



*A Silent Observer captures the privacy and beauty
of a natural burial at Craufurdland.*

A line of a few cars makes its way slowly up a stone roadway, through fields of Ayrshire countryside with sheep and cattle grazing, lined on either side by a mature hedgerow. The cars stop and the occupants emerge and greet each other warmly. Next a wheelbarrow, black painted frame with a pale blue body case is taken from the back of one of the cars, and a large woven Box placed carefully on top. A small cordless speaker is placed into the wheelbarrow, and with some simple taps on a smart phone, serene classical music starts to play.

Before they move off, one of the party, smiling says 'Dad always joked that he didn't really mind what we did with him after he died. "Wheel me down the street in a wheel-barrow for all I care!" he often said'. A natural burial seemed the best way to say goodbye whilst still being close to home.

Accompanying the rousing classical music, is the distinct sound of the wheel-barrow's slightly squeaky wheel, and the chuckles of a loving family on their way to say the true and unique fare-well to their loved one. Once at the graveside, there are tearful heart felt personal stories, which sound more like reminiscing than a eulogy. Pause to listen to a loving granddaughter, playing her classical guitar singing her own composition, in English and Welsh.

A lifelong friend talks of passions and love, of family and of a life of purpose and achievement, but most of all he talks of love. A daughter recounts a rather surreal telephone conversation that she has written as a poem, of history and youth. Lastly, as the tears and laughter subside, a classic and rousing hymn is sung, not for religious reasons, but for love of the tune, sentiment and country.

Together they depart to a warm fire at the Castle for a funeral tea to share the warmth of memories and celebrate in private the end of a beautiful life.

Naturally... as the silent observer describes, you want a beautiful, tranquil resting place for your loved, one void of chaos and busy urban life, somewhere you can return to and watch the natural landscape flourish long after their passing. We invite you to explore and visit the unique and private setting of Craufurdland Woods Natural Burial Ground.

Where is Craufurdland Woods Natural Burial Ground?

Craufurdland Woods is in Ayrshire and is very accessible to most in central Scotland. We are 25 minutes from Glasgow City Centre and only 5 minutes off the M77. Also with close connections by road to Glasgow Airport and close to Prestwick Airport we offer a suitable location for international visitors returning or transferring to Scotland with their loved ones if requested.

What is the setting and surroundings like?

Craufurdland Woods is the oldest private natural woodland burial ground in Scotland, which provides an alternative to a traditional cemetery or ashes interment. Set in a stunning location in the beautiful Ayrshire countryside amidst the Craufurdland Estate nr Kilmarnock it is only short drive from Glasgow city-centre. Surrounded by mature Ash trees and Hawthorn hedgerow, this natural burial ground is quiet and peaceful, set in a long established designated rural area it has stunning countryside views only interrupted by a scattering of farms far off in the distance. The “Woods” is part of Craufurdland Estate, lands given to the Craufurd family in 1245, which has remained in their careful guardianship for nearly 800 years. The Craufurds are dedicated to the continued stewardship of the estate, and it is with this in mind that the woodland burial ground was established to allow other families in the West of Scotland and further afield to secure a beautiful and peaceful resting place for their loved ones. Still operated by the Craufurd family today, brothers Alex and Simon, are always on hand, to walk with you and your family through the tranquil pastures of Craufurdland Woods taking time to show you around before selecting this most serene resting place for your loved one. At Craufurdland Woods’s natural burial ground no embalming is permitted and all coffins must be biodegradable. Types of Coffin recommended are Pine, Bamboo and Wicker – Cardboard, or any other biodegradable coffin.

What can we expect on the day of the burial?

You choose how you want your funeral conducted. Our experience is that the funerals here are as diverse as the people whom are represented or the lives they celebrate. We have assisted in broad and varied funerals, several have had religious services, where the ground has been consecrated, to a 5piece ceildh band to a biker funeral with a sidecar hearse, to a wheelbarrow transfer. It is your choice how you wish to prepare the details of the day. Craufurdland Castle can be used for a beautiful and secluded venue for an intimate and exclusive funeral ceremony, and/or for the funeral tea. What about a funeral director- Do we need one? The simple answer is no - It’s about what’s important to you and how you want your funeral conducted, with or without the assistance of a Funeral director all are welcome. Having tailored options is what makes Craufurdland Woods special for so many who have laid their loved ones to rest in this tranquil setting.

Can we plant a tree in memory of our loved one?

An indigenous tree of your choosing marks the graves, should you wish the graves can also be marked with engraved natural stone plaque. Early each year, families are invited to plant their chosen tree (from the list of indigenous native species). The plot is pre-prepared for the family to plant the tree; Simon or Alex is on hand should the family request help in planting the tree.

“The families who have chosen Craufurdland Woods as a resting place for their loved ones tell us they like the fact that the tree planting is sometime after the funeral as it gives them the opportunity to celebrate their loved ones continuously, long after their passing ”says Simon Craufurd. Security isn’t an issue at the burial grounds. With the gates unlocked, and right of responsible access means anyone can pass through the land. "With no tombstones, there's not much to steal, only peace, stillness and beauty to enjoy.” says Simon Craufurd.

What are the associated costs of a natural burial?

All of our plots are single depth, as we do not want to disturb the tree you have selected once it is planted. Adjacent plots or family plots can be reserved for partners or perhaps a close family member or

loved as the need arises. So how much does it cost? Unlike traditional sites, you don't buy a fixed plot, unless a plot has been reserved for a loved one, but the right to be buried at Craufurdland Woods. The cost of a single plot is £850 and interments and grave preparation are from £450 offering a unique and sometimes cheaper option than traditional options.

What about Ashes interment?

Interment of ashes, as with burials requires a full single plot to ensure that it can accommodate your chosen tree. The cost of a single plot is £850 and interments and grave preparation are from £150 The difference of cost is the coffin chosen and funeral services. This is an option for those who wish to be laid to rest in Scotland though live overseas.

For more information visit our website

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