



Welcome to your newsletter

Following our last edition, a couple of members of the local clergy asked if it might be possible to include coverage of some 'local' issues of continuing interest to the wider community? Absolutely! We always welcome feedback from our readers!

With that in mind, we have included an editorial about the opening of the new Huddersfield Cemetery, as well as an update about the 'digitisation' of facilities at Dewsbury Moor Crematorium, where multi media presentations are now the thing of the future, just as music CDs for services have become a thing of the past!

I wonder if Second World War hero Harold Jellicoe Percival ever thought that 500 strangers would attend his funeral following an internet posting?

It is also our pleasure to congratulate two members of our own team who have tied the knot, funeral services operative, Alan Lee, who married Donna, and our embalmer, Chris Harrison,

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Dewsbury funeral home extension opens

The new extension to Dewsbury Funeral Home



Fifteen years after Box's purpose built Dewsbury funeral home opened, 2014 sees another major development.

The long awaited extension to Box's funeral home on Bradford Road at Dewsbury has finally opened, promising an amazing new facility for local families using the services of Eric. F. Box Funeral Directors.

Contractors moved off site in the run up to Christmas and, now that the dust has settled – quite literally – the new single storey building, designed and project managed by top architect Edward Park, represents the biggest development by Box's since the original building opened in 1998.

Andrew Box, who has been key to driving the project forward, said: "Society has been evolving more rapidly in the last 50 years than it has done in the last century and a half, and people have not only

become more socially mobile, but are living longer thanks to improved healthcare and diet.

"Consequently there are more older people in residential or nursing care, many of whom are often miles from where their relatives live."

This new reality, said Andrew, had been key in the firm's decision to build a new large room to the front of the existing structure.

"At one time the cortège left the family home, however, as people live longer, and many find themselves spending their remaining years in a care home, often long after they have sold their own property, it means there

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isn't always a family home from which the cortège can depart, so more and more individuals request that it leave from the funeral home, hence the need for a more comprehensive facility."

The extension represents a significant investment for Eric F. Box, but Richard Box maintains that it will stand the firm in good stead long after he has retired.

"In some ways the role of the funeral director has become increasingly important as families grow more and more geographically apart. The time when they lived in one street or town, for generations, are rapidly disappearing.

"That means we often get a phone call from a family member asking us to arrange a wider raft of services, from the funeral or cremation, to the departure of the cortège and the post service funeral tea. This new facility is both welcome and necessary."

Social Media tribute to dead hero

An act of kindness by a funeral director, and the power of digital media, ensured that Dambusters hero Harold Jellicoe Percival went to his grave with hundreds of respectful strangers mourning his passing.

The 99 year old former RAF man, who died with no close friends and only a handful of living family dotted around the globe, faced having just his great nephew at his funeral.

Saddened by this fact one of the funeral directors at the Lytham St Annes firm of Roland L. Whitehead & Daughter in Lancashire, placed an advert in a newspaper appealing for people to attend.

But what he hadn't bargained for was the advert being re-posted on social media sites.

Five hundred people arrived

at Lytham Park Crematorium including mourners from across the military, to honour the Bomber Command hero and, before his coffin was carried into the crematorium accompanied by the Dambusters March, they observed a two-minute Armistice Day silence.

Even a soldier on leave from Afghanistan got in touch with the Alistre Lodge Nursing Home, in Lytham St Annes, keen to pay his last respects.

*Left: Harold Jellicoe Percival
Right: Military honour at the funeral*



Digital revolution in Dewsbury & Huddesfield

A double revolution is taking place in Kirklees with the opening of the new state-of-the-art cemetery in Huddersfield, as well as the installation of a hi-tech media system at Dewsbury Moor Crematorium.

And, as the new 8000 place Huddersfield facility off Hey Lane opened last November, Eric. F. Box was



As the cemetery neared completion

honoured to carry out the first burial, meaning the firm now has its name against Grave Deed Number One.

Edward Box said: "There was a lot of controversy in the run up to this facility opening, however, it has been sensitively developed, giving Huddersfield additional burial space at a time when many local authorities are in crisis."

Meanwhile at Dewsbury Moor Crematorium relatives now have the option to build digital play-lists for services, thanks to the new hi-tech facilities, give Power point presentations and even request webcasts for the benefit of relatives who can't attend.

"We have already done two web casts to Canada and Switzerland," added Edward. "It will take time for people to adjust but it needs to happen over time."

Iconic Funerals: Joseph Stalin (1878/79-1953)

He was probably one of the most controversial figures in Soviet Russia, said to have been responsible for the deaths of 30 million of his own people, and himself the subject of various conspiracy theories.

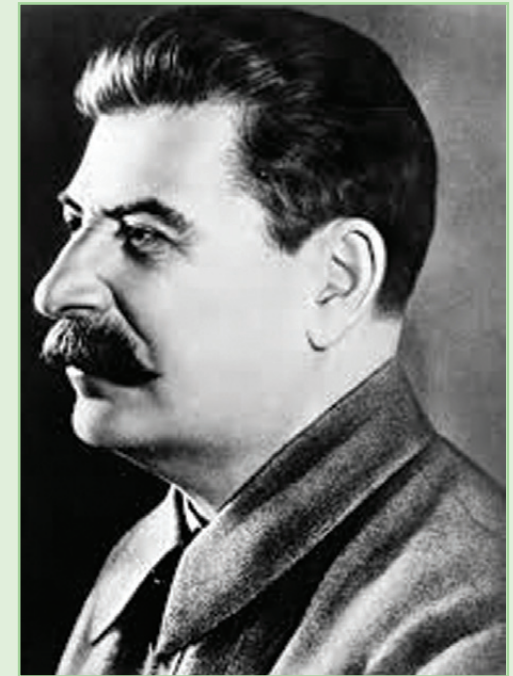
But, as recently as last year, official papers showed that the Soviet leader died of natural causes.

The 11-page autopsy proved that Stalin succumbed to a stroke which caused him to suffocate.

The twice married Soviet leader died on March 5, 1953 at 9.50pm, triggering a crisis in the politburo which ended with Nikita Khrushchev being elected his successor.

However, his post-mortem report remained under lock and key in the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History until earlier this year, finally being made available to a German historian who declared: 'The conspiracy theories were not true. He died in his dacha near Moscow of natural causes.'

Stalin is referred to in the documents as 'Patient Number One', and it is recorded that the stroke which felled him occurred at 6.30pm on March 1, 1953.



The stroke on the left side of his brain, coupled with stomach bleeding, caused the 'Father of Nations' to eventually suffocate.

On March 6 the coffin with Stalin's embalmed body was displayed at the Hall of Columns in the House of Trade Unions, before being interred in the Lenin Mausoleum on March 9, 1953.

He had not risen at the dacha after a heavy drinking session the night before on his favourite Georgian red wine, and was finally discovered, according to the medical protocol, on his carpet, snoring. His aides thought he was still drunk, but he was probably already in a coma. Stalin's autopsy took place the day after his death.

Supposedly aged 74 (his birth year has been put as 1878 or 1879), he apparently suffered from severely high blood pressure, hardening of the arteries in the brain and heart and had a fatty liver bordering on cirrhosis.



The Lenin Stalin Mausoleum



Burials Through Time... SAKALAVA TRADITIONS

Fitampoha is a tradition observed by the Sakalava tribe in the region of Menabe west of Madagascar, from Toliara in the south to Sambirano in the north.



Currently there are about 700,000 Sakalava people and, in Fitampoha, locals celebrate the relics – or

Dady - of the dead members of their royal family.

Fitampoha includes so-called 'Dady wash' or the 'bathing' of royal ancestors' relics including things like teeth, hair and finger nails, which can be dusted or 'washed' in honey, olive oil or vegetable soaps

known as fihository.

The relics are kept in the sacred house or Zomba, located in the village of Belo Tsiribihina, and everything during Fitampoha is organized by the royal family, including a huge feast and the slaughter of around 20 oxen for the July ritual, which is performed every 10 years in the sacred Tsiribihy River.



There are nine relics of the Menabe kings which are kept in a bag in a big iron trunk, housed in the Zomba, which can only be entered by the relics guard.

Fitampoha is an ancestor cult and considered a way for spirits to contact the living via 'bilo' or possessed people and, from a more earthly perspective, is also an occasion for people to settle disputes between themselves.

During Fitampoha members of the royal family perform the lohavony ritual whereby they pray for ancestors to bestow their blessings upon members of the tribe.

However, burials cannot be carried out during Fitampoha and families who have lost loved ones just before Fitampoha are not allowed to attend the ritual.

Source: www.traditions customs.com

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whose happy nuptials took place at Liversedge Parish Church when he married Laura.

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, or even go onto the Eric F. Box website (www.efbox.co.uk) and make your thoughts known to us there.

In the event of a death at any time of the day or night, contact us at:

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DUG BROTHERS - FUNERAL DIRECTORS

