NORLEY WILDFLOWER MEMORIAL WALK

In honoured and grateful memory

Months of hard work as well as disappointment have finally paid off for Norley Wildlife Group (NWG) as the Wildflower Memorial Walk is at last in place.

Phil Gifford the NWG Chair and Walk coordinator said” It’s been 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration. We had applied for funding from Grow Wild based at Kew Gardens but tantalisingly just missed out. Fortunately Norley folk, the Parish council and local businesses all came to our rescue, and rather like the Seventh Cavalry Grow Wild decided to adopt us anyway and will pay for a consultant.

In order to properly celebrate the walk and give thanks there is to be an Inaugural Service at 6.30 pm on Sunday 7th June at the Norley Methodist Church, Maddocks Hill, WA6 8JT. Graham Evans MP who has supported the walk from its inception will be there together with his family and will give a reading. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The basic idea is a simple one, to place memorial plaques of the men who fell in the Great War surrounded by wildflowers, poppies in remembrance but other flowers with which they would have been familiar when they walked round the village. Very few now know anything about these men, so the walk is intended to take these names and put them back into the community where they in the words of Lt Col McCrae in his poem “In Flanders Fields “.....lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow loved and were loved.....there are three graves in St John the Evangelist’s churchyard where the walk starts. A further 11 memorial plaques are sited around the village, often close to where the men lived. NWG has arranged a walk around Norley, passing all the plaques each of which has a single poppy representing the one life as did those 888,246 at the Tower of London “Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red” One of the plaques (see illustration) is for Samuel Sanders aged 40, Cheshire Regiment, died 18th September 1918.In a tough disease ridden campaign in Doiran, Macedonia, only 61 officers out of his battalion of over 1000 survived. He died at Jackson’s Ravine. His name is recorded on the Doiran Memorial with no known grave, the other men’s stories some really boys, are equally sad. So the walk may well provoke some profound thoughts indeed it would be strange if it didn’t, nonetheless NWG hopes that it will be not only memorable but an enjoyable one too. The June edition of the Norley News will have a pullout guide and a map of the walk. It is expected that this will be made available on line, through Grow Wild and CWAC.

Phil Gifford went on to say “The map is quite stunningly beautiful with drawings of wildflowers and framed by Edward Thomas's poem "In Memoriam" (Easter 1915) which poignantly encapsulates the Memorial walk perhaps even more than McCrae's "In Flanders fields".

The flowers left thick at nightfall in the wood
This Eastertide call into mind the men,
Now far from home, who, with their sweethearts, should
Have gathered them and will do never again.
The only caution is to say that anyone visiting Norley expecting to see swathes of wildflowers will be disappointed. It is a work in progress, whilst some places will have flowers including poppies others have only been sown recently so it’ll be some weeks before they are up and running. But that is part of the fun watching how things develop and then spotting the different insects, bees and butterflies as they at last find something to visit. NWG are here for the long haul the walk is intended to last until at least 2019 when it may develop into a walk commemorating the four WWII men who died. We are confident that Norley will continue to help, and we will have a WW1 poetry recital soon to raise funds. We’ll need more seed for autumn sowings as well as a banner and an information board at the Walk’s start at our parish church St John the Evangelist. The lack of our own website too is proving frustrating. It is very gratifying though that Grow Wild has adopted us so we can now use their expertise and professionalism, and it encourages us to apply for funds again in this year’s competition. It is fitting too that Richard Scott of Landlife at the National Wildflower Centre, Knowsley who in a very real sense inspired our group to make the walk, is to act as our consultant.”

NOTES for EDITORS

Norley is a village close to Delamere Forest between Frodsham and Northwich about 12 miles from Chester.

**Norley Wildlife Group** was formed following its original inception as the biodiversity subgroup of the body formulating the Local plan. It is closely affiliated with the Cheshire Wildlife Trust and the Delamere Lost Mosses project.

Phil Gifford is the Chair of the Group and the Walk coordinator. For further information on the walk or if a guided tour of the walk is needed he can be contacted at ansellpgifford@gmail.com tel 01928787217 Mob 07846 585970

**GROW WILD** [https://www.growwilduk.com/](https://www.growwilduk.com/) is supported by the [Big Lottery Fund](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/british-lottery-trust) and led by [Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew](https://www.rbgkew.org.uk); Grow Wild inspires communities, friends, neighbours and individuals across the UK to come together to transform local spaces, by sowing, growing and enjoying native wild flowers. It believes that this simple act of creativity can turn spaces into beautiful, inspiring and colourful wildlife havens; encouraging people to care for and delight in the nature around them. Contact Vinny Ganley - England Partnership Manager v.ganley@kew.org 07917 265417 and Antonia Kanczula - Content Editor a.kanczula@kew.org

**Landlife** [http://www.wildflower.co.uk/](http://www.wildflower.co.uk/) tel: 0151 737 1819 or contact info@landlife.org.uk

Landlife works for a better environment by creating new opportunities for wildflowers and wildlife and encouraging people to enjoy them. “A Tale of Two Cities Liverpool and Manchester” was Landlife’s winning Grow Wild England Landmark Project. Grow Wild is creating four high profile flagship sites, one in each UK country, and voted for by the public. A Tale of Two Cities won the public vote in England in November 2014 against very strong and excellent competition. Richard Scott is its Director, rscott@landlife.org.uk
St John the Evangelist. Rev’d Peter Rugen 01928 787180. Church is locked outside times of Service but arrangements (Dr G Archer 01928 788911 or Alan Nield 01928 787087) can be made to gain access. There is a brass Great War memorial plaque in the church and other memorials such as for Corporal Fletcher and Captain Beazley and two stained glass windows, one to the fallen in the Great War and one to the memory of E. Beazley of Norley Bank. The car park is not locked and the two Servicemen’s graves are all accessed along the path from the car park at the north eastern end of the Church.

Norley Methodist Church Rev’d Sue Levitt 01829 741022 the church is on the route of the walk and has sown wildflower seeds too and plans to install two benches (good for weary walkers) are in place.