

## **When Death Becomes Us**

If you are a Knaphill resident, the chances are that when it's time to '*pop your clogs*', '*kick the bucket*', '*pass away*' etc. Your funeral will take place at the nearby Crematorium in St Johns.

The 'Crem' as it's affectionately known is the oldest in England with its first cremation taking place on 26 March 1885. The deceased was a Mrs Jeannette C. Pickersgill. Here we look at the ethical process behind this very taboo subject and what goes on behind the scenes at 'Woking' Crematorium...

### **Conduct**

The disposal of a human body is a highly emotional occasion for those taking part in the service. This must never be forgotten by the staff of the Crematorium, who must combine to create and maintain an atmosphere of reverence and respect throughout the entire proceedings.

### **Staff**

The greatest care must be taken in the appointment of members of Crematorium staff, any of whom may, by conduct or demeanour, detract from the atmosphere of reverence, which it is endeavoured to create. All staff employed in the operation of cremation must be suitably trained in technical and ethical procedures and certified as specified in the Secretary of State's Guidance Notes of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or any subsequent legislation made there under.

### **After Committal**

A body shall not be removed from the Crematorium after the Service of Committal except for a lawful purpose.

Subject to receiving the necessary Authority to Cremate, the coffin and its contents shall be put into the cremator exactly as they have been received on the catafalque. All cremations will be completed within 24 hours of receipt of the coffin at the Crematorium. A body not cremated on the same day as the coffin is received at the Crematorium may only be retained overnight on the written consent of the Applicant for cremation or in exceptional circumstances deemed necessary by the Cremation Authority. All bodies retained at the Crematorium will be accommodated in secure and sanitary conditions within the building.

Once a coffin with its contents has been placed in the cremator, it shall not be interfered with until the process of cremation is completed. On completion the whole of the Cremated Remains shall be collected and, following their reduction, shall be disposed of in accordance with the instructions received.

### **Correctly Identified**

No coffin shall be accepted at any Crematorium unless it bears adequate particulars of the identity of the deceased person therein. If a coffin is encased, the cover and the coffin must bear adequate identity of the deceased person.

Every care must be taken to ensure correct identification throughout the whole proceedings from the moment the coffin is received on the catafalque until the final disposal of the Cremated Remains.

### **Separately Cremated**

Each Coffin given to the care of the Cremation Authority shall be cremated separately.

### **Coffin Covers**

When a re-usable cover is used to encase the coffin, a signed authority must be given by the Applicant for the cremation authorising its use, and consenting to its subsequent removal from the Crematorium.

### **Metal Residues**

Any metal found amongst the Cremated Remains shall not be salvaged for any purpose but shall be disposed of in aggregate in accordance with the directions of the Cremation Authority.

### **Cremated Remains**

The utmost care shall be taken to ensure that the Cremated Remains, following their removal from the cremator, shall be kept separate and suitably identified. The Cremated Remains shall be reduced and placed in a separate container. If the Cremated Remains are to be disposed of in the Garden of Remembrance, this shall be conducted with reverence and respect. Cremated Remains to be conveyed by a carrier service should be placed in a suitably labelled robust container and dealt with according to recommendations laid down by the Federation of British Cremation Authorities.

### **Cremators and Ancillary Equipment**

Cremators and ancillary equipment used at the Crematorium shall be kept in good repair and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations and the requirements of the Guidance Notes issued under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or subsequent legislation.

### **Statutory Regulations**

All cremations shall be carried out according to the provisions of the Cremation Acts and Regulations made there under and any subsequent legislation.