

ARTEFACTS CONSERVATION SERVICES,

Stephen Umpleby ACR, 83 Wilverley Crescent, New Malden, Surrey KT3 5LW.

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Conservation Treatment Report – WWI Memorial board

<u>CLIENT</u>	Derek Smith, Churchwarden, All Saints Church, Boyne Hill, Maidenhead
<u>ACCESSION NO.</u>	-
<u>OBJECT NAME</u>	WWI wooden Memorial Board
<u>DIMENSIONS</u>	1980mm (W); 453mm (H); 25mm (D)

IMAGE



Overall view of Memorial Board in previous location, before conservation

An on-site inspection and condition survey assessment of the memorial board at All Saints Church, Boyne Hill memorial board was undertaken on 19th September 2016.

DESCRIPTION

The memorial board is currently situated in the North porch of All Saints' Church at Boyne Hill, Maidenhead. The church is a Grade I listed Church of England parish church in Maidenhead, Berkshire. The board is secured above a notice board and in front of an internal window on the East side of the North porch.

The memorial board commemorates the names of those soldiers from the parish who fought and died during the Great War.

The names on the board are written in black paint directly onto the (stained?) oak boards.

The memorial board is constructed of two horizontal boards of tangentially cut oak within a profile oak frame, the mitred frame fixed to the front around the edges with countersunk wood screws secured from the reverse. The oak boards have been cut to reveal an attractive figuration of lamella patterning in the oak. There are four additional vertical wooden batons on the reverse of the board used to hold and brace the oak boards together. The vertical wooden batons are secured to the reverse of the oak boards with countersunk slotted wood screws in slotted holes. The slotted holes provided presumably to allow movement of the horizontal oak panels through expansion/contraction as a result of environmental changes and fluctuations and to prevent buckling of the panels.

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It appears that the memorial board was originally intended to be secured to the wall with copper alloy mirror plate fixings at both the top and bottom corners of the board. There are currently two mirror plate fixings secured at both corners at the top of the frame at the reverse but these are not being used to secure the board in its current location. There are also two further copper alloy mirror plate fixings secured to the bottom edge of the memorial board frame with wood screws but it appears that the position of these has been changed (originally they appear to have been fitted to the reverse of the board at both corners along the bottom edge – the original positions visible by drilled holes in the wood at the reverse). The mirror plate fixings are not currently being utilised to secure the memorial board in position above the notice board and in front of the internal window. The memorial board is currently secured to the sash window bar of the East window behind to the centre of the upper frame only with braided cord tied around a ferrous dome-headed slotted wood screw which has been recently been added to the board. The bottom of the memorial board is not secured but the bottom of the board sits directly on top of the frame of the notice board below. The copper alloy mirror plates fixed to the bottom edge of the memorial board act as spacers between the bottom of the memorial board and top of the notice board frame.

The memorial board is listed on the War Memorials Online website (www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk) as follows:

In the North Porch there is an oak plaque dedicated to 127 of those from All Saints Church Maidenhead who lost their lives during the First World War. The English Oak Board has darkened in 95 years since 1920 so it is difficult to read the black writing. . . The Calvary referred to on the Board is outside the Church on the west wall. The names on the wooden Board in the North Porch are remembered by the Stone Calvary, which has the dates 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 on the Stone Calvary under the feet of the stone figure of Christ and above where it says 'To the Glory of God and in Memory of the Fallen'. This is where poppy wreaths are laid on Remembrance Sundays and at other Services of Remembrance. The Parish magazines of 1920 tell us that there was not enough money raised to inscribe the names in stone outside, which is why they were written in black on the light-coloured English Oak Board. . . Research into the 133 Fallen from the First World War and the Fallen from the Second World War can be seen on the Church website www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk at 'About Us', 'History'.

Research into the names of the soldiers who are commemorated on the memorial board was carried out by Mrs. Elizabeth Grace Bryson.

The names on the memorial board are recorded as follows:

Names: ALLEN A.E. ALLEN F.H. AMBROSE M.H. ANDERSON F.J. ANNETTS P.W. ATTWOOD C.E. BALDWIN H.J.T. BARTLETT F.W. BATES R.J. BEESLEY J.C. BELCHER S.E. BENNETT G. BIRD G. BIRD H.W. BISSLEY W.H. BOLTON C. BOURKE E.G. BRADLEY G. BROWN G. BUTTON W.E. BYE A.T. BYE L.J. CARTER A. CARTER E. CAVEY A.E. COXHEAD W. DALE W.J. DALE T.G. DEAN S.B. DEVERALL T. DEVONSHIRE G.J. DORMER C.B. DOVEY H.W. DOVEY L.M. DRUMMOND N.F. DYKE G.A. EATON G. EGGLETON C.H. FERGUSON G. GIBBONS P. GILDER A. GRANT J.A. GRAY D. GREEN A.H. GREEN A.P. GROVE A. GROVE J. FLETCHER S. GROVE G. GROVE F.G. HARDING C. HARRIS A.J. HARRIS G.J. HENWOOD F. HOLMES A. HULCUP W.J. HUTTON W.J. JANES L.E. JONES W.H. JOYNSON D. KEELEY J. KENT A.H. KING G.W. LAMBERT W. LAWRENCE B. LESTER S.M. LIPSCOMBE O.P. MARKS J.E. MASON C.C. MASON

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MACFARLANE C.W. MOORE R.L. MOORE G. NEIGHBOUR E.W. NEWPORT W.S.
NIGHTINGALE S. NORKETT T. NUCCOLL W.J. OWEN R. PALMER W.G. PARKER
G.H PITTAM E.S. POPE J. POPE R. J. PORTER R.H. PROCTOR F.W. REED O.
SCOTT H.T. SCOTT A.K. SCOTT D.T. SEYMOUR J. SEYMOUR S.H. SEYMOUR L.W.
SHAW G.H. SHELTON J.W. SHEPHERD G. SHIRVALL T.H. SIMMANCE W.H. SMITH
E.J. SMITH F. SMITH G.E. SMITH R.V. STEELE F.E. STEVENS F.J. STROUD S.
TAYLOR W. THATCHER A.J. THATCHER W. TILLIN H. TURNER W.H. TURNER E.H.
WAKELING C. WALFORD L.F. WALFORD O.R. WALFORD A. WALTON A.J. WARD
W.H. WARD G. WHITE A.E.J. WHITE A.E. WHITE J.A. WHITE G.W. WHITEHEAD
J.F.J. BARFORD H.H. BRADLEY H.R. GOLDING J.H. PRIEST C.G.P. TAFT J.

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IMAGES



1. Overall view of memorial board before conservation, showing black-painted lettering on oak panels and darkening of wood from previous cumulative light damage



2. Overall view of memorial board before conservation, showing reverse with vertical wooden batons with slotted screw holes and showing details of construction



3. Detail of cracking in wood from screw fixings at mirror plate at top corner on reverse






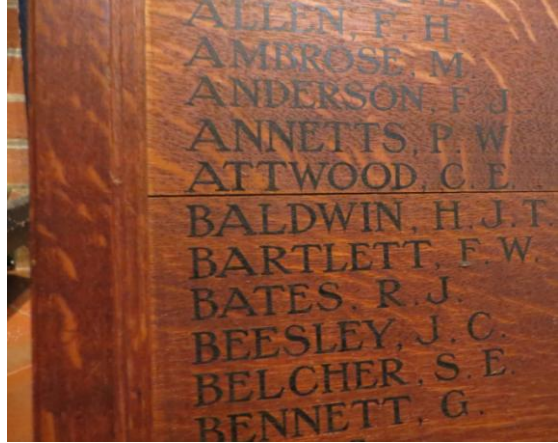
4. Detail of slotted screw holes in vertical batons, wood screws securing frame in position around edge of memorial board and previous position of mirror plates at bottom corner of board (notice light damaged oak in comparison with lighter oak surface where previously covered with mirror plate)

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<p>5. Detail of vertical baton at reverse, showing woodworm damage</p>	<p>6. Detail of vertical baton at reverse showing woodworm damage</p>
	
<p>7. Detail of split in lower horizontal board at right side</p>	<p>8. Detail showing gap between horizontal boards at left side</p>

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<p>9. Detail of reverse on right side, showing vertical baton and slight curvature of horizontal tangentially cut boards</p>	<p>10. Detail of reverse on left side, showing vertical baton and slight curvature of horizontal tangentially cut boards</p>
	
<p>11. Detail showing dent in upper member of profile frame in centre</p>	<p>12. Detail of scuffs/marks along edge of lower member of profile frame with lighter wood exposed</p>

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13. Overall view showing current location of memorial board above notice board and in front of East window of North porch



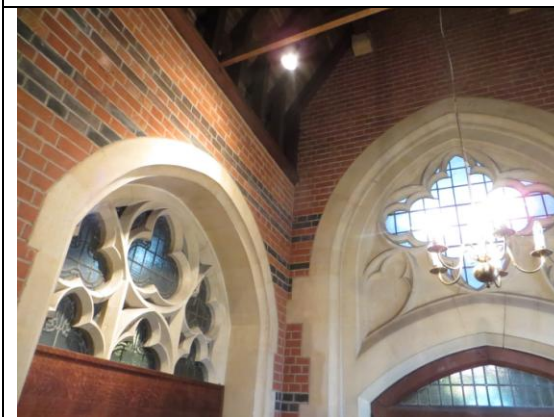
14. Overall view of likely previous location of memorial board (West window of North porch), with position towards bottom of window.



15. Overall view of current location of memorial board from front



16. Overall view of previous location of memorial board (West window) from front, showing unfiltered/uncontrolled natural light through window



17. Overall view of artificial lighting above current and previous locations of memorial board, showing central pendant chandelier light and single spotlight

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CONDITION

The memorial board is in overall good, complete and largely structurally stable condition but with significant previous cumulative light damage to wood, leaving the oak darkened and resulting in reduced legibility of the black painted lettering applied directly to the oak boards (figures 1 and 2).

The black painted lettering is in good, complete and stable condition. The black painted lettering has been thinly applied. The last five names appear to have been added to the end of the sequence of names on the board at a later date have been applied in a slightly different font and slightly thicker paint medium with increased sheen. The first two names of the five added names follow the same indentation and are in line following the names applied above. The last three names are stepped in slightly to the left of the applied names above.

There is visual evidence of significant previous cumulative light damage to the oak surfaces of the memorial board, seen as an overall darkening of the wood, particularly at the top right corner of the board, making the black painted lettering difficult to read (the darkening of the oak caused by oxidation of lignin through exposure to light radiation). The overall darkening of the oak memorial board may also be the result of the oak having been coated/stained and the oils in the applied stain also darkening and oxidising through previous cumulative light damage. The current position of the memorial board (opposite the West window of the North porch of the church, figures 13 and 15) has left the top right corner more noticeably light damaged and darkened where the west-facing natural light has tracked across and has illuminated this portion of the oak memorial board more than elsewhere on the memorial board and has been more exposed. Solar gain (heat) from the natural light from the west-facing window may have also contributed to the colour change in the wooden boards and to the cracking at the top of the bottom horizontal oak panel on the right side of the board (figure 7).

From the evidence of fixing holes in the masonry surrounding the west-facing window at the bottom and previous positions of mirror plate fixings on the reverse of the memorial board (figure 4), the board is likely to have once been situated on the opposite side of the North porch of the church, over the bottom of the West window (figures 14 and 16). In this location the painted lettering and oak on the show side of the memorial board would have been more protected from direct sunlight/light damage. The memorial board in this previous location also appears to have been additionally lit with the electric spotlight above on the opposite (East) side of the North porch. This spot light appears to have had the function of providing a wash of artificial light to illuminate the board and lettering when the board was sited with the natural light from the West window behind.

There is some minor distortion of the horizontal wooden boards where they are butted up against each other within the construction of the memorial board. There is a slight curvature and bowing of the tangentially cut boards (figures 9 and 10) where movement of the oak boards has been restricted by the wooden batons screwed at the reverse (figure 5) and with a horizontal crack at the bottom right of the board from the front (figure 7) and a slight opening of the gap between the horizontal boards at the left from the front (figure 8) as a result of previous environmental changes/damage.

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The copper alloy mirror plates at each corner at the top of the memorial board appear to be more recent replacements. The drilled holes for the wood screw fixings for these more recent mirror plates have caused some cracking/splitting in the wooden frame at the reverse (figure 3).

The positions of the original copper alloy mirror plates at the bottom of the memorial board at each corner (figure 4) appear to have been moved from the reverse of the board to the bottom edge of the frame to provide spacers between the memorial board in its current location on top of the notice board below. Existing drill holes in the masonry around the West window of the North porch of the church suggest that the memorial board was once located on this side of the porch below the window. The distance between the original locations of the copper alloy mirror plate fixing holes on the reverse of the memorial board at the bottom of the frame and the distance between the drill holes in the masonry below the West porch window are similar and would suggest that this was once the location of the memorial board.

The copper alloy mirror plates are in good and stable condition and with surface tarnishing. The dome-headed slotted screw, used to secure the memorial board to the catch at the sash window in its present location with the braided cord, with ferrous corrosion but appears to be stable. The braided cord is worn and embrittled.

There is a noticeable scratch/mark through the centre of the memorial board which is accentuated through the discolouration/darkening of the oak panels. There are some areas of scuffs/marks to the lower frame with fresh wood exposed (figure 12). There is a dent to the top member of the frame towards the centre (figure 11).

There is evidence of woodworm damage to the vertical wooden batons at the reverse of the memorial board with numerous flight/emergence holes 1mm in diameter and a small number of larger holes (possibly death watch beetle) at 3mm diameter (figures 5 and 6). There is no visible insect damage to the horizontal boards or frame of the memorial board. Some of the emergence holes in the wooden batons appear to be more recent with fresh frass in the holes and paler wood exposed, particularly at the third baton from the left.

The memorial board in its current location is illuminated by natural light from the window on the West side of the North porch and also by artificial lighting from above (chandelier pendant light and separate tungsten spotlight – figure 17).

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TREATMENT PROPOSAL

Although there is a desire to add the names of soldiers who are recorded on the framed Roll of Honour hung to the left of the memorial board in its current location as well as the name of a soldier from the recent war in Afghanistan, it is not recommended to add to, change or alter the structure of the memorial board or to add to, change or alter the applied lettering in any significant way in its current state or condition. It is recommended that the memorial board in its current state and configuration is preserved as an historical document/artefact (with the omissions of these names and the inaccuracies of particular initials as discovered through the recent research). It is recommended rather to conserve the memorial board as it is and to minimise and slow down further light damage through preventive conservation measures, through the relocation of the memorial board to the West window opposite to reduce exposure to natural light as the primary light source.

It is not recommended to treat the warping or cracking in the wood panels as it is felt that this would potentially cause further stresses and damage in the wood by restricting movement.

- To clean surfaces to remove loose dust and dirt and particulate matter and evidence of previous insect damage (frass and insect remains)
- To consider replacing braided cord used to secure the top of the memorial board to the catch of the East sash window as an interim measure (if left in current location). Braided cord is only means of securing the memorial board in its current position and there is a risk that the board may become dislodged and may fall if the braided cord were to break, become detached or if the board is allowed to slide off the top of the notice board below
- It is recommended that the memorial board is removed from its current location and moved to the likely previous location below the West window in the North porch to minimise further light damage and exposure to direct natural light and heating effect of solar gain. In this location, the black painted lettering against the oak background would not receive any direct natural light but light levels could be better controlled more through the use of artificial light as the primary light source. This would also allow the electric spotlight above on the East side of the North porch to better illuminate the lettering of the memorial board. It is also recommended that the spotlight is changed to an LED spotlight to further minimise light damage (with no UV content). Changing the spot light to an LED bulb with a different colour temperature (e.g. cool white/warm white light) may also help to highlight the black painted lettering against the darkened oak background improving legibility. NB. Tests would need to be carried out to determine most suitable spotlight fitting, LED bulb and colour temperature of bulb to give best legibility of the lettering.
- If the memorial board is moved to its previous likely location below the West window of the North porch, it is recommended to provide a barrier layer (secondary board support) between the exterior West wall of the North porch and the reverse of the memorial board to buffer environmental changes (changes and fluctuations in relative humidity and temperature), prevent damp penetration and contact with migrating salts through the masonry wall which would also help to reduce the risk of further insect pest activity in the wood of the memorial board. Providing a secondary board support between the external wall and reverse of the memorial board would also help to buffer cold/damp

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environmental conditions during Winter months and warm/dry environmental conditions in Summer months. The secondary support (e.g. either composite wood board wrapped and sealed in moisture barrier film and wrapped in textile covering or painted composite wooden board) to provide a flat and stable surface to which the memorial board is secured for display. It would be necessary to relocate the mirror plate fixings to their previous locations utilising existing drill holes at the corners of the frame on the reverse at the top and bottom

- To tint any areas of fresh exposed wood in areas of scratching and scuffs/marks at the frame with watercolours to colour match to surrounding surfaces
- To treat insect damage and wooden batons at reverse of memorial board with insecticide spray (Constrain – water-based, non-toxic insecticide spray) and to monitor for further signs of insect pest activity

All work to be carried out on-site at All Saints Church, Boyne Hill, Maidenhead – 1-2 days on-site required for proposed treatment

Estimated Treatment Time/Costs:

Cleaning to remove surface dust and dirt, particulate matter, insect frass and insect remains, inpainting of marks and scuffs to colour of surrounding surfaces and insecticide treatment: £160 (½ day @ £250/day + £35 materials)

To change location of mirror plates for fitting of memorial board to secondary wall support, utilising existing drilled holes in reverse,

To supply, fit and install secondary board support to below West window

To install memorial board in previous location below West window of North porch: £370 (1 day @ £250/day + £120 materials)

Additional travel costs for working on-site: £35-70 (£35 mileage/day)

Estimated costs above excluding costs for new spotlight/LED bulb and testing of colour temperatures to achieve best illumination of memorial board and black-painted lettering

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TREATMENT REPORT

- Surfaces cleaned with compressed air with an adjustable airbrush and with soft bristle brush and museum vacuum cleaner to remove loose dust and dirt.
- Surfaces further cleaned with smoke sponge to reduce ingrained surface dirt.
- Reverse of memorial board sprayed with Constrain insecticide as precautionary measure against wood boring insect pests. No evidence of live wood boring insect infestation was seen in the wooden stretcher batons at the reverse of the memorial board.
- Original hanging plates were removed from the bottom edge of the memorial board and relocated to their original positions at the reverse of the memorial board for later wall-mounted installation utilising existing screw hole positions and original ferrous wood screws.
- Dome-headed slotted screw (previously used to secure memorial board by braided window cord) was removed as a non-original fixing from the top edge of the memorial board.
- The top hanging plate from the reverse of the memorial board where the ferrous screws had caused splitting in the wooden frame was removed to enable repair to splitting in wood and to fill area of loss around screw fixings.
- Sennelier fish glue introduced into splitting in wood in the area of hanging plate fixing at reverse of wooden frame. Cotton calico tying tape used to bring split in wood together to enable adhesive repair. Areas of loss around splitting at screw fixings of hanging plate filled with 20% Paraloid B72 in acetone with fine glass microballoons and artist's dry powder pigments to colour. Fills further inpainted with acrylic paints to colour to surrounding surfaces.
- Loose splinter at top corner of frame of memorial board secured in position with Sennelier fish glue and areas of loss around splinter filled with 20% Paraloid B72 in acetone with fine glass microballoons and artist's dry powder pigments to colour and further inpainted with acrylic paints.
- Screw holes around edges of memorial board where screws securing hanging plates and where dome-headed screw were removed from filled with 20% Paraloid B72 in acetone with fine glass microballoons and artist's dry powder pigments to colour and further inpainted with acrylic paints.
- Scuffs and scratches on front of memorial board inpainted with wash of acrylic paints to tint to surrounding surfaces.
- Relocation of memorial board to its original location below the West window of the North porch secured to a new secondary wooden support (secondary wooden support forming a barrier layer between external wall and reverse of memorial board to buffer environmental changes and fluctuations, to prevent damp penetration and contact with migrating salts through the masonry wall, to minimise further light damage and exposure to direct natural light and heating effect of solar gain and to reduce the risk of future insect pest activity in the wood of the memorial board). In this location, the black painted lettering against the oak background would receive limited direct natural light but light levels to be better controlled through the use of artificial light as the primary light source (new LED spotlight on switched circuit installed above to illuminate memorial board).
- In order to prevent stresses on the bowed memorial board when secured to the secondary board support, painted brass tube spacers/standoffs were provided

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and fitted over the screw fixings between the reverse of the hanging plates and front of the secondary board support.

Total Treatment Time (including preparation of secondary board support and installation of memorial board below West window of North porch: 2 days

TREATMENT IMAGES

	
Overall view of memorial board from reverse before conservation	
	
Detail view of lower hanging plate fixing removed from bottom edge of memorial board and showing original location of plate on reverse	Detail view of hanging plate fixing removed from bottom edge of memorial board and showing original location of plate on reverse
	
Detail view of lower hanging plate fixing removed from bottom edge of memorial board and showing original location of plate on reverse	Detail view of top hanging plate fixing at reverse of memorial board left in-situ

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<p>Detail of dome-headed slotted screw used previously to secure memorial board to braided window cord, with screw removed from top edge</p>	
	
<p>Overall view of reverse of memorial board after surface cleaning and treatment with Constrain insecticide spray</p>	
	
<p>Detail of loose splinter at corner of memorial board</p>	<p>Detail of splinter at corner of memorial board secured in position with adhesive repair prior to fill</p>

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<p>Detail of splinter at corner of memorial board secured in position with adhesive repair and with fill in area of loss before inpainting</p>	
	
<p>Detail of screw hole at top edge of memorial board, showing coloured fill before inpainting</p>	
	
<p>Detail of repositioned lower hanging plate fixing at reverse with screw holes from previous fixing at bottom edge</p>	<p>Detail of repositioned lower hanging plate fixing with filled screw holes from previous fixing at bottom edge before inpainting</p>
	
<p>Detail of repositioned lower hanging plate fixing with screw holes from previous fixing at bottom edge</p>	<p>Detail of repositioned lower hanging plate fixing with filled screw holes from previous fixing at bottom edge before inpainting</p>

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<p>Detail of scuff marks and scratching at front of memorial board along bottom edge of border frame before conservation</p>	<p>Detail of scuff marks and scratching at front of memorial board along bottom edge of border frame after inpainting to tint exposed wood, after conservation</p>
<p>Detail of reverse of memorial board showing splitting in wood from previous screw fixing of upper hanging plate</p>	<p>Detail of reverse of memorial board showing adhesive repair and fill to splitting in wood, during conservation</p>
<p>Detail of reverse of memorial board showing inpainted fill to splitting in wood, after conservation</p>	

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Overall view of memorial board secured to secondary board support at West wall window of North porch



Detail view of screw fixing at upper hanging plate and with metal tube spacer to secure memorial board to secondary board support.



Detail view of screw fixing at upper hanging plate and with metal tube spacer to secure memorial board to secondary board support.

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Overall view of memorial board after conservation installed below West window of North porch and with new memorial board below and associated framed Roll of Honour

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HANDLING, STORAGE AND DISPLAY

- To handle with gloves (vinyl/nitrile)
- To carry memorial board in horizontal orientation and upright, fully supporting board and frame from below
- Temperature: 16-22 °C +/- 5% over 24 hours RH: 40-60% +/-5% over 24 hours, avoid exceeding 65% RH
- Light: <150 lux, ideally no UV light; UV:<10 µW/lumen
- To monitor memorial board for future signs of insect pest activity
- To keep surfaces of memorial board free from airbourne dust and particulate matter through cleaning with soft bristle brush only.