

Registered Charity No. 1114333

## The Chapels



The majority of grant applications demand match funding from the site or building owners and, at present, Birmingham City Council does not have the necessary funds available. Therefore, in an attempt to slow down further deterioration and until such time as funding is available, work is currently being carried out on the chapels.

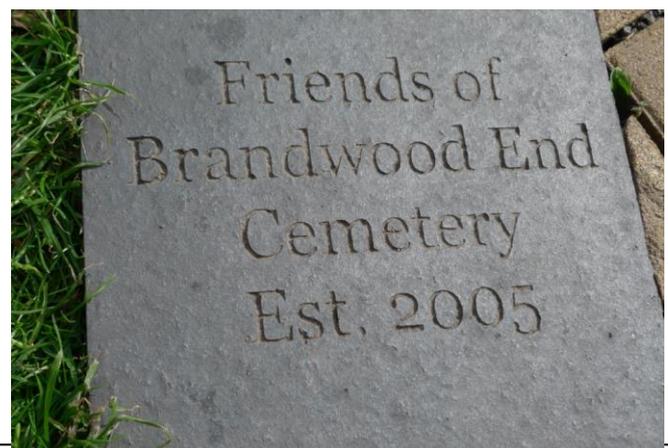
Large amounts of pigeon droppings have been professionally removed from the interior and the pigeons have been denied access. Shrubbery has been sprayed with weed killer and work has begun on the clearing of shrubbery and the re-fixing of loose and fallen masonry.

The windows are to be re-boarded with terracotta coloured boarding and City Bereavements Department is awaiting quotes for new, bespoke, aesthetically pleasing fencing to replace the present unattractive fencing.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of FBEC

It is now 10 years since the inauguration of FBEC and although the original aim has not been achieved, much has been improved. 10 years ago Brandwood End Cemetery looked sadly neglected and some parts of it were being used as a rubbish dump. There is now very little litter about, thanks to our regular litter picks. Volunteers have undertaken various tasks in the cemetery: planting, trimming, and weeding to name but a few. Friends have also helped to obtain funding for projects such as the restoration of the Civilian Garden of Remembrance, planting of bulbs and hedges, installation of bat and bird boxes and creation of tree trails. Section markers have been placed making it easier to find a grave, together with boulders to mark the Public grave areas. All of these have transformed the cemetery into an area that looks loved and cared for. Work that is currently being carried out and the erection of a new fence will improve this peaceful space further.

Look out for our display boards in Druids Heath and Kings Heath Libraries.



## Annual General Meeting

The tenth Annual General Meeting of Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery was held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April at St. Bede's Church, Bryndale Avenue, Kings Heath. There were fourteen members in attendance.

The Committee was duly elected as follows:

Chairman: Jane Edwards  
Other Committee Members: Philip Brown, Nicola Clarke, Sarah Courbet, Adrian Harris, Coral Howard, Julian Pritchard, Brian Rai and Barrie Simpson.

At the first Committee Meeting following the Annual General Meeting, duties were allocated as follows:

Secretary: Jane Edwards  
Vice-Chairman: Coral Howard  
Treasurer: Julian Pritchard  
Membership Secretary: Sarah Courbet  
Newsletter: Coral Howard

A warm welcome to our new committee member.

## A Busy Month in the Cemetery

June saw lots of activity in the cemetery, firstly, the usual quarterly litter pick took place with six members collecting eight bags of rubbish.

This was followed just a week later, on a lovely Sunday morning, by a hedge cutting session attended by six members. The hedge surrounding the Civilian Garden of Remembrance received a much needed trim and the smaller hedge around the War Grave section was treated to its's very first light trim. There was also time for a little weeding.

Later in June, Kings Heath History Group visited the cemetery and Pat Franklin generously gave her time to talk to members about the history of the cemetery and show them some of the WW1 graves and memorials that the cemetery contains.

TWO HAPPY HEDGE CUTTERS



KINGS HEATH HISTORY GROUP



## Service of Remembrance 2015

The Service of Remembrance this year will take place on Sunday 8th November at the Cross of Sacrifice on the main drive of the cemetery. The Service will commence at 10.50. a.m. to include two minutes silence and the laying of wreaths. All are invited to attend this short but meaningful tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice.



Three more war related graves have been discovered by one of FBEC Committee members.

## Dates for Future Litter Picks

Litter Picks continue to be held every quarter and future dates are as follows:

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December** 2015

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March** 2016

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June** 2016

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September** 2016

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December** 2016

This quarterly task helps the ground staff to keep the cemetery clean and tidy and is an ideal way to enjoy some exercise and fresh air. Why not join us on the next one? Fifteen bags of rubbish were in September.

## Forthcoming Projects

### Civilian Garden of Remembrance:

The garden was completely renovated and transformed in 2007. Since that time, the grass has been cut by contractors. However the maintenance, weeding, hedge cutting etc. has been carried out by members of FBEC. In the intervening eight years some of the bedding has become overgrown and straggly, some rose bushes have died and a complete overhaul is now required. The soil in the beds is in poor condition and needs replacing and permanent edging round the beds is required to keep them in shape. Funding is available and the Committee is currently seeking quotes for the work to be carried out during the autumn.

### Tree Replacement:

It has been suggested that another significant tree be planted to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> year of FBEC. Discussions are ongoing with the City Tree Officer as to which particular tree and site would be suitable.

### Hedgehog Project:

The Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust is interested in conducting a "Hedgehog Survey and Reintroduction Programme" in Brandwood End Cemetery and the Brandwood Pool area. The Chairman of FBEC and the Executive Officer of Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust, Georgia Stokes, have had a meeting in the cemetery and Georgia is now putting together a proposal of how this could work. Ideally members of FBEC and local residents would be trained to observe evidence of hedgehog activity and encouraged to make their gardens hedgehog friendly. The hedgehog used to be a common sight in many gardens and within the cemetery. With help we hope to discover if they are still thriving in this area, if not, why not and what can be done to encourage a growth in their numbers.

## **Sinking of the Lusitania 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

A floral tribute was laid on the grave of Canon Earnest Edward Maxwell McPhair on the 7<sup>th</sup> May to mark the 100th Anniversary of the sinking of the RMS Lusitania. Canon Mcphair perished along with 1,201 passengers and crew when the ship was torpedoed off the coast of Ireland.



## **Birds of Prey**

This year a pair of buzzards nested in the cemetery and successfully raised offspring. The youngster has now moved on but hopefully the original pair will stay and perhaps deter the pigeon population. A sparrow hawk has also been spotted hovering overhead.

## **Snippets**

### **Website:**

This newsletter is produced just twice a year but the website is updated on a regular basis. Just log on to [www.fbec.org.uk](http://www.fbec.org.uk) to get the latest news as it happens.

### **Safety and Security:**

Please remember to always lock your car and hide any valuables when visiting a grave.

### **Volunteers:**

FBEC are still seeking an archivist, committee members, litter pickers and people willing to weed and tidy in the Civilian Garden of Remembrance. The editor is always pleased to receive articles for the newsletter.

## **Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery – Contact Details**

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