



## The Chapels



The shrubbery on top of the tower has taken hold once more but given the amount of money spent on the roof, windows and fencing of the Chapels recently it is unlikely that any more improvements will take place in the near future.

## Annual Service of Remembrance

This short service will take place at the Cross of Sacrifice on the main drive on Sunday 13th November. Commencing at 10.50 a.m. it will include two minutes silence at 11.00 a.m. and will last approximately 20 minutes in total. Wreaths will be laid by local Councillors and other local organisations.

## Safety and Security

Please ensure when leaving your car, even for a short time, that you hide all valuables and lock the car doors. This applies however close you are to your car.

## Annual General Meeting

After holding the Annual General Meeting via Zoom for two years it was possible to hold it this year in person in the Superintendent's Lodge. This was the first time we had been able to use the Lodge for this particular meeting. A little cosy but we managed and hope to repeat the experience next year. The meeting took place at 10.30 a.m. on Thursday 7th April 2022. The Annual Report was approved along with an interim report on the Annual Accounts. The Accounts are to be approved at the next Committee Meeting.

The following committee members were elected:

Chairman:	Julia Griffin
Secretary:	Jane Edwards
Treasurer:	Julian Pritchard
Vice-Chairman	Coral Howard
Committee Members:	Philip Brown, Lisa Fair and Carola Klein. Sadly, Sarah Courbet and Kerry Tinkler did not stand for re-election. Sarah because she has now become a Patron and Kerry because she is moving away from the area. We thank both Sarah and Kerry for their contribution to the work of FBEC.

## Poppy Crosses

The placing of Poppy Crosses on the War Graves within the cemetery will commence on Friday 15th October and continue until each grave has a poppy cross on it. A big thank you to all those who have offered help with this mammoth task.

## Civilian Garden of Remembrance

2022 is the 70th Anniversary of the creation of the Garden to commemorate the civilian victims of the air raids on the city during World War 2. In 2005 the stone pillars, the gate and the bronze memorial plate were all that was left leading to a rough grassed area. In 2007 the Friends obtained a grant form Awards for All and the garden was refurbished.



During the spring and summer months volunteers worked hard to bring the garden up to pristine condition and we extend our grateful thanks to them. Keeping the garden looking at its best is no easy task and is now beyond the capabilities of our small committee. If you would like to be involved in the upkeep of the garden, with or without green fingers, please use one of the contact methods on the back page of this newsletter.

### Litter Picks

The quarterly litter picks continue to be well attended and many bags of rubbish collected with the result that the cemetery looks clean and well cared for. Thank you everyone.

#### **Dates of future litter picks:**

**Sunday 4th December 2022**

**Saturday 5th March 2023**

## Brandwood End Memories

The following was sent in by Mr. Brian Stallard a member of FBEC:

In the early 1950s when I was about fourteen, on Sundays and Bank holidays, all members of the cemetery staff would take turns on a rota system to patrol the cemetery at times of opening and locking the gates.

One winter day about Christmas/early January my father was on duty and I had cycled to meet him intending that we should ride home together. Just before 4 o'clock we rang the bell then made our way to the Broad Lane gate. Duly secured we then made our way parallel to Broad Lane to the boundary. By this time dusk had fallen and a faint mist was rising above the gravestones. After a few seconds we heard the distinct sound of metal rubbing against stonework. As we approached along the drive towards the chapels the noise increased. Dad got off his bike and walking into the mist he found a horse with a long heavy chain wrapped round several gravestones and attached to his collar.

We could not leave the horse where it was so Dad led the horse (and chain) and I wheeled the two bicycles to the yard next to the nursery plot. The old buildings included a stable so we led the horse into it. I then went across the drive to tell Mr Frier that a horse had been found and he rang Kings Heath Police Station. After some time the local Bobby arrived and said "Ho! I know who owns this animal!" and set off for the farm in Broad Lane.

It was getting late by now so I cycled home to let my mother know that she needed to delay the tea. When I got back to the cemetery there was no sign of the policeman or the farmer. They eventually arrived and farmer, horse, Dad and I walked to the bottom gate. What should have been a 30 minute round trip ended up with two journeys along Brandwood Road and two and a half hours riding up and down the cemetery. Happy Days!!

## Heritage Open Event

This year our Heritage Open Event was scaled down and concentrated on the Civilian Garden of Remembrance. On Saturday 10th September two large gazebos were erected in the garden, one manned by FBEC committee members and the other by a representative from the Birmingham Air Raids Remembrance Association. (BARRA). Many of our visitors that day had no idea of the existence of this place of peace and tranquillity nor of those buried within.

The FBEC gazebo had display boards showing the history of the cemetery and garden together with general information about the Friends.



We were delighted that Matt Felkin from BARRA was able to spend a few hours with us sharing his vast knowledge of the air raids and the impact they had on the lives of the people of Birmingham. Matt also had an extensive display of memorabilia, artefacts, photographs and records relating to the civilian population and how it was affected during times of blitz.

Visitors were fascinated by the items on display and had the opportunity to try on tin helmets, examine how a gas mask for a baby was fitted and ask lots of questions.

In October of each year BARRA holds a Service of Remembrance at St. Martin's Church in the Bullring.



Some people examining the exhibits were born towards the end of the war and although they had no actual memories of the blitz they had heard members of their families speak about it.

## Heritage Walk

At the end of August, Val Hart and Julia Griffin from Balsall Heath History Society led a Heritage Walk in the cemetery for members of the society. The walk highlighted the interesting graves relating to past residents of Balsall Heath and was repeated on 16th September for members of the public.



Approximately 20 people attended the well-researched and delivered walk and enjoyed the sunshine and the opportunity to learn more about the stories of some of those interred in the cemetery.

## Snippets

**Bereavement Services:** New contact details; all calls to be directed to **0121 216 2000** or: **[bereavement.services@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:bereavement.services@birmingham.gov.uk)**. If sending an email include 'Brandwood End' in the subject line.

**Recording of Memorials:** This has continued through the year and the two year project comes to an end in December.

**Benches:** These have received three coats of oil to protect them through the winter months. Thank you Steve.

**Commonwealth War Graves Area:** The re turfing of this has been completed and new perennial planting has been added.

**Retirement:** The month of June saw the retirement of Alan Holmes one of the ground staff in the cemetery. Alan was always ready to do whatever he could to help the Friends. We will miss him greatly and wish him a happy retirement.

**Badgers:** Badgers have been spotted in the cemetery recently adding to the wealth of wildlife in the cemetery. Although it is interesting to see them we hope they have not moved in permanently as they can cause a lot of damage.

## The Holly and the Ivy

A few weeks ago Josie Wall, and FBEC appealed for help to remove large amounts of holly that were taking over many areas of the cemetery, especially along the main drive. Little did we know that 20+ people would turn up and spend hours clearing such a mountain of holly and some ivy. Josie is showing the scale of one of the two piles volunteers removed.



Another such assault is planned for Saturday 5th November 11.00 a.m. till 2.00 p.m. Please come and join us even if only for an hour.

## Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery – Contact Details

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