



Celebrating Fifteen Years of Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery

The Chapels



Because of the current situation affecting us all, there are no further updates or information on the Chapels. However, there has been an attempted break-in and an attempt to steal the lightning conductor. If you see anyone acting suspiciously while in the cemetery please call the police.

Litter Picks

Dates of Future Litter Picks:

Sunday 6th December 2020

Saturday 6th March 2021

The most recent litter pick held at the beginning of September was extremely successful with 18 pickers and 26 bags of rubbish gathered. Why not join us next time?

Poppy Crosses

Each year, in the lead up to Remembrance Sunday, a Poppy Cross is placed on the 300 plus war graves in the cemetery. This year the placing of the crosses will start during week commencing 17th October. If you helped last year and would like to help again or if you would like to join us for the first time in this important and rewarding task please contact us through our email address. Full instructions on the finding of the graves and placing of the crosses will be given.

friendsofbec@gmail.com

Remembrance Sunday

A reminder to everyone that November 8th is Remembrance Sunday in the United Kingdom. There is no doubt that events will be subject to COVID regulations. Please do not assume that events will take place as in previous years but check with the event organiser if you would normally attend a service.

Cemetery Opening Times

Restrictions on opening times at the cemetery are still in place. As the days get shorter the opening times will be changing, perhaps at short notice. Before travelling to the cemetery it would be wise to check Birmingham City Council website for the latest opening times at <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/brandwood-end-cemetery>.

Summer Work Party



On a warm summer evening towards the end of June, a small party of Committee members, plus a member, set about tidying the hedge surrounding the small area of Commonwealth War Graves which lies close to the Civilian Garden of Remembrance. This hedge was looking decidedly wild and unkempt. The two pictures show the contrast before and after the trimming of the hedge



Encouraged and inspired by the results of their work they then moved on to the Civilian Garden of Remembrance and proceeded to tidy the hedge and beds therein, stopping work just ten minutes before the gates closed at 7.00 p.m.

After three hours work, the hedges and flower beds looked good and the workers looked sun-kissed and rosy cheeked. Well done everyone, it is amazing what dedicated team work can achieve.

Anniversaries in 2020



During the year there have been a few significant anniversaries to commemorate:

- 90th** Anniversary of the dedication of the Cross of Sacrifice on the main drive.
- 80th** Anniversary of the Battle of Britain.
- 75th** Anniversaries of V E and V J days.
- 15th** Anniversary of the Inauguration of the Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery.

The first and the last of these Anniversaries were celebrated in a joint ceremony which took place on 22nd July.

A small group of members and other interested parties gathered on the main drive and a small wreath of summer flowers was placed on the newly cleaned Cross of Sacrifice. Those present included one of our past Chairmen and inspiration behind FBEC, Mrs Anne Courbet.



Cross of Sacrifice



Brandwood End Cemetery's magnificent Cross of Sacrifice was installed on the main driveway in 1929 and dedicated on Sunday 20th July 1930. The dedication was carried out by Birmingham's Assistant Bishop Hamilton Baynes and in spite of the inclement weather, attended by many. A press report of the ceremony reads:

"The event was extremely well attended, despite the continuous downpour that had drenched Birmingham for two days, with the Lord Mayor Alderman M Lancaster, Councillor F. McDonald Chairman of the Parks and Cemeteries Committee, Councillors, representatives of the local TA Units, members of numerous branches of the British Legion (with their banners), the Vicars of Kings Norton and All Saints Kings Heath and other clergy present. They were led to the Cross by the military band of the Legion of Frontiersman. A large number of the public attended, many of whom carried wreaths and bunches of flowers to place on the Cross and the Lord Mayor laid a 'massive wreath' from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of Birmingham. "

The downpour was so severe that only the dedicatory prayers were recited at the spot where the Cross stands, the rest of the service having to take place in the C of E Chapel."

The Birmingham Dispatch of 21st July 1930 has a photograph taken outside the door to the Chapel showing four police officers in their capes and a queue of members of the public sheltering under large black umbrellas.

First Officer Leonard Satel

Within the small area of Commonwealth War Graves close to the Civilian Garden of Remembrance there is a memorial dedicated to First Officer Leonard Satel who was a Polish national flying with the Air Transport Auxiliary. On 28th October 1940 Leonard was flying a Bristol Blenheim IV on a delivery flight, when it struck a balloon cable and crashed near the Warley Odeon, Hagley Road West. The pilot was killed.



A retired solicitor from Wollaston sent us this account:

"On 28 October 1940 I was a five year old pupil at Castle Road School, now Lightwoods School, Warley, on the Wolverhampton Road near to the old Warley Odeon. As we were leaving school that afternoon there was an explosion, and I could see a column of smoke down the hill beyond the Odeon. In those days, even though it was wartime, a five year old could run around the streets with impunity, and I made my way alone to the junction of

Birch Lane and Hagley Road West. An aircraft had crashed there and men in uniform were scrambling about in the smoking wreckage. I saw a body lying at the side of the road covered with some sort of blanket. I picked up a couple of pieces of metal, which I still have, from the wrecked aircraft. One of the men shouted at me and I ran off to my home in Hagley Road West, about two hundred yards away.

The aircraft was a Blenheim Mark IV Bomber. One of its wings had been severed when it struck the cable of the barrage balloon located in Ridgeacre Road (about a quarter of a mile south of the crash site) causing the aircraft to come down. I later learned that the severed wing had fallen to the ground somewhere between the Holly Bush Public House and Quinton Church in the direction of Stourbridge.

In January 2006, thanks to Royal Air Force Records, I confirmed that the pilot, the sole occupant of the aircraft, whose body would have been the one I saw at the crash site was that of First Officer Leonard Satel of the Air Transport Auxiliary. It was very moving for me to discover that the pilot was Polish. He was fighting his war against Nazi Germany, the aggressor who had torn his own country apart and against whom England had declared war.

I found it ironic and a tragedy that in the year following the invasion of his Homeland First Officer Leonard Satel, all the way from Poland, should lose his life by misadventure in a non-descript location on the edge of Oldbury."

On Thursday 4th November, 2010 this gentleman, who was joined by members of Birmingham's Polish community and Quinton Local History Society, held a memorial service on the central reservation on Hagley Road West at the junction of Birch Road where the plane came down 70 years before. A hymn was sung and a Poppy Cross and flowers were laid at the site.

Nature in the Cemetery

There have been sightings recently of hedgehogs in the cemetery.

Munjac deer are often seen and recently a Roe deer was spotted.

The first Fairy Ring of the autumn has appeared.

Keep your eyes peeled and do send us any photos you take for publication on our website.

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