



NEWSLETTER 2009

YEALMPTON WOODLAND BURIAL ASSOCIATION

CONTINUED GROWTH

In the last newsletter we reported rapid growth of membership. In the ten month period to 31st January 2009, a further 50 members have joined the Association, so our growth continues.

Green Burials are on the increase. The growing awareness of the environmental advantages is reflected in enquiries we receive through our website and funeral directors. Woodland Burial sites are being established across the country.

Our treasurer confirms that there will be a surplus for the year ending 31st March 2009, some of which will be placed on deposit.



"We keep a watchful eye on prices elsewhere"

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

One of our aims in setting up the Woodland Burial Association was to keep costs as low as possible. We have had to raise our membership subscriptions twice since we started but, because we want to keep our subscriptions to a minimum, we keep a watchful eye on prices elsewhere. Our prices compare favourably with the cost of burial.

Much of our work is done by volunteers. This and the fact that we are a 'not for profit' organisation, will enable us to maintain our present prices for another year, so the committee has decided not to increase subscription rates for 2009.



SITE MANAGEMENT

As planned, we have improved the turning circle. It is more defined and contained at the perimeter with a low metal surround which will ensure that the circle does not 'spread' in the future. The grass has taken well in the new topsoil and provides a verdant background to the central fallen oak feature.

Almost a hundred additional trees have been planted this year, mostly on our annual tree planting day in December. We had a bumper turnout for that event and for once the weather was kind to us. The yurt was installed as usual and was used for refreshments this time, rather than for shelter.

The burial groves are extending down the side of the field and we may need to think about extending the present track to give easy access.

"We had a bumper turnout . . . for once the weather was kind to us"



May 2008



November 2008



DATA PROTECTION

When the Association began, we did not expect to have to deal with issues of data protection. However, many people now use the internet to check registers for information on relatives, when they are doing research to build up information on their extended families. We have about one enquiry a month from people asking whether a relative has been buried at Lower Heddon. So far, none of the names we have been given matches those of people buried here. If we did get an enquiry about someone whose name matches that of a deceased member of our Association, we would make contact with that members' representative and ask them how they wished to proceed.

Local Authorities, and others who manage large cemeteries and crematoria, have many such enquiries every day. For them it has become quite an administrative burden. The government requires Local Authorities to make their records available to the general public under the 'open government' initiative. The majority of historical burial records in the UK are still in paper form. Several firms are now offering to get registers scanned, indexed and stored on computer. This could provide a central database of statutory burial and cremation registers for the UK for family history researchers and professional genealogists. At the moment, a researcher has to approach about 3,000 burial authorities and nearly 250 crematoria as no official central repository of information exists.

We have been approached by two firms to take our information and make it available on the central database. The Data Protection Act does not cover information on people who are dead, but the central repository would restrict information provided to a researcher. For instance they would not release the address of a deceased person if the burial occurred in the last 15 years, to protect people living at the same address who may be bothered by people trying to sell to the bereaved, or others with an axe to grind against families. Nonetheless, the YWBA Committee has decided that the number of enquiries is not yet sufficiently time-consuming to require the services.

"the number of database enquires is not yet sufficiently time-consuming"

YEALMPTON SHOW 2008

Once again we were delighted with our decision to have a stand at the Yealmpton Show held at the Kitley Show Ground in July. Much interest was generated and we will be attending again this coming year. An annual event, the Yealmpton Show is on the last Wednesday in July. Do come and say hello.

Chairman Linda Durman with grand-daughter Ella



NATURE NOTES

Often seen along the woodland edges and areas of scrub, the flexibility of the Roe Deer means it has become the most numerous deer species in Europe. Roe Deer feed on a variety of twigs, bark grasses and bushes, hence our need for the tree shelters, and is the smallest native deer.



Roe Deer

Although many of the wildlife and flowers that appear at the Ground are welcome, Common Ragwort is not. Considered an injurious weed specified under the 1959 Weeds Act it contains alkaloids that are toxic to many animals, including deer, causing a slow death from liver poisoning. Every effort is made to remove these weeds from our Ground and the committee is grateful for any assistance from members who can either dig out or hand-pull any that are seen.



Common Ragwort



*Barn Owl—also known as
Scritch Owl*

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.WOODLAND
BURIAL.ORG.UK

On a lighter note, among the birds of prey spotted, including buzzards and sparrow hawks, has been the Barn Owl. They are found in open woodland. They specialize in hunting on small ground mammals such as voles and mice using low perches such as fence posts to seek quarry.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Burial in our woodland ground could be cheaper than cremation. Charges are increasing each year at Crematoria in Plymouth and the South Hams and add to this the other associated costs and our subscription starts to look very competitive. Anyone with a concern for the environment can choose woodland burial, a more sustainable option, and save money.

NOTICE AND AGENDA FOR THE AGM 30TH APRIL 2009 AT YEALMPTON COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 7PM

1. Minutes of AGM 2008
2. Honorary Chairman's Report
3. Honorary Treasurer's Report
4. Resignation and Re-appointment of Honorary Officers
5. Next year's AGM 29th April 2010, same venue at 7pm

We are still awaiting the standard Government Document from the Charities Commission to proceed with Charitable Status approved at the 2008 AGM.