

British Institute of Funeral Directors
Educating the Funeral Profession



JOURNAL

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Jem Mead, Dip. FS, LMBIFD

National President



My first President's column to you all must start with a massive thank you to my predecessor Paul for his sterling work as your National President for the last 12 months, and you the members for voting for me to take over the mantle.

As I stated at the conference in Southend, we have 2 National President's this year, as Mrs President & I do everything together, many of you will already be aware that between us we look after the administration of the Institute on a day to day basis, and have done for the last 20 months now, a task which we hope is carried out to your satisfaction.

Talking of conference, those who were not there missed a great occasion, ably guided by the excellently efficient David & Claire Gresty who once again managed to surprise all of us. I'm sure the shenanigans will be reported on somewhere. I stated publicly that our aim for this year was to increase our number of tutors by one a month, a task I think that we, with your help are more than capable of achieving, I have already been promised six...

It is great having this all firing and all singing website which is generating 3 or 4 enquiries every day, but not if we don't have the means to fulfil the task of teaching these potential new students.

This is where we need your help, please give some thought to becoming a tutor for the Institute, not only is it an extended income for you but, it gives great rewards in teaching something that is your passion. The education team have reduced the time and complexity that it takes to become a tutor, so I commend this idea to you all. If I can train to be an examiner in my mid-sixties, then I'm perfectly sure most of you can become a tutor if you so desire. Please either ring us on the 0800 number or email:- admin@bifd.org.uk preferably sooner rather than later.

Karen & I have already attended the FSA AGM in Stratford Upon Avon on your behalf, where I was officially adopted by the 'Chain Gang', and will continue to visit all the other kindred societies.

As we run our own funeral company as well as looking after the BIFD, we will be relying on Paul to stand in for us on the odd occasion.

We have been busy visiting the regions within the Institute, and recently made the trip to Northern Ireland for region H, which has now restarted having face to face meetings, with the help of their new chairman Scott Otley.



Our own region G, under the command of Adrian Pink is continuing as it always has and will; region F is almost back in full swing with the help of Paul; region J has a new Director in Sophie Cross, to whom we also welcome to the board of directors and they too held a face to face at the premises of Phil Halliday. We are looking at all the other regions for potential new officers to help us to help you, more news on this hopefully next month. You could always volunteer!!!

We currently have almost 20 students taking their diploma course, ready for their examination & oral next March, which means we will be having the biggest Awards Evening in October that the Institute has had for many a year.

We both wish good luck to all those concerned – please remember the Examiners are here to pass you, not to fail you.

Talking of October 2023 and our AGM and Gala dinner, we are hoping to see as many of you as is possible at the Alexandra Park Hotel & Conference Centre here in Wroughton on the 21st October next year, so please make a note in your diary now. We can promise you an exciting and unexpected time!!!!

Many thanks for staying awake long enough to read this far, take good care of each other and keep looking after all your families, so until next month it's goodbye from her and ta-ra from me.

Jem.

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OBITUARY

Michael Dillon

BIFD FELLOW & ACCREDITED TUTOR

We were incredibly saddened to receive the news that highly respected tutor who taught many of our students to an exceptional standard, Michael Dillon passed away on 11 October 2022.

Past President and Region H Director, David Capper said of his close friend and former tutor:



"[Michael] pushed me to achieve so much within this great Institute we have, which made me the Qualified Funeral Director I am today.

He was so proud that one of his students was made National President so soon after achieving my diploma and that made me equally as proud to do that for him. I also had the pleasure of presenting him with his fellowship a few years ago."



David attended Michael's funeral mass at St Joseph's Church, Ennis on 14 October as the Institute's official representative and, as his friend, had the honour to deliver the eulogy and act as pallbearer.

Michael's commitment to Funeral Education and encouraging his students to achieve great successes, means that he will always be remembered fondly by us all.

On behalf of National President, Jem Mead, The Board of Directors, Education and Examination Committees, Members and Fellows, Our thoughts and love go to his wife, daughter, son and wider family circle.

There are some who bring a light so great to the world that even after they have gone the light remains.

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Hayley Bell, Dip. FD, LMBIFD Editor of the Journal

Editor's Desk



What a wonderful weekend in Southend - and it was gloriously sunny too!

I travelled up from Gosport with fellow Region G members Sally Walton and Richard Coghlan; Despite the heavy traffic around Dartford, we had a fun journey and arrived in time for me to attend the last Board of Directors meeting of Paul Stibbards' Presidential year.

After a small glitch with room allocation, I changed into my Hallowe'en 'Costume' (let's be honest, we all know that I wore my regular clothes) to join everyone for a delicious buffet-style dinner and fun casino night. Everyone looked amazing in their outfits, and it was wonderful to catch up with so many of you.

Immediate Past President, Paul "Reaper" Stibbards
meets Hayley "Wednesday" Bell



*"Gosport Funeral Directors on Tour"
a selfie with Richard Coghlan & Sally Walton*



After the AGM was adjourned, we were treated to a buffet style lunch of salad, pasta and chicken skewers, put on by the Holiday Inn everything was delicious, especially the apple strudel, which, of course I had to take some in a doggy bag back to my room #pastryparty.

Then it was time to get glammed-up for the VIP drinks and Gala Dinner. I was allocated a seat in the Executive Dining Area, where we had an incredible time laughing and chatting...and singing Jingle Bells.

I want to thank David & Claire Gresty for throwing an amazing 40th Birthday Bash, to Paul Stibbards for his amazing year as National President as well as old friends and new for making me feel so welcomed into the BIFD family.

Saturday's AGM was well attended; Paul reflected on the goals he had set himself for his year as National President, many of which he could tick off while clocking up the miles touring the UK on his many official Institute engagements. I think the most impressive achievement was the implementation of our monthly CPD sessions, which are free to access and are hosted by an expert on a different topic, proving to be an invaluable tool to all members.

The National Treasurer's Report showed that the small changes the board have been making over the past few years mean that the accounts are in a healthy position.

I was incredibly humbled to be nominated by Region G to become their Director, as current Director, Amanda Pink was the nominee for 2nd Vice President, and I was thrilled when we were voted in by the members, along with Jem Mead as National President, Amanda Dalby as 1st Vice President, Sophie Cross as Director of Region J and David Capper as Director of Region H. Congratulations to everyone in their new appointments.



VIP drinks with Karen Mead, Malcolm & Gill Serjeant



Executive Dining



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Lucie Kibbey, Cert. FS, MBIFD

Deputy Editor of the Journal

Deputy Editor's Desk



Hello All,

What a wonderful weekend we had celebrating the 40th Annual Conference for our beloved BIFD! I even managed to drag my dear Husband along to join in the celebrations.

It is only fitting to congratulate Paul on an amazing year as President and I am sure we all agree that Paul has dedicated himself to the role. Thank you for the work you have put in and time you have dedicated to the BIFD in the last twelve months. We know a lot goes on behind the scenes and I'm sure everyone is grateful for the efforts you have made to progress the Institute.

And we welcome Jeremy as our newly elected President, Amanda Dalby as 1st Vice and Amanda Pink as 2nd Vice, what a team! I for one am very excited to see what is to come over the next year.

And congratulations to all students who took or are taking exams this year. I wish you all the very best of luck!

I was able to sit down and have a chat with Paul following the Conference weekend about his year as National President:



Presidents of the Kindred Associations and their partners

LK: What is it like to be President of the BIFD?

PS: It changes as you go through the year, initially it's "what have I gotten myself into", halfway through it's more "I can do this, I have good support around me" and you end up not wanting to give it up.

It's an honour to be nominated and given the role of President, it gives you confidence as you see that what you're doing is giving voice to our members and their interests. There is pressure to improve the BIFD and lots of challenges against the more traditional views of what the BIFD once was and where it may go.

LK: Do you think it has changed your view of the institute in any way?

PS: Yes, there is a lot of passion and loyalty within the Institute. It makes you realise that the board are trying to do a lot more than perhaps the general members see or know about.

LK: What do you think went well for you this year?

PS: That is a two-pronged question I suppose. For me personally it was meeting with members of the BIFD, travelling and seeing their regions and making relationships with our kindred associations.

For the Institute I think CPD was a big hit with the members and planning the Education Weekend for May 2023 as well as generally getting the BIFD name known more in the industry.



Paul and his father, David Stibbards

LK: *What would you have liked to have done more of?*

PS: I would have liked to have gotten more Regions back up and running with the Regional Meetings, but it looks like Region K may be back online soon. Rebuilding social events for some of the smaller regions.

Personally, I would have liked to see the kindred organisations working more closely together.

LK: *What was your biggest achievement as President?*

PS: CPD and the members having the events in their calendar to bring everyone together for educational discussion.

LK: *What one piece of advice would you give to the incoming President?*

PS: Be aware that as President you are representing the BIFD, it's members and its interests, how you speak to and work with building relationships all must reflect positively on us. The reputation lays solidly on your shoulders. Personal beliefs and opinions should not form part of your ethos.

LK: *Would you take the job again if it was offered?*

PS: I would, but not straight away. The reason being that you're learning on the job so much the first time that you feel like you need more time to implement plans and make more progress.

LK: *What will you miss about being President?*

PS: The interaction with all the various members on a wider basis and the opportunity for building relationships with and within the kindred organisations.

LK: *Did you enjoy hosting the Conference?*

PS: Yes, it all went and worked as it should, but David and Claire were the real hosts, I was just there!

LK: *What is next for you personally for 2023?*

PS: Settling my life a little, I have a holiday planned to Canada with my dad to spend some time relaxing. Besides that, using the skills I have acquired as President to help our company to be more present in the industry and other kindred organisations.

UPDATE

We have received the following letter from Terry Jobson of the RNLI, Paul Stibbards' chosen charity for his Presidential year. We raised a whopping £3,740 in donations collected from the sale of 40th Anniversary ties (kindly designed and donated by David Capper) and the Fun Casino and Raffle, which were held during the Conference Weekend in Southend.

We would like to thank you all for making a donation, providing a raffle prize or buying one of the limited edition ties.

Mr Paul Stibbards
President
British Institute of Funeral Directors
National Office
10 St John Road
Wroughton
Wiltshire SN4 9ED

4th November 2022

Dear Paul

It was great to be able to welcome many of your members to the Southend Lifeboat Centre and to be able to show them what it is that we do to protect people around water.

Thank you for inviting me to your excellent Gala Dinner on the Saturday evening. There were clearly many well deserved tributes to you for what you have achieved during your presidential year.

Thank you also for your very generous donation to our cause; it has been much appreciated by the team based here in the local community and also at Head Office in Poole.

The donation from the BIFD towards our cause was fantastic – a staggering total of £3740. The generosity of the Institute and its members was remarkable and on behalf of the RNLI, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for this amazing contribution.

Kindest regards



TERRY JOBSON
CHAIRMAN – Rayleigh & Rochford District
Royal National Lifeboat Institute



Thank You

Jem Mead, Dip. FS, LMBIFD

National President



The thoughts of Mr & Mrs President.

Wow, what a weekend that was!!!! Of course, I refer to the Annual AGM and Conference held recently in Southend. The whole Institute must express our thanks and appreciation to the organiser's David & Claire Gresty and our outgoing President Paul Stibbards. On behalf of each and every one of us we all say thank you. I must also state publicly my thanks to Paul for all he did, and will continue to do, for the BIFD during his presidential year, you are very well thought of Paul by the other Institutes.

So back to Southend, when we first arrived, having collected past president David Capper from Heathrow at 9:00 am!!! An immediate trip to the feeding area was called for, only to discover that there appeared to be No Guinness in the building... to which David replied, "I'll make a phone call; this place will be a car park by teatime" – it's fairly safe to say supplies were summonsed forthwith.



Crisis averted after a quiet word with the staff



The rest of the afternoon was filled by Paul hosting his last Board of Directors meeting, our first face to face one since Shrigley Hall last year, and so we come to the Fun Casino/Fancy Dress Evening, and I must say some of us went to town on this, there were some amazing costumes, an absolutely brilliant evening with the Western's winning the best costume competition, and Mrs President managing to make the most money on the tables – I knew she was a good choice as our Treasurer!!!!



"The Ghouls of Region G"



The 'Fun Casino' was a hit with all



Winners of 'Best Costume'



"JACKPOT!"



Immediate Past President, Paul Stibbards led the AGM on Saturday

The following morning was the Institute's official AGM, which will probably be better reported elsewhere in here, a spot of lunch and it's off to the RNLI Station at Southend, right beside the pier.



We thoroughly enjoyed the tour of the RNLI Station

Our visit was absolutely amazing, and thoroughly informative, I for one did not know that the small D Class rib's cost over £85,000 each!!!! We followed this with a ride on the tram/train to the end of the pier, whilst the younger and more agile walked, a cup of tea a mile out to sea was also unique, before most of us had an ice cream when back on terra firma, I say most, our Irish member decided he needed jellied eels!!!!

Having attended to the requirements of the VIP drinks reception, we were escorted into the dinner and promptly told to leave!!! As we were to be sitting in what was to become known as the Executive Dining Area. We had a constant stream of members and guests asking if they could join us as we were having way too much fun.

Before heading back to the coach for the journey back to the Holiday Inn to get ready for the Gala Dinner.



Mr Tucker and Mr Mead, VIPs



For those that were present I need to apologise for the noise from the said area, as we couldn't hear what was going on in the main dining room, so we all had our own celebration, including a small rendition of Jingle Bells!!!! Also for leaving the room during my toast to the visitors & guests – the look on the chain gang's faces said it all for me.... If you weren't there ask someone who was.



Leaving the room - mid-speech

After dinner we had the official exchanging of the chains and collars, when I was delighted, honoured and somewhat humbled to be invested as your National President, and took immense pleasure in investing Amanda Dalby as 1st Vice President, with Amanda Pink as our 2nd Vice President.



Members of the 'Executive Dining Area' giving their scores following my speech...0 Points across the board



Paul Stibbards handing over the reins (chains??)



First speech as your newly appointed National President

A great weekend, a superb AGM and a brilliant gala dinner. Mrs National President and I would like to thank everybody who had a hand in organising anything over the weekend, and as such Karen & I extend a warm welcome to you all to Wroughton on the 21st October 2023 for our Conference and Awards Evening.

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CPD on the M25

Richard Coghlan, Dip. FD ~ Region G

It was a great pleasure seeing my Daughter Sophie & another of our employees Neave gaining their “Certificate in Funeral Service” at this year's 40th BIFD Conference.

On our work wall we have Certificates for three generations of the Coghlan's who have gained their Dip FD qualification, plus four other members of our staff who have now gained their Dip FS and a Certificate showing that Sally is a qualified Tutor for the BIFD. We are a true family firm with both Sally and I having our daughters in the business.

As a professional you should be qualified so that you can offer your clients, who are going through a very turbulent and tough time in their life, the best service you can provide, and be up to date with all the correct legislation.

As we drove to the conference at Southend on Sea in the usual appalling Friday traffic and spent over an hour parked on the Europe's biggest car park (M25) Sally, Hayley (BIFD Editor) and myself, all gained another hour of CPD !? Learning from each other about zoroastrian funerals with their funeral towers, amongst many more fascinating funeral topics.

CPD is so important - it helps us funeral directors give the best quality service to our clients. I am now semi- retired and not arranging so many funerals, and I find it difficult to remember the new way of writing out the new cremation forms and how registration is done after the Covid Pandemic. I try to leave this to my professional staff.

As I get more free time, I have been able to help with more Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award Expeditions in the mountains. During Covid us qualified “Mountain Leaders” could not get into the mountains, and our skill of navigation diminished. I also find that our Scouts have lost out on two years of camping skills. We are now teaching the new generation of Scouts and Duke of Edinburgh participants things they should have learnt two years ago.

What has this got to do with funerals?

We must make sure we as funeral directors keep up with our learning, like me in the mountains, if you don't keep up to date we will get lost, lost in what are the correct regulations, Lost because paper work has changed, Lost because we can't use the latest computer software, Lost because we can't upload photos or music to the crematorium system.



My Daughter Sophie receiving her certificate in Funeral Service from Paul Stibbards along with Tutor, Sally



Member of the Coghlan's team, Neave receiving her certificate in Funeral Service from Paul Stibbards



Pictured with my daughter, Sophie who recently passed her Certificate in Funeral Service

The only way to keep up to date with these skills is by continual learning, be it on the job or CPD's

BUT I don't like doing CPD's on Zoom!

There are many varied ways we can do CPD's besides Zoom. Think outside of the box, think outside of that computer screen. Spend 30 minutes learning from crematorium staff, visit the new woodland burial site, sit in on a Post Mortem, have breakfast locally with other funeral directors and discuss local problems.

These will all count towards your continual learning hours so that you can be the best funeral director, serving your clients to your best ability, and being a true professional.

Richard

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SUNNY WEEKEND IN SOUTHEND

AMANDA DALBY, DIP. FD, LMBIFD ~ 1ST VICE PRESIDENT

What a terrific weekend in our Immediate Past President Paul Stibbards' hometown of Southend-on-Sea for our annual AGM Conference!

As soon as I saw the Bentley hearse parked outside the hotel in the sunshine, I had a feeling that we were all in for some fun-filled 40th Anniversary antics at the Southend Holiday Inn!



Gala Dinner with Marian Sinclair of Motorcycle Funerals

Paul & his team organised a truly enjoyable itinerary of events from a 'Fun Casino' to a trip along the longest pleasure pier in the World. And we also got to meet the RNLI team too, whom we managed to raise almost £4,000 which was announced at the superb Gala Dinner that evening.

Much fun was had by all who attended, with friendships renewed & forged. Here's to next year in Swindon, then God's Own County, Yorkshire for my year of Presidency!



Halloween night with Adrienne Peers of Canfly Marketing

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Funeral Partners

TWO FAMILY FIRMS DELIGHTED TO HAVE JOINED FUNERAL PARTNERS NETWORK

Two more established funeral businesses devoted to serving their communities have joined the Funeral Partners network.

Edwin Pounds & Sons have been operating on the same site in Bradford for more than 100 years – initially working in the farming and coal industries before moving exclusively into funerals after the Second World War.



Funeral partners CEO Sam Kershaw with Simon Broome and Helen Broome outside Edwin Pounds & Sons in Bradford

Simon Broome, now Business Principal for Funeral Partners, is Edwin Pounds' great grandson. He is proud to have continued working from the premises his grandfather spent his much of his life and will continue to do so under the new ownership.

"The key to our success is longevity," he said.

"People call us and ask to speak to the same people they have dealt with before – they really want a familiar face and voice to support them through one of the most difficult times in their life.

"By the same token, we've had people go elsewhere and then say they wish they had come back to us because of the service we offer.

"What I love about the work is going out into the community and meeting people, even though I've been more office-based for the last few years."

The business has always been a family affair with the majority of Edwin's 11 children working there at some point. When Simon's mother retired 15 years ago, his wife, Helen, joined the team, running the day-to-day operation of the office.

Simon said "Securing the future of his team was a big factor in choosing to work with Funeral Partners.

"Of all the big companies, Funeral Partners are the best in my opinion, they really value and respect the people that have helped build this business," he said.

"I felt I had a duty to my team to ensure they are OK. Many of them have been with us for a long time and I wanted to make sure they were looked after."



Colin Clark, John Roach, Les Boyce and Katie Mckay
at John Roach Funeral Directors



Funeral Partners 

John Roach Funeral Directors of Johnstone, Renfrewshire, in Scotland was established two decades ago by John and his business partner Les Boyce, who officially launched their new venture on Christmas Eve in 2001.

John, who is staying on as Business Principal alongside Les, explained how the pair thought they had mastered the processes needed in the funeral business quickly, before being given a reality check.

“We had five funerals in the first week, but over the next month we only did two,” he said.

“In our first year, we calculated we needed 88 funerals to break even and we did 88 exactly – there is nothing like cutting it fine.

“I have loved the last 20 years in the industry, dealing with our families is very rewarding.

“A lot of people thank you from the heart for delivering their funeral request to the very last detail. You are asking clients to put lot of trust in you, and it is a privilege to provide the service.

“The key to our success is continuity. We’ve had the same people in the business for 21 years and you know who you are going to speak to.”

After more than two decades serving the community, John said Funeral Partners were the perfect company to work alongside.

“There is no feeling of being swallowed up by a corporate giant,” John said. “It is like joining a big family.”

Funeral Partners CEO Sam Kershaw said: “With reputations built on compassion and high standards, we are delighted that both Edwin Pounds & Son and John Roach Funeral Directors have chosen Funeral Partners as their acquisition partner.

“These are exactly the sort of businesses we strive to work with, we share their ambitions to retain the rituals and tradition of funerals and their dedication to the profession. Together we will protect and grow the businesses to enable them to continue to serve their communities, which is at very heart of what we do.”

FUNERAL BOSS TAKES ON WEEK-LONG MEDICINE BALL CHALLENGE TO RAISE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

A funeral home manager spent an entire week with a 5kg weight strapped to his wrist to raise vital charity funds and awareness around mental health.

Carl Tate took part in the Medicine Ball Challenge which sees participants cuff a 3kg medicine ball – and 2kg chain – to themselves for seven days.

The nationwide initiative was created by a serving British Army soldier who had seen friends and family struggle with mental health issues.

The idea is that the ball is a physical, visual, and tangible representation of the invisible burden of mental health.

Carl, 38, was only allowed to remove the chain for driving, sleeping, showering and when he was conducting funeral services on behalf of Daren Persson Funeral Services in Walton Avenue, North Shields, and John Blenkiron and Sons in Queens Road, Richmond – both of which are part of the Funeral Partners network.

Cash raised from the challenge will be split between two charities, Combat Street and ABF – The Soldiers' Charity.

“It was really difficult – harder than I thought it was going to be,” Carl said.

“Simple things you take for granted like writing emails and other small tasks are really difficult with the medicine ball on.

“You have really got to think about every movement.

“But it is a good parallel for the struggles people with mental health issues deal with day in and day out.

“And it did help strike up a few conversations, which is exactly the point.

“I was watching my son play football and a few of the other parents were obviously intrigued and asked what it represented.

“I was also stopped quite a few times when I was out and about with people wondering why on earth I had a medicine ball strapped to my wrist.

“Once I explained it to them, I hope it made them think a bit more about mental health.”

To donate to Carl's fundraising visit <https://events.soldierscharity.org/fundraisers/carltate>



*Carl Tate with the medicine ball
which was attached to him for a week*



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Remembrance Day

On Remembrance Sunday a wreath was laid on behalf of the British Institute of Funeral Directors by a member of Pearson Funeral Service and army veteran Tony (Right) accompanied in the parade by army veteran Paul in the presence of the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, The Royal British Legion and members of local organisations who were all taking part in the parade in a well attended service of remembrance at the Cenotaph in Marsden.



REMEMBRANCE**BY EMILY BRONTË**

Cold in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
Thy noble heart forever, ever more?

Cold in the earth—and fifteen wild Decembers,
From those brown hills, have melted into spring:
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
While the world's tide is bearing me along.
Other desires and other hopes beset me,
Hopes which obscure but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
No second morn has ever shone for me.
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
And even Despair was powerless to destroy,
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened, and fed without the aid of joy.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion—
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine.
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain.
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

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PLUS MORE

LAUNCH OF THE ASHES REGISTER

Official record will provide future generations with details of cremated loved ones' final resting places

Richard Martin, founder of Scattering Ashes, is to launch an innovative register that records the final resting place of people who have been cremated in the UK, The Ashes Register.

Following his recent report 'The Lost Generation: the problem of scattering ashes in the modern era' he discovered that historically the final resting places of those who opted for a cremation have been in churchyards or cemeteries, however since the late 1960s more families have collected the ashes from the crematorium themselves, choosing scattering locations of personal significance but without any means to record the date or place.



Richard Martin, Founder of The Ashes Register

The report estimates that up to 6.45 million sets of ashes have been scattered, without any formal record, relying instead on those present to remember the details and pass them on to future generations. These numbers of formally unrecorded resting places have not been seen since the plagues of the Middle Ages.

The Ashes Register, has been launched to ensure that families can record a scattering of a set of ashes for free, capturing basic information supplied by crematoria and funeral providers much like that found on a death certificate.

Richard Martin founder of the Ashes Register said: "With an increasing focus on the cremated remains, thanks in part to the rise of direct cremation, families have been creating farewells that are more personalised to the lifestyle, tastes and preferences of the deceased, which we thoroughly support. But a direct consequence is the inability of future generations to know the location of their ancestors final resting place."

He went on to say: “The Ashes Register will allow every family to record the location of where a loved one’s ashes are scattered plus their date of birth and death, you can even create an entry for someone who passed away decades ago.”

The Ashes Register can offer its basic listing for free thanks to significant industry support, with founding sponsorship from key industry providers: Pure Cremation and Memoria Group, alongside support from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management where the report was presented.

Catherine Powell, co-founder of Pure Cremation said, “We are proud to sponsor this important project because it will allow grandchildren and great-grandchildren the opportunity to make remembrance visits to the places that mattered to their family.”



Richard Martin, Founder and Director of Scattering Ashes, and his wife Karen



*FOR MORE INFORMATION
ABOUT THE ASHES REGISTER
GET IN TOUCH:*

Richard Martin

07768278363

Director@ashesregister.com

www.ashesregister.com



The Ashes Register will allow every family to record the location of where a loved one’s ashes are scattered



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Time! We just don't have a lot of it certain days wouldn't you agree. And when it comes to social media, posting at the right time on the right channels can be a challenge in itself.

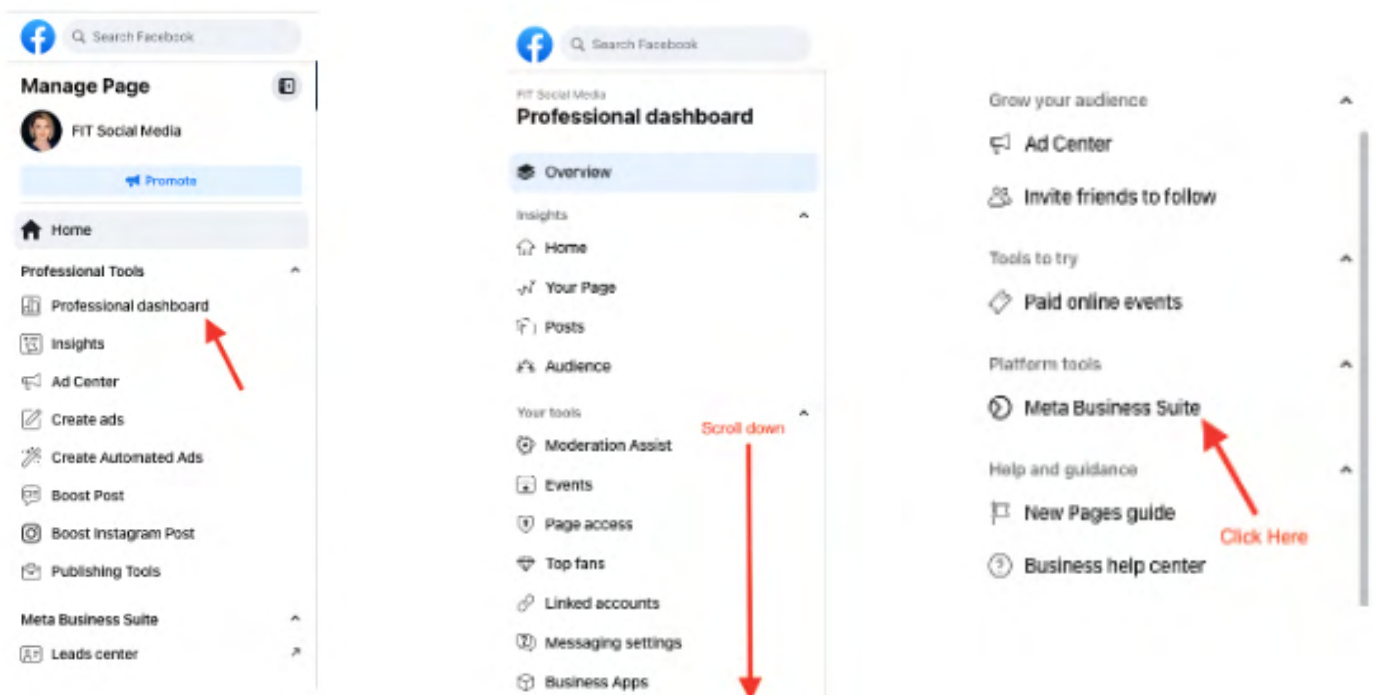
This is where "Creator Studio" can really help. You can find it in your Facebook business page on desktop (see images with red arrows to follow the steps to access) or whilst logged into your Facebook business page open another tab on your desktop and Google "Creator Studio" and the link is <https://business.facebook.com/creatorstudio/home>

Creator Studio

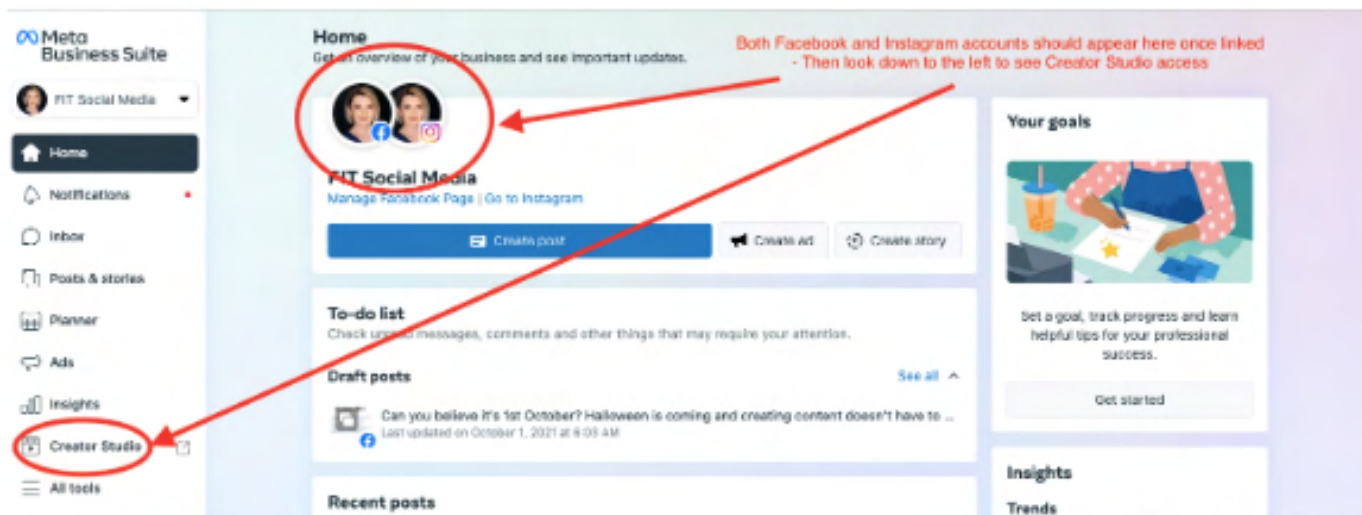
In your Facebook business page on desktop see "Manage Page":

Look to the left menu, click "Professional Dashboard"

After you click on "Professional Dashboard, scroll down the left menu, click "Meta Business Suite"



Then in the left menu click “Creator Studio”

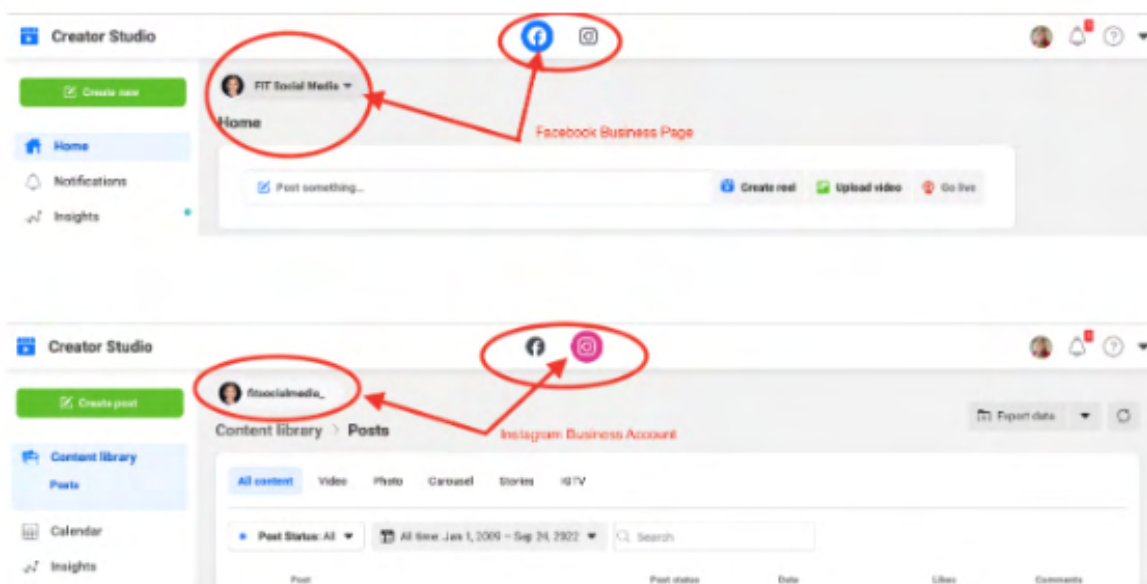


You will then see the Creator Studio dashboard and at the top in the middle you will see two icons - one is Facebook and the other is Instagram.

Now in Creator Studio and it should show you both linked accounts - see next image shows where the Facebook and Instagram icons are in Creator Studio. To access the Facebook part of Creator Studio click on the Facebook icon and to access the Instagram part of Creator Studio click on the Instagram icon.

Here are the two images showing how they look. You can only see the Facebook dashboard when you click on the Facebook icon.

If you want to see the Instagram dashboard then click on the Instagram icon (they light up to show you which one you are in).

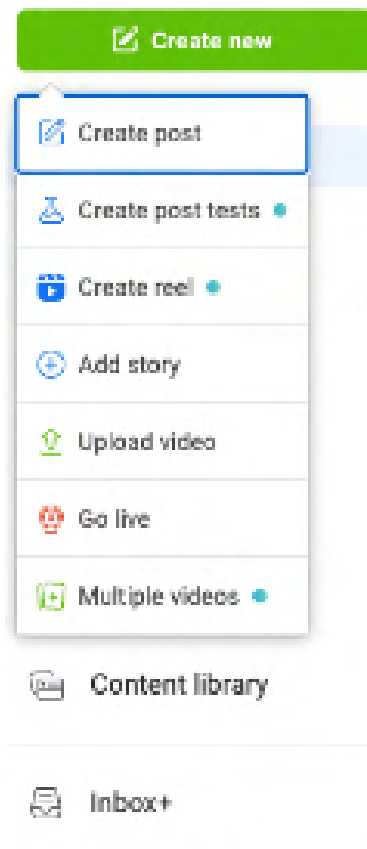


Scheduling

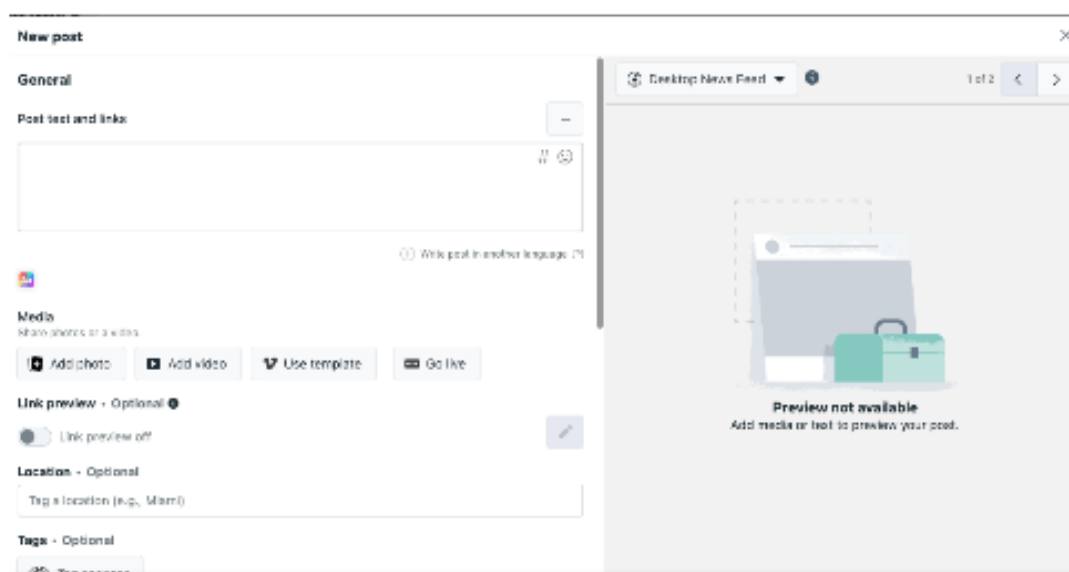
Scheduling using Creator Studio is a great strategy as you can schedule posts, stories and reels now via Facebook for both Facebook and Instagram.

By using Creator Studio it's like the one stop shop - when Facebook and Instagram are both connected.

To create a post on Facebook and schedule click on the green "Create New" and select the first option "Create Post"

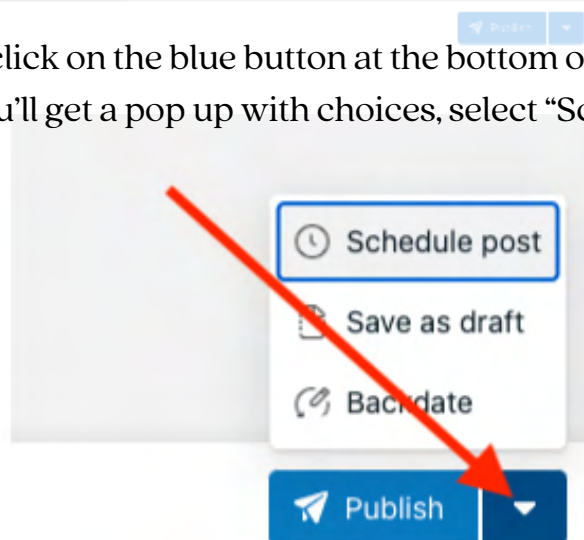


Next add in your caption (include your hashtags and emojis). Then add in your image or video you wish to use.



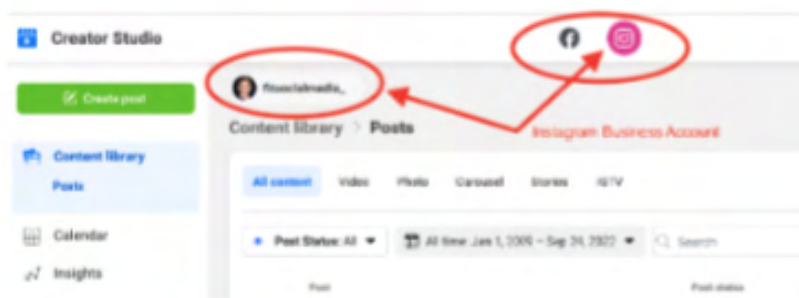
Once you have created your post you can click on the blue button at the bottom of the screen (to the right of the "Publish" button) and you'll get a pop up with choices, select "Schedule Post".

And this leads you to a calendar for you then to select the day and time best for your audience.

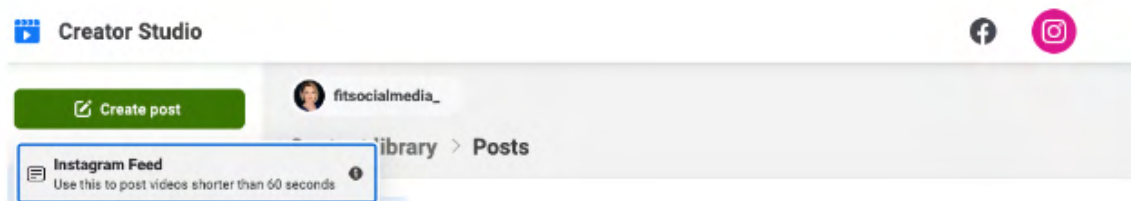


Tip: before you schedule, copy your caption and then you can post that on Instagram via Creator Studio.

When you go to post on the Instagram part of Creator Studio, click on the green “Create Post”,

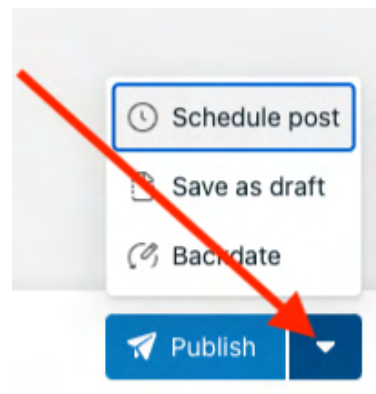


Click on “Instagram Feed” and you’ll be in the Instagram dashboard to create a post and schedule for instagram - create your post (paste the caption you copied from Facebook) and then add in your hashtags (you need to add at least 9 for Instagram).



Once you have created your post you can click on the blue button at the bottom of the screen (to the right of the “Publish” button) and you’ll get a pop up with choices, select “Schedule Post”.

And this leads you to a calendar for you then to select the day and time best for your audience on Instagram.



Quick Note: Remember your Facebook audience is on at a different time to Instagram and you can check the times by looking at each platform’s Insights.

Want More Ideas Or Help?

I hope you found this helpful. If you would like more questions answered or want more information on having an online presence, using social media and how to leverage it for your funeral business, or anything else, do contact me: <https://fitsocialmedia.ie/>

Eimer Duffy, Social Media/Digital Marketing Consultant and Trainer at FIT Social Media. Specialising in assisting Funeral Directors to gain a better online presence and build communities and trust online in a short space of time. Providing live and interactive sessions for all knowledge levels and at a time to suit your diary - working with you via Zoom.

MILESTONE YEAR FOR ONLINE TRIBUTE CHARITY FOUNDER



It's a milestone year for Jonathan Davies who founded an online tribute charity in memory of his brother. MuchLoved is celebrating its 15th anniversary and has also announced that it has raised £100 million for charities and good causes in the UK. It has been a labour of love for Jonathan, a 52 year-old father of three, who has seen the charity grow rapidly over the last few years. There are now 160 new tribute websites being created and over 50,000 website visitors every day.

MuchLoved works in partnership with nearly 2,000 funeral director branches. It enables funeral directors to offer their clients outstanding bereavement support with a beautiful tribute page. It also enables their clients to collect funeral donations for any charities of their choice. And it enables funeral directors to easily display service details and arrangements in one place on their website. The charity employs 20 people and is based in Amersham, where Jonathan lives too.

'His death at the age of 21 was sudden, and unexpected, and an overwhelming shock,' said Jonathan. For a long time afterwards, there was plenty of darkness in my life. I had to keep going when I just wanted to scream.

'I was keen to create an online memorial to Phil, a legacy that could show many of his happy years and make it easy for his school and university friends to view, make contact and maybe add pictures and thoughts of their own. I did some research but couldn't find an appropriate service available. That's when I first had the idea for MuchLoved.'

Just three years later Jonathan's mother died. 'After Phil's death I saw the joy drain from her eyes and it never really came back,' he recalls. In 1997 Pamela was diagnosed with bowel cancer and died a year later at the age of 55. Her death made Jonathan more determined than ever to make MuchLoved happen. He wanted to help others with their grief.

MuchLoved became a registered charity in 2007. It enables people to create a personalised, and free online tribute site in memory of their loved one where they can share memories, thoughts and stories with families and friends as well as light candles, add music, photos and videos. They can also collect fundraising donations for a special charity or project in their name, organise events, and celebrate anniversaries.

‘Sometimes I worry that we could do so much more,’ said Jonathan. ‘There are so many being bereaved every day. We are in such a good position to help more people, and I can see the potential.

‘I am still as passionate as ever about MuchLoved. It’s been a lot of work, a lot of strain, but also a lot of joy and fun. I’m so lucky to have such a fantastic team that put their heart and soul into it.

‘I think it has been a success because from the outset we put the needs of bereaved people first, and that’s always underpinned all our development and everything we do.



Jonathan Davies, founder of MuchLoved

‘We have amazing partnerships. We set up a training team this year and we have been busy building digital resources and much improved literature. We are building our technical team, the support team has been building and all the departments are getting better and better.

‘Of course, I wish Phil had never died. But I’ve accepted his death and used it to inspire life. I feel fortunate that his death led me to do something I’m immensely proud of, something that has made a difference. Some good has come out of it.

‘I think Phil would be chuffed and he’d be very supportive, and that’s a motivation for me. Thinking about the unique support that MuchLoved provides to people at a difficult time is what drives me now.’

much  loved

Find out more online:

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THE ONLINE TRIBUTE CHARITY



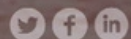
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MUTES: THEIR FUNCTION & PURPOSE

**DR JULIAN LITTEN, FSA, HON. BIFD
FUNERAL HISTORIAN**

At the turn of the last century, just before the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, the photographer Benjamin Stone managed to capture an image of two impeccably-uniformed mutes attending a funeral organised by the crown undertaker, W W Banting of St James', for a wealthy client residing in Regents Park (Illus 1). Even by the late 19th century mutes were rarely seen as part of the funeral cortege, having been considered as out-modish by at least 1870s, if not earlier. So what was the purpose of these fierce, sombre-looking gentlemen, their countenance alone to frighten any child?



Illus. 1

In actuality, they had two tasks to perform. The first was to stand each side of the door of the house of the deceased on the day of the funeral and to activate the knocker on the door, on the pretext that the approaching mourner was too grief-stricken to have the energy to do the task for himself. The essayist and poet, Sir Richard Steel, penned the following short poem in 1702 regarding mutes:

*Where the brass knocker, wrapt in flannel band,
Forbids the thunder of the footman's hand;
The upholder, rueful harbinger of death,
Waits with impatience for the dying breath;
As vultures o'er a camp, with hovering flight,
Snuff up the future carnage of the flight.*

Quite frankly, had I seen such men guarding the door they would most certainly have put me to the flight! Ask any undertaker in the reign of Queen Victoria as to what a mute's purpose was, he would have been hard pressed to give an answer. When he was gathering information on the funeral trade in 1843, the social reformer Edwin Chadwick was able to put the situation right when he asked the following of a Mr Dix, a London undertaker performing upwards of eight hundred funerals a year:

Chadwick: Are you aware that the array of funerals commonly made by undertakers, is strictly the heraldic array of a baronial funeral, the two men who stand at the doors being supposed to be the two porters of the castle, with their staves, in black; the man who heads the procession, wearing a scarf, being a representative of the herald-at-arms; the man who carries a plume of feathers on his head being an esquire, who bears the shield and casque, with its plume of feathers; the pall-bearers, with batons, being representatives of the knights-companions-at-arms; the men walking with wands being supposed to represent gentlemen-ushers, with their wands: are you aware that this said to be the origin and type of the common array usually provided by those who undertake to perform funerals?

Dix: No. I am not aware of it.

Chadwick: It may be presumed that those who order funerals are equally unaware of the incongruity for which such expense is incurred?

Dix: Undoubtedly they are.

Which, of course, begs the question as to whether or not today's funeral director is equally unaware of the trade's antecedents. Regarding cost, Mr Dix was able to tell Chadwick that "mutes vary from 18s to 30s. In some cases of respectable persons, where silk scarfs or fittings, including hat-bands and gloves, are used, £5 5s is charged to the families for those fittings. In parties in moderate circumstances, two guineas (£2 2s) would be charged for the fittings and the pay."

Be that as it may, Chadwick was quite correct in his hypothesis in that the person paging the funeral is nothing more than a representative of the herald-at-arms, but then you already know that, don't you? But unlike Chadwick's day, we don't have pall-bearers any more – coffin-bearers, yes, but not pall-bearers – and it has been thirty-one years since I last saw pall-bearers at a funeral, supporting the hem of the pall as the coffin was carried on the shoulders of the bearers



Illus. 2

In 1720 Hogarth provided an excellent image of pall-bearers performing their duties on a trade-card he produced for the Westminster undertaker Humphrey Drew (Illus 2).



Illus. 3

Once the mutes duties had been performed at the deceased's house their second role came to the fore: to head the procession to the church, preceded by the undertaker, similarly dressed but without the draped wand. Lesser funerals in the early nineteenth-century often dispensed with the leading funeral director, he being substituted by a single mute.

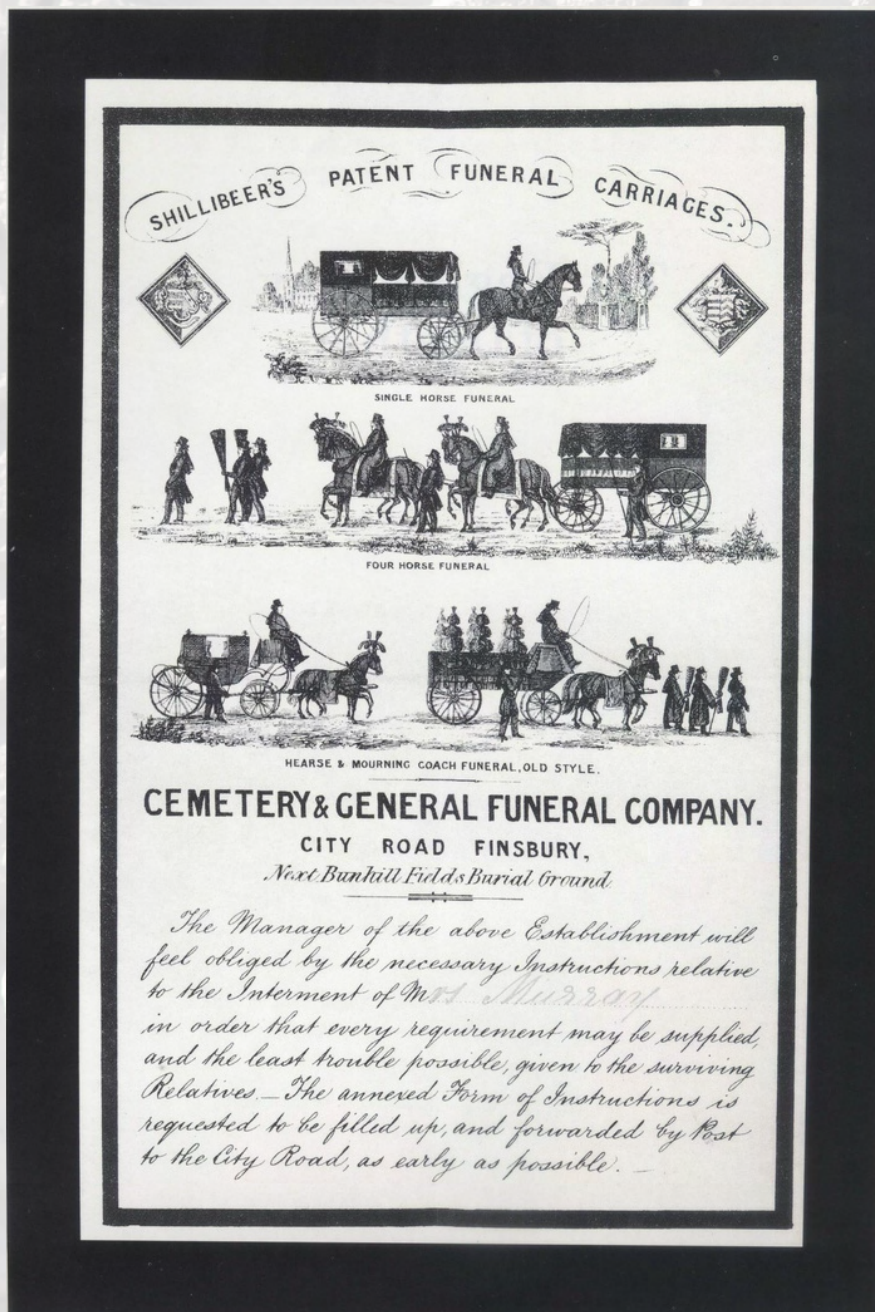
And this format of guidance was extended for the procession to the cemetery. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when evening funerals were popular amongst the wealthier classes, the mute was dispossessed for the sake of the linke-men, individuals who carried branched candlesticks, as can be seen on the right-hand side of a trade card issued by the funeral furnisher Richard Chandles of Shrewsbury in 1750 (Illus 3).

Precisely when the mute became part of the funeral procession is difficult to say, but as with most trends in the funeral furnishing industry, it probably came about in London during the 1730s for they certainly do not appear in a trade card issued in 1725 by the Greenwich undertaker, Richard Innocent (Illus 4) for we only have the undertaker leading off the procession.



Illus. 4

Conversely, by the 1840s they were standard participants in the funeral, as shown on a magnificent trade card of the Cemetery and General Funeral Company of City Road, Finsbury, issued in 1843 (Illus 5).



Illus. 5



In the Museum of London can be seen a fine painting of c.1835 by the Rev Septimus Buss of a mute draped in white, presumably attending the funeral of a child (Illus 6) and in Berkshire is a superb headstone of a similar date showing two mutes guarding the deceased's sarcophagus (Illus 7).



Illus. 6

In 1843, in his novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Charles Dickens has the undertaker, Mr Mold, boast to Mr Pecksniff, regarding Anthony Chuzzlewit's funeral, that "I have orders to put out my whole establishment of mutes; and mutes come very dear, Mr Pecksniff; not to mention their drink." Mr Mold went on to say that money could provide for "four horses to each vehicle; it can give him velvet trappings; it can give him drivers in top-boots; it can give him the plumage of the ostrich, dyed black; it can give him any number of walking attendants, dressed in the first style of funeral fashion, and carrying batons tipped with brass; it can give him a handsome tomb; it can give him a place in Westminster Abbey itself, if he choose to invest in such a purchase." Well, Mold was almost right, except that no-one can be buried in Westminster Abbey outside of the Dean's invitation, regardless of their wealth.



Illus. 7

To some extent Mr Mold was correct in saying that the employ of mutes was reserved to the more expensive funerals. From the eighteenth century, funerals were sold according to the social rank of the deceased, a system which continued into the 1870s until the upper-classes began to raise objections, preferring a simpler solemnity. In the 1874 edition of Cassell's *Household Guide to every Department of Practical Life*, it itemised eight qualities of funeral, ranging from £3 5s for that of an artisan to £53 for a member of the titled nobility. Of these, "two mutes with gowns, silk hat-bands, and gloves" were available only for the five more expensive grade of funeral.

Today, we do not have mutes. Indeed, my people have even dispensed with the tail-coated, top-hatted, stick-bearing "page" proceeding the hearse, considering it be "a Victorian affectation unsuitable for the twenty-first century". You might find that eccentric ("he's taken away the job I like doing best!" I hear you cry), but then mutes are no longer relevant, are they?

Illus 1: Two mutes at a London Funeral organised by W W Banting of St James', Westminster. c.1910. Photograph by Benjamin Stone.

Illus 2: Trade-card of Humphrey Drew of Westminster. 1720.

Illus 3: Trade-card of Richard Chandles of Shrewsbury. 1750.

Illus 4: Trade-card of Richard Innocent of Greenwich. 1725.

Illus 5: Trade-card of the Cemetery and General Funeral Company, Finsbury, 1843.

Illus 6: A Mute. C.1835. By Rev Septimus Buss. Museum of London.

Illus 7: Two mutes guarding a sarcophagus on a Berkshire headstone. C.1835.

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