



Newsletter

WINTER 2024/25

It has been yet another extremely busy six months of the year for the team at Daniel Robinson & Sons, our dedication to community engagement and support has continued to go from strength to strength, and we have also had the privilege to attend a number of unique events which have occurred in our trading area and feature more about these in the following pages.

Pause for thought...

As independent family funeral directors, we continue to develop and evolve with the changing needs of families at their time of bereavement.

The current trend is for the public to receive a constant bombardment of advertising from national companies offering direct cremations and direct cremation funeral plans, through multi million pound TV advertising campaigns, using language and imagery that make their services sound idealistic.

The reality is of course, that we are seeing people in our families and in our communities literally disappearing, which can be bewildering for some loved ones and friends who would have wished to have the opportunity for a final farewell. The effect of this trend on our culture and our mental health over the long run remains to be seen.

We do appreciate that direct cremation may be the right option for some when preplanning and at the time of need. We provide these services if wished, but we always check by simply asking, 'have you paused for thought?' Before making a decision, we would urge you to discuss this with your family first, as they will be the ones that will be bereaved and may wish to visit the Chapel of Rest and take part in a Service, in your memory?

If you are making arrangements for a family member and decide on the direct cremation option, please find out about where your loved one will be taken if you are considering using a national company, and please consider using the services of your local independent family funeral director. Our services will ensure that your loved one will stay close by, and we also offer additional services that you may wish to use which are not available through national providers.

For more information, please see
www.drobinson.co.uk/direct-cremation
www.drobinson.co.uk



Gary Neill BCA, F SAIF
Managing Director



Summer tasted sweeter with pedal power



This summer we invested in a new ice cream bicycle, our old ice cream cart was proving a little too heavy to move around to events and this little bike ticked all of our boxes for making events a lot more fun. We've certainly put it to great use and ice cream has never been so popular. Please see below a selection of photos that we have taken over the last six months whilst out and about!



At this beach party event even mermaids like ice cream!



Penny & Donna, out and about in Braintree



Derek from Harlow modelled a chef's hat!



Jo from Gt Dunmow at St Theresa's Church, Stansted



Donna & Penny from Braintree



Team Harlow



St Theresa's Church, Stansted

We are dedicated to the community, so please do keep up with all the news from us throughout the year via our open Facebook page, www.facebook.com/DanielRobinsonAndSons



Getting sporty in the community

A little sample of some of the sporting events we have supported or taken part in over the last six months.



A patriotic event... In August, Loughton Bowls Club held their annual Daniel Robinson Cup Jubilee event. It was a fabulous day with a great turnout from the Club, with everyone supporting the red, white and blue theme.

A lunch was provided by Club members, together with afternoon tea to round off the day. We were very pleased to sponsor the event and provide the prizes.

The photo shows the Loughton Bowls Club winning team and runners up, with Seamus Setterfield DRS Manager and Jo Setterfield DRS Assistant Manager from our Church Hill, Loughton, funeral home.



Tournament challenge... Well done to the team members from our Bishop's Stortford office who took part in the Bishop's Stortford Youth Project's fundraising rounders tournament. The team are shown below, left to right, Jaz, Luke, Scarlett, Ben, Rob, Chris (honorary member!!) and Tina .



Lest we forget... In September, our team members attended and laid a wreath at the unveiling of the memorial for the 15 aircrew who lost their lives 80 years ago in a tragic mid-air collision above Marks Tey and Earls Colne.

Well done to the team at Earls Colne Heritage Museum for their dedication in painstakingly researching this moment in history and creating a lasting memorial to the courage and sacrifice made by those who sought to protect us. It was a very moving event and we are grateful to have had the opportunity to take part.



Triangular rivalry... We have been proud sponsors of the Triangular Bowls event for many years, it is a competition between Sawbridgeworth, Beldhams Lane, Bishop's Stortford and Harlow Bowls Clubs. Always a good event, this year was no exception, it was a lovely day and very well attended, the weather behaved and it wasn't too hot for the players on the green.

Harlow were the winners, Sawbridgeworth took second place and Beldhams Lane, third place. David, from our Bishop's Stortford funeral home, is shown in the photo on the left, together with the winning Captain from Harlow Bowls Club, Alan Greenhall, who was presented with the Cup and a bottle of Champagne .



Offering more Choice for families

Peace & tranquility

We often conduct funerals at Old Park Meadow, it's tucked away, not far from Gt Dunmow and they offer a range of options for families in a beautiful setting.



Old Park Meadow Natural Burial Ground is a natural final resting place full of wildflowers and young woodland between Great Dunmow and Chelmsford, it is a space visiting family and friends can return to and enjoy together. Families can say goodbye their own way and have the opportunity to have whatever kind of funeral they would like for their loved ones. They offer funerals with no time constraints and no fixed rules or formats, everything can be completely personalised whether it's a burial, ash interment, service or wake. At Old Park Meadow you can plan ahead by reserving a burial or an ash plot in one of the areas around the grounds.

Old Park Meadow provides a beautiful and respectful setting for a loved one's final resting place. If you would like to find out more about natural burials or ash interments, please visit oldparkmeadow.co.uk or call 01245 806332.



The timeless elegance of horse drawn funerals

We have worked for many years with the extremely professional Heritage Horse Drawn Carriage Masters.

We believe they are the very best in the business, with the most friendly, intelligent and polite animals. They have experienced and professional trainers who take great care of their horses and ensure that they are very well trained and obedient.

Some of their horses have been used for drawing the Queens coaches for the Lord Mayor's parade.

Our Funeral Conductor rides up front with the carriage master. The horses can travel a maximum of eight miles to a funeral and travel at 8 mph, they are trained to travel through busy noisy areas and have been through tunnels, over bridges, past road works and through heavy traffic.

If you look on our Facebook page there is even a video clip showing them skillfully reversing a carriage into our driveway!





Sir Geoff Hurst had something to say...

Derek Oakley from our Harlow funeral home, together with Rev Richard Attew (Priest-in-Charge of St. Peter's Church in Roydon and St. Mary's Church in Great Parndon), were delighted to attend a meet and greet session at Harlow Playhouse, "An evening with Sir Geoff Hurst – The Farewell Tour". It was a lovely evening of nostalgia which raised money for various charities, Derek is pictured with Sir Geoff, enjoying the moment

Speaking & listening

Playing host with a talk & tour...

In August, it was our pleasure to welcome the team from GreenAcres Living Memorial Park, Epping, to our Harlow funeral home.

The Memorial Park is popular for funerals with local families and whilst we had conducted funerals there many times, it was good to invite the ladies along so that they could see our facilities and premises first hand, as well as find out more about our family business.



Daniel Robinson & Sons yesterday & today...

In September, our Managing Director, Gary Neill, was invited to speak at the Stansted Business Forum breakfast meeting. He enjoyed the opportunity to engage in discussion with other local business people and to share some information about our family business today and some nostalgia and history about our long and proud historical association with Stansted, which was the home of Daniel Robinson and his builders yard at the very beginning of our family business.



Fundraising

Our Annual Charity Golf Day was another great success, raising an amazing £45,000!!

Twenty one years later on, from our very first DRS Charity Golf Day at Colne Valley Golf Club and we were delighted that once again the day went very well. The support from the community, local businesses and the golfers was, as ever, fantastic - we really are incredibly grateful. Post golf entertainment was provided by Kevin Carpenter and his trick shot show, this was followed by a dinner and charity auction. Donations of auction items had provided over twenty prizes, which included a range of items such as tickets for sporting events, memorabilia and short breaks. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has contributed to making this day possible, including Colne Valley Golf Club staff and a team of over twenty staff members and helpers who worked hard throughout the day and evening.



The Kevin Carpenter Trick Shot Show entertained the players before the Dinner

The funds raised will be used to help local children and young people with cerebral palsy to increase their mobility through privately funded specialist physiotherapy, not available through the NHS. Beneficiaries will also benefit from specialist equipment and walking aids, including such things as wheelchairs and splints, and/or individual physical training sessions.

The aim is to give the beneficiaries much more active lives now and ultimately every opportunity for the greatest level of independence possible for them in the future.



Some of our Golf Day beneficiaries with the winning team - Lime Trees Care Group

Dagmara Fryer, Derek Holmes & Liz Chapman from Team DRS



Golfers & guests at the charity auction



Team news



Each year we celebrate our team members' long service and professional qualification achievements at our Annual Staff Meeting, we are committed to the professional training and development of every one of our staff members.



Left to right, Nigel Appleby, Finance Director, presents Hannah Free - Funeral Administrator, Darren Evans - Funeral Operative, and Dagmara Fryer - Accounts Manager, with their Five Year Service Awards, together with Grahame Smith, Chairman.



Nigel Appleby thanks Caroline Gunn - Funeral Administrator, with a 10 Year Service Award.



This year we had some excellent professional qualification achievements, accredited by the Independent Funeral Directors College (IFDC), perhaps more than ever before achieved in a twelve month period. Well done to everyone for their hard work and dedication. Some of the staff members who were presented with their certificates on the night are shown above, qualifications include Health & Safety, Funeral Foundation, Operative, Administration, Infant & Child Funerals and the Certificate in Funeral Practice.

Back row, left to right: Lisa Thomas & Penny Ward - Braintree, Jo Burns - Gt Dunmow, Tom Riches & Liz Chapman - Harlow, Wayne Brett - Gt Dunmow, Rob Hall - Bishop's Stortford.
Front row, left to right: Wayne Dawes - Harlow & Rourai Shirt - Bishop's Stortford.



We love the classics

Our Epping & Loughton Funeral Home Manager, Seamus, is a member of Epping Rotary Club, he's pictured here, second from the right, with other Rotarians from the Club, helping out with setting up marquees, car park duties and general jobs at the Club's recent Classic Car Show. It was an amazing day with over 190 classic cars, Cobras, Jaguars, Mustangs, Jeeps, Fords and many more, gathered for on lookers to admire, helped along by food and beer stalls of course!



Snippets

Each year we treat families of children who have had a particularly difficult year to a limousine trip around Harlow & a trip to the Panto. We hope you enjoy these little snippet pics of our team enjoying making the children smile on the day!



Focus on Old Harlow

In 2021 we purchased the Masterson Funeral Home in Old Harlow, since then we have fully refurbished the premises and have always sought to provide the families who entrust us with their loved ones with a service which we hope that the late Jerome Masterson would approve of. Today, the funeral home is looked after by Phil Barrow, and we have enjoyed emerging ourselves into activities in Old Harlow and meeting members of the community from there and the surrounding area which we serve.