



## Winter Reflections on The Seasons of Remembrance and Christmas

Doesn't it strike you as rather odd, that during November, we approach remembrance with such solemnity and a sense of duty, but then just a few short weeks later we experience the joy and happiness of Christmas time, and whatever your own beliefs, it is a time for gathering family together and sharing warmth and kindness with each other.

But for some, Christmas is not as joyous. They may suffer loneliness after enduring bereavement in the recent past and Christmas again is a catalyst amidst the festivities that provides a chance for remembrance of those who are no longer with us.

On Remembrance Sunday, many of my colleagues paid respects on behalf of our company at war memorials across the towns we serve. As Christmas approaches, my colleagues will attend Carol Services and we have put up a number of "Memory Christmas Trees" in churches and in our offices, to help people remember their relatives at this important time of year.

I have been in the funeral profession for 13 years and, in recent years, I am seeing the trend towards pure and direct cremations - I am always a little concerned for families in where and how they find their comfort following the loss of a close relative if they don't have an opportunity to say farewell with proper remembrance. Commemorating Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day is one of the last truly national rituals left to us. Whoever you are, you are aware of poppies and war memorials, of the Royal Albert Hall, the Cenotaph and the Chelsea Pensioners.



You are drawn into the ceremonies that symbolise the remembrance, the gratitude and the care of a nation. Celebrating Christmas is a global affair, but with local and family meaning.

Every society, every people needs to remember and to reflect. In many ways, our world is in a troubling place just now, certainly less tolerant, perhaps more selfish. However, over the last 20 years we have seen attendances at Remembrance ceremonies, Christmas tree lightings and Carol Services soar, especially among the young. Memory, prayer, wisdom and resolve are the antidote to despair, loss and grief. These are among the things that will make for "good remembrance". If the growing support and need for Remembrance Day and Christmas Memorial Services is what we need as human beings, then I hope proper farewell and remembrance will be considered an equally growing need for individuals when remembering loss within their own family.

For the Funeral Director, every day is a Day of Remembrance. We walk alongside families to help them through the early days of their grief. We are also there for them on the day of the funeral and afterwards, should they need our ongoing support.

We know that we are unable to do this alone and are very grateful to all our local clergy, ministers, celebrants, other professionals and also our own families, who walk alongside us every day and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to them all.

*Sean Martin*

**Head of Operations**

**[www.peasgoodandskeates.co.uk](http://www.peasgoodandskeates.co.uk)**



**See inside for news of our recent community activities, staff qualifications and long service awards.**

# Some more of our Community Engagements



## The Haverhill Church Flag is Flying High

Operations Manager, Lee Wilkins, who lives in Haverhill, noticed that the St George's flag on top of the parish church was looking a little tired. Revd Max Drinkwater accepted our offer to replace it and, in return, Lee was "treated" to a climb to the top of the tower to see it in situ. Lee scaled the 90 ft tower and is pictured with Revd Max before taking the "terrifying" trip back down!



# REMEMBERING



Saffron Walden



Whittlesford



Cambridge City Centre

As well as attending our local Remembrance Sunday parades and services, we have supported a number of All Souls services during the month of November. Our Saffron Walden Team are pictured at St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden and David Skeates is shown at Whittlesford, where lillies were given as a tribute to each person being remembered. Sue and Samantha from our Cambridge Team attended the Remembrance Day parade in the City centre.



We are pleased to have been able to provide 3 memory trees this year, with each one giving families the opportunity to add a name or a message in memory of their loved ones. This small act of remembrance can bring great comfort as it reminds us that the memories of those we have lost live on and this can be particularly poignant during the festive season. This year, our trees can be found in **St John's Church, Duxford, St Mary's Church, Haverhill and Thaxted Parish Church as part of their Tree Festival**. We are also proud to be sponsoring Saffron Walden town's memory tree again this year.



# A look back at some of our late summer activities



## We were bowled over by The Buster Moore Charity Trophy ...

Funeral Manager Tony Phillips attended the Buster Moore Charity Trophy event at Birdbrook Bowls Club on Sunday 13th August.

In all there were 20 teams, with 3 bowlers in each. The winners, from Cavendish, were presented with their trophy by Mr Chris Ford, Chairman of Steeple Bumpstead Bowls League.

Each player received a coveted Peasgood & Skeates goody bag, so no-one went home empty handed! The enjoyable day raised in excess of £2600.00 for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

## ... and then we went football crazy in Cambourne

The Weekend Festival of Youth Football 2023, hosted by Cambourne Town FC, took place in September and we were delighted to be the main sponsor at this amazing event for youth sport and families. 130+ youth teams of boys and girls from Under 7s to Under 16s met at the ground for the two day festival and there were lots of winners!

Investing in and giving time to help our communities is very important to us – we are a community facing business and what better way to do it than encouraging local young people in team sports?

All the runners up and winners of their age group received a Peasgood & Skeates sports bag and sports bottle, a trophy and medal. There are too many photos to share here but all the pictures we took on the day can be viewed on our Facebook page.



A Funeral Director's work is very varied, as you will see from this picture of our Cambridge Foreman, Justin Crowe, busily tidying the planters at our Newmarket Road funeral home and his colleague Sam Melvin polishing the fleet.





# Long Service and Professional Qualification Awards



Our Annual Staff Meeting in November gives us the opportunity to reflect on the past year's achievements. In particular, we like to recognise and reward individuals who have progressed on their own career journey within the company.

Pictured left are **Claire Needs**, **Roz Manning** and **Alan Prior** who all received certificates for completing the Health & Safety and Funeral Practitioner Foundation Courses, through the Independent Funeral Directors' (IFD) College\*.



We also congratulated members of the team who have given 5/10/15 and 20 years' service to our family business.

Pictured (clockwise from top right):

**Linda Peskett**, **Roger Loveday** and **Ben Seward** (5 years);  
**Julian Sayer** (10 years);  
**Paul Ash** (15 years)  
and **Hayley Doe** (20 years).



**Well done everyone and thank you for your hard work.**

\*The IFD College provides accredited vocational training for the independent sector of the funeral profession.

