GRACIELA AINSWORTH
Sculpture conservation, restoration & commissions

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Newcastle upon Tyne

Catherine Harrison
Parish Clerk, Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council
10 Church Close
Riding Mill,
Northumberland,
NE44 6DP,
UK

30th of June 2017

Dear Catherine,

RIDING MILL OAK WAR MEMORIAL PANEL FINAL REPORT

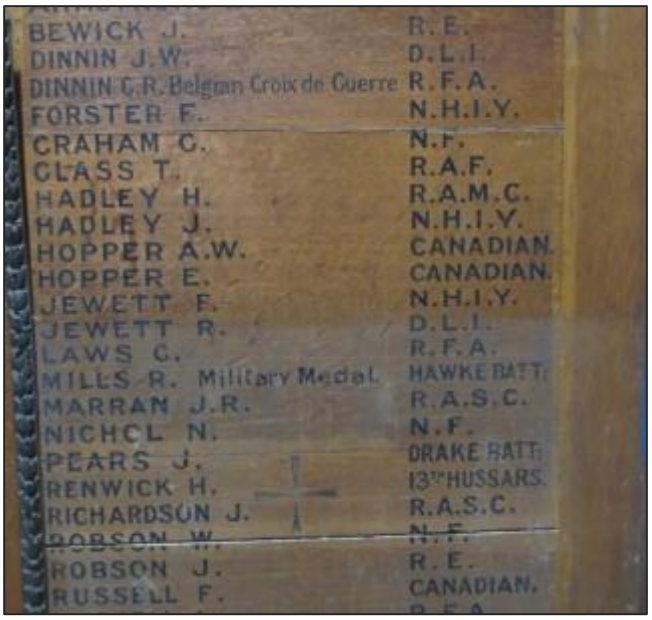
Following our completed conservation treatments to your WW1 and WW2 Memorial, we are pleased to present this brief report with explanations of the treatments and conservation works that have been carried out.

If you have any questions please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Leire Gardeazabal
for Graciela Ainsworth Sculpture Conservation Ltd

CONSERVATION WORKS



All the elements of the memorial were cleaned, firstly using dry methods to clean dust and other residues with bristle brushes and vacuum.

Damaged and defective previous repairs on joints such as wood fills were removed.

Old corroded screws, nails and hanging fixings were removed where possible or only cut where the wood could be damaged otherwise.

In one of the corners of the panel there was one small piece of a different type of wood which had been very badly damaged by woodworm. This indent was removed and re-filled using polyester based wood filler and toned out with acrylic fine artist paint.

The wooden panels were then further cleaned of grime and stains using white spirit and isopropanol.

New inserts were made in to the gaps between panels in order to replace the defective and damaged areas, we used balsa wood and subsequently toned out to match with the surroundings.

Cracks and small losses on the crosses were filled using similar coloured wax based filler and pigmented Cosmolloid wax

The bronze laurel leaf decorative moulding was cleaned and treated with tri-ammonium citrate inhibitor and deionized water.

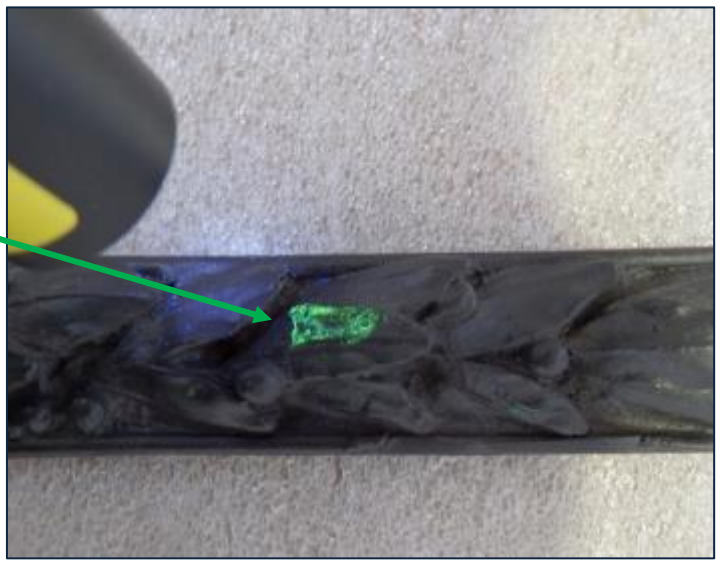
The brass memorial plaque was first cleaned using a solution of white spirit and surfactant Dehypon LS45 and secondly cleaned and slightly re-polished using autosolve metal cleaner before final deep clean with white spirit.

One mould of silicon rubber and plaster was made using an original small section of the bronze decorative laurel moulding. Then the mould was used to cast one new bronze section to replace the lost area of the decorative bronze moulding.

The original sections of the decorative bronze moulding were repaired and joined together using polyester and fibre glass on the back of the broken sections and welded on the front.

All the bronze fragments, original and new, were re-attached in place using new brass screws. Some of the old nails were removed and also replaced with fine brass screws. New bronze replacement and screws were toned matching with the original using fine acrylic art paint.

Forensic coding system **'Smart Water'** was applied at different spots all over the metal (bronze and brass) elements of the War Memorial, enabling identification by using a UV light lamp.



The whole object was treated against wood worm, due to the existence of outlet holes, although it is unknown if the infestation is still currently active.

Firstly the holes were injected until saturation with a specific commercial product based on permethrin and later the same product was brushed over all the wood surface at the front and the back of the object. Afterwards the whole memorial was wrapped in polythene and left sealed for over a month.

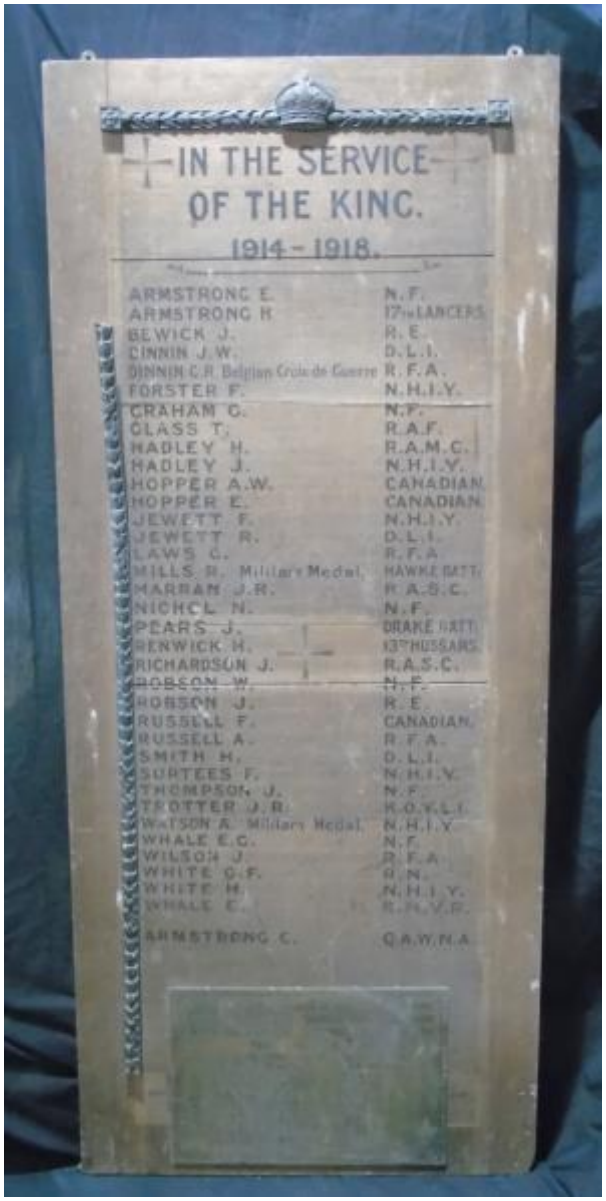
Once the treatment was completed all the flight holes were filled with pigmented wax. In this case, if a hole is visible in the next few years it means that there are new woodworm alive inside, requiring further woodworm treatment.

The missing areas of lettering were retouched using fine acrylic art paint.

Finally a protective layer of Paraloid B44 and Cosmolloid wax was applied over the metal elements, bronze and brass.

The wood surface was protected using French polish shellac and a thin Cosmolloid wax on top.

Before and after treatment



FUTURE MAINTANENCE

The Oak War Memorial should always be moved carefully always with two people, wearing nitrile gloves to avoid hand grease on both the metal and the wood.

The ideal environment for its storage and display should be a temperature between 15c to 25c and a humidity between 40% to 60 % in order to avoid stress and movement in the wood.

Direct sun light should be avoided and ambient light shouldn't be higher than 200 LUX.

The recommended cleaning would consist on a periodical light dusting using soft dusters or brushes avoiding any wet or chemical product as well as cotton or fabric clothes that can damage both metal and wood protective surfaces.

Every year after the summer the piece should be checked to look for new woodworm flight holes. If any new holes are found this would mean that the War Memorial is affected by a new or a regrowth of wood worms. In this case a reapplication of anti woodworm treatment should be required.