

Neutral Citation Number: [2022] ECC Wor 8

Private Petition Number: 22/20

Directions of the Chancellor of the Diocese of Worcester

Petition For Exhumation

Re: Stourport Town Cemetery

Judgment

1. A petition dated 16 August 2022 has been lodged by Kylie Jones, the daughter of the deceased, seeking permission for the exhumation of the remains of Nigel George Jones from grave space number Section H, Row 1 Plot 1 in Stourport Town Cemetery to be reinterred in the same space. The remains of Nigel George Jones were originally interred on 1 July 2022
2. The reason for the request is due to an error made by the Co-op Funeralcare it appears that the body of Nigel Jones was buried wearing jewellery that the family had specifically requested be removed. The family now wish to open the grave to obtain this jewellery before closing the grave up again. The mistake was noticed shortly after the remains were interred and the petitioner has acted promptly. There is no plan to remove the remains of Nigel Jones, nor to disturb them any further than is essential for the purpose of obtaining the jewellery.
3. All family members consent to the exhumation; indeed they wish it to take place.
4. I am content that the circumstances of this petition fit within the legal exceptions to the doctrine of permanence, such that it is lawful and appropriate to permit exhumation in this case.
5. However, I am aware that Andrew Longville, the Parks and Cemetery Superintendent for Stourport Town Council is unenthusiastic about the proposal – although he stops short of directly opposing it. It would therefore be appropriate that the practical arrangements for the exhumation are undertaken subject to any reasonable procedures that he would want to put in place to protect public health and avoid distress to other members of the public. The body will, I assume, be in poor condition and it is likely to be distressing to family members to observe the opening of the grave.

Order

1. I order that a faculty shall pass the seal permitting exhumation of the remains of Nigel George Jones from grave space number Section H, Row 1 Plot 1 in Stourport Town Cemetery provided that they are forthwith reinterred in in the same space after removal of the jewellery and that the exhumation and reinterment take place in a discrete and seemly manner within 6 months from the date of this order subject to all reasonable conditions required by the Parks and Cemetery Superintendent of Stourport Town Council.

JACQUELINE HUMPHREYS
Chancellor of the Diocese of Worcester
24 November 2022