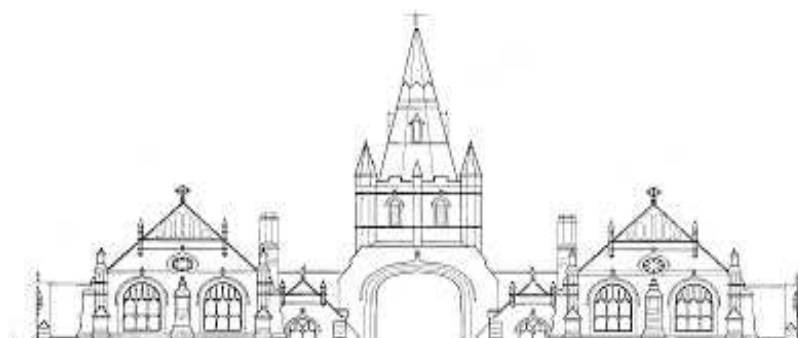


FRIENDS OF BRANDWOOD END CEMETERY



Newsletter Issue No 11

Autumn 2010



‘SAVE OUR CHAPELS’ PETITION

We received approximately 1700 signatures to our Petition and on 7th September 2010 this was presented by Councillor Neville Summerfield to a full meeting of Birmingham City Council.

On Wednesday, 3rd November, a meeting is due to take place between Councillor Timothy Huxtable (Cabinet Member for Transportation and Regeneration) and representatives of FBEC Committee. We await with interest the outcome of this meeting.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The fifth Annual General meeting of the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery was held on Thursday, 15th April, at St. Bede's Church, Doversley Road, Kings Heath.

The Officers and Committee were duly elected as follows:

Chairman:	Tom Langley
Vice-Chairman :	Barrie Simpson
Treasurer:	Julian Pritchard
Secretary:	Jane Edwards
Membership Secretary:	Anne Courbet
Committee:	Philip Brown, Sarah Courbet, Coral Howard, Derek Johnson, Carola Klein and Brian Rai.

We were delighted to welcome Brian Rai onto the Committee.

Following the formalities of the Annual General Meeting, Mr. Dick Empson gave a very interesting talk about Key Hill Cemetery and some of the restoration work which has been undertaken there.

SECURITY: Ensure that you lock your car and hide all valuables when visiting the Cemetery.

WEBSITE

A reminder that our website can be found at www.fbec.org.uk and is regularly updated with the latest information.

Registered Charity No. 1114333

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND POPPY CROSSES



A short Service of Remembrance and the laying of wreaths will take place at the Cross of Sacrifice on the main drive of the Cemetery at 1.00 p.m. on Sunday, 14th November, 2010. Please do come and join us.

As in previous years, it is hoped that a Poppy Cross will be laid on

each War Grave in the Cemetery. Last year there seemed to be a shortage and it was not possible to also create a field of Poppy Crosses. Every effort will be made to obtain sufficient crosses to cover both areas.

LITTER PICKS

The bi-monthly litter picks continue to take place and the dates for the future are :

Sunday, 5th December, 2010

Saturday, 5th February, 2011

Sunday, 3rd April, 2011

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.

At the Litter Pick in May, we were joined by a number of Scouts and two Leaders from 148th Birmingham (St. Dunstan's) Scout Troop. This 'Good Turn' not only helped the Friends, it also helped the Scouts to fulfil one of the requirements of the Scout Community Badge. We were very grateful for their help and look forward to them joining us again on a future occasion.

LOSS OF BEECH TREE

A large beech tree is due to be felled on the Broad Lane boundary of the Cemetery. The tree has been attacked by a root destroying fungus and it now has a dramatically reduced root ball. This means that, in the event of wind or heavy rain when the canopy becomes heavy, it is likely to topple. As it is in an area that would represent a danger to the public if it should fall, the decision has been regretfully taken to remove it. Sadly this is one of the occasions when the loss of a tree is inevitable.

A TIME TO REMEMBER

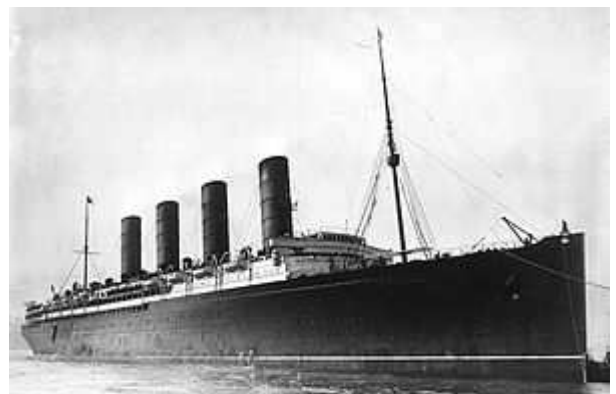
As Remembrance Day approaches our minds turn to remembering those who lost their lives in the service of their country. The Friends also extend that remembrance to those civilians who lost their lives, particularly the victims of what is now known as the 'Blitz'. All the graves of those who served in the Navy, Army and Air Force in both World Wars and the civilians who were victims of the bombing of Birmingham, are remembered by the placing of a 'poppy cross' for Armistice Day.

There are also some graves which you would not immediately connect to this act of remembrance but during our researches some of these unknown connections have come to light. You would not expect to find a connection between our inland cemetery at Brandwood End with the sinking of the Cunard passenger liner, the RMS Lusitania on 17th May 1915, off the coast of Ireland, by the submarine U20; but there is one.

The grave of Ernest Edward Maxwell Phair, Canon of Winnipeg Cathedral, is that connection - he was a passenger on the Lusitania, which sailed on that fatal voyage from New York to Liverpool, despite the warnings of the dangers from German submarines in the Atlantic. Our research can even place him in a Second Class Cabin on C Deck, on the starboard side of the ship, and his Stewardess was a Marian May Bird (who survived the sinking).

Of the 1,959 passengers and crew on board the Lusitania, 1198, were killed - the question is, what was Canon Phair's connection to the city of Birmingham? And indeed to Kings Heath?

If you think you have the answer please let us know via our contact number or address.



ENGLISH CEMETERY IN MALAGA

An FBEC Committee member recently visited Malaga and was lucky enough to be able to spend an hour at the English Cemetery in the heart of the city. Before the development of this beautiful and tranquil facility, Protestants had to be buried on the sea shore at the dead of night. The royal Decree ceding the land for the cemetery to the British Government was issued in April 1830, and the following year the first Protestant Cemetery in Spain was established. It now covers over 8,000 sq. mtrs. and contains more than 1,000 graves. The cemetery is also a botanical garden with a number of unusual specimens of trees and plants. With several well-known people buried there, it has become one of Malaga's historical sites. The English Cemetery is a beautiful and well visited place of peace and quiet in the middle of a bustling city of over half-a-million people.

Visiting the graves of young and old, war heroes, children and families was genuinely moving, particularly the small graves and those painstakingly covered in sea shells. The cemetery is so lovely it is well worth the short trip if ever you are in town. It is cared for by the English Cemetery in Malaga Foundation and, like the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery is funded by public donations.

GATES TO THE JEWISH CEMETERY

A member of the Jewish community, who has a number of relatives buried in the Jewish section of Brandwood End Cemetery and is a member of the Friends, has generously arranged for the restoration and re-painting of the gates leading to the Jewish Cemetery in Broad Lane. This is a tremendous contribution to the appearance of the Cemetery and is a fitting reminder that Brandwood End is a multi-faith cemetery.



LEAFLET BOX

A volunteer paints the new post, adjacent to the FBEC noticeboard, in readiness for the dispenser which now holds our leaflets and guides.



TREE WALK

The tree walk leaflets are now in great demand with a number of visitors making favourable remarks. It is hoped that a start will soon be made on a new 'specimen tree walk' and a number of people have offered their expertise. It will take some time to produce but hopefully will be ready by the spring/summer of next year.



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 contacts below.

Telephone:

0121 628 1186

e-mail:

friendsofbrandwoodendcemetery@blueyonder.co.

Post:

FBEC PO BOX 13910

Birmingham

B13 3FB

BAT WALK

This took place on Friday, September 3rd, 2010. Towards dusk over 20 people including children, gathered for a walk brilliantly organised by BrumBats and Birmingham City Council's Ranger Service, a joint venture with the Friends of Jasmin Fields, Brandwood End Cemetery and Brandwood Pool. After a short introduction, armed with torches and well supplied with bat detectors, we set off across the fields to the canal. Here we waited and listened, moving our detectors around to pick up the calls of bats. Some people could just see them against the sky. We continued round the fields and out across Broad Lane into the Cemetery, where privileged evening access had been arranged.

It was now dark, and strolling up the main drive with its tall trees, we picked up many signals as bats circled overhead, feeding on insects. We heard the echolocation calls of Pipistrelles, and possibly a few Daubenton's, their high frequencies rendered audible by our detectors. The busiest place was at the Pool – where bats were darting around as insects hatched out and rose up through the air. When our guides cautiously used a strong lamp, these fine, elegant and mobile creatures were briefly revealed to us – a breathtaking scene.

Since bats are a protected species, we need to conserve their habitats, and leaflets handed out to us were full of information about bats and the work of the Bat Conservation Trust, and how to join a group to take part in surveys.

MEMBERSHIP

During late summer, members of the Executive Committee undertook to knock on the doors of the residents adjacent to the Cemetery in an effort to raise awareness of the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery and its aims.

This exercise resulted in the recruitment of eight new members and a few offers of help with litter picks etc.

During the course of conversations one or two asked how the membership fee was spent. The fee only just covers the cost of sending out this newsletter and the Insurance necessary to cover our members and volunteers working in the Cemetery.

DONATIONS

As mentioned in the article on Membership, the membership fee does not cover very much and we are very grateful to those members who make donations each year. All of this money is spent on projects in the Cemetery although grants are applied for when possible. If you were unable to attend the Annual General Meeting in April, the Annual Accounts can be viewed on our website.

SNIPPETS

Beech Hedge: The beech hedge around the perimeter of the Civilian Garden of Remembrance is not thriving and will therefore be replaced by a hawthorn hedge in the near future.

Transport: If you are experiencing problems With transport to Brandwood End or Kings Norton Cemeteries, you might find it useful to use the Ring and Ride transport system. Telephone number 0121 453 9682

Pot Holes: Pot holes on the main drive are now being filled in.

FUNGI

Below are two examples of fungi found growing in the Cemetery in autumn 2009.

