



## Newsletter Issue No 12

Spring 2011

### THE CHAPELS



Following the first meeting in November 2010, a second meeting has now taken place between Councillor Timothy Huxtable, Bereavement Officers and representatives of the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery Committee. The like minded approach, overall spirit and intent, has resulted in the instigation of regular meetings in the future. It is clear that both the City and the Friends are appreciative of the mutual goodwill and whilst it will not be an easy task to fulfil the objectives, a good start has been made.

### LITTER PICKS

Litter Picks continue to take place on a bi-monthly basis and the future dates for 2011 are:

Saturday 4th June

Sunday 7th August

Saturday 1st October

Sunday 4th December

Litter pickers and black bags are provided and will be distributed at the Cemetery Lodge at 10.00 a.m. All you need is suitable footwear and gloves and the task is usually completed by 11.30 a.m.

### SECURITY

Please ensure that you lock your car and hide all valuables when visiting the Cemetery.

### NEW LOGO AND WEBSITE

There is now a new logo for Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery which can be seen above and to accompany it there is also a new website. The website address has not changed but the layout and format have. Do go on to the website at [www.fbec.org.uk](http://www.fbec.org.uk) and have a look.

To find photographs of a variety of aspects of the Cemetery go to <http://newsdash.co.uk/fbecdash>, click on 'Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery' on the right of the screen.

### POPPY CROSSES



Once again we have cause to be grateful to the members of Wates Living Space who volunteered to spend a cold, wet, windy day placing a Poppy Cross on every war related grave in the Cemetery. Appropriately, the task was undertaken on Armistice Day itself and work began at 11 a.m. – it was on the 11th day, of the 11th month, at the 11th hour, when the guns on

the 'Western Front' finally fell silent.

This was no mean effort, as there are in excess of 350 graves to visit, all scattered throughout this large cemetery and some are difficult to locate. This task was carried out in inclement weather conditions, with cheerfulness and a real sense of dedication to those we are remembering.

Not only did they place the Poppy Crosses, their enthusiasm in supporting the project while in the cemetery resulted in the discovery of further war related graves.

The poppy crosses were funded by an anonymous donor.

## SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

On 14th November 2010 a short Service of Remembrance was held at Brandwood End Cemetery to honour the fallen. A few friends and onlookers joined The Rev'd Andy Delmege, Vicar of St Bede's Church, Brandwood, to pray and remember the victims of war. Councillor Neville Summerfield laid a wreath on behalf of Birmingham City Council. Wreaths were also laid on behalf of Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery and the Royal British Legion.



## POSTAGE COSTS

The membership fee for Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery has only increased once since its inauguration in July 2005. Unfortunately postage costs have increased greatly in the intervening years. In the interests of economy the committee suggests that as many newsletters as possible are sent by e-mail. If you are happy to receive your newsletter this way, you will need to tick the appropriate box on the subscription renewal form

## THE LODGE

During the extreme weather experienced this winter the Superintendent's Lodge was flooded and as a result is not fit for the office staff to work in. At the moment they are based at Kings Norton Cemetery. There is still a dedicated telephone number for Brandwood End Cemetery 0121 459 9132 and the postal address is Brandwood End Cemetery, c/o Kings Norton Cemetery, Longdales Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham. B38 9BU

## KINGS HEATH VILLAGE SQUARE

The new Village Square in Kings Heath is to include a circle of pavers each inscribed with the name of a family, business or organisation. A donation has been made and there will be a paver with 'Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery—established 2005' inscribed on it. Below is an artist's impression.



## REMOVAL OF IVY

Ivy is incredibly invasive and can kill trees if left unstopped. On the weekend of the 22nd & 23rd January volunteers from Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery attacked some ivy which was wrapped around a tree and several graves. After a number of hours of hard graft the graves were once again visible.

Whilst there is still some work left to do in the clearing of roots, the area blighted by ivy looks freer and lighter. A big thank you to the volunteers of Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery for once again helping to improve the environment for all those who visit the cemetery.



## HERITAGE HEDGE PROJECT

On Monday 4th March, the sun shone brightly in Brandwood End Cemetery as 29 children from St. Alban's RC Primary School, Kings Heath set about the daunting task of planting 250 hawthorn bushes round the perimeter of the Civilian Garden of Remembrance. The bushes have replaced a failing beech hedge.

The preparation work had been undertaken during the previous week by the Biodiversity Champions from Quadron Services and they returned to help the children with their digging. Teaching staff, parents, members of Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery and Councillor Mike Leddy helped with the supervision of the children. All of this was overseen by Dean Paul, a member of the Ground Staff Team for Bereavement Services.

The Biodiversity Champions, led by Nicola Clarke of Quadron Services, undertake many community projects throughout the city and they enjoyed working with the children.

The whole event was funded by the National Lottery through Big Lottery Fund and was organised by Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery.



## SNIPPETS

### Tree Replacement:

Six Alder trees have been planted to replace the felled beech trees on Section 20 and Bereavements Officers are having discussions with the Parks Department with reference to a tree replacement Programme for the whole cemetery.

### Map of Cemetery:

There is now a box at the entrance to the Lodge which holds a map of the cemetery and details of how to get information about the graves.

## A QUESTION ANSWERED

In the last edition of the Newsletter, the following questions were asked: 'What was the connection between Canon Ernest Edward Maxwell Phair and the City of Birmingham?' and 'What was his connection with Kings Heath?' Two readers came up with the correct answer to the first question - Canon Phair was appointed Curate of Christchurch in Sparkbrook from 1895 to 1898. The connection with Kings Heath is that there is a memorial dedicated to him in Brandwood End Cemetery.

Ernest Edward Maxwell Phair was born into a church family in Fort Alexander, Manitoba, on 27th December, 1870. He was educated at St. John's College, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, where he graduated with a BA Degree and was considered to be a "high flyer". Ernest followed in his father's footsteps and was ordained into the Church of England in 1895. Christchurch, Sparkbrook was his first parish appointment. He left Sparkbrook, Birmingham to become the Curate in charge at Stowting, a rural parish in Kent, from 1898 to 1902.

Curate Phair then returned home to Canada to become a Lecturer at his old University, gaining a Master of Arts Degree and becoming Professor of Pastoral Theology and the Canon of St. John's Cathedral, Winnipeg. His meteoric career within the Church continued, with an appointment in 1904 as Examining Chaplain to the Archbishop of Rupert's Land and then in 1911 as Secretary of the House of Bishops of the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada.

Sadly, returning to England in 1915 on Church business, he sailed on the Cunard line SS Lusitania which was infamously torpedoed by a German U-Boat, the U20, off the coast of Ireland. In just 18 minutes the Lusitania sank and 1,153 passengers and crew were drowned; amongst the casualties was Canon Ernest Edward Maxwell Phair

His body was recovered and identified and he is now remembered by a memorial in Brandwood End Cemetery, which was erected by his widow and friends from the Isle of White, Hampshire.

Christchurch, Sparkbrook was built in the second half of the 19th century and located in Grantham Road/Dolobran Road and has had a sad history as a building. The spire belonging to the tower was removed in 1918 and, following a bomb blast

during an air raid in World War II, the entire tower was demolished. Finally, the church was further damaged by the 'Birmingham Tornado' on 28th July, 2002 and the church no longer exists. However, plans are well in hand for a new Church plus a Community and Medical Centre on the site.

Three stories behind a single memorial in our cemetery: the story of a Canadian Vicar in Birmingham; the history of a local church; and an infamous incident in World War I.

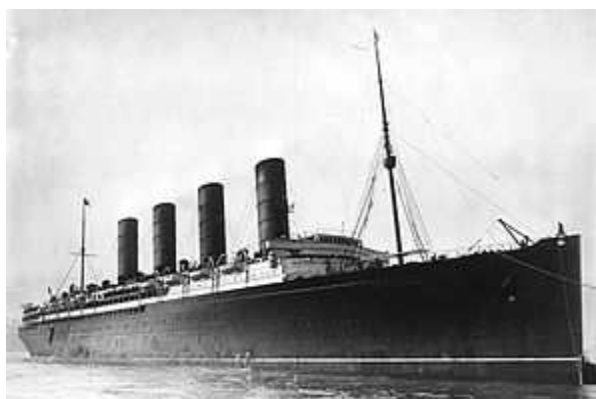


## LAST KNOWN SURVIVOR OF LUSITANIA

Yet another link with Canon Phair.

Audrey Lawson-Johnston (nee Pearl) who was the last known survivor of the Lusitania disaster died on 11th January, 2011 aged 95.

Audrey was a baby of three months and was travelling with her parents, three siblings and two nursemaids when the Lusitania was torpedoed. Audrey's two sisters and one of the nursemaids were lost but the other nursemaid rescued the baby along with her five-year-old brother. Audrey's parents also survived and the remaining family were reunited at Queenstown (now Cobh).



## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS—2011

These are already being renewed and the Committee are very appreciative of these and the accompanying donations.

## WEBSITE

A reminder that our website can be found at [www.fbec.org.uk](http://www.fbec.org.uk) and is regularly updated with the latest information.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

If you wish to contact Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery with a query, idea or article for this newsletter please use one of the contact methods below.

Telephone: 0121 628 1186

e-mail: [friendsofbrandwoodendcemetery@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:friendsofbrandwoodendcemetery@blueyonder.co.uk)

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