

James Perry

From: Kim Fantaci
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2013 1:15 PM
To: James Perry
Cc: Krista Saul; Tina Schneider
Subject: FW: MBNA's 2013 Aspire Awards Contest - Now Accepting Entries

From: Brent Stevenson Memorials [mailto:info@bsmemorials.co.uk]
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2013 1:09 PM
To: Monument Builders Of North America
Subject: RE: MBNA's 2013 Aspire Awards Contest - Now Accepting Entries

Hi,

I am a member of MBNA from Blackburn, Lancashire, England and I would like to submit some coverage gained this year. I hope to attend your conference in Tampa next February. Please give my regards to James Perry. The entries below are taken from the local newspaper. We have definitely been inspired to seek local community involvement from my fellow memorial masons in MBNA. We have some other entries during the last 12 months, but I hope the following demonstrates our activity. We have around 5 competitors and none of them had any entries in the newspapers. We currently have about 80% of the local memorial market. Our view is seek out opportunities to give something away. The more we give away the busier we become! The final press release just out today is actually on the British Government's own website - Gov.UK

Please see below:-

Burnley memorial to be rededicated by new Bishop of Blackburn

10:38am Tuesday 29th October 2013 in [NewsBy](#)

[Peter Magill](#)
, Chief reporter



A MEMORIAL to a Victoria Cross winner, which was damaged by trespassers, has been restored just weeks before the centenary of the start of the First World War.

Churchgoers at St Matthew's in Burnley are preparing to re-dedicate its cenotaph bearing the names of Second Lieutenant Alfred Victor Smith and around a dozen of his comrades.

The stone monument was cracked around a decade ago when youths, who were climbing on the church roof, fell off and collided with part of the edifice.

Now, following a fundraising campaign by the congregation, the newly-installed Bishop of Blackburn will honour the fallen from the Great War at a ceremony on November 9 which will also be attended by Lord Shuttleworth, Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire.

And youngsters from nearby Holy Trinity will honour two Burnley VC winners as part of the Remembrance commemorations.

Headteacher Mark Williams and his staff have worked with church leaders to rehearse a play based around Smith and Private Thomas Whitham, a soldier in the Coldstream Guards, who was presented with the VC for gallantry after disabling a German machine gun on the first day of the third Battle of Ypres in 1917.

Stephen Martin, who attends St Matthew's took on the project following the death of his father, Eric, 94, last year.

He said: "He served in the Second World War and he was really concerned that the memorial had deteriorated so much down the years.

"And after he died I took a look at the memorial and thought it was awful, so we decided to do something about it."

More than £3,000 has been spent commissioning specialist Nelson-based stonemasons Stone Edge to work on the overhaul.

Around a third of the cost was met by the War Memorials Trust, the rest by the congregation, and a plaque was donated by Brent Stevenson Memorials.

Plaque honours Darwen's unsung heroes of Lions Club

6:00pm Friday 25th October 2013 in [NewsBy Chloe Glover](#), Reporter

AN 'UNSUNG' Darwen hero has been commemorated for his work in the community.

Former Lions president Ian Ashton was unveiled as the first person to be named on a memorial plaque on the Town Hall building.

Darwen Lions Club commissioned the granite piece to formally recognise the efforts of community champions.

The scroll of honour reads: "In appreciation to the people of Darwen that have made an outstanding contribution to the community."

The club hopes several more names, currently 'under wraps', will be added to the engraving which was created and donated by Brett Stevenson Memorials.

Former Lions president Kevan Jennings came up with the idea after the death of charity champion Mr Ashton in June last year.

He was joined at the unveiling by current president Stephen Milligan, and Brent Stevenson employees Dave Chadwick and James Stevenson. Mr Milligan said: "Whilst military veterans are routinely honoured and many roads and structures have been dedicated to historic figures, there is a gap when it comes to committed community members who have died more recently.

"We wanted to be able to demonstrate our pride in the civilians who have done great things for our community and people less fortunate than themselves who would otherwise get forgotten over time. We decided that a plaque would be the best way to create a permanent memorial to them and hope to add more names in the coming months.

"Ian was a true unsung hero who was the last surviving charter member of the Darwen Lions and a long-standing member of the scout movement.

“The Lions would like to express their gratitude to Brent Stevenson and his team without whom this plaque would not have been created.”

“The plaque is an important addition to the town that we hope will be enjoyed by all.”

Headstone safety inspections for Blackburn with Darwen cemeteries

1:06pm Wednesday 2nd October 2013 in [NewsBy Dan Clough](#), Reporter



Robin Duxbury, Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery, Don Hodgkinson, Friends of Pleasington Cemetery chairperson, [Brent Stevenson memorial creator](#) and Mari Whalley, Friends of Pleasington Cemetery secretary, at Pleasington Cemetery
HEADSTONE safety inspections will be carried out for free at cemeteries across Blackburn and Darwen.

[Brent Stevenson Memorials](#) will work in conjunction with local friends' groups to carry out the work at both [cemeteries](#) in Darwen, plus Blackburn Old Cemetery in Whalley New Road and Pleasington Cemetery.

People have been assured that no memorials will be laid down and all will be made safe in their original position. Work starts at Darwen Old Cemetery this month, It follows criticism in 2007 when Blackburn with Darwen Council came under fire for asking bereaved relatives to fix 'dangerous' headstones - when neighbouring authorities had carried out the work for free.

At the time, the council said it was 'not policy' for them to pay for headstone repair.

Now, inspections will be carried out to new Ministry of Justice Guidelines, where memorials weighing more than 500kg and of a higher risk of causing injury will be made safe at the council's expense..

Chairman of the Friends of Darwen Cemetery John East said: “We are supporting the checks on the headstones to make sure families get assurance that things are safe.

“It is good news as we are working in partnership with Brent and the council.

“Over the years, I think they got a bit over-indulgent with laying headstones down and we don't want that to re-occur.”

The smaller lawn memorials will also be tested to see if they are a cause for concern or are considered dangerous, in which case the council will pay to have them made safe.

Where memorials erected within 35 years are a cause for concern, but not a risk, the council will write to the grave owners at their last known address to advise them their memorial is loose, and the owners then have the choice of instructing a qualified memorial mason to make the memorial secure.

Tony Watson, Blackburn with Darwen Council's head of environment and public protection, said: "The safety of these memorials is important to families and loved ones and helps to keep our cemeteries safe."

Memorial offer for Blackburn VC winner

3:00pm Monday 2nd September 2013 in [News By Jon Robinson](#), Reporter



Maurice Dease

A BLACKBURN memorial maker has offered to donate a commemorative plaque to Stonyhurst College in memory of a former pupil who was awarded the first Victoria Cross of the First World War.

Under current government plans, Maurice Dease, a lieutenant in the 4th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, will be omitted from centenary commemorations because he was born in Coole, County Westmeath, Ireland.

He grew up in England from the age of eight.

Twenty-eight commemorative stones will be unveiled next year to honour those who won medals in 1914 and others will be laid in every year up to 2018.

Brent Stevenson, who owns Brent Stevenson Memorials in Blackburn, has offered to donate the piece in any design to the college if the government does not reverse its decision.

Mr Stevenson, who has written to the college, said: "We would like to do our bit and whatever we can do to make sure that he is remembered in the right way. I think something like this needs to be recognised."

Stonyhurst headmaster Andrew Johnson said: "It's a very generous offer from him and it's great that people want to get involved.

"I think it's important that we wait for the response from the government before taking any further action ourselves."

Lieutenant Dease, who was born in 1889, attended Stonyhurst College from 1903 to 1907, having previously studied in London, and died during the Battle of Mons on August 23 1914, aged 24.

He was awarded his VC after he continued to man his machine gun post after every other member of his section had been killed or wounded during the Battle of Mons.

Stonemasons from Blackburn repair vandalised statue

4:19pm Friday 25th January 2013 in [News By Dan Clough](#), Reporter



Brent Stevenson with Flora

STONEMASONS in Blackburn are creating a new leg for a much-loved statue that was damaged by vandals.

Flora, in Corporation Park, was broken in September when vandals smashed off the right leg in an overnight attack.

Workers at Brent Stevenson Memorials in Blackburn have now inserted a piece of stone where the missing leg should be and have begun carving to make the shape of the leg.

Blackburn with Darwen Council requested the work be carried out, which will cost almost £3,000.

To ensure the leg is the right shape, workmen will refer to old photographs.

The statue was removed by the firm in December and was allowed to dry out before work began.

Brent Stevenson, owner of the family firm in Preston Old Road, said: "The work will take a couple of months but we don't know exactly how long it will take.

"We just do a couple of hours at a time and then take a break and come back and look at it again.

"It isn't the only job we have over the next two months so it will take time."

"It is never ideal to work like this as the original piece was carved entirely from one big piece of material.

“But we will get it looking as close to the original as possible.”

Mr Stevenson said; “Flora has been through the wars a bit over the years. She has had her head knocked off a couple of times and various other body parts damaged.

“We will check all the other joints as well and clean her up as good as we can before putting her back.”

Flora was presented to the park in 1871 by well-known monumental mason Thomas Harvey Fairhurst.

She was created by artist Thomas Allen, who moved to Blackburn in 1870 and provided several pieces of art.”

Safety first at cemetery

10:29am Friday 12th July 2013 in [News in brief](#)

A TRAINING day has been organised to show members of Blackburn with Darwen’s cemetery friends’ groups how to safety test memorials.

The free 10am-2pm session, hosted by Brent Stevenson Memorials at Darwen Old Cemetery, is being run in conjunction with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

Letter: Action group says thanks

4:08pm Thursday 14th February 2013 in [Opinion](#)

Many people are aware of the Pleasington Cemetery Action Group’s challenge of Blackburn with Darwen Council, relative to the health and safety audit in all cemeteries of the borough of around six years ago.

We have finally won the case, and as a result approximately 500 grave owners have/are to be reimbursed, and the remaining headstones are to be repaired free of charge within the next 12 months.

The people we wish to acknowledge are Jack Straw MP, Damian Talbot of the Constituency offices, Brent Stevenson Memorials, Brian Gordon, group members and last but by no means least, Sayyed Osman and Tony Watson of the council.

Our group have worked with Blackburn with Darwen Council and in the near future, a Friends of Pleasington Cemetery group is to be formed by Mrs Whalley.

Our aim is to give Pleasington Cemetery the respect it demands, and the Friends group will work to ensure that this happens.

Headstone tasks

4:46pm Wednesday 30th January 2013 in [News in brief](#)

THE Friends of Darwen Cemetery have started work to complete the re-erection of headstones in Section B of the cemetery. The work is being carried out this month by Brent Stevenson Memorials, of Blackburn.

'Lost' Darwen war memorial to go on display



Stonemason Brent Stevenson works on the

memorial

A FORGOTTEN memorial to people killed during the First and Second World Wars is being restored and will be put up in a prominent Darwen town centre location.

The memorial is in tribute to fallen members of the former National United Services Club, where Bar Java now stands in Green Street. The original club closed in 1985.

The memorial was found by the then owner of The Railway pub in Railway Road in the cellar and for the past four years the memorial had been sat in an office at Darwen Library.

But now it will be put up somewhere near the town hall in Croft Street.

Town councillors in Darwen discussed the disused memorial during their meeting earlier this month and had since investigated having it restored.

The work is now being carried out by **Blackburn stonemason Brent Stevenson.**

The memorial – about three feet by two feet, and made of white marble and weighing 30lbs – was yesterday in the process of being repainted and when completed it will be white with black letters for the names of the deceased.

Whitehall town councillor John East said he had taken on the project following the meeting.

He said: “I am really pleased it is moving now.

“It is important that we preserve our heritage here in Darwen.

“These memorials should not be lost.

“I am delighted Brent Stevenson has volunteered his services to repair it.

“This is yet another success for Darwen Town Council.”

Mike Coyle, Lancashire representative of the War Memorials Trust, said he was delighted the memorial was being put back on display.

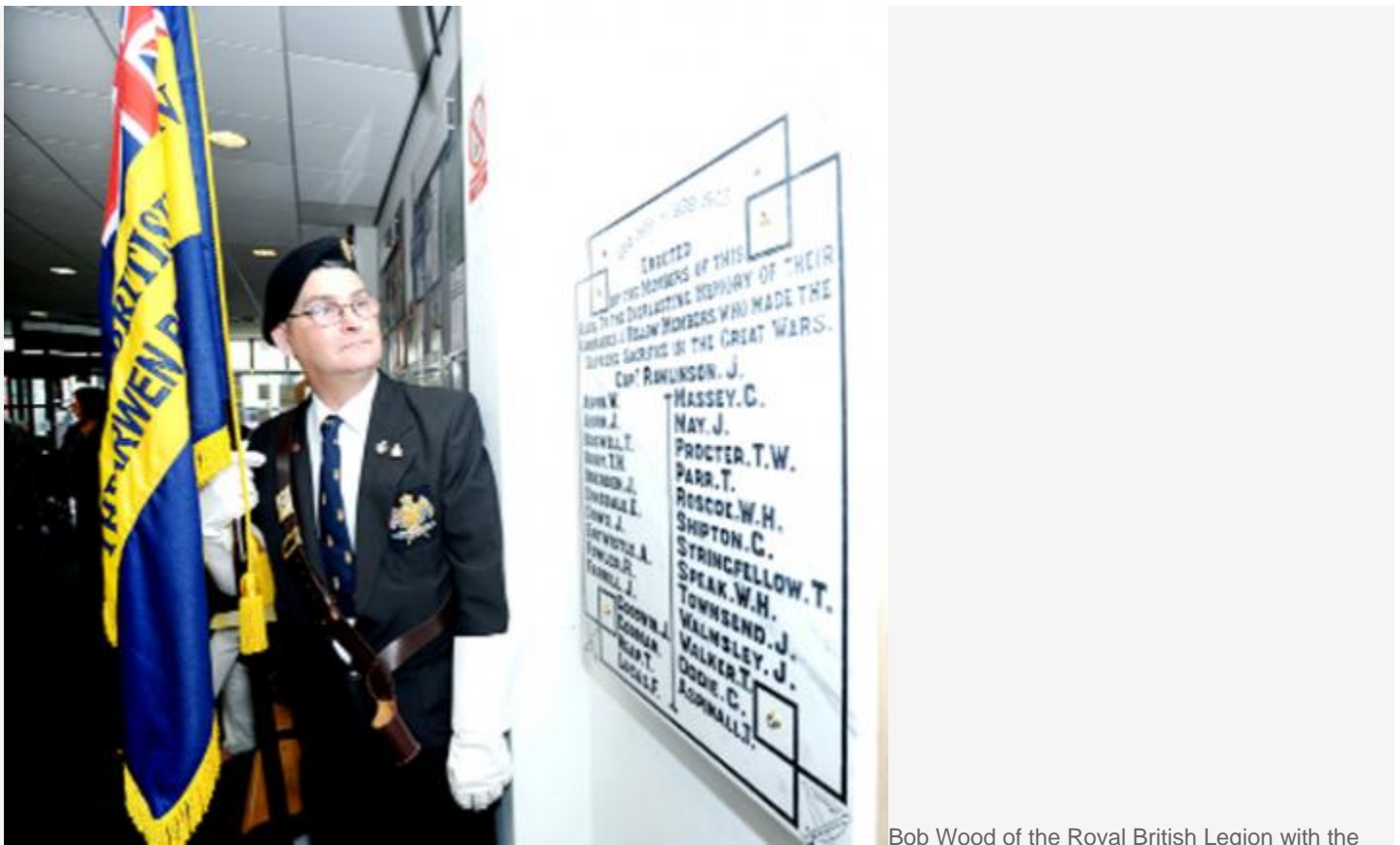
He said: “It is great that another piece of Darwen’s heritage is being restored.

“Up and down Lancashire there are still lots of memorials under threat or lost.

“It is wonderful to see one being brought back into use.”

Forgotten Darwen war memorial is restored

2:00pm Friday 24th May 2013 in [NewsBy Dan Clough](#), Reporter



memorial

A FORGOTTEN war memorial has been restored to its former glory and put up in Darwen town centre.

The memorial, in tribute to fallen members of the former National United Services Club, where Bar Java now stands in Green Street, has been put on display in the Town Hall in Croft Street.

The original club closed in 1985 and the memorial was removed. It was found six years ago in the cellar of The Railway pub and put in storage in the town’s library in Knott Street, where it was left under a desk in the manager’s office.

But after an appeal by Sudell councillor Paul Browne at a town council meeting in January, the monument was restored free of charge by Blackburn stonemason Brent Stevenson. Councillors unveiled the memorial, watched by

members of the local branch of the Royal British Legion, and spoke of their delight that the men of the club who gave their lives in the First and Second World Wars would not be forgotten.

Town Council mayor Coun Eileen Entwistle said: "It is good it is back and in a place where people can see it. It was a bit of a mess before but it looks brilliant now."

Chairman of the Darwen branch of the Royal British Legion Bob Wood said it was important memorials like this were kept on display.

He said: "I am delighted we have got the memorial back up and looking good as new."

"It is worrying that memorials like this can go missing and it is important we remember the sacrifice of these men."

Town council deputy chairman and Blackburn with Darwen Council's armed forces champion Trevor Maxfield said: "It is fitting that the memorial is back just in time for Armed Forces Week next month."

"We will be holding a parade outside the town hall on June 29 to mark Armed Forces Day."

Mill founder

2:30pm Thursday 18th August 2013 in [News](#)

A HEADSTONE to commemorate the founder of India Mill will be unveiled in Darwen Old Cemetery on World Mental Health Day.

Eccles Shorrocks had bi-polar disorder and he died in the Edinburgh Royal Asylum in 1889.

It is said that building India Mill in the 1860s broke him financially and mentally.

He was buried at Darwen Cemetery without anything to mark the family vault.

Four of his eight children also suffered severe mental health problems.

Now the Friends of Darwen Cemetery (FODC), with **the help of Blackburn stonemason Brent Stevenson**, have decided to mark his life and will conduct a short unveiling ceremony on October 10.

Blackburn memorial firm lands First World War deal

1:51pm Monday 4th November 2013 in [News](#)



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

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."



Press release

Winner of First World War Victoria Cross paving stone design competition unveiled

Organisation:

[Department for Communities and Local Government](#)

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Policies:

[Marking relevant national events and ceremonies+ 1 other](#)

Topic:

[Community and society](#)

Topical event:

[First World War Centenary](#)

Minister:

[The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP](#)

Eric Pickles (Government Minister for Local Government) 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.

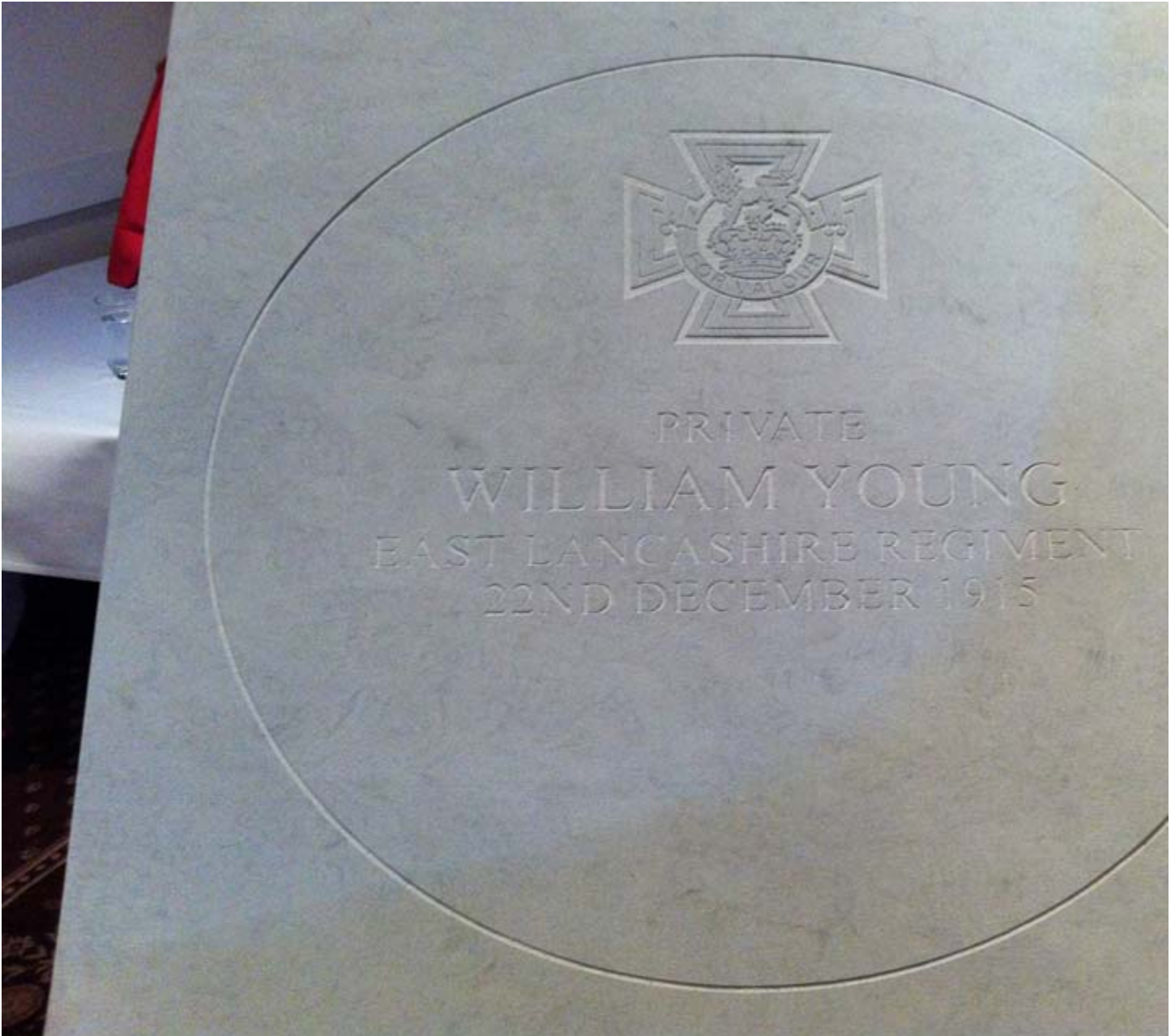
It impressed the judges with its simple and elegant qualities, while being suitable to be replicated for all branches of the armed forces.

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:

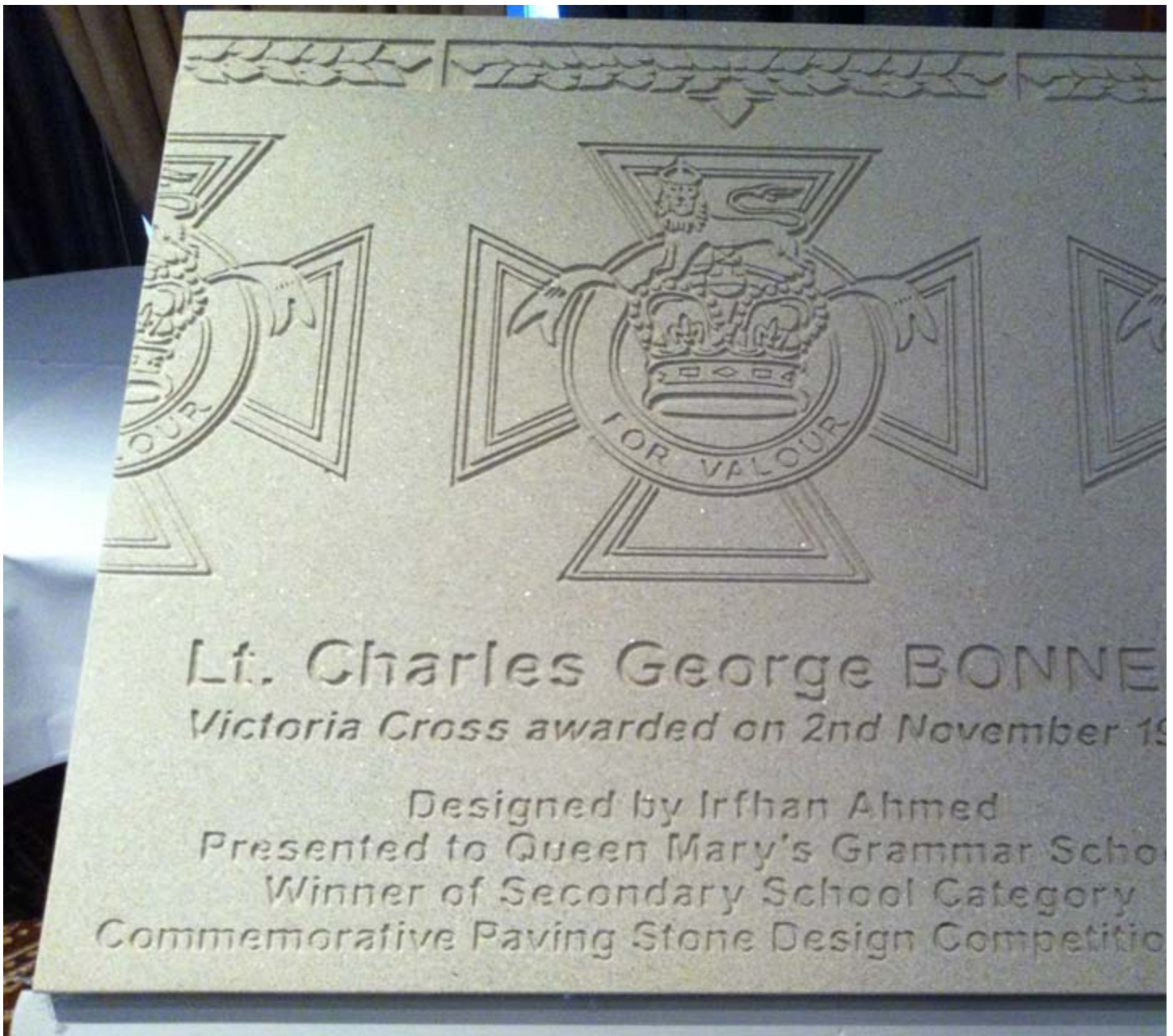
It was an honour to reveal the winning design that will take pride of place in our communities and enable people of all ages to appreciate the sacrifices of the fallen brave.

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

Kind Regards & Best Wishes

Brent Stevenson

BRENT
STEVENSON
MEMORIALS

01254 202019

Six Generations Since 1883

BrentStevensonMemorials.co.uk

From: Monument Builders Of North America [<mailto:info@monumentbuilders.org>]

Sent: 28 October 2013 14:39

To: MBNA Members & Friends

Subject: MBNA's 2013 Aspire Awards Contest - Now Accepting Entries

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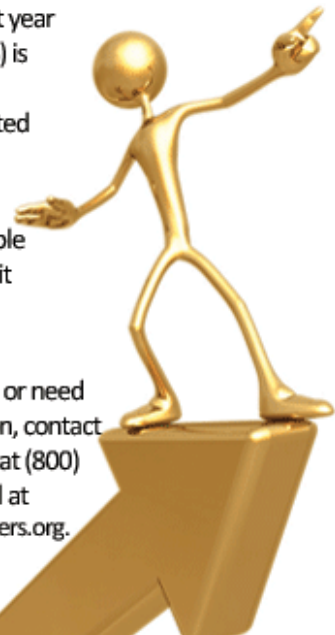


Any publicity you've received during the contest year (November 1, 2012 through November 1, 2013) is eligible. This includes coverage by newspapers, magazines television, new acquisitions, celebrated anniversaries or testimonial letters.

Up to three (3) winners will be awarded the handsome granite MBNAspire Award. Honorable mention entries will receive a certificate of merit suitable for framing. All winning entries will be featured in MBNews.

Deadline for entries is November 15, 2013. 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.



2013 Marketing & Public Relations Contest

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Monument Builders of North America
136 South Keowee Street
Dayton, OH 45402

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