



SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

Press Release

SANDOWN'S ROYAL VISIT AND COMMEMORATION

Sandown Mayor Paddy Lightfoot welcomed HRH Prince Michael of Kent to commemorate the Centenary of Sandown War Memorial, as well as the Island's Lord Lieutenant Susie Sheldon, and the High Sheriff James Attrill DL.

Prince Michael met Mark Birch, operations manager of the Sandown & Shanklin Independent Lifeboat, and volunteer crew members, and received a special knitted memento of his visit to Sandown; IW RBL President Ian Ward introduced Bill Wyke and Sally McConkey, descendants of service personnel named on the memorial, as well as Island Road's Kenny Snudden, who tends the area around the memorial, and Stuart Kent, bugler from Sandown and Shanklin Military Band.

The visit was completed by meeting the Head of School (Bay CE Primary) and pupils from the School, with school Governors Rev Williams and Rev Hall, who presented Prince Michael with a set of mugs specially designed by pupils from the school – there was a display of all of the designs and they are on the website.

Prince Michael then visited the Broadway Centre and presented the Queens Award for Voluntary Service to volunteers from the Community Bus Service, who provide the 24 service to Yaverland, Sandown, Lake and Shanklin (as well as the 22 and 32 services); during his visit he met members of the TWG and local residents that use the voluntary bus service.

Town Mayor Paddy Lightfoot said 'The Town Council have funded special commemorative troughs for the Memorial, which Green Town Volunteers have planted, and renovated the memorial for the Centenary, a fitting tribute for the sacrifices for those named on the memorial and their descendants.'

The Town Council also worked with the local church to arrange a special Commemorative Church Service on Sunday 25 July 2021, exactly 100 years to the day the memorial was unveiled.

The Service started with a 2 minute silence, followed by a Cry For Peace read by Cllr Andre, readings from IW Vice Lord Lieutenant Brigadier Maurice Sheen, High Sheriff James Attrill, and Sally McConkey, whose family are on the memorial.

There were special plaques highlighting the Centenary, a trowel and scroll that laid the foundation stone of the local church, a tribute to Eric Charles Twelves Wilson VC, son of a former curate and baptised in the church in 1912, and the TWG provided refreshments to the congregation.

Mayor Paddy Lightfoot added 'The service paid tribute to those lost during the pandemic, and also provided an opportunity to reflect on the VE and VJ Day 75th anniversaries that were affected by Covid guidance in 2020, and we hope that this year's Remembrance Day event will go ahead safely, as we know how important this is to local residents'.

The Town Council carried out public surveys at the beginning of the year, with residents supporting arranging commemorative events for the centenary of the memorial.

Deputy Mayor Heather Humby MBE said 'This has been a memorable week for Sandown, and the cross section of the community involved in all of the events, and we hope the November service can go ahead safely, and then we can start planning for the Queens Jubilee next year'.

Pictures from the visit of HRH Prince Michael to the Memorial, Commemorative Church Service, and the designs created by pupils from our local school are on the website.

