

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.newlingsofroyston.co.uk



**See inside for news of our recent community
activities and long service awards ... and our Local Hero.**



REMEMBERING



Andy and Nicola represented Newlings of Royston at The American Memorial in Royston's Priory Gardens to commemorate Armistice Day and they also took part in the town's Remembrance Day Parade. On both occasions Andy laid a wreath and Funeral Administrator Nicola had the honour of playing The Last Post.



At Christmas we offer families the opportunity to add a memory bauble to our tree. This has proved popular over the years as it allows people time to reflect and remember. It can also bring comfort and a moment of quiet during the busy pre-Christmas period.



Our Lovely Les is Back!



St George's Nursing Home was the first to welcome Les Ames back with open arms after his recent break from entertaining. Singing all the classics, Les was on good form as the residents clapped and sang along. Everyone enjoyed themselves and he was invited back for a Christmas Sing Along.

Not all heroes wear capes!



Funeral Manager Andy Mcfadyen was delighted to be named as Royston's Local Hero, in recognition of his community work and fundraising efforts over the years.

Andy said he was blown away to receive the award and added that it is very much a team effort at Newlings of Royston "I am always humbled by the thanks we receive from families. It is this gratitude that has driven me to give something back to the community. My charity work has sometimes been challenging, but always fun. I like to push myself to new heights, particularly when I took part in the wing walk challenge a few years ago. And, on more than one occasion, I have been happy to wear a chicken outfit in Royston High Street to help a good cause and bring a smile to people's faces."

Paul Brown, manager at Royston First BID, added: "We were deeply moved by the incredible stories and nominations that poured in for our 'local hero' campaign. It's a testament to the extraordinary people who call Royston home. Andy has served the people of Royston for more than 15 years, demonstrating unwavering dedication to the community."

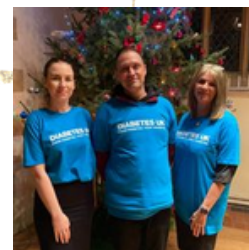
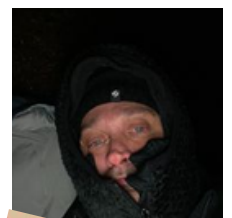


His initiatives, including Royston's Got Talent and fundraising for Garden House Hospice, showcase his commitment to local causes. Amid personal challenges, he selflessly supported Royston residents during the hardships of COVID, particularly in times of bereavement.

Andy's remarkable service, resilience, and caring nature make him truly deserving of recognition for his profound impact on Royston and its people.

These qualities and achievements were also noted by the members of the community who voted for him." The Christmas lights switch on event hosted by Star Radio took place on 24th November.

Andy is pictured above right with The Mayor of Royston, The Town Crier and Paul from Royston First. We have also chosen a few of his fundraising highlights to share with you.



In Other News ...

Long Service 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. This year, we presented a certificate and gift vouchers to casual Driver/Bearer Ray Ayres who has worked with us for 5 years and Funeral Manager Andy who has given 15 years' service. Thank you both for your hard work, which is very much appreciated.

Visit from Care Staff

We were pleased to welcome the newest members of staff from St George's Nursing Home in Royston to a talk about the role of the Funeral Director and the history of our Company. Our visitors were also shown around our premises so they could see our facilities first-hand. Everyone received a certificate of attendance and one of our coveted Newlings of Royston goody bags. It was a joy to meet the lovely team and we hope they enjoyed their afternoon with us too.



Local Bowls Sponsorship

On August Bank Holiday Monday, we were the proud sponsors of Royston Bowling Club County Pairs Tournament. 20 pairs spent the day playing 4 matches each, and the overall winners were Darren Hickin & Harry Undrell. Funeral Manager Andy Mcfadyen, presented the cup to the winners along with a cash prize.



A Musical Treat for 102 Year Old Ron

In October, Funeral Arrangers Jacqui and Nicola were delighted to attend Richard Cox Care Home, to celebrate a gentleman's 102nd birthday. Ron loved listening to classical music and Nicola, a talented musician, was pleased to take her portable keyboard along to play for him. After enjoying some classical pieces, everyone was pleased to join in with the singing of "Happy Birthday".