

WESTMILL WOODLAND BURIAL GROUND CIC

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Summer newsletter 2019

Open Afternoon Saturday 15th June 2-5pm

The usual invitation to come and enjoy a cup of tea and a lovely piece of cake in the sunshine (we hope - so far we have been lucky).

There will be lots of free information to pick up, guided tours around Westmill by members of our staff and Friends and Family group. There is a talk by Liz on green burial at 3.00pm and then a talk on birds from a member of the small team of keen local ornithologists who have been working on the farm to record the different species visiting us including the lovely corn bunting (pictured). There will also be the chance to buy some of Chris Parks' delicious honey made near the burial ground and visit his traditional hive.



Skylarks' nest

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter

If you do not regularly receive our newsletter and would like to, contact us at info@westmillwoodlandburialground.co.uk

of our Friends and Family group. The theme of this newsletter is nature and

The newsletter comes out twice a year and can be emailed to you. We try to keep our postage costs to a minimum. It provides news about Westmill and helpful and inspiring articles about nature, death, dying and bereavement often contributed by members

trees in one form of another as you will see when you look inside.

If you would like to keep more regularly in touch there is a monthly blog on our website www.woodlandburialwestmill.co.uk



Rejecting Eternal Youth

There's a lot to be said for a tree that stands still and firm, providing cool shade, safe haven, place to play, filter for the light, a view over the busy world below.

As a healthy eighty year old I find other things to do than joining today's endless activity, competition, frantic grabbing for the new.

"I expect you're busy," people say as if I, or the world, would otherwise collapse or as if joyful inactivity was a sin.

"No", I reply. "I don't do hurry."

I'm not idle but I have plenty of space to watch the sun rise, thoughtfully prepare food, listen to music - whatever turns up.

I happily cede to the young the opportunity to be busy: I've had my youth and enjoyed it; now it's their turn and it's not for me to encroach on that. I'm here to look, listen, admire, appreciate, support them if necessary. As a thoughtful army officer in a garrison town once put it. "We have a serious shortage in our personnel here - grandmas."

I choose this path of my own free will rather than waiting to have it forced on my by incapacity. Thus I can enjoy being myself in a different way as well, perhaps, as play a useful role, like the tree.

Lynda Farrington

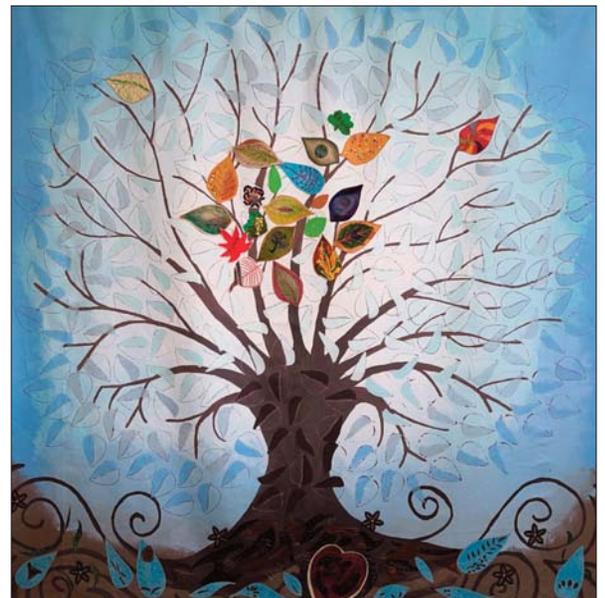
Our Memory Tree

When we moved into our lovely little office we were delighted to finally have a permanent place to hang the beautiful memorial tree hanging that textile artist Clare Davis, from Abingdon, made for us a few years ago

Recently, someone came to see us and was admiring it and it reminded me of an idea I recently had about it. We planned to fill every leaf with one made by friends or family members in memory of someone at Westmill and the £3 for the leaf template was donated to Treehouse, the Wiltshire children's bereavement charity, I helped to set up and was chair of for several years.

In reality only a few leaves have been completed as you can see and this by no means reflects the number of people we now have with us which is around 200.

So we thought we would make it easier to be part of the tree. If you don't want to make a



leaf yourself you could simply ask us to add the name of the person you wish to remember and we will write it on one of the leaves with their dates and colour around the edge of the leaf. Thus the tree will begin to fill and become more vibrant in celebration of their lives.

We look forward to hearing from you if you would like this done for you.

Braiding Sweetgrass



I have been reading a most wonderful book called 'Braiding Sweetgrass' by Robin Wall Kimmerer. The writer is a Potawatomi woman from the United States and a professor of botany.

She tells of her journey to unite the approach she has grown up with of respect and gratitude to all living things with the rigour and analysis expected of her as a scientific botanist. The result is a profoundly knowledgeable and poetic account of her approach and of how she has worked to instill a love of nature into her students and her own daughters. One thing she explains is that when she began to reclaim her native language she discovered that when talking about plants and trees the grammar is very different. If trying to identify a flower you would not say not what is that but who is that. This simple difference conveys a completely different world view.

To me it speaks of valuing all other living things on the planet as worthy of our respect and care and reconnecting humans to the natural world. We are after all not separate from nature but just one expression of it.

*To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.*

Auguries of Innocence - William Blake

I was just up in Derbyshire in this recent glorious sunshine and the wildflowers were in their May glory. I was equipped with my tiny 10X magnifying glass.

To look at them with this you have to stop, get right down on the ground and get really close to the plant. That in itself slows you down and makes you really appreciate what you are looking at. Then when you focus in and look through the lens a whole new extraordinary world opens up.

The subtlety of colour and pattern, all the individual parts of the flower, the iridescence of many of the petals and the fine hairs and veins - none of which can be seen with the naked eye. I really recommend buying one

of these if you feel curious because it is absolutely fascinating and humbling to realise that each flower has all of this incredible detail and is perfectly designed to attract its particular pollinators and spread its seed in a way that works for its location.

Come up to the burial ground and try out your new purchase! There is plenty to see at the moment.



Donating to Westmill

People often ask us if they can donate to us, so we have decided to make the process easier.

The burial ground is a Community Interest Company (CIC). This means we are a not for profit business - serving our local community and keeping all costs to a minimum. We are very grateful for any donations that enable us to develop and improve the site and our events for everyone's benefit. We have just added a donation page to the website.

What will I be donating towards?

Your gift will help us ensure that the burial ground is a diverse and thriving wildlife haven for the benefit of future generations. The money will go into a general donations fund. Any contribution from £10 to £1000 is welcome - buying more wildflowers and trees, new benches and bowers, helping improve the Roundhouse and the creation of new groves in the burial ground.

How can I donate?

Via the website

We are adding a pay button to our website which you will find at the top of every page.

BACS

Bank details - Acc. No. 65640298 sort code 08 92 99

Reference - Your name and the word Gift.

Legacies

You can leave a gift to the burial ground in your will. Your solicitor can give you further advice on this.

Thank you very much

We have already received some generous donations which have been used to add to our wildflower and tree planting and we wish to remember.

Ours thanks to: Rita White, Ceri Isaac, Lesley Phillips, Jo Newbould, Sue Smart, Claire Morris, Tom Williams, Neil Morrison, Ellie Chanin, Penny Iles, Jean Poole, M Sheppard, Carolyn Hampton, Lucy Wilkinson-Moore.

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All articles written and edited by Liz Rothschild unless otherwise stated. Photographs by - Lynda Farrington, Liz Rothschild, Noah Walker

Dates for the diary

WESTMILL MEMORIAL GATHERING Saturday 28th 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 16th 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. The cost is £3.50. No need to bring any extra food.

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.