



**NATIONAL  
MEMORIAL  
ARBORETUM**



# Armistice Day

**Monday 11 November 2024**  
National Memorial Arboretum



Welcome to the National Memorial Arboretum.  
Thank you for joining us today to remember those who courageously served and sacrificed on behalf of our Nation.

Today, we reflect not only on the end of the First World War, but also on the many anniversaries that remind us of the bravery and resilience demonstrated by our Armed Forces across generations.

This year at the Arboretum, the 80th anniversaries of the Battles of Monte Cassino, Kohima, Imphal, the Scheldt, Operation Market Garden and D-Day have been marked. The anniversaries of Kosovo 25 and Afghanistan 10 have also been remembered. These events, though separated by decades, are connected by the strength, bravery and care demonstrated by those who served, and their families who sacrificed at home.

Within the living landscape of the Arboretum the memorials radiate from the first dedicated, the Polar Bear, into the farthest reaches of our grounds. Each one serves as a powerful reminder that Remembrance is for all, and that 'they' mattered. After our time together today, I hope that you will be able to explore our grounds and find your own space in which to remember.

Next year at the Arboretum, which is freely open to all, we will mark 80 years since the end of the Second World War. We hope that you will be able to join us to reflect on this important time in history.

Thank you once again for joining us for this important service and your continued support.

**Group Captain Rtd Mrs Anny Reid OBE**  
Chair of the National Memorial Arboretum  
and Trustee of the Royal British Legion

**10.30am Musical Welcome**  
British Army Band Catterick  
Under the direction of Major Benjamin Mason

**10.40am Words of Welcome**  
Mark Ellis, Arboretum Lead, National Memorial Arboretum

**(Please stand when the fanfare sounds)**

**10.50am Arrival of Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh GCVO**

**Accompanied by:**

Mr Ian Dudson CBE KStJ  
**His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire**

Group Captain Rtd Mrs Anny Reid OBE  
**Chair of the National Memorial Arboretum  
and Trustee of the Royal British Legion**

Mrs Philippa Rawlinson MA(Cantab) MSc  
**Director of the National Memorial Arboretum**

Mrs Julia Mitchell MA Oxon  
**High Sheriff of Staffordshire**

The Rt Hon Maria Eagle MP  
**Minister of State for Defence Procurement**

Surgeon Rear Admiral Fleur Marshall  
**Air Space Command, Royal Navy**

Major General Ollly Brown  
**General Officer Commanding 3rd (UK) Division, British Army**

Air Vice-Marshal Shaun Harris CBE  
**Director Support, Royal Air Force**

Members of the Clergy

## The Bidding

We meet in the presence of God.

To commit ourselves to work in penitence and faith for reconciliation between the nations, that all people may, together, live in freedom, justice and peace.

We come to pray for all who in bereavement, disability and pain continue to suffer the consequences of fighting and terror.

We come to remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives, in world wars and conflicts past and present, have been given and taken away.

**(Please sit)**

## Confession & Absolution

Let us confess to God the sins and shortcomings of the world; its pride, its selfishness, its greed; the evil divisions and hatreds. Let us confess our share in what is wrong, and our failure to seek and establish that peace which God wills for his children.

**(We observe a short silence)**

**Father, we have sinned against heaven and against you,  
and are not worthy to be called your children.  
We turn to you asking that you have mercy on us,  
And teach us to live rightly in love and peace with You  
and with all mankind. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

**(Please stand)**

## The Act of Remembrance

God of truth and justice,  
we hold before you those whose memory we cherish,  
and those whose names we will never know.  
Help us to lift our eyes above the torment of this broken world,  
And grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm.  
As we honour the past, may we put our faith in your future;  
For you are the source of life and hope, now and for ever.  
**Amen**

## The Exhortation

**Mr Ian Dudson**

They shall grow not old,  
as we that are left grow old;  
age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning,  
we will remember them.

**We will remember them.**

## The Last Post

**(Military personnel in uniform salute on the first note of the Last Post and recover from salute on the last note of the Last Post)**

## Silence

## Reveille

# The Kohima Epitaph

**Mrs Anny Reid**

When you go home  
tell them of us and say,  
for your tomorrow  
we gave our today.

## Wreath Laying

**Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh GCVO**

~

**Lord-Lieutenant Mr Ian Dudson** on behalf of the Staffordshire Lieutenancy  
**Mrs Julia Mitchell**, High Sheriff of Staffordshire

~

**The Rt Hon Maria Eagle MP** on behalf of the Ministry of Defence  
**Dave Robertson MP** on behalf of Parliament and His Majesty's Government

~

**Surgeon Rear Admiral Fleur Marshall** on behalf of the Royal Navy  
**Major General Olly Brown** on behalf of the Army  
**Air Vice-Marshal Shaun Harris** on behalf of the Royal Air Force

~

**Group Captain Rtd Mrs Anny Reid** on behalf of the National Memorial Arboretum  
**Mrs Philippa Rawlinson** on behalf of the Royal British Legion

~

**Mrs Jeanette Buxton** on behalf of the Women's Section the Royal British Legion

~

**Mr Phil Hewitt** on behalf of Staffordshire County Council  
**Councillor Andrew Rushton** on behalf of Lichfield District Council  
**Mr David Whatton** on behalf of Alrewas Parish Council  
**Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner David Evans** on behalf of the  
Police & Crime Commission  
**Deputy Chief Constable Jonathan Roy** on behalf of Staffordshire Police  
**Chief Fire Officer Rob Barber** on behalf of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

**There will be an opportunity for other organisations and individuals to lay wreaths at the end of the Service.**

# A Poppy To Remember

**Dan Simpson & Talent in the Ranks participants**

A poppy to remember, a poppy to reflect  
a poppy pinned to lapels just above our hearts  
a poppy to display our gratitude and respect  
a field of poppies bright for when the silence starts.

A poppy to revive names carved in stone  
each life a petal fallen on hallowed ground  
a poppy to remember the fields where they grow  
the bodies buried in this earth; of those never found.

A poppy to remember the reality of war  
that behind the stories were people living lives  
a poppy to remind us to not create folklore  
but ensure that the shades of truth survive.

A poppy to remember that in darkness there is light  
that even in a battle's wild insanity  
during the worst of conflict and the midst of a fight  
we are still among the best of humanity.

A poppy to remember that the fighting is never done  
for those who served the inner war is never won  
that trauma returns and unconsciously passed on  
that we need to care for them: our daughters and sons.

A poppy to remember that we live in the presence of death  
a shadow sharing the brightness we all hold  
our ancestors have gifted us the air to draw breath  
because of them we have the honour of growing old.

A poppy for those who came before  
their generation's extraordinary sacrifice so painful  
we are indebted to this mortal cost of war  
a poppy to show we are forever grateful.

A poppy to breathe in two minutes of silence  
sensing the crisp air; the hushed rustle of leaves  
reflecting on our humanity in the absence of violence  
a poppy to remember this hard-won peace.

A poppy for continuity: in this present is our past  
as we gather here each and every November  
in remembrance of those who have now long passed  
a poppy to promise that the future will remember.



## Hymn - Abide With Me

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide  
The darkness deepens Lord, with me abide  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee  
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away  
Change and decay in all around I see  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour:  
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes  
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

Henry Francis Lyte (1793 - 1847)

**(Please sit)**

## For the Fallen an extract

Lawrence Binyon (1869 - 1943)

**Read by Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh GCVO**

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;  
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;  
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time.  
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,  
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,  
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known  
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,  
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,  
To the end, to the end, they remain.

# Intercessions

We pray for all who have died, or suffer as a result of conflict.  
Those whose lives are disfigured by war or terror,  
For service men and women, for civilians,  
for those held captive,  
each one remembered by and known to God.  
May God give peace.

## God give peace

We pray for peace-makers and peace-keepers;  
those who seek to keep this world secure and free;  
for all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership,  
political, military and religious;  
asking for gifts of wisdom and resolve in the search for  
reconciliation and peace. May God give peace:

## God give peace

Finally we pray for all members of the armed forces who are in  
danger this day, remembering family, friends and all who pray  
for their safe return. May God give peace:

## God give peace

Trusting in the compassion of God, let us pray with confidence as our  
Saviour has taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy Kingdom come;  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
for ever and ever. Amen.

**(Please stand)**

# Hymn - I Vow To Thee My Country

I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above  
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love;  
The love that asks no question, the love that stands the test  
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;  
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price  
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice

And there's another country, I've heard of long ago  
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;  
We may not count her armies, we may not see her King;  
Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;  
And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase  
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace.

Gustav Holst (1874 - 1934)

## Act of Commitment

As we prepare to leave this place let us commit ourselves to responsible living and faithful service.

Will you strive for all that makes for peace?

**We will**

Will you seek to heal the wounds of war?

**We will**

Will you work for a just future for all humanity?

**We will**

Merciful God, we offer to you the fears in us that have not yet been cast out by love:

May we accept the hope you have placed in the hearts of all people, and live lives of justice, courage and mercy; through Jesus Christ our risen Redeemer.

**Amen**

## The Blessing

God grant to the living grace, to the departed rest, to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth and all people, unity, peace and concord, and to us and all God's servants, life everlasting. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you all and remain with you always.

**Amen**

Go forth with hope and seek for peace in the service of God In the name of Christ.

**In the name of Christ. Amen**

# The National Anthem

**(Military personnel in uniform salute)**

God save our gracious King!  
Long live our noble King!  
God save the King!  
Send him victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us,  
God save the King.

The Royal Party depart to view the newly engraved names on the Armed Forces Memorial.

The congregation are requested to remain standing until the Royal Party have moved through the Memorial.

## Musical Interlude

**British Army Band Catterick**

Please remain in your seats until you are invited to either lay a wreath or tribute, or descend the Memorial, by one of the Arboretum stewards.

With thanks to the British Army Band Catterick,  
Black Voices and Carly Paoli.

# Support Us

The National Memorial Arboretum is a registered charity that relies on the generous support of our visitors, partners, friends, and donors. You can help to ensure that we continue to educate future generations, as we inspire them with the important stories we share, provide a safe space for those processing complicated emotions, and help our communities celebrate lives lived and remember lives lost.



## Share our story

Support us by sharing the story of the Arboretum with your friends and family.



## Donate

We appreciate every donation, large and small. Donate today in our Remembrance Centre, join our Friends membership scheme or fundraise for us.



## Volunteer

Join our team and share your passion and enthusiasm with our visitors.

Visit

**[thenma.org.uk/support-us](https://thenma.org.uk/support-us)**

or speak to a member of our team to find out more.

