

Diary of a New Build

October - Almost there!



Chris Came, Clerk of Works, Stepnell Group

Well, the pictures tell the story don't they? Roof on, electrics in, cremators built and the tarmac team expected any day now. The weather has been kind to us on this project and generally we have been able to keep to the programme. We will certainly be handing over to Memoria at the end of November.

The team from Facultatieve arrived on the 17th of October and quickly installed the bulk of the factory built cremation plant and abatement gear. As a novice to the cremation industry I was amazed at the high tech equipment and the sheer size of the cremators. On the 13th of October we had a visit from a group of funeral directors; 37 attended and I was pleased to say reacted favourably to the design and location of the facility - luckily for them they quite liked my workmanship! I say luckily because we have just constructed an enormous pond for fire fighting purposes, and with a faint drizzle falling on its muddy edges we didn't want any premature burials!

The windows are all in and very smart they look in environmental green with an energy saving coating that lets heat in, but not out and helps to control climate within the building. One of the constant themes here at Sherwood Forest is the large number of visitors that come to site. Is it my handiwork? Is it the fact that abatement is fitted or is it simply that not many crematoria are built and they always attract such interest. Perhaps you can tell me?

The furniture and fittings are expected in the second week of November and I understand the crematorium expect to be able to accept bookings from the 1st of December. All this of course is of no use without a gas supply and I am pleased to report the safe arrival and connection of three Calor Gas tanks to supply the FT equipment. Work to the gardens is expected to conclude this week and planting will take place during the first week of December. Signage is being provided by Lincolnshire County Council for those using the trunk road network.



Extreme left is the flower cloister, left the administration wing and right the large porte cochère

By the time you read this I hope to be setting up camp at Bury to begin the second of these new build projects, hopefully the editor may allow me to report on that also. I understand that it is to be a significantly bigger facility. I have found the construction of a crematorium an interesting change from the more usual range of public buildings and learnt a great deal about how they work and the many complexities of their location, design and place in the community.

Footnote: Sherwood Forest Crematorium was completed on the 30th of November 2005 and handed over to Memoria Ltd on the 1st of December 2005 by builders Stepnell Ltd. The first cremation is expected to take place on the 14th of December 2005. A service of dedication led by the Rt. Rev. George Cassidy, Bishop of Southwell will take place on the 18th of January 2006 and is to be attended by the local M.P., Paddy Tipping and H.M.Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire.

Memoria Ltd, a company formed in 2003 and owned by Howard Hodgson, Chris Johns and Michael Hackney is in the process of constructing two other crematoria at Chorley and Bury in Lancashire. There are other developments planned across the U.K.