

## Boldmere Swimming Club --- War Memorial

The War Memorial which the members of the Boldmere Swimming Club have erected at what is now called "Hallets Corner" on the Boldmere side of Sutton Park to commemorate the members of the club who made the supreme sacrifice in the war for their country, was unveiled on Saturday afternoon, 29<sup>th</sup> October, by the Mayor (Councillor G.F. Pearson) in the presence of a very large gathering. The Mayor who was attended by the town clerk (Mr R.A. Reay Nadin) and the Vicar of Boldmere (Rev O.H. Wethered, M.A.) robed at Powells Pool House, and proceeded in procession, headed by the 1st Boldmere Troop of Scouts under Scout Master Varley and the Sargent at Mace (Mr A.W. Kerr) bearing the mace, and followed by the Mayoress (Mrs Pearson), the Mayoress-elect (Mrs. G.R. Hooper), Mrs C.F. Fiddian Green, Mrs. J.T. Glover, Mrs. W.T. Harrison, and Mrs. A.E. Beach, Alderman W.J. Seal (Deputy Mayor), J.T. Glover, S.C. Emery and T.H. Cartwright, County Councillor H.E. Beach, Councillors Leiut. Col. C.F. Fiddian Green, G.R. Hooper (Mayor elect), W.T. Harrison, W.E. Showell, J. Bamford, T.W. Lawrence, and F.L. Hawkins, to the site of the memorial, where there was a large gathering, including Mrs. T and Miss Turner, Mr C and Mrs. Fellows, Mr. A.J. and Mrs Moorhouse, Mr. T Bloore (Borough Accountant) Mr. And Mrs. J Le Tellier, Mr. F Brown, Mr A.E. and Mrs Mitchell, Mr R.W. Balls, Mrs Showell, Mr. W.G. MacVitie, Mr. C.N. Milner (representing the National Amateur Swimming Association), Mr and Mrs Hawker, Mrs and the Misses Hepburn, Mr and Mrs A.E. Twiltum, Mr. G Couch, and Mr J. Potter (Hon Sec of the club).

The memorial is in the form of a statuary group of a bathing instructor instructing a boy on how to enter the water. The boy, standing between the knees of his instructor, is confident of his knowledge, and fully assured he understands all he has to do. The man is seated on the branch of a tree which forms a rustic base, and the lad is gathered in a fatherly way in the arms of his instructor, who is placing his hands for diving into the water. The figure of the man is a fine specimen of the aquatic athlete, sitting in a natural and easy position, while that of the boy is graceful, which makes a fine and happy contrast with more mature development of the adult. This group is placed on the summit of a buff terra cotta plinth, on which are inscribed the names of the members of the club who made the supreme sacrifice. The base is in the form of a fountain which will be eventually in play, and will be a welcome and useful addition to this part of the park. The memorial is erected on a bed of concrete 12 feet square and is a most pleasing feature in the landscape. The work was designed and carried successfully through by Mr Ben Cresswick, of Jockey Road

Sutton Coldfield, a pupil of the late John Ruskin, the great art critic. The bronze work of the statue was carried out by Messrs MacDonald and Cresswick Ltd. Edinburgh, Mr Cresswick being a son of the artist, and the terra cotta work was executed by a Tamworth firm under the direction of Mr Cresswick.

The ceremony on Saturday was conducted by County Councillor H.E. Beach the president of the swimming club, who said he had been honoured with the request to invite their worthy Mayor (Councillor Pearson) to unveil the memorial, and this he had the greatest pleasure in doing.

The Mayor said when it was mentioned to him that he might be asked to unveil the memorial to the members of the swimming club who had made the great sacrifice, he felt that it was the most important duty that had devolved upon him during his term of office and, although he considered it a great compliment, it was with mixed feelings that he accepted the position. Mixed feelings in so much as when he remembered many of the boys to whose memory the memorial was erected, were nursed by him, it gave him such a severe test to perform such a duty as to unveil such a monument which was erected in their honour by their friends. In unveiling the memorial they did not want them to tell them how they regretted the passing away of the men who gave their services for their King and Country. They died in order that they might live and enjoy the beautiful surroundings which they were then enjoying. After they had made the supreme sacrifice the least they could do was to honour their memory. He then unveiled the memorial.

The Rev. Q.H. Wethered, M.A. Vicar of Boldmere, said because he happened to be the Vice-president of the Swimming Club he had the honour of voicing their intentions to dedicate the memorial to those members who had fallen in the great war. The memorial he considered a most suitable one to those whom they were commemorating. It would be of great service to children who took their holidays in the park, and would remind them of those who had fought for their happiness and freedom, for which the men had given their lives, and perhaps when the children came to use the fountain they would remember those men who had given their freedom and happiness. He then dedicated the memorial and read the names of those who had fallen.

County-councillor Beach then asked Alderman Emery, the chairman of the Parks and Estates Committee of the Town Council, to accept the memorial on behalf of the town. And in doing so said he regretted the accident that had befallen Mr. Joe Le Tellier, the late honoured secretary of the club, who was solely instrumental in the erection of the memorial. To him was due the inception of the fountain, for when they made up their minds to erect the memorial he suggested they should have something erected not only ornamental but for the use of the children who entered the park, and was sure they would be pleased with

the opportunity of drinking from the fountain.

Alderman Emery said he had attended not only with pleasure but also with sorrow. Sorrow for those brave men who had fallen, and sorrow or those they had left behind to deplore their fate. Those who had paid the supreme sacrifice had done their duty not only to Boldmere but to England. It was a pleasure for him to know that the Boldmere Swimming Club appreciated the services of their fallen members, and the monument which they now presented to the Corporation, the Park Committee would take great care of. It was a great honour to him to be asked to accept it on behalf of the royal town, and he assured them the Council would look well after it.

The Last Post was sounded by the Assistant Scout Master Varley, and after two minutes silent prayer the sounding of Reveille concluded one of the most affecting ceremonies ever held in the park. The Mayoress, at the close, walked to the base of the monument and placed a beautiful wreath of coloured chrysanthemums. This was followed by several of the relatives of the fallen placing wreaths and bunches of flowers at the foot.

The inscription on the monument was as follows:-

**"Erected by the Boldmere Swimming Club and friends to the memory of the members of the Club who made the great sacrifice for their King and Country in the terrible war 1914-1918 : H. Allen, M.D. Angell, S. Bailey, A. Baker, W. Brassington, R. Bratt, L. Bromwich, N. Chamberlane, H. Couch, B. Delattre, P. Edge, H. Floweres, W.E. Harman, H. Milner, A.E. Perks, D.V. Perett, R. Pinfold, R. J. Twiltum, O. Warmngton, and H. Woodward."**