



Cornflowers and Poppies



***Ideas for schools and parishes to
commemorate 100 years since the
ending of the First World War***

Introduction

Dear colleagues

We are pleased to offer you some additional resources to support the plethora that has become available in advance of the significant Remembrance Day that marks the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War 1 this November.

At our Area Briefings we shared ideas with colleagues, and were particularly keen to take the opportunity to look at the common heritage we share as human beings, in light of what has become a time for many to emphasise difference and even xenophobia. Le Bleu et in itself offers the opportunity to discuss with children how the use of symbols can be distorted – a humble and poignant flower, representing peace, being intentionally claimed some years back by the far right as a symbol of division and hatred – as of course was the swastika, another historic symbol of peace.

There are countless opportunities for intergenerational work and conversations within the context of Remembrance, and a time to emphasise those values and virtues that church schools espouse.

If you'd like any further information, do contact Sue Bowen (Sue.bowen@portsmouth.anglican.org) who has kindly put together these resources.

Best wishes

Jeff

Jeff Williams

Director of Education

Why The Cornflower?



An alternative to the traditional poppy, the 'bleuet' or cornflower is the French symbol for the annual remembrance commemorations. Symbolising delicacy and innocence, the cornflower used to grow abundantly in France and, like the poppy, was often the only sign of life amidst the mud and desolation of World War 1. The flower was also used to describe the young soldiers of WW1, whose bright blue uniforms initially stood out in sharp contrast to the grey and muddy misery of the trenches.

Les poilus, as the French soldiers were known, suffered terribly. Survivors trailed home maimed, mutilated and mentally traumatised. Seeing the importance of keeping these men active, French nurses Suzanne Lenhardt, and Charlotte Malleterre, started up 'Le Bleuet de France', a workshop where former soldiers created cornflower blue lapel badges from blue tissue paper to sell to the public. The initiative spread slowly and in 1935, the sale of the Bleuets on Remembrance Day finally became official throughout France.

Two thirds of French families lost a close relative in WW1. This is a far greater toll than in the UK, something that was true during the Second World War as well. As a result, communities are still very mindful of their loss. Many today will still recognise the family names listed on the memorials as the ancestors of friends or acquaintances.

In recent years the cornflower has become a sign of hope and peace for the future in France.

At a time of Brexit and division, schools and parishes are encouraged to think about what binds us together. The cornflower has seen a revival in recent years after President Francois Hollande was seen wearing the symbol during Armistice Day events.

Why The Poppy?



In the spring of 1915, shortly after losing a friend in Ypres, Canadian doctor Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae was inspired by the sight of poppies growing in battle-scarred fields to write the now famous poem *In Flanders Fields*.

His poem moved American teacher Moina Michael who began making and selling silk poppies to friends to raise money for the ex-service community. Before long, poppies made their way to the UK and became the symbol of the Royal British Legion when it was formed in 1921.

The first ever 'Poppy Appeal' in the UK that year raised over £106,000 for war veterans. The following year, a poppy factory was set up by Major George Howson MC, giving jobs to disabled former servicemen.

The bright red poppy is regarded as a resilient flower which managed to flourish despite fields being destroyed by war. Poppies are available from late October when the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal launches. Street collectors sell them all over Britain up until November 11.

Collectors aim to be at all major supermarket chains, train stations and high street stores. You can also buy poppies online from the Royal British Legion's website. The suggested donation is £1 per poppy.

The net income from the appeal goes to the Royal British Legion Benevolent Fund and armed forces' dependents, veterans and those bereaved. In 2016 the Poppy Appeal raised £47.6 million.

There follows a list of practical projects designed for schools and parishes to mark remembrance, uniting school communities in remembrance traditions by using both poppies and cornflowers.

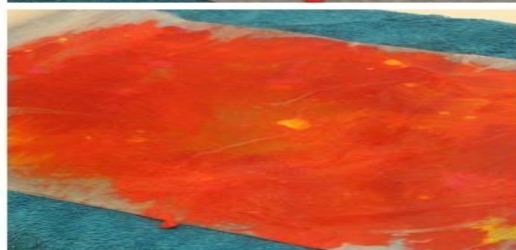
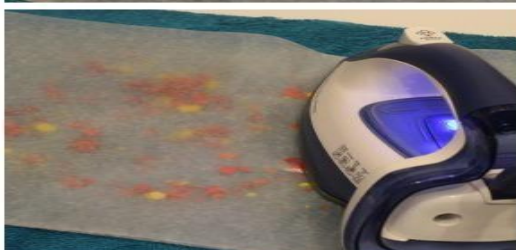
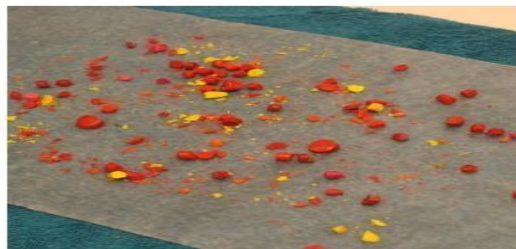
Quilling a cornflower

Cut thin strips of blue paper (or buy special quilling papers). Roll the paper strips round a pencil to create a spiral. Pinch the ends to create a petal shape. Put PVA glue onto a board or strong card and gently press the quilled shape onto the glue. This is an exercise in patience for older and younger participants as it takes some time to stick! Release the paper. See the picture for more ideas.



Melted wax poppies

1. Wax paper
2. Crayon shaving or small chippings in red, pink, yellow and purple
3. black buttons
4. Green pipe cleaners
5. Small whole punch

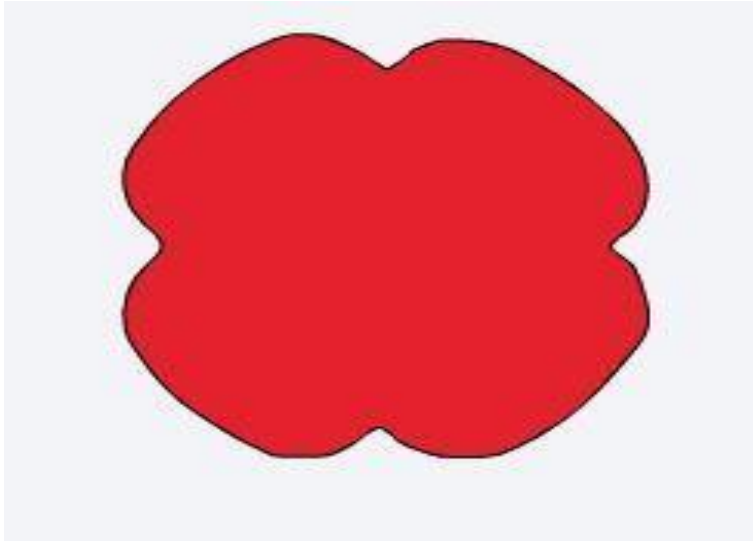


Chop up some used crayons into small chunks. If your children are younger then you can use a pencil sharpener to produce shavings.

Place the crayon wax between two sheets of wax paper and iron it on a low setting. For younger children a hairdryer will melt the wax between the sheets.

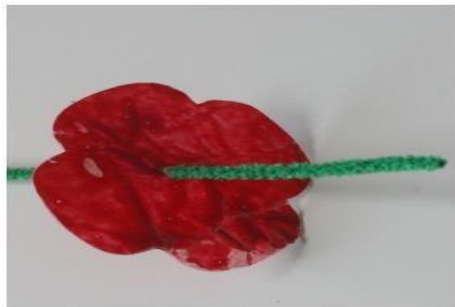
Allow the wax to set again and it will become stiff like card.

Create a card poppy template or use the one below.



Make a small hole in the centre before feeding through a pipe cleaner and then securing it by threading

it through a button and back on itself through the second button hole and back through the punched hole in the poppy. It is possible to use the same technique to make a poppy brooch by added a pin on the rear.



The same process can be adapted to make cornflowers, using an alternative template.



Edible Flowers

Cornflowers are edible. Harvested between May and the end of September each year, cornflower plants have a simple floral flavour – very slightly sweet and spicy but with a pleasant ‘barely-there’ taste. They grow in a variety of colours – the distinctive blue (wild cultivar) and vivid reds, pinks and blacks.

Cornflowers have many and varied uses – providing a key ingredient in summer salads, as decorative touches to sweet and savoury dishes or used as a base in making your own natural food colouring. See [Higgledy Garden’s Calendula and Cornflower Fudge Recipes](#) online and soft cheeses using petals to add to their visual appeal.

Cornflower and Berry Pavlova

This cornflower pavlova is straightforward to make and a very impressive dessert to share at a peacetime tea dance or school/church memorial day. Ask the older community to help the children make this recipe.



First gather your cornflowers and ensure that they are dry and free from insects and then crystallise them using egg white and caster sugar.

Using a fine paint brush gently paint egg white onto the flowers (on both sides of the petals) and sprinkle some fine caster sugar carefully over them, (on both sides and in all the cracks) so that it adheres. Knock off any surplus sugar and place on a baking sheet to dry. Depending on the temperature in the room, the flowers may take a few hours to dry and should then be kept in an airtight container until use.

Make a meringue base by beating 4 egg whites until stiff in a bowl. Gradually add 225 grms of caster sugar a spoon full at a time. Then add 1/2 teaspoon of white wine vinegar and 1 teaspoon of cornflower and give a final quick whisk.

Spread onto baking parchment and put in the oven at 120C (lower if a fan oven) or gas mark 1/2. Cook for 1 1/2 hours in the oven and then switch off the oven leaving the meringue base in the oven until it is completely cold (overnight is best). Add the seeds of 1/2 a vanilla pod and the zest of a lemon to a large carton of double cream and whisk until firm. Mound the cream on top of the cold meringue and add your chosen selection of berries and decorate with the crystallised cornflowers.

Getting your parish involved.



Use the often extensive knowledge of the local WI or cookery club to hold a wartime back off or simply to share their wartime recipes, exploring how to cook with rationed food. Maybe create a wartime cookbook to sell for an armed forces charity – or ‘buddy up’ with a French school and swap wartime recipe ideas.

Extend this idea to consider a sewing club with a 'make do and mend' mission – creating simple items such as brooches and pencil cases using left over materials. Link this idea to modern day recycling projects.

Intergenerational choir

Contact the church or a local choir and invite members to join an intergenerational choir to learn and perform wartime favourites. Amazon has a selection of albums and lyrics.



Gardening

Contact the local gardening club or allotment society (or simply write an invitation to the local church congregation) appealing for help to plant a poppy and cornflower memorial garden.

When there are enough blooms, pick them and create small flower arrangements to display in local shops, businesses and the church of course. Next to each arrangement, place some children's research about wartime memories or a memorial to a local fallen soldier.



Poppy prayers

The Church of England website has a variety of prayers for the centenary commemorations.

Remember, Lord, those whose stories were unspoken and untold.

All Jesus, remember them when you come into your kingdom.

Remember, Lord, those whose minds were darkened and disturbed by memories of war.

All Jesus, remember them when you come into your kingdom.

Remember, Lord, those who suffered in silence, and those whose bodies were disfigured by injury and pain.



All Jesus, remember them when you come into your kingdom.

Father of all, remember your holy promise, and look with love on all your people, living and departed. On this day we especially ask that you would hold for ever all who suffered during the First World War, those who returned scarred by warfare, those who waited anxiously at home, and those who returned wounded, and disillusioned; those who mourned, and those communities that were diminished and suffered loss. Remember too those who acted with kindly compassion, those who bravely risked their own lives for their comrades, and those who in the aftermath of war, worked tirelessly for a more peaceful world. And as you remember them, remember us, O Lord; grant us peace in our time and a longing for the day when people of every language, race, and nation will be brought into the unity of Christ's kingdom. This we ask in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The simple script uses poppies and involves everyone in prayer at a Remembrance service. Ensure as far as possible that everyone is given or takes a poppy as they arrive for the service.



Look at your poppy or that of someone sitting near you if you don't have one. Poppies are bright and cheerful flowers: give thanks to God for the lives of those who have died in war, remembering all the joy they brought to families and friends, and all the good things they did for their home and their country.

Then look at the red petals: red reminds us of danger and harm. Ask God to be close to those who are still facing danger each day, to give courage to the armed forces, and compassion to all who help others.

Place your whole hand over the poppy: poppies are also fragile and need to be handled gently. God cares for those who are hurting and those who are sad. Ask God to comfort all who are grieving the loss of someone they love.

Finally place a finger on the centre of the poppy: ask God to help you play your part in working for peace in the world.

The Revd Canon Sandra Millar

Map prayers

Obtain a large world map and lay this out in the middle of your group. Alternatively it might be held up or a version displayed on a screen. Talk about what sort of wars are going on today around the world. Identify the parts of the world where there is fighting, perhaps using some newspaper pictures and headlines to put



on or against the map. Invite the group either to place some poppies on those different parts of the world and turn this into a short time of prayer, or make your own poppies cut from card and stuck to short garden sticks. On each of

the three main petals you could emphasise the different sorts of peace that Christians believe Jesus brings – peace inside ourselves, peace between each other and peace with God.

Flowers

Place a vase filled with water centrally. Scatter poppies or cornflowers on the table or floor around the vase. Explain that the flowers need to be put back in the container with the water in order to live. We need to be in contact with God to be whole and to know life in its fullness.

Ask everyone to pray, in silence, for people and situations they know that need help and support.

Invite children to place one of the scattered flowers back in the vase as a token of their prayer in silence, or with a brief explanation of their prayer.



Poppy and cornflower crosses

Give everyone a red poppy and a blue cornflower made from paper. Invite the children to write a prayer of remembrance on the red poppy and a prayer for peace on the cornflower. Stick the prayer poppies and cornflowers onto a large card or wooden cross. You could have a cross of remembrance and a cross of peace. Consider making two crosses of each flower and display in the school and church.

The Guildford Diocese has created a set of 10 prayer stations on themes of peace, reconciliation and the impact of war that may be of use in your school or church. They can be found here [Remembrance](#).

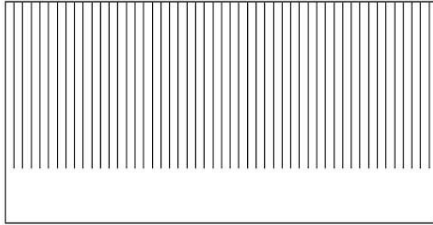
Make a paper cornflower using the following instructions.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS AND TOOLS

Crepe paper, in magenta, orange,
or another color, as desired

Step 1

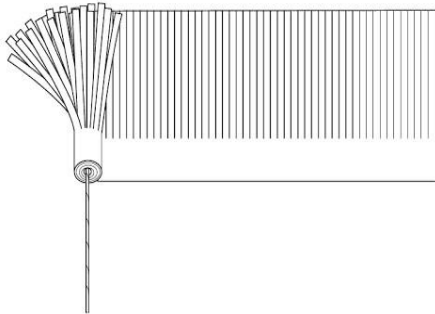
Make deep cuts that run parallel to the grain of a wide strip of crepe paper.



Cut a 2½" × 10" (6.4 × 25.4 cm) piece of crepe paper. Snip deep parallel cuts into the top edge of the strip at ⅛" (0.3 cm) intervals to make fringe along the full length of the strip. Repeat on a second strip of paper for a fuller stamen, if desired.

Step 2

Roll the strip into a brush.



Use your finger to apply a scant dab of glue along one end of the strip and press it to one end of the stem wire. Roll the paper strip around the stem wire to make a snug tube-shaped brush. Apply a scant dab of glue at the overlap to secure the strip. Add a second strip for more fullness, if desired. Then wrap a piece of fine wire around the base of the paper tube, leaving a 2" (5.1 cm) tail of wire.

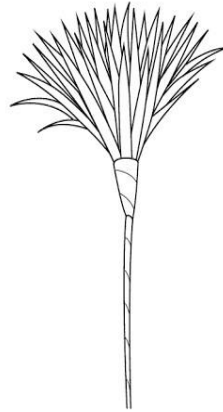
Step 3

Attach the stamen to the floral stem.

Place the stamen against the end of a length of stem wire and wrap the excess wire around the stem. Use floral tape to conceal the wire binding.

Step 4 (optional)

Trim the stamen.



Use the tips of the scissors to snip the top of the stamen so that it resembles a spiky brush.

Making Flowers

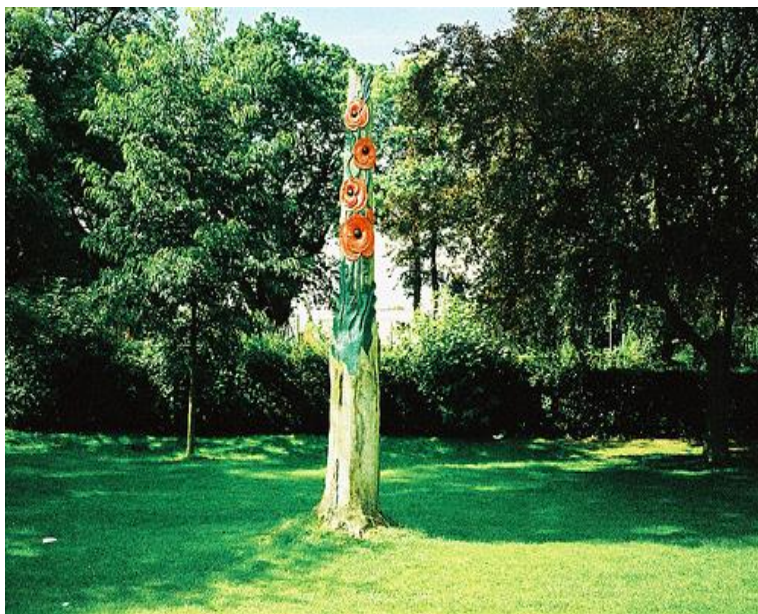
A flower can be made by one of two methods. One way is to cut a long strip of paper into continuous petals and wrap it around a stamen. The other way is to cut individual petals, wire them into a continuous strand, and wrap the strand around the base of a stamen. In both cases, the stem wire to which the petals are attached is concealed with floral tape to provide a nonslip surface.

Continuous-Petal Flowers

The construction method behind this style of flower is to cut a strip of paper, snip the top edge of the strip into the shape of the petals, and then wrap the strip around a stamen that is already attached to a stem wire.

Planting gardens of peace

Using help from the local community, use the school grounds to plant poppies and cornflowers to create a prayer garden of peace or garden of remembrance. Growing poppy flowers can be as simple as planting seeds or dividing roots of existing plants. Plant poppies from seed into poor to average soil in a sunny location for a good start to growing poppy flowers in your garden. Choosing the variety of poppy best suited for your garden is an intriguing garden chore. The Armenian poppy is among the smaller and more delicate offerings. Oriental poppies offer the largest and showiest blooms but may die back during summer heat. California poppies self seed abundantly and should be planted where more poppies are desirable.



Cornflowers grow and flower best in sunny positions.

They need a fertile soil enriched with lots of organic matter, which holds plenty of moisture in spring and summer, doesn't dry out or become waterlogged. Sow seeds from March to May outdoors for flowers from June to September, or sow during August and September to flower slightly earlier the following year.

Sow seeds thinly in finely raked, moist soil at a depth of 13mm, covering the seeds lightly with soil. Water the soil during dry periods.

Consider filling a time capsule full of children's work, photographs and prayers to bury in your peace garden.

With co-operation from local clergy/historian, identify houses in the parish or surrounding area where someone involved with the conflict died. Remember them with a cross/poppy placed in their garden.

Faith in the war – what binds us together?

Explore with older children how faith may have influenced the actions of people during World War 2. With the help of local older people discuss what life was like in the 1940s, rather than offering a detailed factual knowledge of it. Talk to children about the introduction of conscription. On 3 September 1939, all men in Britain aged between 18 and 40 became legally liable for call-up under the new National Service (Armed Forces) Act. Discuss with children what objections they would raise themselves to the possibility of going to war, and explain how for some people such views would be linked to their religious faith. At the time of World War Two, for example, fighting in a war went against some people's faith. Others simply did not believe in war, and others still were afraid to go to war. Discuss the fact that in World War Two in Britain most conscientious objectors were Christians. Consider 'hot seating' your vicar to explore this.

Conscientious objectors had to attend a tribunal. About 60,000 men and 1,000 women applied for exemption on the grounds of conscientious objection. Almost 3,000 were given unconditional exemption. Around 18,000 applications were dismissed. The rest were either recommended to do alternative civilian work, or put on the military service register as non-combatants. Non-combatant work involved duties such as bomb disposal, or working in medical units. Civilian work included agricultural, forestry, social or hospital work. Many tribunals wanted to send male objectors away from home, so that they made similar sacrifices to those of fighting men.

The BBC's WW2 People's War archive online is excellent on faith during the war. Read **Only I Can Speak for my Conscience** and **A Conscientious Objector's Wartime Story**, both are available on the [story extracts](#) page of the site. Consider why it was brave of the objectors to stick to their principles, despite the attitudes of others.

A God Of Peace

Look at references to peace and reconciliation in liturgy and the Bible, some examples are below. Discuss the concept that in worship Christians believe that they are a community gathering in the presence of God to celebrate the transforming love of God with each other. Hold an intergenerational session in church to look at the meaning of 'sharing the peace' with one another as a demonstrative act of community.

Matthew 5:9 *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*

John 20:19 *On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."*

These are some useful websites to help you in your studies. You may find some of these have links with others.

General information

The Royal British Legion www.britishlegion.org.uk
Poppy Travel www.poppytravel.org.uk
Imperial War Museum www.iwm.org.uk/education
Department for Education www.education.gov.uk
Commonwealth War Graves Commission www.cwgc.org
Guardian Education www.guardian.co.uk/education
Defence Statistics and data www.dasa.mod.uk
Armed Forces www.armedforces.co.uk
In Flanders Fields Museum www.inlandersfields.be
Bletchley Park www.bletchleypark.org.uk
Bruce Castle Museum www.haringey.gov.uk
National Army Museum www.national-army-museum.ac.uk
National Memorial Arboretum www.nationalmemorialarboretum.org.uk
National Sikh Museum www.nationalsikhmuseum.com
The Thiepval Visitor's Centre www.historial.org
Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) www.veterans-uk.info
Wiener Library www.wienerlibrary.co.uk
Armed Forces Memorial Trust www.veterans-uk.com
The National Archives www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

General History websites

The History Channel www.thehistorychannel.com
History Today www.historytoday.com
BBC Education www.bbc.co.uk/learning
Active History www.activehistory.co.uk

Refugees

Christian Aid Primary KS2 & 3 Safe Place Ludo

[Safe Place Ludo game | Christian Aid](#)

Use the questions discussion prompts on the back of the instructions

Oxfam Stand with refugees KS2 & 3 Resources to think critically about why people flee and develop empathy

[Stand with Refugees](#)

Schools of Sanctuary, for secondary schools consider their school culture of welcome.

[Schools of Sanctuary: Giving a Warm Welcome | Oxfam Education](#)

Courage

Noel Chervasse [SPCK Assemblies - Two Victoria Crosses, and he never fired a shot: Remembrance Sunday](#) secondary

Edith Cavell [SPCK Assemblies - Edith Cavell – An Ordinary Hero](#)

Edith Cavell Faith before the firing squad Hope UK 2015 materials

https://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/265838/Edith_Cavell.aspx

Working for Peace

Tearfund peacebuilding

Martin Luther King Foundation for Peace

The peace prayer possible poetry or prayer writing [SPCK Assemblies - The Peace Prayer](#)

World Peace day 21st September

[Peace Babies](#) – Bassetts Jelly Babies

To mark the end of WW1

Football and BAME

Walter Tull Footballer died Somme 2018

[Tull100 | Big Ideas](#)

Poppies

Bleuet de France cornflowers

<https://anglophone-direct.com/le-bleuet-de-france/>

Poppy factory [here](#)

War memorials

[SPCK Assemblies - Memorials](#) secondary

How the death of one person will affect so many people in a community includes finding information about a person a local war memorial.

[SPCK Assemblies - Remembrance](#) primary

Memories

[SPCK Assemblies - Remembering](#) primary. Includes memorials and acts of remembrance

[SPCK Assemblies - Stone remembrance](#) primary

Conflicts since 1945

General www.britains-smallwars.com

www.royalnavy.mod.uk

www.army.mod.uk

www.raf.mod.uk

Northern Ireland www.bbc.co.uk/history/recent/troubles

The Falklands War www.falklandswar.org.uk

www.falklandislands.com

World War One

Schoolnet www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWW.htm

Ypres www.fylde.demon.co.uk/welcome.htm

Western Front www.westernfront.co.uk

BBC www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/

Photographs www.remember.org

World War One School's Project www.tudorhallschool.com/wewillremember/

Soldier Poets

Soldier Poets www.english.emory.edu/LostPoets/

War poetry (traditional and contemporary) www.warpoetry.co.uk

General www.cwgc.org

Julian Grenfell, Siegfried Sassoon and others

www.sassoonery.demon.co.uk/contents.htm

World War Two

Anne Frank www.annefrank.com

Normandy www.search.eb.com/normandy

Battle of Arnhem www.pegasusarchive.org

BBC www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/

General www.sunsite.unc.edu/pha/

Burma Star Association www.burmastar.org.uk

General Information www.worldwar-2.net

Leaders

Winston Churchill www.winstonchurchill.org

Margaret Thatcher www.margaretthatcher.org

Saddam Hussein www.who2.com/saddamhussein.html

Adolf Hitler www.who2.com/adolfhitler.html

**Produced by the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan
Education Team**

