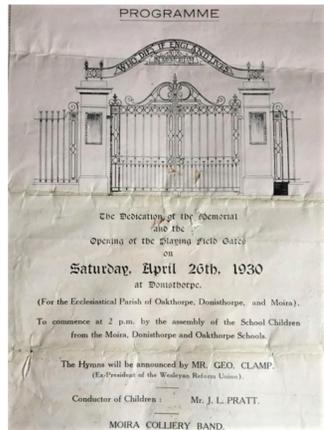


Hello Heritage...

Donisthorpe Memorial Grounds

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The memorial grounds were split into three levels with the top level including the memorial gates. It was well kept and had what was described as 'beautiful gardens'. The ground had a pitch and put course and a bandstand which was used for music and occasionally as a boxing ring.

There were also public toilets, a tennis court and a bowling green with a pavilion. The middle section of the grounds had a children's play area which consisted of swings, a slide, sand pit, see-saw and a paddling pool. There was also a drinking water fountain. The lower section of the grounds was a football field which was constructed by the miners during the 1926 miners' strike. The fence around the field was constructed using railway sleepers and steel haulage rope. The changing rooms with space for two teams and officials was in one corner of the lower level of the grounds. This building 'disappeared' during the second world war and the teams changed upstairs at the Halfway House.



Subsidence caused the bandstand to become unsafe and it was dismantled. The football pitch turned into a swamp. In later years the play equipment was moved to the field adjacent to Cockspur Row.

The war memorial is situated within the north wall of the memorial grounds on the boundary with Church Street. The gateway flanked with pillars was erected in 1922. The memorial grounds were initially a recreation ground opened on 17th April 1920 by the high sheriff of Leicestershire, Mr John Turner. The six-acre field had been acquired by public subscription at a cost of £450.

The following years saw the Donisthorpe War Memorial committee hold a series of local events to raise funds to develop the memorial. On 19th August 1922 the committee organised a Donisthorpe music festival and allotment holder's exhibition.



Each pillar displays the rank surname and initials of the brave souls lost during the two world wars from our community. The memorial gates were dedicated on Saturday 26th April 1930 and are Grade 2 listed. (List entry number 1453402)

The aftermath of the first world war saw the biggest single wave of public commemoration ever with tens of thousands of memorials erected across England. This was the result of both the impact on communities with the loss of three quarters of a million British lives, and also the official policy of not repatriating the dead. This meant the memorials provided the main focus of the grief felt at this great loss.

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