

The interior of the chapel itself, when viewed in July 2019, shows its recent use as a place of worship and devotion, with altar, pulpit, hymn board and bibles poignantly stacked up as though ready for use at any moment. A war memorial tablet in marble bearing the names of local fallen soldiers is on the north facing wall, with a poppy wreath still at its foot.

Over the years the buildings were used for not only devotional purposes but also social related events, for example Women's Guild meetings etc. amongst others. The pastorate was centred from Dover itself with appointed evangelists who also covered adjacent village responsibilities.

The attached burial ground probably reaches back to 1780 and work has been done to record the surviving memorial inscriptions. A transcription of all the headstones with plan has been undertaken, the earliest burial dating from 1792 and the latest from 1977. There is no evidence yet of any surviving burial, baptism or marriage registers.

Application has been made by the United Reformed Church, the current owner, for its closure under the Disused Burial Grounds Act 1884 presumably as a precursor to the delicate question of its clearance. The fate of the headstones and the interments has yet to be determined.

Photographic record has been made of the headstones as well as views of the interior of the building as seen in July 2019.

It is sad to see the end time for this very unusual and mostly unseen place of God in its tucked away location off the Sandwich Road in Whitfield. One can only but wish all the very best for its transformation in the future.



Interior Whitfield United Reformed Church (M. Webster)

COWGATE CEMETERY Jeremy Cope

I have to report the sad loss of Jeremy Fox, one of our long time volunteers. Jeremy was the best of companions and workers and, although his attendance was inevitably rather spasmodic in his last couple of years we shall miss him.

We have had a summer's weather that made for an easy working environment and indeed, a good one to work in. The weather has now taken a wetter turn, to be expected and much needed to replenish the aquifers and water gardens. However that means that arranged meetings may have to be cancelled or re-arranged, but

that is readily dealt with by our volunteers.

An interesting challenge is to improve things so that we make the cemetery a better living space for wildlife, whilst at the same time keeping it so that visitors continue to be happy to use it. I hope to be able to report progress on this in future newsletter reports.

If anyone would like to join our happy band you will be most welcome. Phone me on 01304 211348 or email me jeremycope@willersley.plus.com