

## St Edmund's Churchyard Work Day

Roger Dunn

During the Churchyard working party on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May around 15 people turned up to help; some to dig, trim and tidy up and some to make teas and coffees to keep everyone going. The weather cleared out to become warm and sunny. I think everyone enjoyed themselves, and hopefully we stopped before anyone had been overworked. We practiced on a small stone that needed uprighting a little bit, then worked our way through several other badly leaning stones until we eventually managed to lift an enormous marble one that had fallen flat onto the ground; this required everyone working together. It was very rewarding to reveal the names which had been hidden from view for so many years.

Did you know that there are around 560 marked graves in the churchyard, plus more memorials inside the church? Each tells us a story of the people they are there to commemorate; here are a few:

- Owen William Arnold (1816-1876) was born at Iddesleigh, a member of the Arnold family who farmed at West Park Iddesleigh, as well as Buckland in Dolton.
- William Risdon (1812-1873). A doctor who lived at Hilliers. According to his obituary he was also a "farmer, a gentleman, a Conservative and a staunch churchman". His wife was the sister of Owen William Arnold (above).
- Jane Cooke (1774-1814). Daughter of Thomas Owen, a surgeon who lived at Sages, and wife of William Cooke a surgeon with the East India Company. Also the aunt of Owen William Arnold.
- William Budd (1736-1802). William Budd was the brother of Daniel Budd. He farmed at Down Farm, but William's line of the family died out and his nephew took over at Down. William's gravestone didn't seem to have a home and was constantly being moved from place to place so we set it in the same plot as his wife Elizabeth.
- Patience Webber Arnold (1828-1909). She was the 1<sup>st</sup> cousin of Owen William Arnold and lived at "The Cottage" (now known as Bisley House) along with her sister Susan and niece Marion.

Graves newly discovered:

Emily (1838-1882) and George Arnold (1818-1892). A surveyor who lived at Arscotts. He was 1<sup>st</sup> cousin of Owen William Arnold above.

- Caroline Heard (1837-1904). Caroline was the daughter of Robert Heard and Ann Folland. She never married and she was living at Chulmleigh when she died.
- Elizabeth Webber (1754-1791). Her husband Thomas Webber was a yeoman farmer at Great Cudworthy. He later married Mary Hooper and they had 3 children – see the plaque in the centre aisle of the church which documents that of the family of 5, all but one died over an 8-year period.