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Avenue of Peace for Auchtertool

A tree-lined Avenue of Peace has been planted on the approach to Auchtertool Kirk.

The project, which involved planting 36 rowan saplings – 18 down each side of the road – commemorates the lives of 36 soldiers from the village who lost their lives in the two world wars – 33 in WWI and 3 in WWII.

It has been made possible thanks to generous donations from parishioners and the ExxonMobil and Shell plants at Mossmorran.

And, as well as the tree planting, which involved many members of the local community, the village's school pupils played a major part, carrying out research into the lives of the soldiers and what they did before going to war.



A service of dedication, in which the youngsters decorated a tree with handprint leaves including their wishes for peace, was held at Auchtertool Kirk on Friday (Sep 30) to mark the successful completion of the project.

It was attended by many of those involved, including the youngsters, their teachers and members of the congregation.

"This project has been a long time in the making as it was interrupted by Covid and other factors, but we are delighted to see it completed," explained Simon Forrest, an Elder with Auchtertool Kirk.

"The Avenue of Peace was designed to mark the lives of the Auchtertool men who lost their lives in battle, but it is also particularly poignant given the current events in Ukraine.

"Rowan saplings were chosen because they are a hardy species, native to Scotland, and traditionally Scots planted one in their garden to ward off evil spirits and bring peace to the home. They are also particularly wind resistant, which is necessary in our climate.

"As well as the planting of the trees, the children have a project to learn about these soldiers who lived ordinary lives in our village before going off to war, and the project has been teaching us many lessons.

"We couldn't have done it without the generosity of ExxonMobil and Shell and we want to thank them very much."

Lesley Brady, Acting Headteacher at Auchtertool Primary, explained: "We have some Ukrainian children learning with us in school and our focus on peace is one of the ways where we can show some of our school values – being respectful of the past and showing compassion for those at war in the present.

"It will soon be Remembrance Day and we hope to walk the Avenue of Peace and, in school, display our research on those who lost their lives."

Martin Burrell, Plant Manager at Fife Ethylene Plant, said: "When we were approached about this project we thought it would be a very worthwhile thing to be involved in and we are delighted to see the Avenue of Peace completed. We hope it will continue to grow and flourish."

