



Friends of  
Emsworth Memorial Garden

## Newsletter No 3 Summer 2008



*This Sunday Dispatch headline in Vitalise window really summed up the day !*

### EMSWORTH 40's Flashback



#### **A real success - albeit a soggy one**

For a week before the event day itself, the shopping centre was awash with forties memorabilia with some 18 shops entering the Window Display Competition. And what fabulous, imaginative, informative displays there were too. They created the perfect setting for the WWII jeeps and trucks.



It was unfortunate that the weather on the day caused the cancellation of the Emsworth Concert Band which had been specially rehearsing a programme of swing music to greet the Mayor and Mayoress of Havant as they arrived in a convoy of jeeps.

But Angel Radio's Tony Smith and Martin Kirby really came to the fore, compering the day beautifully both musically and vocally.

The Soup Kitchen was a real hit too. A Chef from the Royal Logistical Corps from Thorney Island kept his home-made soup bubbling and spirits warm even though the bodies were bedraggled and cold !



The Mayor, Cllr Victor Pierce-Jones, together with his wife Margaret entered into the spirit of the occasion and toured the shop displays beneath an umbrella and awarded first prize to Evelyn Pearce of Emsworth Delicatessen. A well deserved prize and Evelyn was justifiably thrilled.

TS Unity turned out on parade in the afternoon and gave us some stirring military music.

A big thanks go to Solent Overlord Executive for turning out in their military vehicles, to the guys from Baker Barracks of Thorney Island for their attendance and for all the groups, businesses and individuals for all their support, sponsorship and participation.



All the efforts raised another £704 towards Friends of Emsworth Memorial Garden and the work to create Emsworth's own memorial garden.

Verdict on the event - many requests for a re-run and for it to be an annual affair! Don't breathe a word but - there's a whisper of maybe something in the pipeline. Sshhh - careless talk spoils surprises.

## The Garden

Much has been happening in the garden since the last newsletter update, when the contractors were on site and just starting the main construction works. We now have something that is beginning to look like a garden, at long last.



### Flooding issues

Spring's rain was incredible not so much for its frequency, but its sheer volume. When it rained, it was like a monsoon. At first the water collected in the lower south western corner and seemed to soak away quite quickly. However, as the ground became more sodden the flooding spread taking longer to soak away. The water surged down the path bordering the playing field and emptied itself into the garden.

This has obviously been of great concern and resulted in our putting 'on hold' any work in the lower planes of the garden; there is no point planting hundreds of bulbs in the grassed areas only to have them rot away.



We are also anxious that the 'Names' of the Fallen should not be subjected to long immersions in water. Discussions are taking place with the engineers at HBC but will have to be patient whilst they explore various avenues for a solution.

### Coming to Life

We have concentrated our efforts in getting the higher part of the garden and the large raised bed planted out and looked after. With the arrival of summer, the work in these beds is beginning to show attractive results.

The sculpture 'Absence' now looks as if it's meant to be there, and the newly sown grass is well established. The rose and beech hedge have taken well and the raised bed, planted during April, is beginning to look a real picture with a large number of colourful poppies.

The huge amounts of rain we had during the spring were a great help obviating the need for tedious amount of manual watering. It also did a grand job establishing the weeds too !



Exciting news - so attractive is the garden beginning to look that HBC entered it into the 'Borough in Bloom' competition. Judging took place on 2 July. We'll keep you posted.

### Work sessions

We have set up regular monthly work sessions - 10 a.m. on the second Monday of the month. All helpers very welcome!

### Dedication Plaque

A bronze dedication plaque has been designed and made by Michael Johnson to commemorate the unveiling of the memorial sculpture 'Absence' in August 2006. It will be installed on a reconstituted Portland stone base by Wraights and Son as soon as the flooding problem has been solved.



### Name Plaques

As the work of establishing the garden is now substantially underway we are now turning our attention to the creation of the memorial name plaques themselves.

The last part of the memorial garden has yet to be completed and that part is the manufacture and installation of the memorial plaques. The plaques will be embossed with the names of those service personnel who gave their lives in conflict and who have lived in Emsworth or who have a connection with Emsworth. Inevitably, the vast majority of these names will be those who died in World War I and II.

A list of names in the Emsworth Museum is being used as a starting point as well as the names inscribed in St. James' Church which should be identical to the names in the museum. It would be so easy just to copy these names by accepting that there are no errors in the original lists. However, minor errors have been found and so far one omission from WWI of someone who belonged to a long-standing Emsworth family.

So far, I have only managed to verify about half of the names. Information on the rest is proving difficult to find. To help with completing the final list, a letter in the

current edition of The EMS will be printed appealing for information from relatives and friends to help ratify those names that are being queried and perhaps add some names to the list as well. It is important to ratify these names as Emsworth names to preserve the integrity of the memorial. There is one family in Emsworth that lost four of its sons in WWI, emphasizing the fact that their memory must not in any way be undermined.

The process of vetting names has been given a breathing space by the problem of flooding in the memorial garden as the plaques cannot be installed until this problem has been resolved. If you have any information about the above, please contact me, Dave Lee, tel. 377929 or email: tansylee2000@yahoo.co.uk

## Membership

'Friends' membership now stands at 57

## Fund Raising

Fund raising efforts continue for both the Garden and the Name Plaques.

Emsworth 40s Flashback on 19th April raised £704.

The 'Friends' are delighted to announce that the Co-Operative Funeral Directors presented the group with a giant 1m-long cheque for an amazing £2,000 on Wednesday 18 June. This money will go towards the 'Name Plaques of the Fallen'. The cheque was presented by Stuart Wilders, Head of Sales and Marketing, and Pauline Lympany, Manager of the Emsworth, Leigh Park and Waterlooville branches.



Lucy Doherty opened her most attractive garden at 23 New Brighton Road to the public on Sunday 22 June with proceeds being donated to the 'Friends'. The weather was just perfect - and the cakes were delicious. Money raised from entrance fees, plant sales and teas amounted to £321.34. A fabulous result. Thank you Lucy.

## Forthcoming events

We will have a stall at the Emsworth Show on August bank holiday Monday.

The 'Friends' will be holding a Remembrance ceremony in the Garden at 11am on 11 November.

