

FODC News Bulletin



Gala

FODC had a stall at the Darwen Gala in August. We had some fundraising games, displays of our work and information about our group. We had a guessing game where people had to guess how many burials there were in the first two years the cemetery was in existence. The Whitehall Hotel very generously gave us a first prize of dinner for two in their restaurant. A very successful children's game was a large map of the cemetery with lollies in holes. Children could purchase a lolly with the chance of winning another prize and then they replaced the lolly with a miniature headstone, thereby putting all the headstones back. We also had a tombola. It was a very enjoyable day and we raised over £185.

Completion of Section C

The volunteers of the Working Party have been meeting regularly on Saturday mornings to work on Section C. Almost all of the memorials on this section have been re-fixed and we have been trying to get the rest of the rhododendrons cut back so that it is easier to manage. Blackburn with Darwen Cemeteries Department paid for the first phase of the rhododendrons to be cut back and FODC paid for the second phase. The third phase of cutting back will have to wait until we have raised some more funds. In the meantime the Friends are clearing the area where the rhododendrons have been allowed to spread for the last twenty years getting it ready for grassing next year. It has really opened up this vast area where we believe there are common graves and there are now views to the site of the old 'rose' garden and up the hill to the bridleway. Blackburn with Darwen Cemeteries Department will be supplying us with a large amount of top soil to fill in sunken graves and level out the area ready for grassing. We will shortly be planting over 2000 crocuses and some clumps of snowdrops.



Adopt a war Grave and Remembrance Service

We are shortly to hold two Remembrance Day services. On Thursday 11 November we are holding a service for children from local schools. The children will take part by doing the readings and then after the service they will place poppies on each of the war graves. In recent years Mr Richard Westhead from the Royal British Legion, has carried out this duty but he is happy that this task is to be carried on by the children. The second service will be on Sunday 14 November for members of Friends of Darwen Cemetery and for those who have adopted war graves in the FODC Adopt a War Grave project.

The project has been really successful and in less than nine months nearly 70 Commonwealth War Graves have been adopted by local schools, youth organisations, community centres and Darwen families. Some people who are unable to work on these graves themselves have given FODC a donation to look after them on their behalf. There are war graves within family graves and as some of these are no longer cared for, some of these are now being looked after by the scheme.

One family looking after a war grave are grandfather Billy Walsh and his granddaughter Ellie. In the photograph they are looking after the grave of J Eccles, a Private from the King's Own (Royal Lancashire Regiment). This grave is one of the five adopted by St Barnabas C of E Primary School. Billy and family have also adopted their own war grave.

Dates

Last **Working Party** of 2010 is on Saturday 20th November 10 till 1
Next **General Meeting**. 7.30pm
Wednesday 24th November at Bolton Rd
United Reformed Church.

