Friends of Flaybrick

November 2021



Mayor of Wirral George Davies, the Rev Joe Smith and Birkenhead MPs representative Stuart Whittingham are welcomed by our chairman Rob Dolphin.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

This year saw the return of our Remembrance Service which took place on Armistice Day, Thursday 11th November.

The service was led by the new minister at St Oswald's Parish Church, Bidston, the Rev Joe Smith. The Mayor and Mayoress of Wirral, Councillor and Mrs Davies were able to attend and Birkenhead's MP Mick Whitley was represented by his office manager, Stuart Whittingham. Pupils and staff from Bidston C of E school joined us to lay poppies and to take part in the readings.



Flowers by Chris Dawson

NEWS

Groundworks

As can be seen from the above photo, the area in front of the chapels has been renovated by maintenance staff prior to our remembrance service. Jointly funded by Wirral council and the Friends, the area has been cleared of old tarmac and grass and relaid with gravel. This gives a much larger standing area around the sword of sacrifice.

Railings

Removable railings have been installed near to the cross of sacrifice to prevent any falls over the low wall. They were made and installed by Brian Sinton and a group of volunteers and funded by the 'Friends'. They can be erected when needed, but then folded away so they don't interrupt the view of the chapels.

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Valerie Gane. M.B.E.



It was with great sadness that The Friends of Flaybrick heard of the death of Val on 7th September after a short illness. Val was a trustee and former chairperson of our charity. She was a member of the Friends for twenty years and her contribution to our work will be greatly missed. She assumed the role of Chairperson in 2004 and continued in that position until 2019 when she took the decision to step down; she did however continue to work hard on our behalf and remained a member of our executive group, attending meetings until just a few months ago.

Val was the daughter-in-law of the renowned oceanographer, Arthur Doodson. She worked at the Tidal Institute at Bidston Observatory for 43 years as a higher scientific officer. In the Queen's Birthday Honours of 1996 she was awarded an MBE for her services to science.

An unrelated enquiry to the Observatory by our group's founder and secretary, John Moffatt led to Val's involvement with Flaybrick.

Val became more involved, assisting in research and provided us with a wealth of information regarding Arthur Doodson's extraordinary life and achievements.

Several members of our group attended the service of remembrance held for Val on 22nd September at West Kirby Methodist Church. The sincere condolences of our trustees, executive committee and all members of the Friends of Flaybrick go to Val's husband David and her extended family.

New Benches

Two new steel benches have been installed on the main driveway. They were funded by the Friends and a grant from 'Wirral together fund'. It is hoped that more benches can be added to the gardens in the future.



Green Flag

Flaybrick Memorial Gardens have been awarded the Green Flag for the second year consecutive year. This is great testament to the work carried out by both the volunteers and the maintenance staff.



Fund Raising

Thanks go to both Chris Dawson and Jayne Phennah for their fund raising efforts.

Chris raised £60 from an online book sale during lockdown and Jayne raised £240 after asking friends and relatives to donate to our charity instead of giving her birthday gifts. Well done and many thanks to them both.

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Roman Catholic Chapel Memorial



The memorial tablet at the site of the Roman Catholic Chapel has been repaired. The tablet had eroded over the years and was illegible.
The project was carried out by E. F. Mackie and funded by the Friends group.

Gates, Gates and more Gates!

Volunteer Lynne Steen has spent the best part of the last year painting gates, from the interior Chapel gates to the main gates on Tollemache Road and then on to Boundary Road entrance! All the old paint has been chipped off and two coats of paint applied. Fantastic job Lynne, well done.





Flaybrick looking autumnal

Thanks to all the volunteers, 'Friends of Flaybrick' and Council staff for their support and hard work over the last two difficult years.
We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Communal Graves

Ranger Neil Mutch and a small group of volunteers have been at work in the Roman Catholic section. Over the years a path had become worn across communal graves that contain as many as 3000 people. Neil and his group have managed to realign the path to approximately the original position away from the graves. Gravel has been laid on a section of the path and a small fence erected at the edge of the graves. A temporary information board has also been made and installed giving visitors an insight into the area.