

Ramsey Mortuary Chapels Heritage and Archive Centre

By Jane Yardley – Chair, Friends
of Ramsey Mortuary Chapels

Amongst the items that we have had donated since we closed for the winter, is an autograph book that belonged to a Miss Edwards of Common Bridge, Ramsey Heights.

All the entries are from 1941-1942 and amongst them is one which made me laugh and I thought that I would share it with you.

*I dreamt that I died
and to heaven did go,
From whence I had come
they wanted to know.
I said I'm from RAMSEY,
St. Peter did stare,
he said come in quick
You're the first one from there!*

It was written by Joyce Bates on the 1st July 1941, who obviously had a good sense of humour.

We get such lovely things given to us, including these photographs printed here. They were taken by Guy Pilkington, who asked in Amanda's Flowers, in the Great Whyte, if there was anywhere that they could recommend to enable him to get some good photographs and as they are great supporters of our project, they told him about the chapels and cemetery. He used an infra-red filter to take them and I think that you will agree that the result is very atmospheric, just right for a Victorian gothic building. Thank you Guy and Amanda.

I'm sure that any of you who have been down to the cemetery in the past few years will have

noticed the vast improvement. The majority of the work has been carried out by a team from Community Payback, lead by Nikki Lisle who has now left the post to take up a new position, but I'm pleased to say that she has joined our committee and will continue to help us when the chapels are open.

This year sees the national celebration of VE Day (Victory in Europe) and we will also be taking part.

If you have any photographs of yourself or members of your family taken during the war, please contact me. We would love to be able to copy them and put them on display if you are willing. You can contact myself either by email: - janem.yardley@gmail.com or phone: - 01487 814304.

A special part of the exhibition will be dedicated to local man, Stan Beebe. He was responsible in 1974 for raising a petition to save the Mortuary Chapels from demolition by Ramsey Town Council and fortunately the building was saved.

Stan was a despatch rider in the Transport Corps in the war, riding to and fro to the front line with important messages and I remember him telling me that more than once he found himself on the German side!

Mentioned in despatches, he was at the D Day landings at Gold beach, at Arnhem and also one of the first troops into Belsen Concentration Camp. He loved Ramsey, its people and its history. Both he and his wife Evelyn are buried in the cemetery near the chapels he loved. They were both wonderful people and it was a privilege to know them and call them friends.

