

Ramsey Mortuary Chapels Heritage and Archive Centre

By Jane Yardley – Chair, Friends of Ramsey Mortuary Chapels

I must start this month with a great big thank you to The Hospital Charity Shop in Ramsey.

Firstly, they surprised me by asking me to go in, as they wanted to give me a donation for the Ramsey Mortuary Chapels. Imagine my surprise when I got home and opened the envelope. They had given us £200!!

It was so generous and kind of them and I can assure them and you that it will be put to very good use.

On Saturday 1st June, we had a fundraising stall at the St. Thomas a Becket Church Fete. The weather was glorious, we were so lucky because as I write it's pouring down, yet again!

It's always a lovely event and our thanks to the organisers for inviting us once again and my personal thanks to volunteers Linda Lavender and Jonathan and Lewis Pope for all their help on the day.

The following weekend was the 50th anniversary of the Ramsey Flower Festival at St. Thomas a Becket Church and it was absolutely marvellous. How everyone comes up with the ideas for the displays I'm at a loss to know. The theme this year was Ramsey's Heritage and Margaret Bailey chose to make an arrangement based on the Mortuary Chapels and what a stunning arrangement it was, she really did us proud, even making a scaled down version of one of our rare contagion windows. The whole piece was really

beautiful. Thank you so much Margaret, on behalf of us all.

Now for last month's Mystery Photograph. I had a telephone call to tell me that the building wasn't in Ramsey at all, but in Somersham. But then I was contacted by June Allpress who told me that the building was now Abbey Antiques and that her Aunts,

Olive and Lily Edwards used to live next door in what is now Headlines the hairdressers. Then Laura Smith telephoned to confirm what June had told me. I went down to have a look and it's definitely the same building.

Most of you will remember Laura's dear father John Smith. He was one of Ramsey's characters and such a lovely man.

I have since found the building in the Listed Building Register, listed grade 2. Apparently, it dates from the 14c and was a timber framed hall house with a solar. It was encased in brick and rendered sometime in the 19c. In fact, going through the register makes you realise just how many really old buildings still remain in the town, hidden under more modern facades. Such a shame really as they



● **Mystery Photograph - June 19**

lose their character. So many old buildings have been pulled down or altered beyond all recognition in the recent past and Ramsey is all the poorer for it.

That is why we are determined, that with your help this will not happen to the Ramsey Mortuary Chapels.

This month's photograph of an unknown man is a real mystery, but with your help we hope to put a name to him and then we can find out something about him.

If you can help with any information regarding this photo, you can contact myself either by email: - janem.yardley@gmail.com or phone: - 01487 814304.

A headstone in the Wood Lane Cemetery, belonging to Sergeant Phillip Duffy was recently damaged beyond repair when a tree branch fell on it in a storm. Due to the sterling efforts of one of our volunteers, Roger Reynolds, it has been replaced by the Commonwealth War Graves



● **Mystery Photograph - July 19**

Commission. Sergeant Duffy died on Sunday 4th August 1940. He was a crew member of an aircraft, a Fairey Battle, which was engaged in a night flying exercise when it crashed.

He was a member of 142 Squadron which supported the British Expeditionary Force.

It was while he was stationed at RAF Upwood that he met his wife, Vera (nee Garton) who lived with her parents, at 54 Little Whyte, Ramsey.

On Sunday 7th July, there will be an exhibition in the chapels, by Roger Reynolds, about Sergeant Duffy, together with information about all the other 31 servicemen who have War Graves in the Wood Lane Cemetery, plus those interred in the cemeteries at Ramsey St. Mary and Pondersbridge.

We look forward to seeing you.



CWGC
Commonwealth War Graves Commission