



## Welcome to your newsletter

There's an economic theory that advocates how countries should spend their way out of recession, hence the repeated mantra about the need for 'growth', certainly in the UK.

However, one has to question whether that philosophy has also played its part in creating the debt ridden society that we now find ourselves in. Spending has its place but, as Engage Mutual's research illustrates (see our page 2 article), too much of it can leave people ill equipped to fund life's fundamentals, and that includes burying their loved ones. Hopefully you will find the article both enlightening as well as thought provoking.

And if there were ever a person to whom we should also apply the words 'thought provoking', it must surely be civil rights campaigner, Rosa Parks, the subject of our Iconic Funerals feature in this edition.

Local stories? You asked for more of them and that's what we have tried to give you from toppling headstones

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## Tribute to council as crem re-opens



Dewsbury Crematorium

**Just days before Kirklees Council prepares to fully re-open the re-vamped Dewsbury Moor Crematorium, Andrew Box has paid tribute to the local authority for its seamless handling of the facility's makeover.**

The Heckmondwike Road crematorium has been operating on reduced opening times for around four months as refurbishment work has continued against the clock. A major feature has seen the installation of a mercury abatement plant to bring the crematorium up to standard so that it complies with environmental emissions legislation.

Andrew said: "Kirklees gets plenty of criticism for many things but, in this instance, we can only praise the authority's work. At the outset they said there would be delays and there were, however, it was

the way they policed those delays that has been commendable. Throughout officers have communicated to the profession and, in truth, delays, in our experience, have been kept to a minimum despite the comprehensive works. We thought it would be worse than it actually was."

At the time of writing the crematorium had already partially re-opened and was due to be back in full operation by October 13th. Works have included a replacement canopy at the front entrance, installation of a covered flower terrace, renewal of the Book of Remembrance walkway and installation of a new Book of Remembrance cabinet. New double exit doors have also been installed at the rear and both the facility's CCTV and fire and burglar alarm systems have been upgraded.

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### Meanwhile.....in Wakefield and beyond.....!

A few miles down the road Wakefield Council's Bereavement Services have been doing their own version of a 'makeover'..... gravestone topple tests at the authority's various graveyards.

The on going programme of memorial safety checks is there to ensure that cemeteries remain safe places to visit, and was originally introduced following a number of accidents, including some that were fatal.

Each memorial headstone is 'tested' both visually and by hand – on a five year cycle - to see if there is any movement and to ensure that they are not at risk of falling over



and injuring someone. If any memorial moves it is deemed to have failed and supports are introduced until repairs can be implemented.

## Pre paid funerals – a saviour?

With cremations and burials predicted to cost between £9,000 and £13,000 by 2044, there has never been a better time to invest in a Pre Paid Funeral plan, according to Richard Box.

Speaking in the wake of Engage Mutual's 2014 Funeral Costs Tracker research, Richard maintains that more and more people are in danger of leaving a legacy of debt unless they heed warnings and start preparing for soaring funeral costs.

"Market research specialist, Mintel, has already proved that 82% of over 50's have not made specific provision for funeral costs.

"And in this latest Engage Mutual survey we hear that funeral costs are set to soar. A fixed price pre paid funeral plan bought now is an absolute no brainer for families wishing to leave their loved ones in good



financial order."

Eric F. Box's has been managing pre paid funeral plans for many years.

"If you care for the people you leave behind, then you need to think about the financial implications of your death on them," added Richard.

*Source: Funeral Service Journal*

## Iconic Funerals: Rosa Parks (1913-2005)

America's 'first lady of civil rights', Rosa Parks, made international headlines on December 1st 1955 when she refused to obey bus driver, James F. Blake's order that she give up her seat in the coloured section of the vehicle to a white passenger.



The setting was Montgomery, Alabama and Parks' subsequent arrest for civil disobedience in defying the state's segregation laws, gave the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) the opportunity to launch a high profile legal challenge.

Parks' act of defiance and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, became important symbols of the modern Civil Rights Movement with Parks becoming an international icon of resistance to racial segregation. She organized and collaborated with civil rights leaders, including the likes of Martin Luther King.

Parks lived in Detroit until she died of natural causes in her apartment at the age of 92 on October 24. She and her husband never had children and she outlived her only sibling, however, the day after her death city officials in Montgomery and Detroit announced that the front seats of their city buses would be reserved

with black ribbons in honour of Parks, until her funeral.

Parks' coffin was flown to Montgomery and taken in a horse-drawn hearse to the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal church where a memorial service was held. One of the speakers, United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, said that if it had not been for Parks, she would probably have never become the Secretary of State.

The casket was later transported to Washington, D.C. to lie in honour in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol and around 50,000 people viewed it. Parks was finally interred between her husband and mother at Detroit's Woodlawn Cemetery in the chapel's mausoleum. Her birthday, February 4, and the day she was arrested, December 1, have both become Rosa Parks Day, commemorated in the U.S. states of California and Ohio.



Above: Rosa Parks and Bill Clinton



Left: Rosa Parks' Arrest

Above: The bus on which Rosa Parks was riding before her arrest

## More front than most !

If you've been in Ossett recently you might have noticed a slight change to the Eric F. Box funeral home on Kingsway!

That's because we've invested in a complete new 'frontage' for the premises which, as many locals will remember, is housed in the former Chadwick Lawrence Solicitors building just off the main town centre roundabout.

Edward Box said: "It is hard to believe that we have been open in Ossett for four years now, just a fraction of our 161 year history! Nevertheless it has been a wonderful journey and we feel so very much part of the local business community.

"When Box's first came to Ossett we had a small office before re-locating to our current premises in



The new Ossett office frontage

Kingsway. In that short space of time the industry has changed beyond recognition, and it seemed like the right moment, therefore, to freshen up our external image whilst giving the funeral home an internal makeover, just months after opening the extension at our Dewsbury premises."





# Burials Through Time... TORAJAS OF INDONESIA

Around 650,000 members of the Toraja nation live in the mountains of south Sulawesi island in Indonesia.

Their ceremony is held at a site known as a 'rante' which is usually a grassy field with places for audience, rice barns and structures needed for the ceremony.

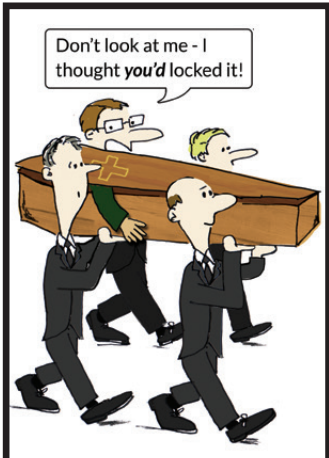
For the Torajas death is a process towards "Puya" or "the land of souls" and, during a so-called waiting period, the body is wrapped in several layers of cloth and kept under the "tongkonan", a traditional house of the Toraja people. It is believed that during the ceremony the soul of the deceased is still present in the village with the journey to Puya starting after the ceremony.



Water buffalo are slaughtered at funerals and the dead animals are usually lined on the rante, or ceremonial field, waiting for their 'owner' who is, as the Torajas would say, in the "sleeping stage". They believe that the deceased need buffaloes to reach the Puya faster.

Some of the slaughtered animals are given to attending guests whilst the body of the deceased is eventually put in a coffin and buried. The coffin can also be laid in a cave, in a carved stone grave or is hung on a cliff, along with everything needed in the Puya.

Full body sized figures of the deceased or "tau tau" are then placed in the cave looking outwards. Coffins of dead children are usually hung from ropes on a cliff face or from a tree and, after several years, the ropes rot allowing coffins to fall to the ground.



DUG BROTHERS - FUNERAL DIRECTORS

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to the changes at Dewsbury Crematorium!

Enjoy the read and, as always, we welcome your comments be they in writing, verbally or by email. You can always drop our editor, Phil Hopkins a line on [philh@theh2.co.uk](mailto:philh@theh2.co.uk), or even go onto the Eric F. Box website ([www.efbox.co.uk](http://www.efbox.co.uk)) and make your thoughts known to us there.

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