The story behind the book:

Berkshire’s fallen heroes remembered

3rd Dec 2018

Every single project we work on at Local Heritage is fascinating in its own way. After all, we’re helping people pass on their stories, and there’s nothing more interesting than that.

Those stories – whether they’re intended for the world to hear, or just the people in one’s immediate family – are without exception fascinating, and we always feel privileged to briefly be a part of them.

But there are some projects that take on a special significance. The Men of the Cold Ash Memorials was one such project.

On 11 November 2018, we attended St Mark’s Church in Cold Ash to commemorate 100 years since the end of the First World War. During the service, author Peter Seward presented the church with a copy of this book.

Inside, all the names of all the men from this humble Berkshire village who served in the First and Second World War. Nearly 200 men, each with his own page, detailing their time served, their accomplishments, their awards. It’s an incredible record and one we’re so proud to have helped bring to life.

To have been able to do so in this centenary year makes it especially resonant.

In many ways, this was the absolute embodiment of what we strive to achieve here at Local Heritage. Only 10 copies of this book were printed and it’s likely that no more will ever be added to this number. This book was never intended for mass consumption. Does that diminish its significance? Not remotely. Sitting safely in the church, there is now a permanent record of the sacrifice these proud Berkshire men made. A page for every man. Not online, but written on paper.

This labour of the love was undertaken by Cold Ash resident, Peter Seward, not for financial gain, but out of a sense of civic duty – because this was a valuable, important and worthwhile project.

A huge amount of research, spanning four years, was necessary to ensure each man was accurately and fairly accounted for, and we take our hats off to Peter.

However uncertain the world feels right now, we’re confident that another 100 years from now, the Church of St Mark’s will be standing and The Men of the Cold Ash Memorials will still be sitting safely inside.

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