



Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery

Issue No.2

24th April 2007

Newsletter

At the First AGM on 4th April, the Friends put themselves onto a formal footing by adopting a constitution and electing their new committee. They heard progress reports by all the project leaders.

The constitution will shortly be posted on our website or can be obtained from the Secretary. Its most important section is our three aims:

- to further the protection, conservation and sympathetic enhancement of Woodbury Park Cemetery for public benefit and enjoyment;
- to record and foster its heritage of monuments and its ecological importance; and
- to foster its appropriate use as an educational resource for the community.

We have planned an interesting programme for all tastes. Do please get directly involved with one of our projects or offer to develop some fundraising activities in support of our aims. And persuade your friends to join as well.

Committee 2007–08

Chair	Mrs Lorna Blackmore
Vice Chair	Miss Angela Phillips
Secretary	Mrs June Bridgeman
Treasurer	Cllr David Wakefield
Membership Secretary	Miss Pat Mathewick
Committee Members	Mr David Bushell Mr Michael Clegg Mrs Sue Fitzwater Mrs Lisa de Garston Mr Brian Kempster Mr Richard Still Miss Angela Swain

Wild life in Woodbury Park Cemetery



Close encounter with a *porpidia tuberculosa*

Our guided nature walks got off to a flying start with Keith Palmer's tour of lichens on 21st April. Magnifying glasses were a must for some of the thirty species of tiny beautiful lichens growing on tombstones, walls and trees in the cemetery. A "lichen walk" booklet is in hand so you can make your own inspection.

More aspects of the cemetery's flora and fauna will be looked at during the walks arranged for the summer. Note we have a new date to add. On 19th October, Dr Ian Beavis will give us an overview in a talk "Natural history of Woodbury Park Cemetery".

An environmental management plan is being built up from all the surveys being carried out. If you would like to help with this, contact Brian Kempster (01892 618347).

Our current long-term notion is to foster and develop the "arboretum" features of the cemetery. Let us know what you think about that and any choice item that might be planted. Your editor fancies a "tree of heaven" (alas too invasive) surrounded by some archangel plants.

Exhibition material

An impressive collection of early documents about the cemetery displayed at the AGM included Queen Victoria's Order in Council from Balmoral requiring the burial vaults to be tightly sealed. Another interesting new item was Brian Kempster's pictures of flower carvings on the tombstones, often conveying a message from the Victorian "language of flowers" – lily of the valley, acanthus, roses, ferns, ivy. The sickle below the roses on this carving signifies a woman cut off in the prime of life.



More contributions of interesting display material as well as relevant documents and pictures for our archives would be most welcome.

Historical work

History enthusiasts are seeking to find out more about the people recorded on the 644 memorials and information is trickling in. However an even bigger task lies ahead. The burials list shows that there are in fact over 6,200 people buried in the graveyard, most of their resting places anonymous under the grass and trees. If you would like to help find out who they were, contact Michael Clegg (01892 525753) who will suggest what to look out for and where it might be. You don't need expertise – just enthusiasm and patience. The expertise follows!

Action Days

Work parties have so far spent three afternoons removing saplings rooted into monuments. Brambles have been another target, but there will be a lull on clearing them for the next few months to preserve nesting and butterfly habitats. If you are interested in joining a work group and have stout gloves and pruners, contact Angela Swain 01892 541881

Events

Put the dates below in your diary now. Some of the work of the Tattershall Dodd brothers, who are buried in the cemetery, will be on display at the museum in September. It portrays our local landscape of hills, trees and buildings at a time of rapid change in the town.

Sat. 5th May: Dawn Chorus (Keith Palmer). Meet 5 am, WPC gate. **Very quiet please, not to disturb neighbours – and birds.**

Thu. 14th June: *Guided Civic Society WPC walk (Dr Philip Whitbourn)*. Meet 7.45pm, WPC Gate.

Sat. 16th June: Family fun day nature walks and mini-beast safari (Dr Ian Beavis). Children 6 years and upwards welcome, if accompanied by an adult. Bring bug boxes if you can. Meet 10 am and 2.30 pm, WPC gate.

Fri. 13th July: Moth trapping (Keith Palmer). Meet 9 pm, WPC gate.

6–9th Sept.: *Civic Society Heritage Walks*.

Wed 26th Sept.: "Parallel lives", lecture on *Tattershall Dodd brothers (Dr Philip Whitbourn)*. Museum at 7.45 for 8.00.

Sun. 30th Sept: Leaf miners (Keith Palmer). Meet 2.30 pm, WPC gate.

Fri. 19th Oct.: "Natural History of Woodbury Park Cemetery", Public lecture (Dr Ian Beavis). 7.30pm, Town Hall.

fwpc.org.uk

Lots of interesting facts and pictures appear on our new website. Do take a look at it. We are most grateful to Burslem Stonemasons for sponsoring this for the next two years. Give us your views about what else you would like to see there.

Further thoughts on the contents of future newsletters please to the Editor, 01892 525578, jbman@btinternet.com.