



WESTMILL WOODLAND BURIAL GROUND CIC

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Winter newsletter 2017

Welcome to our new office!

The new office is gorgeous. We have a beautiful apple tree right outside the door, a comfy sofa, the essential kettle and lots of really useful resources for you to browse or take away with you and we have rescued another of the lovely old farm buildings that no longer served for agricultural use and breathed new life into it.

It is far more convenient for all our helpers and families and we like being part of the busy Westmill farmyard where Adam stores his silage and other crops and lots of people and animals come and go. Our neighbours include a group of young cattle, Westmill Forestry run by Guy Newton, Root

& Branch, the fantastic horticultural therapy project, Barletts memorial masons and Westmill organics run by Pete Richardson. So now you can go home with a bag of delicious home grown organic veg from his stall when you come to see us and we will always have a few jars of Chris Park's wonderful raw honey for sale

too made from bees foraging around the farm. Watch out for Open Days at Root & Branch where you can pick up wonderful crafts, plants and food and contribute to an excellent and much needed local service. www.rootandbranch.info

Our new office address is Westmill Farm, Swindon SN6 8TH Tel: 01367 700615

Help with the grieving journey

Grief is a totally natural process and unfolds in each one of us uniquely whilst also sharing many characteristics with the experiences of others. Many of us find we need some help along the way not least because our culture is not very helpful and people can be awkward around us thus making the whole process more painful than it has to be.

We will be holding a Death Café at the Westmill office run by Rose-Anne O'Hare who is a bereavement councillor based in Shrivenham and who ran a course in Faringdon with Liz several years ago on preparing for end of life. She has hosted numerous Death Cafes locally. This will be followed by a 6 week course on bereavement if we have enough people interested. There

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will be no charge for any of these events. Rose-Anne worked for years with people living with dementia, as a life coach and has been a helper at the burial ground for a long time. Contact us if you are interested.

Sue Holden is a celebrant and has been running Death Cafes in Swindon. She is offering courses there in the Grief Recovery Method. Here she explains a little about it.

There are 40 plus other types of loss that induce grief apart from bereavement and very often there are multiple losses with one event.

We work around the 6 myths of loss: -

- Don't feel sad*
- Replace the loss*
- Grieve alone*
- Time is a healer*
- Be strong*
- Keep busy*

and look at things to say and not to say like

'I know how you feel'. This helps to identify where some of the pain comes from.

Above all, people will be reassured that whatever they are feeling is OK, normal and a natural reaction to grief and nobody can tell them otherwise or set a time limit on 'getting over it'. You just learn to manage grief and get through it until you re-discover what it is that it is your nature to be so that you need not be in conflict with it anymore.

Sue Holden 01793 978617

The Good Grief Project offers another very creative and innovative look at how to keep the relationship alive with someone even after they have died. Set up by Sue and Jimmy whose son, Joshua, was killed in a car accident on his gap year they have used their professional skills as a therapist and photographer/filmmaker to transform their own and other people's experiences.

www.thegoodgriefproject.co.uk

How to manage internet legacies when someone dies

I blogged recently about an interview with a mother who was blocked from her daughter's facebook account after she died despite her daughter's explicit wishes to give her access.

She discovered the simple steps you can take to prevent this happening to you. Some people want all facebook activity to cease, others take huge comfort from it remaining active. If you follow these steps you can decide what



needs to happen and not find yourself, as she did, unable to access precious

photographs and other posts which felt like a second bereavement. The way to do this is at the top right of your facebook page. There is a small triangle/down arrow. Click on this and select 'Settings'. From there select 'Legacy Contact'. You can now choose the person who in effect becomes your facebook executor.

Good Funeral Award



In September Liz was very honoured to receive the Good Funeral Award for the Most Significant Contribution to the Understanding of death.

This was in recognition both of her work as a celebrant and at Westmill but also because of her contribution through the 'Kicking the Festival Bucket' in Oxford which has happened three times and is due to come round again in 2019 and for work with people with learning disabilities and young people about death and her current solo show called 'Outside the Box - A Live Show

about Death' which she continues to perform around the country and abroad when not doing the day job. She shares the award with Lucy from the excellent Individual Funeral Company in Oxford so our region was rather well represented!

Assisted Dying

We know that this subject is a very contentious one. It is not our role to advocate either way but to respect each person's right to make their own choices. We know it is difficult to speak to anyone with experience of supporting someone through this process. A friend of ours went to Dignitas in Switzerland with her sister and is willing to speak with anyone wanting to know more. Contact us and we will put you in touch with her.

Boxing Clever

Jacqui Collins, one of our Friends and Family group members has been talking to me for some time about her birdboxes and finally we have organised a session for the morning of our June Open Day. It is open to all ages with members of their family or older friends to support them and at the end of the morning you will go home with a birdbox and/or birdfeeder.



Colin Crook and Jacqui, who will run the session, met as volunteer rangers at Coate Water and that is where they made their first birdboxes. 19 years and 700 boxes later they have just received the 'Pride of Swindon Award' for their contribution to conservation

in the Borough and a plaque in their honour will be going up in the library. They have been into 50 schools leaving each of them with a box for blue tits and a larger one for great tits and nuthatches. Some have been adopted by bats and others by insects. They have 13 sites in parks around the Borough and Westmill will join the

Crematorium and Whitworth Road in gaining a birdbox at a burial ground.

Don't miss this chance to have a bit of fun and learn more about wildlife. Ideal for bringing your children and grandchildren along. Bring a picnic to have when you finish. We will be under cover if the weather is unkind.

Friends and Family Group

by David Birley



The Friends and Family Group comprise anyone with relatives buried in Westmill Woodland Burial site, people with pre-bookings and a few volunteers who are involved with project.

We aim to provide support to the CIC, run by Adam and Liz who own and steward the land, offer suggestions and understand more about the day to day running of the CIC. It brings us closer to one another too since we meet at events and many of us share the experience of being bereaved and we can feel comfortable talking about that.

At the AGM in November we discussed the accounts, heard reports from the CIC Directors and Rebecca Brain who manages the site and Jan Power the new Manager introduced herself to us. We discussed the idea of printing some cards for the sale at events and visited the new office. Ideas for discussion are always welcome. The FFG Committee will be meeting in January and we would love to hear from you. Emails can be sent to the office for our attention.

info@woodlandburialwestmill.co.uk.

Dates for the diary

2nd FEBRUARY - DEATH CAFÉ
4-5.30 at the burial ground office. Tea and refreshments provided. You need to book.

16th JUNE - OPEN DAY
11-1 Birdboxbuilding - £6 per birdbox, £1 for a birdfeeder. Children should be old enough to use a hammer with supervision.

Open Day - 2-5 Tour of burial ground and refreshments.
Talk on Green burial by Liz at 3.

MEMORIAL GATHERING
SEPTEMBER 29th

FRIENDS AND FAMILY DAY
17th NOVEMBER 11-4

Seasonal greetings

I know how hard this time can be for many of us. I find this lovely poem which a friend recently reminded me of enormously comforting in reminding me that darkness and dark times can also, in unexpected ways, bring us gifts.

To Know the Dark

To go in the dark with a light is to know the light.

*To know the dark, go dark. Go without sight,
and find that the dark, too, blooms and sings,
and is travelled by dark feet and dark wings.*

Wendell Berry