

# FRIENDS OF THE PARISH OF THE ASCENSION BURIAL GROUND NEWSLETTER



## EVENTS OF THE YEAR

17<sup>th</sup> March: Visit to Histon Road cemetery.

24<sup>th</sup> March-15<sup>th</sup> December: Monthly working parties with Friends and others helping to clear leaves and vegetation from the burial ground while retaining its character and beauty.

9<sup>th</sup> June: The Cambridge Young Archaeologists Club visited the burial ground. Report on page 3.

21<sup>st</sup> June: Keystage Theatre co. and Chesterton Community College stage a production of "Giants beneath our Feet".

15<sup>th</sup> July: Three Cemeteries Green Day. Report on page 2.

8<sup>th</sup> August: Invitation to Histon and Impington Village Society, where Mike Good gave a talk on the Ascension Burial Ground.

7/8<sup>th</sup> September: Open Cambridge weekend. Mark Goldie gave his usual excellent tours of the burial ground.

19<sup>th</sup> October. Cambridge University Research Horizons film in the burial ground.

2<sup>nd</sup> November: All Souls Night bonfire. Report on page 2.

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Parish of the Ascension Burial Ground is released annually to record events and news.

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*To find out more about the Friends of the Parish of the Ascension Burial Ground, or become a member email*

*friendsofparishascensionburial  
@yahoo.co.uk*

*or jptc1@cam.ac.uk*

*The Wikipedia page 'Ascension Burial Ground, Cambridge' has been updated by Martin Packer and gives information on the history of the graveyard and links to many of the people commemorated there.*

## All Souls Bonfire Party

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November was a dry, calm evening. At the Ascension Burial Ground a huge bonfire was expertly assembled by Eric Marland. Pat's cat Cally thought this was an excellent place to hide and had to be chased out of it before it was lit.

Guests arrived, including the mayor Sheila Stuart, and gathered around getting to know other "Friends". A large amount of wood and prunings from the work parties was burnt. As the fire died down, children lit sparklers and roasted marshmallows.

Mulled wine, soup and refreshments were enjoyed in the chapel before some poetry readings around the bonfire.



Thanks to Eric Marland for his hospitality in the chapel which contributed to a most successful evening.

*Diana Tapp*



## Three Cemeteries Green Day

On Sunday, July 15th, the Ascension Burial Ground, together with Mill Road and Histon Road Cemeteries, invited friends and members of the public to join them in a Green Day. People of all ages came from Cambridge (and from overseas) to visit the cemetery on a warm English summer day (fortunately without rain) and enjoy its calm and greenery.

A wide variety of tours were conducted by local experts, to all of whom we are most grateful for their time, enthusiasm and wide knowledge (tested to the utmost by the visitors). Tours included a wildlife tour (including a sweep for insects) by Iain Webb of the Wildlife Trust; a fascinating exploration of the different lichens growing on the graves by Mark Powell of the Cambridge Lichen Group; a wildflower tour by Rod Ailes of Arkley Nursery and "Et in Arcadia Ego", a memorable meander through the memorials in their natural setting by Eric Marland, lettering artist, pointing out the work of different stonecutters, including his own. Inside the chapel, which is Eric's workplace, further examples of his work could be seen and there was an evocative display of photographs taken in the cemetery by Mark Wills. Other events included a hunt for "Green Men", a wildflower quiz and display boards. Delicious and refreshing home-made elderflower cordial, lemonade, cakes and biscuits were served. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to make the day so memorable.

## THE CAMBRIDGE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS VISIT THE BURIAL GROUND

On 9<sup>th</sup> June Hayley Roberts led a visit by the Cambridge Young Archaeologists club to the burial ground. Kailey, Seth and Jordan Brock recount what happened next:

“Given a clipboard and directions, we started out on a scavenger hunt, split up into teams and went looking for gravestones and the engravings on them, some of which included crosses and pictures of books. At several gravestones the YAC leaders had attached interesting information about the people buried there. What looked like a small cemetery turned into an adventure to learn about some famous sons and daughters of

Cambridge. At the end we drew a picture of a gravestone we liked and wrote the information about the person buried there. We found gravestones that included the sons of Charles Darwin; a famous astronomer; and the man that split the atom. We had a great day exploring and would like to take our cousins there when they come to visit us.”

To find out more about the Cambridge YACs, or to join up, please email [cambridgeyacs@hotmail.com](mailto:cambridgeyacs@hotmail.com).

For quiz answers, visit [tinyurl.com/ckvd8ho](http://tinyurl.com/ckvd8ho).

### Questions from Cambridge Young Archaeologists Burial Ground Quiz

1. From the Chapel doors walk straight ahead and between two pairs of trees. Behind the second tree on the right is the grave of Bridget Spufford. At what age did she die?
2. Continue to walk up this path until you reach the end of the burial ground. Turn left, after a couple of paces you should see the grave marker of Sir Horace Darwin. What did he make?
3. Turn right and walk along the footpath as far as you can go without turning the corner. The grave of Arthur Benson has a rail around it. What did he write?
4. Go back 3 paces. The grave of Henry Taylor is lying down. What did he do?
5. Take two paces forward, six paces right, look forward and left behind a tree. This Celtic cross marks the grave of John Adams and his wife Eliza. What did he discover?
6. Take 37 paces along the footpath. When you meet another footpath that is heading towards the fields, look just to the left. You should be able to see the pale gravestone of Sir Francis Darwin and his daughter Frances Cornford. What did he research?
7. Walk along the footpath until you reach the corner. Stand on the lower edge of the slope. Look behind the rose bush. The grave of Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins and his wife Lady Jessie Anne is quite hard to see. What did he discover?
8. Go to the end of the footpath, towards the chapel. When you reach the junction turn left (away from the chapel) into a separate area of the burial ground. What do you notice about this area? Why do you think this might be? To find the next grave count 27 graves along and then two rows back. You should see the stone for Geoffrey Bushnell. What was his profession?

## EVENTS FOR 2013

Provisional dates for Working Parties to sweep leaves, cut back growth, and clear ivy and creepers from memorials and paths (led by Rod Ailes of Arkley Nursery, Cottenham):

January 26  
February 23  
March 23  
April 20  
May 18  
June 22

Many thanks to Rod and everyone who has helped at the working parties this year.

Date of next Annual General Meeting:

6<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30 p.m.

to be held at St Augustine's Old Vestry,  
Richmond Road, Cambridge CB4 3PS.

## HERITAGE LOTTERY BID

The Friends (led by Diana Tapp as Chair) have made substantial progress in the preparation of material for a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for support for the maintenance of the cemetery, the repair of damaged or endangered memorials, and archival and publicity work, including a website and construction of a database about the graves. The Heritage Lottery Fund application has now been taken over by the Parish of the Ascension, since it is the legal owner of the graveyard, and it is expected that the bid will be submitted in 2013.

## REMINDER

*Please contact the treasurer, Pat Ingham, 8 All Souls Lane, Cambridge CB3 0EA, in order to pay your subscription for membership in 2013.*

*Rates are £10 for individuals (£5 for students and OAPs); £15 for households; £25 for corporate subscriptions. You may also set up a standing order for your subscription.*

## OFFICERS OF THE FRIENDS OF THE ASCENSION BURIAL GROUND

Chair: Diana Tapp

[dianatapp@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dianatapp@hotmail.co.uk)

Secretary: James Clackson

[jptc1@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jptc1@cam.ac.uk)

Treasurer: Pat Ingham

[patingham@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:patingham@hotmail.co.uk)

Historian/ Archivist: Mark Goldie

[mag1010@cam.ac.uk](mailto:mag1010@cam.ac.uk)

Vicar of Ascension Parish:

Rev'd Janet Bunker



The Burial Ground of St Giles and St Peter Parish  
(now the Ascension Parish Burial Ground) c. 1930.

Photograph from Ben Walby.