

New garden for Sandham marks outbreak of WW1

- Memorial chapel re-opens and Stanley Spencer paintings come home

On Monday 4th August, 100 years to the day since Great Britain declared war on Germany, Sandham Memorial Chapel in Hampshire, will be unveiling its new garden of reflection.

Designed to be a tranquil area for visitors, this new space will contain fruit trees, cottage garden style planting and a vegetable plot.

The new garden is the creation of Hampshire designer Daniel Lobb, intended to complement the modernist proportions of the chapel.

A competition to design some of the planting has given winner Alice Wrightson, a student from nearby Sparsholt College, the opportunity to help shape the look of this special place. First year Sparsholt students laid the native hedging and turf.

In collaboration with the charity 'Help for Heroes', service men and women from local rehabilitation centre Tedworth House helped to clear and prepare the grounds for this transformation.

Memorial Chapel re-opens

The Memorial Chapel will also re-open after a year's extensive conservation work. The chapel is famously home to a series of 19 works by Stanley Spencer created to honour the forgotten dead of the First World War and is our only building dedicated to the war.

Sandham Memorial Chapel was built by John Louis and Mary Behrend primarily to house Spencer's paintings. It was dedicated to the memory of their brother Harry Sandham who died in the War.

Completed in 1932, Spencer's large scale canvases depict scenes of his own wartime experiences as a hospital orderly in Bristol and as a soldier on the Salonika front. Peppered with personal and unexpected details, they combine the realism of everyday life with dreamlike visions.

These incredible paintings, considered by many to be Spencer's finest achievement, are returning following an acclaimed touring exhibition at Somerset House in London and Pallant House in Chichester. The paintings will be at Sandham until the property closes for the Winter at the end of October, before heading to Manchester Art Gallery, where they'll be on display from 29th November 2014 until March 2015.

Sandham Memorial Chapel re-opens to the public on Tuesday 5th August, and entry will be by pre-booked ticket only. Tickets will be released for sale from 23 June and will be available

until the chapel closes on 31 October. Information on ticket booking will be available online from 23 June at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sandham-memorial-chapel.