



RYDE SOCIAL HERITAGE GROUP

Contacts

Sally-Ann Garrett
Chairperson
36 Pellhurst Road
Ryde
PO33 3BP

Janette Kitching
Secretary
The Cemetery Lodge
63 West Street
Ryde
PO33 2QF

Matthew Bell
Treasurer
C/O Old Post Office
Yard
Union Road
Ryde
PO33 2ER

Meetings

The Group meets on the first Saturday each month at the Ryde Development Trust Offices in Union Road, Ryde.

Membership is free to anyone who is interested in the heritage of the town of Ryde.

Research is centred on Ryde Cemetery, and the people who are buried there, their links to Ryde's past, their lives, homes, businesses, families and descendants.

LOCAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE AWARD

The newly formed **RYDE SOCIAL HERITAGE GROUP** is celebrating an award of £22,418 from the Local Heritage Initiative Fund, for a project that will create a unique opportunity to bring to life the stories of past generations of the people of the town and show their influence on the town's development. Over the next two years the funding from the Local Heritage Initiative, (LHI) a partnership between the Heritage Lottery Fund, Nationwide Building Society, and the Countryside Agency, will enable the group to establish a rich source of information about the cemetery and Ryde's heritage.

Research will be coupled with learning opportunities for all ages. There will be exhibitions and workshops, and the project will include a bio-diversity survey of the cemetery in conjunction with the **IW Natural History Society**, the first part of which will be a mammal survey. There will be many opportunities for the community to get involved in the project, which will lead to the publication of a book and resource packs about the heritage of the Cemetery and the town, and an interpretation panel in the Cemetery.

The group welcomes new members to participate in research to find out more about Ryde's past. A focus of activity will be on those who are buried within **Ryde Cemetery** and their connections to the history of the town. The graves of the founding families of the town, (Player, Brigstocke and Lind) as well as those of the local artisans, merchants, and trades-people are being located, and research is needed to tell the stories of these people.

Details on headstones entice members of the group to find out more about the relationships that exist between the named individuals. For example, the headstone of **Ma'am STAGG**, who ran a Dame-School in St Helens; she died on January 15, 1858, aged 74. The headstone notes that 'More than fifty years of her life were spent in the care and education of children'. The headstone also records the details of the death of one of her pupils, **Arthur Horatio Dawson HILL**, who was born in London, and died September 7, 1870, aged 18, when the ship **HMS Captain** went down in the Bay of Biscay, with a loss of nearly 500 lives. He would have been only six years old when she knew him.

Another example is the simple grave of **Francis NEWMAN**, (1831 to 1901) the town surveyor for Ryde, who we know was responsible for the design and layout of the third extension of the cemetery in 1881. From the details of the report of his funeral, found in the archived IW County Press, we can see that he was a well-loved and respected member of the community and an influential figure in the town's development.

Additional research is needed to complete the stories of Ma'am Stagg and Francis Newman. There are still many thousands of untold stories yet to be discovered.

Newsletter of the RYDE SOCIAL HERITAGE GROUP

Natural History: *Autumn in the Ryde Cemetery*



As the seasons change, and the trees take on their many autumnal tints, the ground in the cemetery comes alive with fungi of many shapes and sizes. Spotted so far this autumn, are specimens of Parasol (*Macrolepiota procera*), Plums and Custard (*Tricholomopsis rutilans*), and Yellow Wax Cap (*Hygrocybe*). Would you be interested in participating in a fungus foray?

Family History

The stories of the many families who exist today in the town are often uncovered when people are researching their own family history. If genealogy is of interest to you, the group has experienced family history researchers who can help others get started. Do you know if you have ancestors buried in the cemetery? If you contact us, we can look up the name and try to confirm the location with the Crematorium office. If you want to get started with your family history, the cemetery may be a good place to begin.



There are many styles of grave markers, and we are currently taking photographs, and will try to

find out about the stonemasons who made them and carved the inscriptions.



The Website

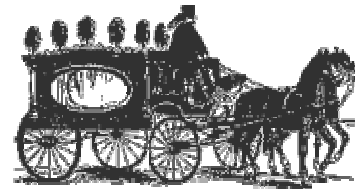
The Website has been running for nearly two years, and has pages dedicated to several subjects and areas of interest. You can find details of some of the funerals of noteworthy people of Ryde; the memorial inscriptions and photographs of their graves; information on the War Graves, and medal holders; natural history to be found on the site (the plants, trees, birds, animals, insects and fungi) and links to other sites associated with cemeteries, such as the Friends of Arnos Grove, and the National Federation of Cemetery Friends. There are stories of some of the people whose history has been researched so far: reports on the funerals of Michael Maybrick, Francis Newman, and of Haynes and Heward, the two brave lifeboat men who died in the New Year Disaster of 1903. The website will be completely revamped with the LHI funds. Why not check out www.rydecemetery.org.uk and see for yourself!

If any of this has caught your attention, please come along to our next meeting on **Saturday 5 Nov** at 11:00 am
Ryde Development Trust Offices, Union Road, Ryde.

The Victorian Funeral

We would like to find out about the Victorian rituals associated with burial – probably very different to the funerals of today.

If you have any information about this, or any memorabilia, photographs, or postcards, please contact us.



Please contact us if you have any ideas for future editions of the Newsletter. For example, do you want details of the stories of the people we have researched so far? This would be helpful for people who don't have Internet access.