

Newsletter April 2010

Memorial Inscription Service Goes Live

January saw the fruition of five years work by the Memorial Inscription team in recording all the inscriptions in Flaybrick onto a computer database. After having been told initially that the task would take 20 years to complete, they have now recorded a total of 8,318 inscriptions. The recordings have been done to an agreed national standard and indicate the type of stone, the style of memorial and any inscription. The database has been put together by Kath Lovatt, a database manager for Liverpool Museums. Kath, who will also manage the database, has produced a database that can be accessed with complete or partial information. The final part of the project involved the placing of the service onto our website, a difficult task which was completed by Marianthi Lainas and Gavin Rymill, our website manager.

Members of the public anywhere in the world can now make an application online for inscription details and pay for the service via the Paypal system, at a fee of £10 per search. There is an additional photographic service which will provide both an image of

the gravestone and an image of its immediate surroundings for a fee of £10. The service, which is one of the first of its kind to be provided by a UK cemetery, may help to generate foreign visits to the Wirral. That is because people who have received grave research information from us in the past have frequently then wanted to visit the grave. Income from the service which so far amounts to £60 will be used to help meet our running costs. The service will have the added benefit of providing a permanent record of gravestones that may be lost to vandalism.



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Annual General Meeting

The Friends of Flaybrick AGM will be held on:
Saturday 17th April 2010
10.30 a.m at Tam O'Shanter Farm
All Welcome

This meeting will be followed by a normal Members' Meeting which will include a report on the Bilbao ASCE meeting with slide show of images

Bat Study Centre

On 10th February a meeting was held at Westminster House, Birkenhead. The meeting was called by ourselves and was intended to bring all parties together in order to establish a way forward for the project. Representing the Society were J. Moffat, A. Davies and R. Johnson. Representing WBC Parks and Open Spaces Department were J. Lester (Head of Cultural Services), M. Garbutt and N. Harding. Representing WBC Planning Department was J. Malpas. Representing Ainsley Gomon, Architects was A. Plant. Representing Morris, Redfern & Thomas, Quantity Surveyors was M. Redfern. Representing Donald Insall, Architects was H. Hutchinson. P. Riley, WBC Lotteries Officer was invited but was unable to attend.

J. Moffat began the meeting with a complete overview of the present situation of both the grounds and the chapel buildings, emphasising that English Heritage had re-designated Flaybrick's landscape from Grade 2 to Grade 2* in December. During the meeting it was emphasised that the project had a clearly identifiable income stream from the return on school visits, a clearly identifiable visitor base from the Tam O' Shanter Urban Farm and limited staffing costs.

Mike Redfern outlined that the costs of the project were in the region of £5 million to £5.5 million, with the majority of those costs lying in the clearance of the site, and the consolidation and making safe of the existing fabric. This basically meant that the cost saving option of restoring one chapel only would in effect not bring any significant savings. A proposal by the Planning Department that the building could be converted into flats was briefly considered but found to be not viable on a number of counts.

Although the current funding situation looked bleak generally, both Grosvenor Park, Chester and Castle Park, Frodsham (both Edward Kemp landscapes) have succeeded in securing major funding from HLF. Additionally the European



*Sitting left to right : M Redfern, H Hutchinson, N Harding,
M Garbutt, J Lester.*

Standing left to right: R Johnson, J Malpas, J Moffat , A Plant

Development Fund also looks promising at the moment. However Jim Lester indicated that although they were happy to back a major capital bid for Flaybrick's landscape, they were reluctant to support a major bid for the Bat Study Centre. However he was prepared to fully support the costs of a landscape development plan and it was agreed that Donald Insall would proceed with the production of this plan. It was also agreed that an onsite meeting with HLF Manchester be arranged in the near future.

Flaybrick Walks 2010

Come and find out about the history of the beginnings of Birkenhead and the famous people buried at Flaybrick

Guided walks around Flaybrick take place on a regular basis and are run by the Friends of Flaybrick

The next guided walk will take place on:

Saturday 10th April

Non-Conformist Area - Part1

Meet at Tam 'O'Shanter Farm at 11 am
(Flat shoes recommended and an umbrella or raincoat in case it rains)

Walks last approx 2 hours

Please ring Tam'O'Shanter Urban Farm on
0151 653 9332 to book your place

New Treasurer

After a year in which the responsibility for the accounts fell into the hands of the Secretary, the January meeting saw the election of Andrea Davies into the role of Treasurer for the Society. Andrea, who is a Wirral resident, has recently passed her final exam for the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. She is currently employed by The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company as a financial analyst and has spent the past thirteen years working within the finance departments of a broad range of companies in the local area.

Andrea's application to become Treasurer for the Society was spurred on by a desire to utilise the time previously spent studying by committing to a worthwhile cause in the Wirral area and a deep respect for the work

of the Friends of Flaybrick and in particular their efforts to limit vandalism to the memorial gardens.

Andrea would like to thank the members for the warm welcome she received at her first meeting and is looking

forward to spending more time with the group, getting involved and learning about the history of Flaybrick and the work that is being done to conserve it.

At the meeting J Moffat said, "From all he had seen, he was confident that she would not only be a good Treasurer, but also would make a real contribution towards the advancement of the Society."



Andrea Davies, our new Treasurer

Flaybrick goes from Grade 2 to Grade 2*

In December 2009 English Heritage notified us that they had upgraded the listing for the landscape of Flaybrick. Flaybrick had previously sat alongside over 71 other cemeteries at Grade 2 but now sits in a more elite group of 24.

This comes in a year when Edward Kemp's standing is clearly on the increase with a new entry in the National Biographical Dictionary.



This newsletter has been produced by the Friends of Flaybrick.

We would welcome any contributions for future newsletters.

Slide Presentations

The next slide presentation on the History of Flaybrick will take place on:

**Tuesday 6th April 2010
at 8.15pm
at the Merebrook Pub, Bromborough.**

All Welcome

Contact Us

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