

THE BRITISH CEMETERY COMMITTEE, KYRENIA

DEATH & FUNERALS IN THE TRNC

There are no Undertakers or Funeral Directors in the TRNC and as this is a Muslim country there is no Crematorium. **In the event of the death of a British Passport holder or their spouse or partner contact should be made immediately with a member of the British Cemetery Committee who will be able to provide help and advice regarding official requirements and will be able to make funeral arrangements.**

The British Cemetery Committee Kyrenia has recently opened a new cemetery which is situated to the south of the new bypass above the Girne American University. It is signposted to the left from the bypass, for traffic coming from the Girne area, as well as at the roundabout above the University where a short road leads towards an Army camp, before the Army barrier is a signposted lane to the left. The track up to the Green Hill Cemetery is awaiting tarmacing but carries markers along its 1.5 kilometres length.

The Green Hill Cemetery is open to all British passport holders of whatever denomination and services can be held by Chaplain, Pastor, Priest or Rabbi, or a Humanist Service can be organised.

The Committee will provide a coffin, transport of same from the Mortuary, a grave site, metal surround and a plaque giving the name of the deceased, their date of death and plot number. It will backfill the grave and carry out basic maintenance of the Cemetery but not the grave site. The fees charged by the Committee include all charges with the exception of a Chaplain's fee which a matter for the next of kin.

The Committee will also provide advice for the completion of the necessary formalities and whilst recommending that a permanent memorial is not placed on or around the grave for a minimum of 18 months, will also advise on the dimensions and style of any such memorial.

The current (November 2012) charges for the Committee's services are, for Residents: £650.00, for Non-Residents: £750.00, for a single grave. The next of kin of tourists are advised to check their relative/friend's travel documents as most travel insurance offers free repatriation. The Committee can advise on repatriation.

As weather conditions make it difficult to dig graves during most of the year, the Committee keeps several graves dug and will always use graves in sequence. It is therefore impossible to be buried in a double grave unless one is a member of the Pre Payment Scheme. The Committee does not own the land (it is given for use as a cemetery by the Council of Ministers) therefore we cannot sell individual plots. We have however, organised a scheme whereby the cost of a single or double grave is paid to the committee which not only guarantees a place in the Cemetery but can also give peace of mind to the next of kin as the funeral arrangements are already made.. As this also helps with the administration the charges for this can be reduced and a single grave will cost £600.00 and a double £1000.00. It should be stressed that all prepayment funds are kept in a separate account earning, albeit, a small amount of interest and the balance can be withdrawn at any time, although an administration fee may be charged. Forms for the Pre-Payment scheme are available from any Committee member.

The Cemeteries themselves are a record of the history of the last 130 years of a British presence on the Island and in order that this may not be lost, the Committee commissioned Dorothyann Betts to produce a booklet with information on some of the people buried in the Old British Cemetery. Entitled "Shadows of Empire" it can be obtained from any Committee member. It is hoped that more information will come to light that can be incorporated in another edition and that a similar project will be undertaken for the New British Cemetery whilst memories are still with us.

A full list of members of the British Cemetery Committee is attached and gives all their contact details. In the event of a death, any member may be contacted but preference should be for **Harry Fellows or Tim Harris.**

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ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

Following the events of 1974 it was decided by a small (voluntary) group of people that a committee should be formed to facilitate the burial of foreign, predominately British, residents. Since that time the procedures have been refined and the British Cemetery Committee Kyrenia is now responsible for the maintenance and use of the several British Cemeteries in the Kyrenia region with the exception of a Cemetery in Lapta, (contact Sandy Oram on 821 2307 or 0542-872-4291). Famagusta has its own Cemetery and Committee, (contact Ann Kelly on 0533 860 7258)

The Committee operates independently of the Church and because TRNC mortuaries work in flexible conditions, currently the Committee would be unable to conform to a fixed Church service. The coffin is, therefore, taken straight to the Cemetery and both Service and Committal performed there.

The Cemetery Committee is a voluntary organisation that depends on public subscription for the maintenance of the British Cemeteries.

MEMBERS CONTACT DETAILS

Chairman

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Hon. Treasurer & Deputy Chairman

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Ex officio member

Rev'd Richard Frost Tel: 815 4329 or 0533 830 8526

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A LITTLE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH CEMETERIES IN KYRENIA

The Old British Cemetery was originally a field set aside on the outskirts of Kyrenia, following the landing of British troops in 1878. It was first used around the turn of the century when members of the 42nd Highlanders, the Black Watch were buried following their deaths from Malaria. Lance Serjeant McGaw, a VC veteran of the Ashanti wars is also buried in the Cemetery after being disinterred from where he died on the line of march in Çiftlik Paşa (Lefkoşa). The Cemetery was not used again until 1921 and was finally closed in 1980. It is now administered by the Royal British Legion, Kyrenia Branch.

The New British Cemetery was created in 1978 following requests for a new burial site by the British Cemetery Committee. The local authorities, after agreement with the Orthodox Bishop of Kyrenia, gave permission for land at the northern end of the Greek Orthodox Cemetery to be used and this Cemetery was in use until 2010. It can now only be used for the interment of those with double graves.

The Green Hill Cemetery is the Cemetery now in use and this was opened in 2010 following extensive discussions with the President of the TRNC. It is a 5 donum plot on the hills south of the Kyrenia bypass, above the Girne American University and below St. Hilarion. This beautiful site took 18 months to build and is open to all foreign residents of the TRNC, whatever their religious beliefs. The section created by the British Cemetery Committee is walled and they have also built a Chapel of Rest with the necessary offices, which may be shared by members of other communities.

There is another Cemetery, no longer in use, on a piece of land that formed part of the property owned by George Houstoun in the early 20th century. The land (known locally as "The Lord's Cemetery") was given by the 6th and final Laird of Johnstone, George Houstoun, to provide a final resting place for family members and close friends. There are some 8 graves in this Cemetery and although the Cemetery was "lost" following 1974, recent action to incorporate it in a Girne Belediyesi plan for a Sports and Green Park area, has meant that the British Cemetery Committee is working closely with the authorities, to renovate the walled compound and to display the history of modern Girne which George Houstoun (buried within) did so much to encourage.

There are three other cemeteries where Christians may be buried but the British Cemetery Committee neither uses nor keeps records of the persons buried therein.

They are:

- The Karaman (Karmi) Cemetery for the use of residents of Karaman.
- The International Cemetery in Girne
- The Lapta Cemetery for the residents of Lapta Municipality

Please refer to the Chaplain for further details