, donated by Cherry Tree stonemason **Brent Stevenson**, are positioned either side of the cenotaph in the Whalley Old Road cemetery.

The project was the culmination of 18 months of research and work in conjunction with the Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery.

The two plaques, which are positioned in a mirror image to each other, have the names of the First World War dead on the front and the names of those killed in the Second World War are on the back of one of them.

Mr **Stevenson**, who owns **Brent Stevenson** Memorials in Preston Old Road, said: "We have worked with the friends group there and have donated two large pieces of granite that records all the names of those buried in the cemetery who gave their lives in the First and Second World Wars.

"There was no record of anyone's name anywhere and a lot of the graves are now overgrown.

"We wanted a place where all the names are recorded."

Landscaping works were carried out where the plaques were to be sited to ensure they were in the right place and, because they were so heavy, a crane was used to drop them into place.

Mr **Stevenson** said without the hard work of the friends group the project would never have happened.

He said: "The friends went through all the cemetery records and picked out the ones that were from the wars.

"This was quite a laborious task to go through them all.

"We have been at this now for more than a year, probably 18 months.

"We work hand in glove with the friends and try to help out where we can.

"We are all interested in making the cemeteries better and more appropriate places to visit."

Mr **Stevenson** said the friends had helped transform the cemetery since being formed.

He said: "It really has improved over the past two and a half years since they started and that is all down to them.

"They do work very hard."

## **Darwen memorial to First World War dead**

FIFTY granite paving slabs bearing the names of all Darwen's First World War dead will be laid around the Boer War memorial.

The location was confirmed after Darwen Town Council approved spending of just over £4,000 on preparation work around the memorial at the bottom of Bolton Road.

Blackburn-based stone-mason **Brent Stevenson** had offered to provide the slabs free of charge in a project similar to one taking place at Corporation Park.

And now a location has been confirmed, work can begin on the slabs, with the first expected to be unveiled on Remembrance Sunday, although the first stones to be installed will not be unveiled until Remembrance Weekend next year.

Town Council Mayor Coun Trevor Maxfield said at Tuesday's meeting: "**Brent Stevenson** has offered to do us 50 granite plaques but we have not got anywhere we can just put them like Corporation Park.

"If we are going to take him up on this we are going to have to spend some money.

“The best site we have come up with is the Boer War memorial but we need to do some work making it disabled friendly and removing some shrubs.”

Coun Maxfield said he had gathered quotes for the work and the cheapest were £775 to remove the shrubs at the back of the memorial and about £3,500 to have block paving put down all the way around the memorial.

Coun Maxfield added: “The beauty of this is if we remove the shrubs we give ourselves room to put more names down in future.

“That means adding names for the Second World War, Falklands and so on.”

Coun Maxfield confirmed he had verbal permission from borough leader Coun Kate Hollern to carry out the work and have the memorial stones put down.

Coun Dave Smith said: “The back of that, round the side of the bushes, is getting out of control.

“If that gets done up I think it would be a big improvement to that area.”

Councillors unanimously approved the plans and work is expected to be ongoing at the proposed site for the next four years.

## Blackburn WW1 servicemen memorial plaques laid in park



**Brent Stevenson** places a memorial plaque in Corporation Park, Blackburn

First published Thursday 30 October 2014 in News

Last updated 11:54 Thursday 30 October 2014 by Jessica Cree, Crime reporter

MEMORIAL plaques remembering the thousands of Blackburn servicemen killed in the First World War have been laid in a park.

The granite stones engraved with the soldiers' names have been put down in Corporation Park near the war memorial in time for the Remembrance Day commemorations.

So far, the names of those who died in 1914, the year the Great War began, have been laid.

Organisers are planning to repeat the process each year with those who died during the corresponding year of the conflict, until 2018.

A stone with a map of the world detailing the locations of where the Blackburn men fell has also been put down.

Ray Smith, chairman of the Blackburn local history society, was involved in researching the names.

He said: "This is an ongoing project that will tell the story of all those lives of the men, who lived, were born or who enlisted in Blackburn, that were lost.

"They all volunteered and they gave their lives so it is important we remember that sacrifice.

"I think the plaques will tell a lovely story when the project is complete.

"By the time the scheme is finished, more than 3,000 names will be listed.

**Brent Stevenson**, owner of **Brent Stevenson** Memorials, in Preston Old Road, said the company had donated memorials.

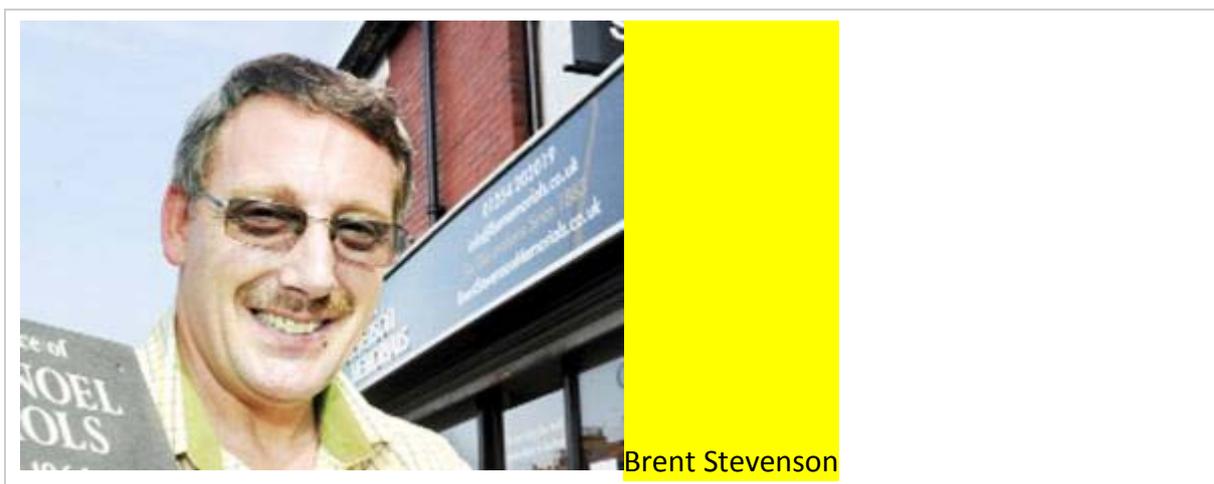
He said: "We are hoping people will come and pay their respects and learn from such a disaster.

"The memorial is an educational resource for future generations and because the plaques are made of granite, people can take rubbings."

If anybody has any information about a soldier that should be included on a future plaque, call Mr Smith on 01254 247257.

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014

**DARWEN could have a free memorial to all its First World War fallen after a generous offer from a local stonemason.**



The owner of Blackburn-based **Brent Stevenson** Memorials said he had wanted to create a memorial listing the names of all Darreners who fell during the conflict, which began 100 years ago.

Mr **Stevenson**, whose firm is based in Preston Old Road, Cherry Tree, is already working on a memorial in Blackburn in partnership with local residents, to be installed in Corporation Park.

That memorial will be unveiled annually in stages based on the year in which the soldiers listed were killed, and Mr **Stevenson** said this was an idea he would be happy to discuss with council chiefs in Darwen.

He said: "We need a site and that side of things would be up to the council, but the offer is on the table. I am really keen to do something in Darwen to go with what we are doing in Blackburn.

"I would like it to be somewhere near the market hall in a place where people will see it, but that would be up to the council."

If it goes ahead, the memorial, which would most likely be made from granite, would be donated by Mr **Stevenson** at no cost to the council.

Darwen Town Council mayor Trevor Maxfield, who is also Armed Forces Champion for Blackburn with Darwen Council, said: "This is a wonderful gesture and it certainly needs to be discussed.

"I have put the item on the agenda for the next Darwen Town Council meeting and I will speak to officers at the borough as well."

Darwen MP Jake Berry said he had already spoken to Mr **Stevenson** about the issue and was keen to help it progress.

He said: "I had a chat with **Brent** about this in Huddlesden the other week and my vision is to have memorial paving slabs outside the town hall in Darwen.

"I am planning to meet with **Brent** and Coun Maxfield as soon as possible to talk about what sort of memorial would be most appropriate for Darwen's heroes."

## Blackburn man who invented Vimto to be remembered with new plaque



John Noel Nichols

First published Friday 19 September 2014 in Newsby Dan Clough, Reporter

THE man who invented Vimto will be remembered with a new granite plaque to be installed on the house he grew up in.

John Noel Nichols, born in 1883, was brought up at Bank House mansion in Dukes Brow, Blackburn, and went to the nearby Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School.

In 1908, having set up in business as a wholesale druggist and herb importer, he created the fruit cordial blending grapes, blackcurrants and raspberries with fruit essences, herbs and spices.

'Vim Tonic', later shortened to Vimto, was born and soon became one of the nation's favourite drinks.

John died in 1966 and a blue plaque was put on the house in which he grew up, but it was later removed by thieves.

Now, thanks to stonemason **Brent Stevenson**, it is to be replaced with a more durable granite memorial.

Mr **Stevenson**, who owns **Brent Stevenson** Memorials in Preston Old Road, Cherry Tree, said: "I was talking to Ray Smith from Blackburn Local History Society about replacing stolen plaques and he said, 'what about John Noel Nichols?'.

“I had never heard of him before and certainly didn’t know Vimto had been invented in Blackburn.

“When this one goes up it shouldn’t be stolen because it won’t be worth anything and as it is granite it will last longer than the metal blue plaques.”

Mr **Stevenson** said a date for the plaque to be fixed in place had been delayed while bosses at QEGs try to trace a relative of Mr Nichols to attend an unveiling.

Mr **Stevenson** said he had offered to produce more of the plaques for other local figures where the original blue ones had been stolen.

“We have done one for Jack Walker which has been sat here for six months and we are waiting to be given permission to put it up.

“I am happy to donate more if they are missing, and also to look at putting up new ones to people who have done a lot for the town.”

### **New tribute to fallen war heroes takes pride of place at Ewood Park**



New tribute to fallen war heroes takes pride of place at Ewood Park

First published Tuesday 16 September 2014 in News

A MEMORIAL to some of Blackburn’s fallen war heroes has been replaced.

In 2008, memorial plaques salvaged from Hollin Bank Mission and St Bartholomew’s Church in the town were fastened to the side of Ewood Park.

The ‘Rovers Remembers’ display on the back of the Jack Walker Stand was unveiled at the time by Rovers’ club chaplain Ken Howles.

And ahead of Saturday's 3-1 Championship victory over Wigan, the plaques were replaced by local stonemason **Brent Stevenson**.

The plaque replaces the one from inside Hollin Bank Mission, which was made of wood and had deteriorated over time. Mr **Stevenson**, who owns **Brent Stevenson** Memorials at Cherry Tree, said the new granite plaque would last for years.

### **Stonemason steps in to replace stolen Hoddlesden benches**



First published Tuesday 18 March 2014 in Newsby Dan Clough, Reporter  
BENCHES that were stolen from next to a village war memorial have been replaced.

The benches went missing from Hoddlesden war memorial last September.

But stonemason **Brent Stevenson** stepped in to replace them free of charge.

The new benches, which are made out of granite, have been installed facing towards the memorial, whereas the original benches were facing away.

They have also been engraved with the words: "As I sit here weary and tired and feeling old, I look up and remember they will never grow old."

Another message says: "As I sit here in Hoddlesden and watch the sun go down, I know everyone here will always remember them. 100-year anniversary 1914 - 2014".

Coun Julie Slater, who represents the village on Blackburn with Darwen Council, said everyone in the village was very grateful to Mr **Stevenson**.

She said: "I am delighted. We have waited for them for quite a while and they are now in place for the First World War anniversary.

"We cannot thank **Brent** enough for replacing them.

"They are really nice and we like the verses engraved on them.

"**Brent** deserves a community award for all he has done in the area."

The benches went missing at the same time as one was stolen from outside the home of David Graham, which was a memorial to his son, David.

Mr **Stevenson** also replaced that bench free of charge.

He said: "We are always on the lookout for projects like this as I like to give something back to the community. A lot of people were saying they looked really nice, so they have gone down very well."

### **Fallen Darwen war tribute repaired**



## Brett Price and his son Jason with their special lifting gear

First published Thursday 26 June 2014 in Newsby Dan Clough, Reporter  
A WAR memorial damaged by 'mindless' vandals has been repaired.

Two concrete posts which surround the cenotaph in Darwen's Bold Venture Park were pushed over last week, causing outrage.

Vandals also sprayed blue paint on memorial benches, obscuring the names of those they paid tribute to.

Blackburn with Darwen Council contacted Cherry Tree-based stonemasons Brent Stevenson Memorials, and the posts were put back in place.

Along with help from Mr Stevenson, workmen from CB Price and Son used a special heavy lifting machine to put the concrete posts back in place.

Mr Stevenson said: "Someone will have a job taking them out again as they have steel dowels down the centre.

"The lifting machine made it easy. I think it would have been a big job without that. We did well to get it done so quickly. It was quicker than I expected."

Friends of Bold Venture Park chairman Harry Duxbury said: "It is a relief that it got fixed so soon.

"It is very frustrating when this sort of thing happens, especially after all the work we have done, and it isn't the first time this has happened.

"But these are the things you have to contend with all the time."

Sunnyhurst councillor Pete Hollings, deputy chairman of Darwen Town Council, said: "I am really pleased it has been all sorted out.

"I just hope that whoever did it is caught and properly punished."

Blackburn with Darwen Council executive member for environment Coun Jim Smith said: "It is disgraceful that vandals can cause such disrespectful and disgusting damage to what is a stunning war memorial in Bold Venture Park.

"I am pleased to say that the damage has been repaired and hopefully this shameful action can be put behind us.

"I urge anyone with any information regarding this reckless act against the fallen and the communities they served to call the police."

## Friends to dig in for Blackburn's old cemetery



A volunteer day last summer

First published Thursday 20 March 2014 in News

Last updated 13:00 Thursday 20 March 2014 by Bill Jacobs, Local government reporter  
A project to make Blackburn Old Cemetery safer and more attractive has been launched.

The scheme is appealing for volunteers to help spruce up the historic burial ground.

More than £20,000 will be spent on resetting stone steps, new benches, topping up graves and information and notice boards.

Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery worked with the Greenspace Development Team at Blackburn with Darwen Council to secure money to carry out the improvements.

The cash was raised in 'Section 106' payments towards environmental enhancements s permission in the borough.

Cherry Tree memorial mason **Brent Stevenson** is supporting the project, including the design and construction of the central memorial garden, a granite bench, and safety checks on all upright grave stones.

The 40-acre cemetery, which dates from 1858, has 3,000 graves and is still open for burials.

Robin Duxbury, chairman of Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery, said: “Since the formation of the friends group 18 months ago, we have forged a successful working partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Council, at both a management and local level.”

Council environment boss Jim Smith said: “It is fantastic to see the work Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery do, in making sure that such an important, historic location is maintained.

“You can really see the difference that has been made over the last 18 months and we look forward to continuing working with the friends group going forward.”

If you are interested in getting involved with Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery, visit [facebook.com/groups/496715363690379/?fref=ts](https://www.facebook.com/groups/496715363690379/?fref=ts), or ring the Green Spaces Team at the council on 01254 692203 In October Mr **Stevenson**, the friends and the council carried out free safety inspections on headstones at the cemetery.

### **Blue plaques to honour Blackburn's stars**



Jack Walker's birthplace

First published Friday 28 February 2014 in News  
NEW plaques commemorating famous Blackburn people could soon be appearing on the town's streets.

Regeneration boss Maureen Bateson has pledged to seal a deal with local historians to revive the scheme.

She is keen not just to replace lost and stolen plaques, including one marking Jack Walker's birthplace, but add new ones as part of her revitalisation plans.

Coun Bateson said: "I have a few names in mind, including a couple of Blackburn Rovers footballers."

She intervened after Blackburn Local History Society appealed for action to revive the scheme after the plaque to Mr Walker went missing.

Responsibility for the plaques rested with Blackburn Civic Society until it folded a few years ago. The history society has an agreement with English Heritage, which oversees the national scheme, to keep the list of the existing 24 plaques.

As scrap metal thieves can target the distinctive badges, they asked Blackburn with Darwen Council for permission to maintain, replace and add to the commemorative plates dotted around the town.

Coun Bateson said: "I am very keen to bring back the blue plaque scheme. I have instructed officers to move quickly to conclude an agreement with the society.

"It is important that we have this means of marking important people and places in the town's history."

Blackburn memorial maker **Brent Stevenson** has offered to give replacement plaques to replace those stolen, including the one dedicated to Jack Walker.

He said: "We would make exact copies in black granite, which are maintenance free, last longer than metal and have no scrap value."

Local history society chairman Ray Smith said: "We would welcome an agreement with Coun Bateson. We have had a meeting with council officials and hope to have another one soon.

n Any similar deal to revive the scheme in Darwen would have to be concluded with that town's local historians.

## New maps boost for Darwen cemetery visitors



**Brent Stevenson**, John Jacklin and John East with one of the new granite cemetery maps

First published Thursday 19 December 2013 in Newsby Dan Clough, Reporter  
TWO granite maps helping people locate graves in Darwen Cemetery have been erected.

The maps were commissioned by Friends of Darwen Cemetery using a grant of £1,000 from the Lloyd Trust.

Blackburn stonemason **firm Brent Stevenson** Memorials carried out the work and the maps are near the cemetery's two main entrances.

They point out the location of each of the cemetery's sections, making it easier to locate graves, and also feature pictures of previous works carried out by the friends group. A space has been left for a picture of the First World War commemoration, plans for which are to be unveiled in the new year.

John East, of the Friends of Darwen Cemetery, said: "We are so grateful for the generosity of the Lloyd Trust grant. The granite maps will certainly give the many visitors an overview of the location of family graves.

“We have noticed a significant increase in people looking for family graves and many graves are now being re-erected and cared for. The friends have regular working parties and the cemetery is undergoing much renovation and reclamation. If somebody wanted to locate a grave and had no idea where it was, they can ring the borough council to find out, then use the map to find the right section.”

John Jacklin, of the Lloyd Trust, said: “It was felt it was appropriate that people should be able to find their way around the cemetery.”

### **Blackburn memorial firm lands First World War deal**



**Brent Stevenson** (right) starts the winning paving stones on their journey to the schools.

First published Monday 4 November 2013 in News

A BLACKBURN stone masonry firm has been chosen to create specially-commissioned First World War memorials designed by youngsters from across the country.

The government recently announced a competition to design a picture for a paving stone which will be placed in the home towns of every Victoria Cross winner from the Great War.

**Brent Stevenson** Memorials, which was established in 1883, has been chosen as the supplier for a spin-off competition, for which more than 200 primary and secondary school pupils submitted their designs.

The Preston Old Road firm is run by the fifth generation of the family and was due to unveil the two winning paving stone designs at a ceremony in London today. The two York stone plaques, complete with one primary and one secondary school pupil's drawings, had to be designed and lettered interpreting the children's ideas.

The stones were then being taken back to the two winning schools for them to lay at their site.

The unveiling of the winning design to be included in the national Victoria Cross Commemorative Paving Stone Campaign will be revealed at the same event, at the Army and Navy Club in Pall Mall.

**Brent Stevenson** said: "It's great that a family company like mine has been chosen as the supplier for this competition.

"I'm very proud of being involved, especially in the lead-up to Remembrance Day and the centenary of the start of the First World War.

"To be involved is fantastic and it's a great cause as well. We were only told a few days ago that we had been chosen so we have had to put in a lot of work to get everything ready."

### **Work at Blackburn Old Cemetery to improve historical location**



**Cllr Jim Smith, Executive Member for Environment, with Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery and Brent Stevenson**

Published March 17, 2014 at 16:31

Work is ongoing at Blackburn Old Cemetery, as part of a project to make the historical site a safer and more attractive location.

Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery worked with the Greenspace Development Team at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to secure money to carry out the work, under s106 funding.

Actions agreed under s106 money include resetting stone steps within the cemetery, new benches, topping up graves and new information and notice boards.

**Brent Stevenson** has also generously supported the project, including in the design and construction of the central memorial garden, a granite bench, and safety checks on all upright grave stones.

Robin Duxbury, Chair of Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery said: "Since the formation of the friends group 18 months ago, we have forged a successful working partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Council, at both a management and local level."

Cllr Jim Smith, Executive Member for Environment said: "It is fantastic to see the work that Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery do, in making sure that such an important, historic location is maintained. You can really see the difference that has been made over the last 18 months and we look forward to continuing working with the friends group going forward."

Published August 6, 2014 at 13:44

A hundred years ago this week Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary in 1914, returned to his chambers in the Foreign Office and lamented "The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our life".

He had just given a speech to parliament in which he notified the nation that the British Empire had declared war on Germany. On Monday at 11 pm hundreds gathered around the Borough to commemorate the declaration of war, with a candle light vigil.

This symbolic reference to Grey's lament, allowed the Borough to stop and reflect on the beginning of what would become one of the bloodiest wars in global history.

In Blackburn, residents and Councillors were joined by members of the Royal British Legion and the cadet forces in both Corporation Park and Little Harwood to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of war.

The event in Corporation park also saw a commemorative stone unveiled created by Brent Stevenson as part of a resident-led project to place a new memorial in the park listing the names nearly 4,000 people who fell in the war.

In Darwen, hundreds came together in the town centre and joined Cllr Trevor Maxfield, the Boroughs armed forces champion, in an evening of remembrance, hymns, prayers and reflections in commemoration of the Great War.

Listen below to hear the Chief Executive Harry Catherall, Council leader Councillor Kate Hollern and Mayor Councillor Alan Cottam discuss why it was and is important to take time to reflect and remember the sacrifices made by the nation during the First World War.

### **Eric Pickles unveils the design of the paving stone which will commemorate recipients of the Victoria Cross during the First World War.**



Communities Secretary Eric Pickles today, Monday 4 November, unveiled the design of the paving stone which will commemorate recipients of the Victoria Cross during the First World War.

Charlie MacKeith from London was announced as the winner of the main paving stone competition. His circular design seeks to ‘make one pause and remember’ and uses the material, form and lettering of the family of memorials used by the War Graves Commission, bringing this well understood layout into cities, towns and villages across the United Kingdom.

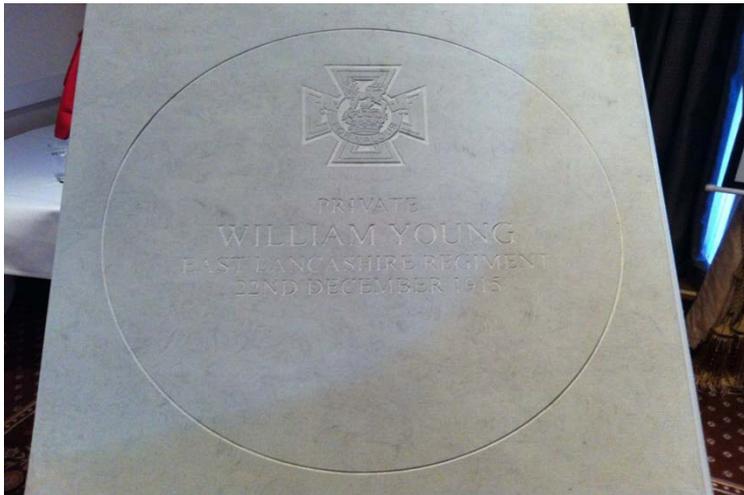
It impressed the judges with its simple and elegant qualities, while being suitable to be replicated for all branches of the armed forces.

It will be set in stone in over 400 communities across the United Kingdom to commemorate those First World War soldiers who were awarded the Victoria Cross for valour ‘in the face of the enemy’.

The design will also incorporate an electronic reader which people will be able to scan using their smartphones to discover more information about their local Victoria Cross recipient.

The paving stone was unveiled at an event at the Army and Navy Club in London – originally founded for former and serving officers of the British and Commonwealth Armed Services,

and was attended by the first living recipient of the Victoria Cross in over 30 years, Lance Sergeant Johnson Beharry.



Young people were represented by members of Middlesex Air Cadets, part of 'Youth United' who provide volunteering opportunities with uniformed organisations such as the Scouts, Sea Cadets and Girl Guides and some school children who entered the competition.

The winning design was selected by a panel of 7 judges, including members of the government's First World War Centenary Advisory Board - Professor of Modern History Michael Burleigh and novelist Sebastian Faulks.

Communities Secretary Eric Pickles said:

It was an honour to reveal the winning design that will take pride of place in our communities and enable people of all ages to appreciate the sacrifices of the fallen brave.

I was incredibly impressed with the variety of excellent entries that were submitted for the competition. It was fantastic that so many were from young people who could use this as an opportunity to learn about the First World War and the legacy that it has had on their local communities.

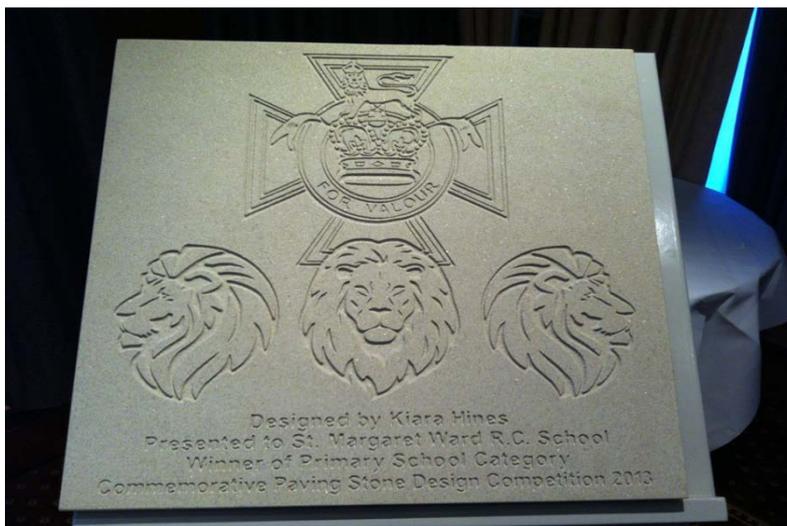
The winning paving stone is a fitting tribute to the centenary of the war and will keep the memory of local war heroes alive for hundreds more years to come.

A large number of entries were received from primary and secondary schools and their designs were judged separately. Winners will have a full size replica awarded to their school as a record of their success and a permanent tribute to their local heroes.

Irfhan Ahmed, age 18, from Queen Mary's Grammar School in Walsall won the secondary school category for his striking design which impressed the judges with the way it conveys a sense of a line of Victoria Cross winners by showing a row of medals.



Kiara Hines, age 11, from St Margaret Ward RC School school in Sale, Cheshire was triumphant in the primary school category for her high quality design which depicts a sketching of 3 lions below the Victoria Cross. The judges all remarked on how impressed they were with the drawing skills displayed in this entry.



More than 200 entries were received for the main competition and the judges found it very difficult to pick a winner given the high standard of the entries.

Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC, a member of the judging panel and owner of the largest collection of Victoria Cross medals said:

This was a truly splendid crop of designs, many of which showed that their creators had put massive effort into their submissions. There were also some exceptionally good entries from children with great imaginative powers.

The competition winner, Charlie MacKeith, said:

It is a fantastic privilege to win and have my design as a permanent marker for heroes who won the highest award for gallantry.

It is humbling to think that the making and laying of this design will continue until 100 years after the last selfless, heroic act in conflict.

The name I used for the stone design - Private William Young VC, identified by Preston veterans - summarised for me the humanity we will find in all the stories of those who served in the First World War.

### Further information

- Charlie MacKeith is an architect and the director of Research Design Architecture and works from studios in Lee, southeast London and Barrow-in-Furness; his design reflects 5 years of learning about memorials from veterans and communities on 2 Heritage Lottery funded centenary projects in Preston and Fleetwood
- the first paving stone will be laid in August 2014, to represent the date that the first 2 Victoria Crosses were awarded in the First World War, in August 1914 to Charles Garforth of Willesden Green (Brent) and Sidney Godley of East Grinstead (Mid Sussex District Council)
- the primary and secondary winners paving stones were created for free by **Brent Stevenson** Memorials - part of the National Association of Memorial Masons; the winning paving stone was created for free by Marshalls Stone Masons
- 7 judges were on the panel who decided on the winning design, these were: Lord Ashcroft, Lance Sergeant Johnson Beharry, Michael Burleigh, Major General Patrick Cordingley, Sebastian Faulks, Dame Helen Ghosh and Diane Lees, [see more information](#)
- the competition was [launched on 5 August 2013](#) as part of the government's plans to commemorate the centenary of the First World War
- a total of 363 Victoria Crosses were awarded to English-born recipients, 44 to Scottish born-recipients and 15 to Welsh-born recipients; 32 Victoria Crosses were awarded in pre-partition Ireland, 8 in what is now Northern Ireland and 24 in what is now the Republic of Ireland
- Lance Sergeant Johnson Beharry was awarded the Victoria Cross for twice saving members of his unit from ambushes in Iraq on 1 May and 11 June 2004
- all Victoria Cross heroes of the First World War will be commemorated; for those born overseas but who have a local connection in the UK, the relevant local council will be offered a paving stone; we are also working on plans to ensure that all heroes who were awarded the Victoria Cross, but who were born overseas, are commemorated

Please click on the links below to our videos:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCC1MJy80sk>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uQpdH99NYo>

PROJECT

# Smart new plaque marks Jack's start

Local history group is replacing worn-out signs across town

By DAN CLOUGH  
daniel.clough@nqnw.co.uk

A NEW plaque has been installed on the house where Blackburn Rovers' benefactor Jack Walker was born.

The granite plaque is the first English Heritage blue plaque to be replaced under a new programme co-ordinated by the Blackburn Local History Society.

The plaque, at 96 Randal Street, was taken down by the premises owner Sajid Munshi as he converted the building into a shop.

It is not yet known what Mr Munshi will do with the original plaque, which was unveiled by Blackburn MP Jack Walker in May 2001.



This project has been five years in the making

Ray Smith

The new plaque is personalised for Mr Walker as it bears the Blackburn Rovers crest and has been donated by Cherry Tree stonemason Brent Stevenson.

Mr Stevenson has agreed to replace all the town's plaques, and put up new ones, in partnership with the local history society, as they are more weather-resistant than the metal blue plaques and less likely to be stolen.

He said: "It was quite surreal seeing where Mr Walker grew up. It is a real rags to riches tale."

"There has been a delay in getting it up because we have been trying to contact the building owner for a while now."

"This is better than the metal

blue plaques because it is granite so it doesn't weather. It will outlive the house itself.

"And it has no value so it shouldn't be stolen."

Ray Smith, chairman of Blackburn Local History Society, said: "It has taken five months to get permission for this and at long last it has been sorted."

"This is the first of the new plaques that will be put up and we are going to slowly replace ones that have been stolen or damaged."

"This project has been five years in the making and I am absolutely over the moon that we have got it up and running."

Jack Walker was born at the family home in Randal Street on May 19, 1929.

He went into the family scrap metal business Walkersteel and, with his brother Fred, transformed it into the multi-million pound concern at Guide.

Walkersteel was sold to British Steel for more than £300million in 1989, providing Mr Walker with the funds to take over the Ewood Park club, transforming its fortunes on the pitch and ultimately leading to the Premier League title in 1995.

Mr Walker died at his home in Jersey on August 17, 2000, aged 71.

Blackburn Rovers benefactor Jack Walker



Stonemason Brent Stevenson and his son James have replaced the blue plaque on the house where Jack Walker was born, with shop owner Sajid Munshi, and the original plaque

# Brave village soldiers to be honoured

BY DAVID SHARMAN  
South-Style Reporter  
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Brave villagers who fought and died in the horrors of the First World War trenches are set to get a permanent memorial – nearly 100 years after the hostilities first began.

Parish councillors in Staining have been campaigning for a memorial to be erected in the village since last year.

And finally an appropriate memento to honour of its fighting men is now set to be put in place next month.

The stone memorial will sit outside the Jubilee Gardens, in the village.

The cost of the monument, which has not been revealed, has been funded through a grant and donations.

Coun Malcolm Hyland, who is chairman of Staining Parish Council, began a project last April to resurrect the idea, after it was first discussed by his predecessors back in 1919.

Coun Hyland said: "There was a roll of honour found in the church about 20 or 30 years ago. It's very important really because it's the 100th anniversary of the Great War. "These people are local people as far I can tell."

A total of 23 men from the parish – which also included parts of Hardhorn (now part of Poulton), Weeton and eastern

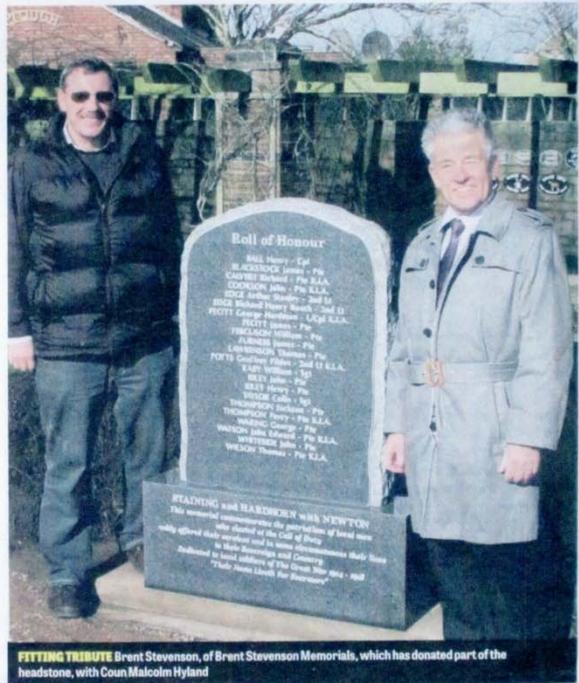
Blackpool at the time – went off to war.

Seven perished in the conflict, which lasted from 1914 to 1918, at Ypres, Arras and in Flanders.

Coun Hyland added: "They worked in the village and were part of the village.

"It's part of the history of people that lived in Staining."

A comment in the minutes of a Hardhorn with Newton Parish Council meeting, held on January 30, 1919, noted that a public meeting would be held to discuss the matter. But nothing else could be found on the subject from the time. The provisional date for the memorial to be unveiled in April 27.



**FITTING TRIBUTE** Brent Stevenson, of Brent Stevenson Memorials, which has donated part of the headstone, with Coun Malcolm Hyland



Accrington Pals Memorial ceremony. Top right, veterans Trevor James Dawson, Brian Howarth and Vincent Barnes. Left, bugler Tommy Fox. Far left, the Accrington Pipe Band.



Lights Out ceremony at Blackburn's Corporation Park. Left, Chairman of Blackburn British Legion, Gerald Stephens. Top right, mayor Alan Cottam with TA cadet Raham Adam. Bottom right, Julie Redhead and Brent Stevenson with the WW1 memorial stone was unveiled at the ceremony.



Pictures: Tim Bradley

**LOWER DARWEN**

## Church work is continuing

WORK to tidy up and improve the graveyard and cenotaph at St James Church, Lower Darwen is continuing. The church is planning a week of events to commemorate World War I. The week will follow Remembrance Sunday starting on Monday, November 10. The graveyard and

cenotaph will feature in some events to the church is planning a clean up of the area on Saturday, October 25 from 9.30am-1pm. Two young churchgoers, Emily Goulding and Ellie Massan, both aged 12 have been fundraising and received a kind donation from stonemason Brent

Stevenson to replace the memorial for a grave they adopted of Brian Haworth. There will be further work done to 'make safe' other memorials thanks to their fund raising and kind donations received. Emly and Ellie are pictured with the gravestone they adopted and improved.



**HODDLESDEN**



Stonemason Brent Stevenson with David Graham

# New memorial in place for David

By DAN CLOUGH  
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■ Stonemason donates bench after reading about theft

A **STOLEN** memorial bench dedicated to a youngster, who died 12 years ago has been replaced by a generous stonemason.

The community in Water-side clubbed together to buy the bench when 16-year-old David Graham died after a heart attack in 2002.

His dad, also called David, told the Lancashire Telegraph in September the bench had been taken by thieves.

A Facebook appeal to

trace the bench was unsuccessful, but after reading the newspaper report, Blackburn stonemason Brent Stevenson offered to make a new one.

He said: "I read about the theft and asked the local councillor, Julie Slater, if there was any way we could help.

"We got it in just before Christmas which was really good.

"It is not an exact replica of the original as we have made it out of granite.

"It will be easier to maintain and is very heavy so you would have to be very strong to steal this one."

Mr Graham said he was delighted the bench had been replaced.

He said: "We are over the moon with it. It is brilliant, and it was there just in time for Christmas, which we didn't know about.

"We knew it was coming but we had been told it would be in the new year. "Then one day we came

home and it was there. It was a very nice Christmas present for us."

Coun Slater said: "I was so glad Brent was able to get them in for Christmas for the family.

"We owe him a huge debt of thanks for all the things he has done for our community.

"The bench is absolutely beautiful and I am really pleased."

@lt\_darwen

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