

Pupils visit cemetery to remember wartime fallen

Molly Williams
Local democracy reporter
@SheffieldStar

The Friends of Loxley Cemetery joined together with Loxley Primary School to honour local war heroes in their first ever event.

The remembrance gathering was the Friends of Loxley Cemetery's first ever event since it formed two years ago to rejuvenate a long-lost part of Loxley, cherished by many in the community.

A spokesman said: "There is such value in connecting children with their local environment and local history. You could see the 'learning in action' in their faces, their questions and a growing awareness whilst engaging in the cemetery, bringing their learning to life."

"Hopefully, with the involvement of the Friends of Loxley Cemetery committee and the contribution of Rev Dan Brown of Wadsley Church who gave a moving address at the cemetery; everyone helped create some tangible memories for the children as part of their learning experience."

The event – which saw FoLC and the school join together at the cemetery to pay respects – stemmed from a chance meeting last year when a member of the



The Friends of Loxley Cemetery joined together with Loxley Primary pupils at the historic cemetery for a special event remembering local war heroes

FoLC committee met a pupil and their family at the cemetery on Remembrance Sunday.

A year after the chance meeting, on Thursday, November 11, year five pupils were invited to visit the cemetery – which has several war graves – to carry out a history project researching local service men and women with their teacher Dan Eaton.

The Friends helped the children find the graves of those they were learning about and lay wreaths created by the children with

biographies and British Legion crosses provided by the FoLC.

Mr Eaton said: "The pupils really appreciated the visit and the FoLC committee's time in helping them to find 'their' men and women that they had been researching."

"They were really enthused when we got back to school, and I suspect, could have spent quite a long time asking questions of you all."

Of Rev Dan Brown, Mr Eaton said: "It was great to have the prayers and reflections, particularly to em-

phasise the need for peace and the children's role in it."

Mike Ford, chair of FoLC, said: "With our work and committee aims for the cemetery a joint event like this is so beneficial to all involved. We would be delighted for it to become an annual event."

"We take momentum from Loxley Primary School's visit as it shows us that we, the FoLC, are beginning to make a difference."

Loxley Church – originally Loxley Congregational Chapel – and cemetery date back to the late 18th centu-

ry when worshippers raised £1,000 to build it.

The cemetery is still open for burials in existing plots, although no further plots are being sold.

The church closed in 1993 with the building gradually deteriorating into a ruinous state over the years.

The churchyard which surrounds the church on three sides had become seriously overgrown.

But FoLC has cleared parts of the cemetery and enabled access to graves not seen for more than two decades.

Steps to play live gig at wildlife park

Acclaimed pop outfit Steps will headline Yorkshire Wildlife Park summer show series when top live acts perform concerts on every Saturday throughout next August.

Steps, the most successful mixed pop group of all time, will take to the stage at the park on Saturday, August 27.

YWP's head of guest experience Chris White, said: "We are planning a spectacular full return for safari nights in 2022 and we can't get a much better first act to announce than Steps."

"They are a national treasure and I'm sure many visitors will be excited to see them headline."

"The acts performing at next year's event are by far some of the strongest we've ever had and are excited to reveal more of the line up in the next coming weeks."

Tickets go on sale tomorrow. Full details are available at <https://booking.yorkshirewildlifepark.com/events.aspx>



Steps are coming to the Yorkshire Wildlife Park

Markets and music all night at Rotherham lights big switch-on

The yuletide adverts are back on our television screens, the festive food has landed in the supermarkets and it's that time again – the Rotherham Christmas lights switch on is taking place today.

The main switch on will take place in All Saints' Square, where Rotherham's Mayor, Coun Jenny Andrews, will do the honour of switching on the lights.

Activities are taking place all across the town centre from noon.

A gin and craft market will kick off the festivities

on Effingham Street, from noon until 8pm.

Over in Effingham Square, festive digital performances from the care home choir will be screened throughout the night.

The Thorpe Hesley Brass Band will be providing the carols and Christmas songs outside Rotherham Interchange from 6.30pm

A puppet sing-a-long show will take place at market Square near Boots from The Lips, at 6.45pm and 7.15pm.

Over in All Saints Square, vintage singer Miss Trixie Holiday will kick off the

entertainment at 6pm, followed by Sheffield Community Gospel Choir at 6.35pm and 7.30pm.

There will also be poetry and performance from Rotherham Open Mic Performance at 7.10pm.

There is also free parking in council-owned pay and display car parks from 4pm.

The Met Office has forecast a chilly evening, with temperatures set to drop to 4C by 6pm, so don't forget to wrap up warm

More information at www.facebook.com/events/922086938513153/

City MP wins award for work on education and disabilities

Olivia Blake, the MP for Sheffield, Hallam, has won an award for promoting positive change for disabled people from the national disability charity, Sense.

Mrs Blake, who chairs the all party parliamentary group on special educational needs and disabilities (Send), was named 'Parliamentarian of the Year' at the 2021 Sense awards.

As part of her work, Olivia Blake has led the delivery of an inquiry into the support disabled children and young people received last year during the pandemic.

The inquiry culminated in a hard-hitting report with nine key recommendations for government on what needs to be done to ensure disabled children and their families can recover from the pandemic.

Mrs Blake has also signed up as a disabled children's champion, committing to supporting disabled children and young people and their families recover from Covid-19 and sharing Disabled Children's Partnership research with Government.

"I'd like to say a massive

thank you to Sense for this award," said Mrs Blake.

"I'm over the moon to have been recognised as 'Parliamentarian of the Year'."

"Since entering Parliament in 2019 I've made it one of my missions to be a voice for disabled people in Parliament, both as the chair of the APPG on Send and in my other work."

"We've done a huge amount of work through our APPG to highlight the impact of Covid-19 on young people going through our education system. So, to have this work recognised means such a lot."