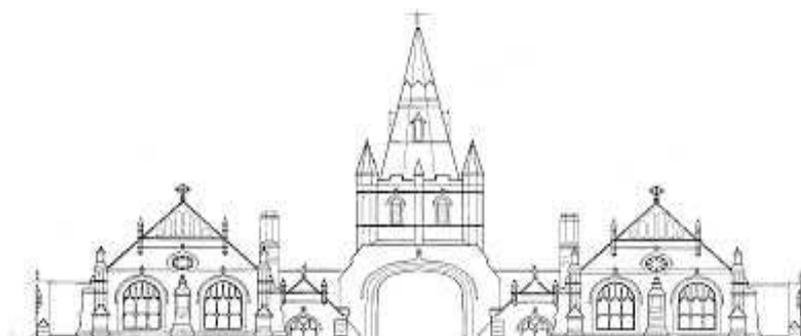


FRIENDS OF BRANDWOOD END CEMETERY



Newsletter Issue No 4

SPRING 2007

THE CHAPELS

We are very excited and encouraged by the latest developments. Funding was obtained from the Brandwood Ward Community Chest to make the Chapels “safe” and for necessary surveys to be undertaken. As many of you visiting Brandwood End prior to the Christmas period will know, much needed work has been carried out. All of the vegetation has been removed from inside and out, the charred beams have been removed from the Chapel which suffered fire damage, valuable artefacts have been placed in storage, the windows have been re-boarded and the Chapels now look as if someone cares.

The next stage is also very exciting, since the Birmingham Conservation Trust, which has been greatly involved in the restoration of the Back to Backs, Perrott’s Folly and Newman Bros. has agreed to assist with the next step - a feasibility study. This will determine what work needs to be done to establish the long term requirements to repair and restore these very beautiful terracotta Chapels back to community use. Terracotta coloured boarding was requested and it is hoped that the resulting somewhat gaudy colour will be toned down by the weather.



LITTER PICKS

Bi-monthly Litter Picks continue to take place and contribute to the hard work of the Ground staff in keeping the cemetery clean and tidy. Please check the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery notice board at the main entrance of the cemetery for the dates of forthcoming litter picks.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery will take place on Thursday 19th April 2007 at St. Bede’s Church, Doversley Road, Kings Heath commencing at 7.30pm. This is your opportunity to receive the Annual Report and elect the Committee for the coming year. We hope that as many ‘Friends’ as possible will attend. The annual subscription also becomes due on this date and further details will follow.

OBITUARY

We regret to report the death of one of our valued members, Cheryl Mutteen, of Warwick, who passed away prematurely on 30th June 2006. Our sympathy is offered to her mother and her family.

NEW SECTION MARKERS

The installation of the first Section Marker took place on 26th October 2006 on Section A1/FC (the Children's Section) and further placements will follow shortly. Our thanks to Wates Construction for supplying the labour to install the markers.



FLOWER CONTAINERS

During Litter picks and walks around the cemetery, it is very obvious that flower containers are a major problem. Because they are so light, they are easily lifted out of position by the wind or the weight of flowers.

Would a solution be the placing of a stone in the base of the container, thus weighting it down?

We do try to replace these wayward items but it is not easy to identify the graves to which they belong.

PODNOSH

Audio Interviews with Local People - Friends of Brandwood End were interviewed at the time of Remembrance Day 2006. To listen to the interview go to www.podnosh.com/grassroots.

TRANSPORTATION

It is evident from comments made by many members with mobility problems that it is difficult, and probably impossible, to visit Brandwood End Cemetery by public transport.

We offer details of the Ring and Ride transport service which may help to solve this problem. After telephoning 0121 453 9682 to register, a first journey can be booked up to five days in advance. A registration pack will be issued which will give a personal number and a telephone number on which to book further trips. Negotiations with the driver will be necessary to arrange for a return journey.

TREE SURVEY

The Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery are undertaking a survey of the trees within the Cemetery. Anyone familiar with this area will realise that this is a daunting task as there are many roads and boundary fences, all lined with trees. We have been very fortunate in attracting the interest of Mr Len Salt. Len is now retired but was formerly the Head Gardener at Birmingham Botanical Gardens and has a particular interest in trees.

His initial visit took place in the early autumn, when he was able to point out many unusual trees in the cemetery. The Friends were already in possession of a list of tree types and numbers, kindly provided by Birmingham City Council Parks Department, but we were unable to plot the actual position of a lot of the species mentioned. Len has helped identify many of these, but the onset of winter has meant that further identification has been postponed until the trees are in leaf. Our Victorian forefathers used a grid system of roads and paths, so plotting is relatively easy. Correct tree identification takes more knowledge.

Len has since returned with some of his students on an impromptu 'tree walk' and has expressed his willingness to lead a 'tree walk' in the spring, for any of our members who wish to attend. Information will be posted on our notice board.

The Committee hope to undertake a tree labelling project as visitors to the Cemetery have expressed an interest in this area.

WARNING !!

A handbag was recently stolen from a car while the owner was tending a grave. Please keep your valuables locked in the boot of your car and lock your car even if you are only a few yards away. It only takes a few seconds.

R.S.P.B.

We are extremely grateful for the work undertaken by Mr. John Bailey and other members of the local Birmingham RSPB group who carried out a survey of Brandwood End Cemetery during the months of April, May and June. The survey was conducted by each person walking slowly around the cemetery pathways making a note of the species of birds seen and its location. Each visit lasted for about two hours and further information was gathered from members of the Ground staff. Twenty nine species were recorded with more known to visit during the winter months. List of species found:

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Robin | Wren | Starling | House Sparrow |
| Dunnock | Blackbird | Song Thrush | Blue tit |
| Great tit | Coal tit | Long-tailed tit | Greenfinch |
| Chaffinch | Bullfinch | Blackcap | Willow Warbler |
| Coldcrest | Treecreeper | Nuthatch | Jay |
| Carrion Crow | Kestrel | Sparrow Hawk | Great Spotted Woodpecker |
| Tawny Owl | Wood pigeon | Stock Dove | Green Woodpecker |
| Feral pigeon | | | |

The list of birds recorded cannot be considered as a definitive list e.g. redwing seen prior to the survey.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Poppy crosses were once again placed on individual war graves within the cemetery. We feel this is just a small public acknowledgment that we do remember those men and women who gave their lives for those of us who remain.

Also, on 11th November, Armistice Day, a short wreath laying ceremony took place around the Cross of Sacrifice. Wreaths were laid by George Jackson, Chairman of the Kings Heath Branch of the British Legion, Councillor Neville Summerfield, on behalf of the citizens of Birmingham and Alistair Morton, Chairman of Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery. The fallen of both World Wars, together with those of later conflicts were all remembered with honour.



WEBSITE

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

CIVILIAN GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE



Phase 1 on this garden commenced on 13th November 2006. This comprised the removal of the old pathway and renewal with new limestone slabbing, together with the rebuilding of the gateway pillars. On 6th December, Phase 2 resulted in the planting of a brand new beech

hedge around the perimeter. Phase 3 will be replanting the area with roses and spring flowers. The original wrought iron gate is being restored and two new benches will be placed in this area thanks to funding through Brandwood End Regeneration. On completion, we sincerely hope that visitors to this very memorable garden will find peace and tranquillity.



REDISCOVERED GRAVES

For some time several of the graves in Section A2 C/E (on the right as you approach the Chapels from the main entrance) have been buried under a covering of ivy. Following consultations with the City Conservation Dept. and with the permission of the Bereavements Dept, two rows of graves have been restored to the light of day. These graves are memorials from the very early 1900s and there are still more to uncover. For those concerned about any nesting loss, worry not. The removal of the ivy was undertaken with the advice of Conservationists and out of the nesting season. There are plenty of natural nesting alternatives.



If you are already a member of the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery, would you perhaps like to consider giving membership to a friend or colleague as a present?

If you are not a member of the Friends, are you reading a borrowed copy of our newsletter? If you would like to join and receive your own updates and information, please contact our Membership Secretary, Anne Courbet :

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