

A Long-Awaited Memorial

On the 28th of November 1915, a terrible accident happened on the Chesterfield Canal at Churchtown, Killamarsh and six young people tragically drowned.

The Canal, which was no longer used for traffic, had been frozen over for some days, and in certain parts large numbers of children were indulging in sliding and skating. There was an unusually large number of young people on the ice, and the numbers proved more than the ice could bear, when suddenly there was an alarming cracking sound. Before anyone had time to realise what was happening the six victims, who were close together, were plunged into the water, which was apparently nine feet deep.

The young people who lost their lives are Mary Elizabeth Watson (aged 6), Annie Sedgewick (aged 12), Mary Ann Ramskill (aged 18), Fred Northridge (aged 18), Harry Milner (aged 18) and Alice Read (aged 21). Miss Read was engaged to be married to Tom Northridge, brother of Fred Northridge, the Banns having been read out for the second time at the Church the same morning.

The tragedy cast a gloom over the village, and the War had to take second place as a general topic of conversation. It was reported in several national newspapers including the Telegraph, the Daily Mirror and the Scotsman.

For several years Killamarsh Heritage Society, representatives of St Giles Parish Church and Gary Daynes of Freeman Daynes Ltd have worked together to put in place a Memorial bearing the names of all the six young people who lost their lives that day.

We are pleased to announce that the stone will be dedicated by Revd Daniel Cooke on Saturday the 29th of November at 2.30 pm in St Giles Churchyard. We do hope everyone will come along to see the Memorial stone finally dedicated.

And come and join us afterwards across the road at The Crown, which has recently re-opened under new management, where you will be welcome to have a Cuppa on us. Or you may prefer a drink from the Bar.

We look forward to meeting you.

