

Remembrance Day will be marked at Merchiston Castle School with 100 pipers and drummers

Merchiston Castle School will mark Remembrance Sunday and the centenary of the end of the First World War with 100 pipers and drummers on the front driveway of the school in Colinton.

This was the idea of one of the pupils James who is now 15. In 2014 he wrote to the Headmaster about the 2018 Remembrance Service which might be commemorated with 100 pipers and drummers parading outside the school.

In a speech to the school last year he gave a further outline of his plan and the reason behind the idea. He said : "In 2014 when we as a School commemorated the 100th anniversary of the beginning of WW1, I was here and an idea sparked and grew.

"As we thought about the 177 Merchistonians who died in the First World War, I was reminded of stories that my family told of my great great Uncle Duncan McNaughton, who, although not a Merchistonian, played while serving with a Scottish Regiment in the War.

"We still have his pipes in the family, and I thought ahead and wondered whether, as a School, we could do something to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the war. What about a band of 100 Merchistonian pipers and drummers parading after the Memorial Service in 2018, which will be on 11

November 2018?

“It may rain, it may snow, it might be fine ... but nothing will compare to what that generation of Merchistonians and my great great uncle went through. So, pipers and drummers, let’s try and make it 100 for the 100th anniversary of WW1.”

And his dream is coming true as the school will stage the parade on Sunday 11 November 2018 beginning at 11.30am at the school on Colinton Road, EH13 0PU

Rev Nick Blair, School Chaplain, commented: “I remember when James approached us in 2014 and he had been inspired by the 100th Anniversary theme of our Remembrance Service that year. At the time, I thought it was very exciting that we are able to reach out to 11 year-olds and inspire them to think big. Four years ago, I was not sure if it would happen, but here we are, four years later, continuing to hold true to our promise. We will remember them, and James is helping to spearhead our team effort, to inspire his generation and the next generation to connect with real people, real sacrifice, and real freedoms won at a price.”



James a pupil at Merchiston Castle who had the idea of staging 100 pipes and drums to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War

James said : "I have to say that I am surprised that this has come to be such a big event. At first, I questioned whether or not we would reach the 100 pipes and drums, which was my target, but the work has paid off, and hopefully it will turn out to be a great day. I feel very privileged to have had the support to go through with this idea I had back in November 2014.

"At the time, part of me wondered how it would all work out, but everything has fallen into place. I have lots of respect for those who have fallen in combat and this event will hopefully show my respect, especially for the Merchistonians who died tragically at such a young age, and also for my Great Great Uncle, Duncan McNaughton, who was also killed in WW1."