

Top things to do!



Marvel at the actions of Captain John Liddell, awarded with a Victoria Cross. Imagine the sights, sounds and smells of the battlefields.



Observe the emblems on the headstones. What do you think they mean?



How do I get there?



How to find us:
Chapel Hill
Basingstoke
RG21 5TB



By Train:
The cemetery is a short walk north of Basingstoke railway station and town centre. Head up Chapel Hill and you will find the cemetery on your right.



By Car:
The main entrance is on Chapel Hill by the cemetery lodge, RG21 5TB. There is parking space for 3 cars.



On Foot:
Pedestrians can access the cemetery from town by following Chapel Hill or via the Burgess Road public footpath at the top of the cemetery.



Opening Times
Free access at all times

Want to find out more?

Extra information about the War Graves can be found on our website at www.holyghostcemetery-basingstoke.org.uk. Feel free to try our other trails. Why not explore the historic chapel ruins, discover cemetery stories through the trees and graves, or find out quirky facts about Basingstoke citizens buried at the Holy Ghost cemetery?

The Holy Ghost Cemetery Basingstoke

War Graves Remembering Our War Dead



the 
South View
conservation
group

Welcome

The last thing you'd expect to find in the heart of Basingstoke town is a quiet green space with tales of gallantry and bravery. Open to all, you can explore the cemetery and discover its rich tapestry of stories.

Why is there a cemetery on Chapel Hill?

Holy Ghost Cemetery arose out of a fierce dispute between Pope Innocent III and King John. It led to the the Pope banning religious services in England for six years from 1208 and the King's excommunication in 1209. Basingstoke people were forced to bury their dead in unconsecrated ground on Chapel Hill. When the Pope lifted the ban, the makeshift burial ground was consecrated and a chapel built. The cemetery was extended in 1858 to accommodate the growing town.

Our War Graves

Twenty two servicemen from WW1 and WW2 are buried in Holy Ghost Cemetery, including four Canadians, one Belgian and 17 British servicemen.

During WW1, the large number of allied casualties soon overwhelmed the medical units in France and Belgium. Many grand houses and civilian hospitals in the south of England, (including Basingstoke) were turned over to the military. The men who died in these hospitals were buried locally.

Most of the war graves are maintained by the Commonwealth War Grave Commission (CWGC). The CWGC takes care of the graves of all people from Commonwealth countries who died fighting in WW1 and WW2.

What are the symbols on the graves?

As you move between the men's graves take notice of the emblems on each headstone. Some refer to the military unit in which the men fought; others include a nation's symbol like the maple leaf found on the Canadian graves.



War grave of Corporal Mercer

Each headstone includes a religious symbol appropriate to the deceased. The grave of Corporal Mercer also depicts a scroll. According to Christian symbolism, the scroll's open section illustrates Mercer's earthly life whilst the unrolled portion refers to his heavenly life.



Liddell on the Western Front

Who was Captain John Liddell?

Like many men who fought in World War One, John Liddell volunteered for duty as war approached, 'not wishing to be a slacker'. He joined the 3rd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in 1911 and later trained as a pilot.

Liddell spent 43 consecutive days in the trenches in command of the machine gun section, before being awarded the Military Cross for action at Le Maisnil, France.

Having transferred to the Royal Flying Corps, Liddell's aircraft was raked by machine gun fire when he was flying over Belgium in July 1915. Despite his severe injuries, Liddell managed to fly the badly damaged plane back to safety and saved the life of his flying companion, but died a month later of his own wounds. He was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously.



Hampshire County Council Arts & Museums Service



Capt John Liddell's funeral

?
Did you know
 You can find Commonwealth war graves in 150 countries across the world.

?
Did you know
 Regardless of rank, nationality, age or religion, all Commonwealth war graves are all the same.

?
Did you know
 The white stone used to make Commonwealth war graves comes from Portland in Dorset.



1. **Liddell, John**
John won the Victoria Cross and Military Cross
2. **Lacerte, Wilbray (Canada)**
He worked as a clerk before the war
3. **Braddock, Sylvester (Canada)**
Born in England and moved to Canada before enlisting
4. **Robertson, James (Canada)**
Approved fit for military service aged 33
5. **De Pelichy, Julius (Canada)**
A Belgian man who served with the Canadian Infantry
6. **Vander Poorten, Henri (Belgium)**
Henri died at Basingstoke Cottage Hospital
7. **Slark, William**
William was born in Basingstoke and died in London after serving in the Red Cross
8. **Oliver, William**
A local man from Basing Road, Basingstoke
9. **Williams, Lambert Llewellyn G**
A local man, he fought in the RAF in WW2
10. **Simpson, William S**
William died aged 36 years after service in the Territorial Army
11. **Usher, Alfred J**
One of the oldest servicemen in the cemetery, Alfred died aged 38

12. **Hasler, Charles George**
Charles died within three months of joining up aged 18
13. **Wilson, William Charles**
William survived 4 years fighting in WW1 before being wounded in Sept 1918 only two months before the Germans surrendered
14. **Strong, James**
James served in the Navy from 1903 to 1914 including on HMS Victory
15. **Goodyear, Frederick**
Frederick served in the 33rd Training Reserve Battalion
16. **Ballard, James**
He died at Wote Street, Basingstoke
17. **Cook, Ernest Charles**
Ernest was the son of Basingstoke couple, Charles and Mary Cook
18. **Fullbrook, Ernest**
Ernest died in Fareham at the young age of 18
19. **Mercer, Sydney Albert**
Sydney served as a machine gunner before suffering from a poisoned gas attack
20. **Dibley, William Frank**
The 22 year old son of local couple, John and Mary Dibley
21. **Cornish, Harold**
Originally from Basingstoke, Harold died of tuberculosis
22. **James, John Francis**
A local man, John served in the Royal Engineers and is buried in the family plot, not a war grave.

