

WELCOME

It was almost a year ago that we last all stood here together. Thank you all for making the journey once more.

The hills still stand as sentinels, the orchard is in blossom, the lambs are in the field and the birds are singing. The chapel still casts its shadow and Michael watches over this small patch of ground. But, we have all changed. The sun has been through this sky almost 365 times and we have made a journey of a different kind. Thank you for being part of that journey with us. Is that journey over? This is just another corner.

Daniel loved people, and he would have been very pleased to see so many friends and family here today. He would be smiling that huge smile and chatting away to everybody.

This morning we laid Daniel's memorial stone and this afternoon we are celebrating his life and his legacy. We'll be remembering Daniel with some readings and some music, and later on we'll release some balloons. There is going to be nothing formal about today, so if anybody would like to join in, please feel free.

Last year, Daniel's doctor, Neil Shah, wanted to read this piece but couldn't. This year we have asked Brian Cleland to read it on his behalf

Children - From The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, "Speak to us of Children."

And he said:

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,

And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts.

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as he loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

DANIEL'S MEMORIAL

In February, Jo, Alex and I took a trip to Oswestry, on the Welsh Border. There we went round the one-way system so many times, I lost count; sang the 'bananas in pyjamas' song for a whole hour and were attacked by a goose! But there we met Mark Evans. Mark is a stonemason and was recommended to us by Hilary Meynell from Memorials by Artists.

We talked for almost two hours that day (While Alex played with some cars) and built up a rapport so quickly that we knew we had found the right artist for Daniel. Mark turned our ideas into pictures almost before we had finished explaining them to him. When the first real draft of Daniel's memorial arrived a few weeks later, Mark had taken those loose ideas, added his own born out his creativity and love and knowledge of the stone, and created a perfect image to celebrate Daniel.

You've probably all been looking at the embroidery. It hung from the bottom of Daniel's cot for 15 months and travelled with him when he moved between hospitals. It was admired

by everyone who saw it, and still is. Thank you to Daniel's Grauntie Beverley.

Beneath it is Daniel's memorial stone. Carved from Westmoreland Green Slate by Mark Evans, it will remain here to mark Daniels' life. We have been restricted by size and style, but Mark has taken our ideas, added his own (inspired!) and turned this stone into a beautiful memorial for our special little boy.

It has a balloon and a rainbow (Alex's Idea!) and..... well lets take a look!

BALLOONS

Winnie the Pooh said: "Nobody can be uncheered with a balloon" and he's supposed to be a bear of very little brain!

Balloons have become synonymous with Daniel. He loved them and was often surrounded by them. He was never uncheered. Of course, we have also adopted the blue balloon as our symbol for his Charity.

The sixteen balloons we have asked William and Emily to release for us today are dedicated not only to Daniel but to many other special people... including the other children who lost their fight for life on Ward 8 and the people who looked after them. They are also for Daniel's two donors who gave him such a special gift.

So if William and Emily are ready....it's balloon time!