

The Chapels



Although it might appear that work on the roof of one of the chapels has come to a halt, that is not the case. We are assured that work is continuing.

Meanwhile the Victorian Society has included Brandwood End Chapels (together with another site in the Midlands) in its Top 10 Endangered Buildings list for 2018. A spokesman for the Victorian Society said "These sites are in a very bad way and have been let down by those who should be their custodians. There is still time for them to be regenerated and brought back into use as buildings the communities can be proud of".

Service of Remembrance 2018

The Annual Service of Remembrance organised by Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery will take place at the Cross of Sacrifice on the main drive on Sunday 11th November. Everyone is welcome and the Service **commencing at 10.50 a.m.** will last for approx. 15 minutes to include two minutes silence at 11.00 a.m.

Obituaries

In April we lost one of our much valued and respected founder members. Barrie Simpson was such an integral part of FBEC. Apart from having a key role in the inauguration of the organisation, he was the inspiration behind the practice of placing a poppy cross on each of the war graves in the cemetery, before Remembrance Sunday every year. Barrie had spent hours tracking down and plotting where the war graves were, working very closely with the War Graves Commission. Barrie was dedicated to making sure that those who had laid down their lives for their country received the honour due to them. In committee his knowledge and wisdom were invaluable and he is sadly missed. A man regarded with much respect and affection. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Hazel and her family.

In June we were informed of the sudden death of Barbara Johnson who was known to many of us through her work with Birmingham Air Raids Remembrance Association. Again our sympathy goes to her family and many friends.

Annual General Meeting

The thirteenth Annual General Meeting of Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery took place on 12th April 2018 in the Conference Room at St. Dunstan's Church, Kings Heath.

Members in attendance approved the Annual Accounts and the Annual Report. The following committee members were elected:

Chairman: Julia Griffin
Treasurer: Julian Pritchard

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Secretary: Jane Edwards
Vice-Chairman: Coral Howard

Committee Members: Philip Brown, Nicola Clarke, Sarah Courbet, Adrian Harris, Carola Klein and Brian Rai.

Litter Picks

At the June Litter Pick we were joined by five Scouts plus Leaders from the 96th Birmingham Scout Troop (Colmore Road, Kings Heath) and with their help 11 bags of rubbish were collected. A gentleman from Wales visiting the cemetery was most appreciative of the work being done by the volunteers and gave a donation to both the Scouts and the Friends

In September five members of FBEC took part in the litter pick and gathered 7½ bags of rubbish. Many thanks to the same few who turn out regularly to take part in the picks.



Dates of future Litter Picks:

Sunday 2nd December 2018

Saturday 2nd March 2019

Sunday 2nd June 2019

Saturday 7th September 2019

Flash Flooding at Brandwood End

As a result of the intense storm on 27th May there were issues with flash flooding at properties in Sunderton Road and Broad Lane. The drainage system was overwhelmed and as a temporary measure Bereavements placed sandbags along the verge where the water had entered the gardens in Sunderton Road.



Eventually a 'bund' covered in wild flowers will be created in place of the sandbags.

Civilian Garden of Remembrance

The garden was on the receiving end of another weed and tidy early in July and, once the nesting season was over, the hedge was cut. Our thanks to Idverde who carried this task on our behalf.



Tree Removal

After the examination and testing of the large Poplar trees behind some of the houses in Sunderton Road, the local BCC Tree Officer took the decision that the trees were nearing the end of their life and it was necessary for safety reasons to remove them. As the picture below shows, the decision was justified.



The log pile to the side of the heavy lifting gear represents the trees that have been removed and cut into sections. All of these logs were destined to be chipped and used as Biomass to fuel power stations. Nothing would be wasted.



It is hoped that the trees will be replaced by smaller specimen trees in the not too distant future.

Heritage Open Event

To commemorate the centenary of the cessation of hostilities at the end of the 1914-1918 War, Bereavements Services staff, in conjunction with Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery, held a Heritage Open Event on the morning of Saturday 8th September.

Despite a wet and drizzly morning, well over forty people came to learn more about the cemetery and some of the war dead remembered within it. During the morning, FBEC Chairman Julia Griffin, led two war grave walks to uncover the history of the Labour Corps, many of whom are remembered on the Screen Wall by the Cross of Sacrifice. Fortunately, although the weather was not great, the paths between the graves were not too wet.



Those who did not wish to venture out were able to browse the wealth of information displayed about World War I, the Suffragettes and the Labour Corps as well as reading about 'Frederick Clifford Alabaster' and 'William Shakespeare' who are buried in the cemetery. We were honoured to be presented with a photograph of William and his wife by his Grandson, John Shakespeare, who attended with his family.

Tea, coffee and some wonderful cakes were available throughout the morning and there was a colouring competition for children.

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In between the guided walks visitors were treated to an insight into the lives and deaths of some of the soldiers buried in the cemetery. Doug Smith and his team read 'monologues' as if from beyond the grave. Some died of their wounds and many, having been injured and brought back to England to convalesce, died as a result of the Spanish Flu which swept the country immediately after the war.



We were grateful for the gazebo!

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If you go onto our website and click on the Amazon logo in the top right hand corner of the first page you will be taken direct to the Amazon website. Place your order and FBEC will receive a small commission. It will involve no further cost to you but will help to fund the expense of the newsletter.

Safety and Security

Please ensure your car is locked and valuables hidden when attending a grave.

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