

From Saltash 1941 Blitz Committee to Saltash Town Council

Tuesday May 4th 2021

A request has been received from the Saltash 1941 Blitz Committee for STC to adopt the following memorial items as STC assets to include ownership, maintenance, health and safety, and insurance.

Dear Saltash Town Councillors.

You will all be mindful, as the Saltash 1941 Blitz Committee have been in regular communication with the Council on the work of the Blitz committee to pay tribute to the Saltash fallen civilian personnel of April 1941.

Thursday April 22nd and again on Wednesday April 28th, Saltash paid homage to the Saltash fallen during the April 1941 Blitz.

The Saltash 1941 Blitz Committee have been working tirelessly to pay homage and tribute to the Saltash civilians killed during the April 1941 Blitz, moreover, to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the fallen during WW2.

It was in April 1941, fifteen Saltash civilians were killed by enemy action.

Six Saltash Auxiliary Fire Servicemen (AFS) were killed all together in King Street, Devonport on April 22nd 1941 when they responded to a call for help from neighbouring Plymouth during a bombing raid.

Nine other local civilians died on April 28th 1941 during another bombing raid in Saltash.

All fifteen Saltash civilians are 'commemorated in perpetuity' by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Thirteen of the fifteen civilians are named on the Borough of Saltash 1939-1945 War Memorial, including all six firemen who died on April 22nd 1941. However, the names of two other civilians, Aaron Brooking and Walter Eales, who died on April 28th 1941 during the Saltash Blitz, are not engraved on that War Memorial.

The six Auxiliary Fire Servicemen (AFS) are buried side-by-side at St Stephens-by-Saltash Churchyard. The seventh an Auxiliary Fire Service Scout is buried at Botus Flemming Churchyard.

SALTASH AUXILIARY FIRE FIGHTERS (AFS)

One of Saltash's most-known civilian tragedies was the loss of six Auxiliary Fire Fighters on April 22nd 1941.

Their names are: Francis Joseph Brooking, Stanley Richard Crabb, Alfred John Crapp, Bernard Jasper, John Robert Hoskins Stanlake and Leslie George Tibbs.

The men crossed on the Saltash Ferry into Plymouth to help tackle the raging fires in the city. Driving a Packard taxi, towing a water pump behind them to serve their homeland with vigour, they never came back.

Their equipment was very basic, just tin hats, overalls, oilskins and gas masks. They also wore their AFS badge with honour.

There was a seventh Saltash Auxiliary Fire Fighter (AFS), 18-year-old Donald Noel Cummins (2nd Saltash Scout Troop), who was tragically killed on April 28th, just six days later.

Donald was one of the brave volunteer scouts who took on their role with courage during the war. Donald was killed serving the Saltash Community at the Great Western Railway (GWR) goods yard at the Saltash Railway Station. Donald, alongside his fellow Boy Scout Troop volunteers, proudly wore the Scout Firemen's Badge. The troop, led by Mr Douglas Vosper, was given a Beresford-Stork Light Trailer Pump. Mr Vosper used his own car for towing the pump and had alterations done, so that he could carry a ladder above the pump. All orders at the time were taken from Fire Chief Venn. ***Donald Noel Cummins was rightly awarded the Bronze Cross, posthumously***

The remaining civilian personnel whom were tragically killed in the enemy air raids in Saltash in April 1941 were: ***Charles Henry and Emma Amelia Allen*** (Grave in St Stephens-by Saltash Churchyard), ***Alfred William Olver*** (Grave in St. Stephens-by-Saltash Churchyard), ***William Rogers*** (In Communal grave in St Michael Churchyard, Landrake), ***Mrs Dorothy Goad and Miss Joan Goad*** (Both in a Communal grave in St Michael Churchyard, Landrake), ***Walter Eales*** (Grave in Callington Cemetery), ***and Aaron Brooking*** (Grave in St. Michael Churchyard, Landrake)

The committee have been able to raise sufficient funds thanks to Saltash Town Council, local businesses and funding sources to install local memorials in their honour.

The memorial items include; two blitz themed seats to be sited in Saltash Fore Street, a memorial plaque in honour of Donald Cummins at the Saltash railway station, a WW2 blitz themed history board in Fore Street and memorial booklets.

On behalf of Saltash, the committee have organised wreaths and Commonwealth War Graves tokens, for the graves of the fallen, and visited all the graves and placed wreaths and tokens on each grave on the anniversaries of April 22nd and April 28th.

The committee only have one more act of remembrance to organise, which will be August 8th this year, and more details will be released to the Council and the community nearer the date.

In the meantime, the committee are asking if Saltash Town Council will please adopt the Donald Cummins memorial plaque, and the Blitz memory board please. Neither of

the two memorials will need very much maintenance, but they will need insurance and other aspects of property care. The memorial seats, we believe will be under the Saltash Town Council responsibility in accordance with the application to S106 successful bid.

I and members of our committee would be pleased to furnish the Council with any further information if deemed necessary if it helps with this meaningful request.

Thank you most sincerely.

Sue Hooper

For further information please contact the general secretary of the Saltash 1941 Blitz Committee – **Sue Hooper MBE tele 01752 843073 – Email suehcf@msn.com**







END OF REPORT