



WESTMILL WOODLAND BURIAL GROUND CIC

## NEWSLETTER

### *Welcome to the Summer newsletter 2018*

The wild roses are a picture this year and the cowslips have really started to establish themselves in one section of the burial ground and were a peachy smelling, uplifting sight recently. Come and see them next spring when they will be even more plentiful and a big thank you to all of you who chose to plant them and so got this wonderful native plant properly re-introduced here. And now the moon daisies are in full swing and if you are lucky you will spot one of our gorgeous bee orchids.

Our memorial circle has now almost completed its first spiral and is looking lovely. We have also got some tablets placed here by people who want a place to come and remember even though the person referred to is not actually buried with us. This feels very special. Our funerals continue to be wonderfully varied in so

many ways. It can be just a handful of people up here for less than an hour or over a hundred staying for the whole afternoon and sharing music and a picnic. It can involve the priest or celebrant and our excellent local funeral directors or it can be entirely DIY with our support. The choice is yours. The gates are open all the time so come up whenever you feel like it for a walk, to watch the

birds, have a quiet think or to visit a grave. The larks can be regularly heard here at this time of year and the kites often soar overhead. Later on the goldfinches will come and feast on the seedheads of the teasels. There is always something to see and our resident robins like to greet people at the gate.



### A special opportunity at Westmill

*We are very lucky to have the workshop described on the following page at Westmill.*



*It will be held on Wednesday 21st November 10-12.30 at Root and Branch SN68TH just next door to our office. Places are limited so book early to avoid disappointment.*

*The workshop is a fresh look at listening and support led by the inspiring Mandy Preece.*

*Explore what it means to truly listen...*

*Continued next page*

## A FRESH LOOK AT LISTENING AND SUPPORT

*Have you ever wanted to know how to respond when someone is sad, angry or frustrated? Or how to really listen when someone needs your support? How to enable people to feel heard, seen and witnessed? Welcome to Being Rock!*

*Being Rock is a fresh look at how to enable people to feel heard and supported.*



*Join Mandy for a profound, practical and inspiring exploration of what it truly means to be a Rock for someone. Come and explore what it means to truly listen:*

- *The importance of presence and silence*
- *Observing body language and how people talk when they really need to share*
- *A fresh look at listening skills and the essentials to support people to unburden*
- *How to use empathy effectively*
- *What hinders our ability to support someone*

*Mandy Preece is a skills tutor, soul midwife (holistic end of life companion), motivational speaker and ambassador for Macmillan Caring Locally. Based on her volunteer training (for which Mandy was a*

*recipient of the Princess Royal Training Awards), Being Rock is a wonderful exploration of what it means to listen.*

*“Thank you for sharing your knowledge and wisdom and for giving me the confidence to make someone’s world a better place.”*  
*(Macmillan Caring Locally volunteer)*

*“Thank you Mandy for sharing the power of Being Rock. This is an amazing life skill that I will continue to practice. I feel sure that this fantastic workshop will benefit so many. Wonderful.”* (Claire Ball, Soul Midwife)

[www.beingrock.org](http://www.beingrock.org)

**Being ROCK**   
*so people feel heard*

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## Precious advice on Grieving

By Penny Bassett

*A while ago I went to Blackwells Bookshop to hear Cathy Rentzenbrink talk about her new book ‘A Manual for Heartache’. Her first, ‘The Last Act of Love’ was an outpouring of her feelings about her darling brother, who at the age of 16, (she was 17) was in an*

*accident and kept alive for eight years. She talked about that long journey and people kept asking her how she had coped. This led to her second book.*

*My husband died in January 2017 and is buried at Westmill. I found Cathy’s words extremely helpful and comforting. She talks*

*about the blunders people make when they don't know what to say or how to be with us. She shares the advice she would have given her 20 year old self and I particularly like her "Instructions to my Future Self." Cathy's words are as much for a person*



*supporting someone with heartache, as they are for someone coping on their own. In fact have bought several copies so I have them on hand to give others. It was a moving occasion to hear Cathy speaking with such pride about this beautiful book.*



## Woodland burial

*by Averil Stedeford*

*My body,  
host to mind and soul for eighty years  
became unserviceable.  
It clung to me through frailty and pain,  
till it could let me go.*

*Now buried in a high field  
where wild flowers bloom and rabbits run.*

*Around it and within, microbes divide and thrive.  
In my bones, tree rootlets worm their way  
into the foramina, anchor themselves.  
Above, the saplings take their time  
to grow and mess into a wood  
which will offer peaceful shade  
when those who sang at my burial have gone.*

*In nearby fields, turbines turn,  
panels soak up sunlight.  
This is a farm where  
Nature lets her power be harvested.  
This is earth life in all its vigour.  
My body offers itself to this place  
but I am not there.*

*(Foramen: a hole through which blood vessels or nerves pass)*

*Averil was a GP and later trained as a psychiatrist before working for twelve years as a teacher and clinician in her local hospice. Always concerned about the environment, she and her husband bought the first petrol-electric (hybrid) car on the road in Oxon. After he died she sold their four bedroom detached house and bought a rather run down semi. She made it as green as possible in every respect, achieving a 60% reduction in carbon emissions. This gained her an Observer Ethical Award and three appearances on television, including Songs of Praise. Recently she has written a book of poems about how she and her husband coped with his terminal cancer and about her journey through bereavement.*

*(The Long Way Down ISBN 978-1-912078-68-4)*

# Dates for the diary

## WESTMILL MEMORIAL GATHERING

**Saturday 29th September**

This event is open to anyone wishing to come and spend time in a peaceful, beautiful place remembering someone who has died.

5.00 Refreshments and simple lantern making. A chance to get creative, make something to take home and meet others.

6.00-7.00 Ceremony led by Liz Rothschild. We welcome suggestions for readings or you reading them yourself and are happy to read out the names of anyone you want remembered if you cannot attend to speak them yourself.

## WESTMILL WOODLAND

### FAMILY & FRIENDS DAY & AGM

**Saturday 17th November**

11-1 Work morning. Planting trees, general repairs. Bring warm clothes, gloves and wellies.

1-2 Light lunch served by FFG members.

Please tell us if you want lunch so we have enough! Suggested donation of £3.50.

2-3 AGM of the Community Interest Company. Find out what we do, meet the Family and Friends Committee, ask questions, make suggestions.

You are welcome to attend for just part of the day or all of it as suits you. A good chance to meet others and spend time outside at the burial ground.

## WEDNESDAY 21ST NOVEMBER

10-12.30 **BEING ROCK WORKSHOP** at Root & Branch SN68TH (just up from our office) £10 or £5 for FFG committee and funeral helpers and staff.

*The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen, nor touched, but are felt in the heart.*

*Helen Keller*

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All articles written and edited by Liz Rothschild unless otherwise stated.  
Pictures by Jan Power, Liz Rothschild, Kevin Rolph