

Friends say goodbye to George

THE friends of Blackley Forest have said goodbye to one of their members by planting a tree in his memory.

George Baylis was a member and former treasurer of the community group and he died at the end of last year, aged 84.

To commemorate their friend the group held a remembrance ceremony and planted a walnut tree in the heart of the forest.

George's friends, neighbours and his widow Marlene were present at the ceremony and a plaque provided by Wellens Funeral Directors was placed at the foot of the tree.

Dot Keller, chairman of the Friends of Blackley Forest, said: "It is a measure of the respect and popularity that so many people should turn out on a Sunday afternoon.

George was a valued member of the group and until his illness was very active."

Despite the sadness at the loss of their friend the group entered and managed to win a special environmental award for the

forest section in the Britan in Bloom contest.

They entered as part of Blackley in Bloom and the judges were wowed by the areas natural beauty spot and how well the group had helped to improve and maintain it.

Dot and her fellow members attended a special presentation at Manchester town hall and were presented with their award by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Margaret Smitheman.

Dot said: "It is the culmination of all the hard work put in by the Friends group over the years and it is nice to receive this award on behalf of the group.

"The forest is getting a lot of recognition for the environmental and conservation work being put in.

"This is the fourth award we have won this year and it is a testament of how the group has enlarged and become more involved with the work that has been done.

"We are pleased to have won it in George's honour."



Dot Keller, chairman of the Friends of Blackley Forest (white top) and fellow members from the group receive their award from the Lord Mayor, Councillor Mavis Smitheman

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