

# Somme Artist's poignant shrouds tribute heads to city

Emma Grimshaw

emma.grimshaw@b-nm.co.uk



**A** BREATHTAKING art installation commemorating soldiers who fell on the first day of the Battle of the Somme by creating 12 inch-figures for each of the 19,240 soldiers who lost their lives is to be shown in Bristol.

Following hundreds of requests, organisers are bringing the symbolic shroud to the grounds of Bristol Cathedral where it will be on display from November 11 to 18, marking 100 years since the bloodiest battles in history.

Artist Rob Heard spent six months hand crafting each of the figures which he wrapped and bound in shroud, crossing the name of every soldier who fell.

Mel Bradley MBE, project manager, said: "The Shrouds, along with the Poppies at the Tower are perhaps the most memorable WWI commemorations this country has ever seen. The public response to the shrouds from around the world has far exceeded all expectations.

"We have a visitors' book from Exeter with



hundreds and hundreds of personal and emotional remarks from people trying to express the impact the Shrouds has had on them.

"It had a huge impact on the City of Exeter and has the potential to be even bigger in Bristol. The personal and community impact cannot be underestimated."

Commodore Jake Moores OBE, chairman of the Shrouds of the Somme, praised the exhibition as 'one of the most powerful acts of remembrance' he had ever seen throughout his military career.

He said: "The raw emotion it produced in countless numbers of people, many of whom were in tears, some kneeling and praying and others stood rigidly to attention, was extremely moving. Without doubt this exhibition touches the hearts of all those who are privileged to witness it."

Proceeds from the exhibition, which will be opened on Armistice Day, will be donated to Forces charity SSAFA, specifically to their Bristol branch supporting servicemen, veterans and their families in the Bristol area in times of need.

