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In Business Update

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Cowbridge Athletic Club's war memorial gates are reopened

COWBRIDGE Athletic Club was the setting for a unique and moving occasion on September 29, when Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Cairns, MP for the Vale of Glamorgan, officially re-opened the newly-refurbished Fred Dunn Memorial Gates, at the club entrance off The Broad Shoard, Cowbridge.

The gate re-opening ceremony was the final act in a service of dedication for a memorial that honours former members of the club who have

died in war. An adjacent pedestrian gate has been augmented with a bronze memorial plaque listing those members who have lost their lives in conflict.

Funding for the work carried out on the gates was provided by The Heritage Lottery Fund, Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council, and club members' donations.

The gates were first hung in 1960 to mark the huge contribution made by cricketer, Fred Dunn, towards the revival of the club after the First World War.

Over the years, the elements had taken their toll on the gates but now they are fully restored. Today, the club

encompasses cricket, rugby, squash and tennis sections.

A large gathering of club members, friends and invited guests witnessed a moving commemorative event including Jeffrey Bird, president of the Cricket Club, Alun Cairns MP, Jane Hutt AM and the Mayor of Cowbridge with Llanblethian, Coun Sian Vaughan, accompanied by her consort, Mr Robert Vaughan.

Honouring the sport played by Fred Dunn, the game of cricket was represented by former president of Glamorgan County Cricket Club, David Morgan, along with Hugh Morris and Peter Hybart, chief executives of Glamorgan CCC

and Cricket Wales respectively.

It was particularly poignant that Mrs Judy Davies was able to attend, as her brother, Roy Watts, who lost his life in 1941, is among those named on the memorial plaque.

The club was also honoured that Mrs Clarke, mother of Tom, who died in Afghanistan in 2014, was able to attend.

Dr Andrew Hignell, historian and scorer at Glamorgan CCC, enthralled the audience with an illustrated talk on how the First World War had affected the county, its sports clubs and personalities.

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RIGHT:
The club
president,
Jeffrey
Bird,
with
Vale MP
Alun
Cairns
at the
memorial
gates.



Memorial gates are reopened

(CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 1)

Jeffrey Bird described how Fred Dunn had revived the cricket club after the First World War, despite losing his three brothers, Frank, Tom and Jack, along with team mates Albert Gibbs and Harold Moynan. The loss of former club members in the Second World War and Afghanistan were also referenced, including George Pratt, who died in Italy in 1944.

The gathering moved outside to the

club's main entrance, where Rev David Boulton, accompanied by Rev Heather Weddell and keyboard accompanist Sandra Williams, conducted a short service of dedication for the memorial gates.

The names inscribed on the plaque were read out with dignity by Cowbridge Athletic Club chairman, Lynn Thomas, followed by the laying of wreaths by representatives of the four sporting sections.

Fred Dunn Memorial Gates re-opened

Friday, 29th September 2017. A day that will live long in the memories of all who witnessed the dedication and re-opening of the newly-refurbished Fred Dunn Memorial Gates, sited at the main entrance to The Athletic Club in The Broad Shoard, Cowbridge.

Performed by the Secretary of State for Wales, the Rt Hon Alun Cairns, MP for the Vale of Glamorgan, the formal re-opening ceremony for the impressive pair of re-hung gates was the final act in a service of dedication for a memorial honouring former members of Cowbridge Cricket Club who have died in war. An adjacent pedestrian gate, which has also been refurbished, has been augmented with a bronze memorial plaque listing those club members who have lost their lives in conflict.

Funding for the work carried out on the gates was provided by The Heritage Lottery Fund, Cowbridge Town Council and club members' donations.

The gates were first hung in 1960 to mark the important contribution made by cricketer, Fred Dunn, towards the revival of the club after the First World War. Over the intervening years, the elements had taken their toll on the gates. Now, newly restored, they provide a fitting memorial to former members



The gathered assembly is addressed by the Rev'd David Boulton during the service of dedication.

of the Athletic Club which, today, encompasses cricket, rugby, squash and tennis sections.

A large gathering of club members and friends along with specially-invited guests witnessed the commemoration and formal re-opening of the gates.

The morning's proceedings began in the pavilion where club President, Jeffrey Bird, welcomed guests on behalf of the Athletic Club. In addition to Alun Cairns MP, the impressive gathering included the Mayor of Cowbridge, Cllr Sian Vaughan, accompanied by her consort, Mr Robert Vaughan, representing local civic bodies.

To honour the sport played with such distinction by Fred Dunn, the game of cricket was represented by former President of Glamorgan County Cricket Club David Morgan, accompanied by Hugh Morris and Peter Hybart, chief executives of Glamorgan CCC and Cricket Wales respectively.

It was particularly poignant that Mrs Judy Davies was able to attend as her brother, Roy Watts - who lost his life in 1941 - is among those named on the memorial plaque. The club was honoured also that Mrs Clarke, mother of Tom, who died in Afghanistan in 2014, was able to attend.



Club Chairman, Hugh Williams, lays a wreath in memory of former club members.



The Rt Hon Alun Cairns, MP for the Vale of Glamorgan, and Jeffrey Bird, President of Cowbridge Cricket Club, formally open the newly-refurbished Fred Dunn Memorial Gates.

Regrettably, Mrs Joyce Forster, sister of John Gwyn who died in Italy, was unable to travel from Cheltenham. However, the presence of children and staff from nearby primary school, Ysgol Iolo Morganwg, added greatly to the importance and meaning of the event.

Following Jeffrey Bird's welcome, Dr Andrew Hignell, historian and scorer at Glamorgan CCC, gave an exceptional illustrated talk on how the First World War had affected Glamorgan, its sports clubs and their members.

Jeffrey Bird then described how Fred Dunn had revived the cricket club after the First World War despite losing in the conflict his three brothers, Frank, Tom and Jack, along with team mates Albert Gibbs and Harold Moynan. The loss of former club members in the Second World War and in Afghanistan was also referred to including that of George Pratt, who died in Italy in 1944.

The gathering then moved outside to the club's main entrance where the Rev'd David Boulton, assisted by the Rev'd Heather Weddell and keyboard accompanist Sandra Williams, conducted a moving Service of Dedication for the refurbished Memorial Gates.

After the patriotic hymn 'I vow to thee my country' and the reciting of Henry Newbolt's poem 'Vitai Lampada' by former Cowbridge mayor, Peter Knapp, the names inscribed on the plaque were read out with great dignity by Lynn Thomas of Cowbridge & District Athletic Club.

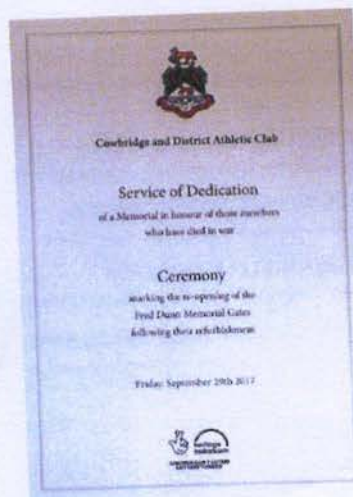


The Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP and Jeffrey Bird follow official opening of the newly-refurbished Fred Dunn Memorial Gates.

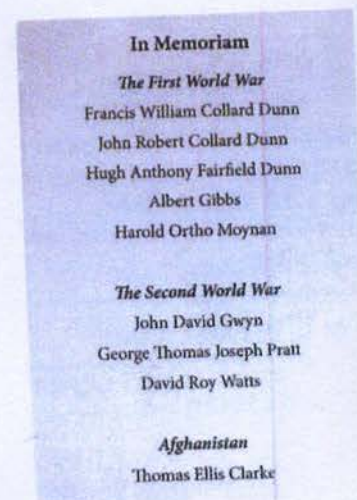
This was followed by the laying of wreaths representatives of the club's four sporting sections.

A short address by the Rt Hon Alun Cairns preceded the formal re-opening of the gate carried out jointly by Mr Cairns and Jeffrey Bird. A stirring rendition of Cwm Rhondc brought the proceedings to a fitting close.

Anyone passing by or through the entrance the ground is invited to stop and read the storyboard on the gates. The carefully-chosen words displayed there are designed to raise awareness and appreciation of the importance played by the Athletic Club, its present and sadly-departed former members within wider history of the town of Cowbridge and surrounding area.



The frontispiece for the order of service of dedication for the newly-refurbished Fred Dunn Memorial Gates, which honour former members of Cowbridge Athletic Club who have died in war.



The list of former club members who have lives in war. The names are engraved on a plaque attached to the pedestrian gate adjacent Fred Dunn Memorial Gates.



Ian Cran

unusual apparel and used unorthodox strokes."

The third bench commemorates the more contemporary figure of Ian Cran whose obituary is to be found on page 55 in this publication.

The fourth bench was donated by Mrs Judy Davies in memory of her late husband John. John Anthony Davies had come to Cowbridge in the early 1950s and was the Club's leading cricketer and indeed one of the very best playing club cricket during his career. 'JA' made a single appearance for Glamorgan against Worcestershire before deciding to follow a career in the Midland Bank rather than play cricket for a living. 'JA' captained the Club during fourteen seasons and also served as Treasurer before succeeding Colin Adams as President.



*John Davies
by brother Douglas*

The fifth new bench was given by Michael and Bill Clay and their families in memory of J C Clay. A man whose cricket career was as luminous as it was lengthy 'JC' played for Glamorgan between 1921 and 1949, took 1317 first class wickets and played one test for



J C Clay

England. In the period between admission to the status of being a First Class County to winning the County Championship in 1949 the County finances were parlous but JC alongside Maurice Turnbull and Wilf Wooller somehow kept it solvent. 'JC' played regularly for Cowbridge, becoming President in 1962 and he retained a strong interest in the Club until his death in 1973.

The sixth bench has been given by Lawrie and Charles Williams in memory of their father, L E W 'Tip' Williams.

Born in Bonvilston in 1900, 'Tip' was educated at the Oratory School and Oxford University. He bowled right arm fast medium and was a hard-hitting batsman. 'Tip' made four first-class appearances for Glamorgan but social cricket clearly held more appeal and he acted for long periods as Chairman of The South Wales Hunts Cricket Club and Chairman of Selectors at Cowbridge.



Tip Williams

Indeed, for many years he was the dominant figure of Cowbridge Cricket Club. He is pictured in the 1st XI in 1926 and was still playing in the early 1960s. In the interim, 'Tip' was Captain of the 1st XI for at least eleven seasons.

The contribution of 'Tip' Williams to Cowbridge Cricket Club was immense and he was remembered particularly for his garnering of support for First-Class cricket to come to the Athletic Ground. He was rightly made President on the passing of his old friend J C Clay but, sadly, 'Tip' passed away within the first year of his taking office in 1973.

His sons, Charles and Steve, both played for the Club and Lawrie acted as a Trustee of the Cowbridge and District Athletic Club. It is indeed fitting that one of our Club's most distinguished criceters should be remembered at our ground.

Funding for Billy's Bell and the six benches described in this article has been provided by sources outside the general running costs of the Club with friends, families and cricket lovers combining to make a start in improving the Club's general environment while providing lasting memorials to those who played significant roles in its history.

Anyone who would like to commemorate a former family member or friend in similar manner at the ground is invited to contact Jeffrey Bird on 01446 773386.

JRB