

# The Brookwood Express

The Newsletter of the Brookwood Cemetery Society



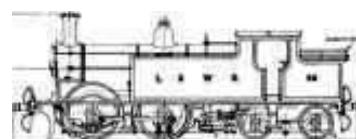
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## Society and Brookwood Cemetery News

### Change of Ownership of Brookwood Cemetery

The committee hope that all members received notification of the change of ownership of Brookwood Cemetery on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014. Woking Borough Council are now major shareholders and thus will be responsible for the future of the cemetery. This should be secure as greater investment will be made into the infrastructure of this historic site. Diane and Kevin Holliday will remain as managers and at present no change in the position of the society is envisaged

### Restoration Projects

#### Colonel Edgar Thomas Inkson V.C.- Plot 74, south side

We are rightly proud of our twelve V.C. winners within the civilian part of Brookwood Cemetery. Colonel Inkson's grave, tucked away in St James Avenue, is showing signs of age. The gentle attention of the Committee members has not been able to restore the beautiful marble cross and kerbing, so the Society approached Pankhurst Graphic Masonry for a quotation for full restoration work.

We subsequently approached Colonel Inkson's regiment, the Royal Army Medical Corp, to advise them of our intentions.

The regiment have offered to pay the full invoice price for the restoration. The Society was prepared to foot the bill, but thanks to the Regiment's wonderful generosity we will be able to spend the money on another worthy army grave.



#### **Colonel Inkson V.C. D.S.O.**

Colonel Inkson, born 1872, was awarded his V.C. after the Boer War battle of Colenso in 1900 where he rescued a severely wounded comrade, carrying him a quarter of a mile, under heavy fire and in an exposed position. In 1915 Colonel Inkson took command of No 2 Field Station and was subsequently twice

mentioned in dispatches and awarded the D.S.O. He died in 1947.

His medals are at Keogh Barracks Museum, Mytchett – only a few miles away from Brookwood Cemetery.

### **St Botolphs Without Aldergate – Plot 85 south side**

Of the many London Parish re-interment plots, St Botolphs is a particularly stunning pink memorial, one of the better preserved. The pink granite obelisk and full kerbing remains in remarkable condition after over 110 years. The Society wanted to restore the area, but were aware that access was difficult and the kerbing needed special care. We appreciate that the obelisk could not be moved to enable re-pointing of the brickwork. Therefore we intend to fill the void within the kerbing – involving hand spade work, and hope to level and grass the area. This is going to be a tricky project, but certainly worth the trouble. For those who know Postman's Park near St Paul's Cathedral – this park was once the church graveyard.

### **The Wood Mausoleum- Plot 30 south side**

This is a beautiful family mausoleum and is going to be a big project. The work needs specialist attention and a start date has been much delayed. We are currently obtaining further quotations. Recent wet weather has exacerbated the urgency, and we sincerely hope that the work will be done during the summer of 2015. We fear the cost of the work will be greater than our coffers may afford – but we will keep you posted.

### **Bookbinding**

Many of the original leather bound volumes from the archive of the London Necropolis & National Mausoleum

Company, dating from 1855 onwards, are in very poor condition. The Society has started a programme of restoration of these ledgers. Receipt Book 25, dating from 1885, bound in calfskin, needed extensive restoration. The spine was detached and substantial parts of the head and tail areas were missing; the sewing was broken. Thanks to the bookbinding and restoration skills of the St Edward Brotherhood, the book now looks as below. A second ledger is being currently worked on.

Thank you Father Thomas.



Leger 25

### **2014 GUIDED WALKS**

The Society has had another very successful year of enjoyable and well attended guided walks.

Our first Walk of the season was the ever popular 'Railway Walk' in March, led by Barry Devonshire and our Chairman and Secretary, with tea afterwards and many sales from our range of railway books on the sales stand.

On a military note, in April military expert Paul Rason led a 'Victoria Cross Walk' – we have 12 within the non Commonwealth Graves section. So popular was our walk in May – 'The Introductory Walk', that the 60+ walkers were split into two groups, one led by Val Pretlove and one by the Committee.

Kim Lowe, our Chairman, led a fascinating new walk in June – 'Mausoleums and the Columbarium', of which we have some splendid examples. This proved very popular with our regular walkers and new walkers alike, and we hope to repeat this walk again

in 2015. We were pleased to welcome back our regular military guide, Paul Rason in July – this time it was for a ‘Talk and Walk’ (and tea) which was based in the old Catholic Chapel on the North side of the Cemetery. Paul is very much the expert and his walks are always very popular and appreciated.

In August Society member Barry Devonshire devised and led another new walk – ‘Oriental and Empire’, again we have ample examples. This new walk was very well received and we hope to repeat in 2015 or 2016. Our unique colony of black bees (*Andrena marginata* and its parasite *Nomada argentata*) was the star of the September ‘Nature’ walk led by George Else and David Baldock. The Cemetery staff, led by Dan the head gardener, co-operate by not cutting back the late summer wild flowers - our blue scabious in particular is very important to the insects at that time of year.

In October, regular guide, Di Smith, amazed us yet again with details of the exquisite geology shown on the headstones over both sides of the Cemetery – her wealth of knowledge was astounding. If you have never done this walk, DO.

The final walk of the year was based in the Commonwealth Graves section of the Cemetery – a poignant and fascinating walk led again by expert Paul Rason.

A big Thank You to all our guides who give up their Sunday afternoons to inform others.  
It is very much appreciated.

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The committee hope that you enjoyed your membership last year, and now is the time to renew; a form is enclosed with this issue.

### FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES: WALKS & OTHER EVENTS

All walks now start from the Cemetery Office entrance, off Cemetery Pales. A donation would be welcome. **We look forward to meeting you. Walks start at 2pm unless otherwise stated.**

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015: Introductory Walk** led by Val Pretlove. This walk will be in the former Anglican section, and will include the founding of the cemetery and ideal for the first time visitor.

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2015: Mausoleum Walk** led by Kim Lowe. Learn the history of the many beautiful mausoleums in the Anglican Section of the cemetery.

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015: Railway Walk** led by Ian Devine. This walk follows the route of the old Necropolis Railway through the cemetery.

**WEDNESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> JUNE AGM at 7.30pm.** This will be held in the meeting room of the St Edward Brotherhood, Brookwood Cemetery. **Speaker to be confirmed.**

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2015: The Good the Bad and the Unfortunate** led by Margaret Hobbs & Kim Lowe. This walk visits both sides of the cemetery.

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### PILOT OFFICER JOHN BENZIE

Grave No 1 in plot 22, row E in the military cemetery contains the remains of an "unknown airman", buried on July 15 1977. It is highly likely that the remains are those of a Battle of Britain Hurricane pilot, but the evidence of his identity has not been considered sufficient by the Ministry of Defence.

The man who probably rests in the grave is a Canadian, Pilot Officer John "Jack" Benzie, born in Winnipeg on March 14

1915. He graduated from St John's Technical High School there and went on to serve in Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry ("Princess Pat's") before coming to England. He was accepted for a short service commission in the RAF and began his training as a pilot in May 1939. He received his first operational posting early in 1940, arriving at Church Fenton in Yorkshire on February 3 to join No 242 Squadron, in which a considerable number of Canadians served.

The squadron fought in the Battle of France. On May 23 1940 Pilot Officer Benzie baled out south of Dunkirk, during an engagement with Messerschmitt BF 109s. He returned to England by ship and spent time in the RAF Officers' Hospital, Torquay. In June, with 242 at Coltishall in Norfolk, as part of Fighter Command's No 12 Group, Squadron Leader "Tin Legs" Bader took command. He would lead the squadron throughout the Battle of Britain, from the beginning of September also leading into action No 12 Group's "Big Wing".

Jack Benzie failed to return from an action over the Thames Estuary at about 5 pm on Saturday September 7, the day on which the Luftwaffe launched its first major attack on London. He was recorded as missing and eventually his name was placed on the Runnymede Memorial. In 1953 Benzie Lake, near Hone, Manitoba, was named in his honour.

The story moves forward to the mid-1970s when metal detector users searching for Roman coins found pieces of aircraft wreckage in a field at Blackacre, Theydon Bois, Essex, in an area where a crash was known to have occurred. An excavation took place in 1976 and, at a depth of 18 ft, a Merlin engine and cockpit containing human

remains were discovered. This led to the 1977 burial at Brookwood.

Despite further excavation insufficient evidence of the identity of the pilot has been uncovered to achieve the very high standards for formal identification, though there is much circumstantial evidence to suggest that this is the crash site of Jack Benzie's Hurricane. A further tribute was paid to him in 1990, when wreckage from the Blackacre crash site was placed at Benzie Lake by the Royal Canadian Air Force.

#### Major sources:-

Wynn, Kenneth G, *Men of the Battle of Britain*, manuscript of third edition to be published on June 30 2015 by Frontline Books, in association with the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust.

Saunders, Andy, *Finding The Few*, Grub Street, 2009

*After the Battle* magazine

Note: Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry was raised and financed in 1914 by Captain Andrew Hamilton Gault. It exists today as part of the Canadian armed forces and was deployed to Afghanistan in recent years.

The regiment was named after Princess Patricia of Connaught (1886-1974), youngest child of Prince Arthur, a son of Queen Victoria, who was Governor-General of Canada from 1911 to 1916. Princess Patricia was Colonel in Chief of the regiment for many years. In 1919 Patricia voluntarily relinquished her Royal style when she married a commoner, Commander the Hon Alexander Ramsay. She assumed the title Lady Patricia Ramsay, but continued to be regarded as a member of the Royal Family. Like John Benzie, Patricia had a Canadian lake named after her, in her case in

Alberta. Other tributes included the London, Midland and Scottish Railway "Princess Royal" express steam locomotive, *Lady Patricia*.

**Geoff Simpson**

**On a lighter note the editor was sent this joke:**

Time is like a river. You cannot touch the water twice, because the flow that has passed will never pass again. Enjoy every moment of life. As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery in the Nova Scotia back country. As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost and, being a typical man, I didn't stop for directions. I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There were only the diggers and crew left and they were eating lunch. I felt badly and apologized to the men for being late. I went to the side of the grave and looked down and the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play. The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I've never played before for this homeless man. And as I played "Amazing Grace", the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, and we all wept together. When I finished, I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car. Though my head was hung low, my heart was full. As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I never seen anything like that before, and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years." Apparently, I'm still lost....it's a man thing.

**LONDON EXPLORATIONS OF  
PEOPLE BURIED AT BROOKWOOD  
CEMETERY**

**GUILIO SALVIATI c 1843 -1896  
PLOT 25**

Guilio was a mosaicist and the second son of Antonio who founded the Salviati and Jesuram Company in London and Venice. Their London head quarters was originally at 213 Regent Street

and later at 235 Regent Street which is now an Apple Store. This building has fine set of Salviati mosaic spandrels outside the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and the designs include the coats of arms of the cities of London and Westminster intertwined with the Venetian lions of St. Mark.

The particular London works with which Giulio was likely to have been involved are many and include the depiction of the Last Supper on the reredos of the High Altar in Westminster Abbey. There is a very similar one by the Salviati Company in the church of All Saints, Downshire Square in Reading. In St. Paul's Cathedral he is likely to have been involved with the mosaics in the spandrels of the dome and the east end of the chapel of St. Dunstan and also depictions of Saints George, Andrew, Patrick and David in the Central Lobby of the Palace of Westminster.

**SIR EDWARD WILLIAM MOUNTFORD  
1855-1908 PLOT 30**

Sir Edward was an architect and his most significant building in London is the Central Criminal Court commonly known as the Old Bailey. This enormous and impressive edifice, built between 1900 and 1907 in neo-Baroque style is on the site of former Newgate Gaol. The main front stretches down Old Bailey (the street) and has a rusticated ground floor with the entrance beneath a segmented pediment with the three figures of Truth, Fortitude and the Recording Angel above which is the inscription "Defend the Children of the Poor and Punish the Wrongdoer".

**SIR JOHN WOLFE BARRY 1836-1918 PLOT 4**

He was an eminent engineer and had been a pupil of H. M. Brunel, the son of Isambard Kingdom Brunel. He worked on Charing Cross and Cannon Street Railway Bridges and, after the death of Horace Jones in 1887, he took over the design and completion of Tower Bridge. He also worked on the London Underground Railway. There is stained glass window memorial to him in Westminster Abbey.

**SIR ERNEST WILLIAM MOIR 1862-1933  
PLOT 3**

Sir Ernest was an engineer who worked with Sir John Wolfe-Barry. He was highly regarded and was the first civil engineer honoured by the British

Association. The National Portrait gallery in Trafalgar square has two portraits of him.

### THE ROYAL HOSPITAL, CHELSEA PLOT 54

Their first burial ground for these old soldiers, opened in 1692, is beside the Infirmary at the Royal Hospital in Chelsea. Recent interments here are those of Margaret and Dennis Thatcher whose ashes are beneath the main pathway. In 1854 this area had no more space and a plot in Brompton Cemetery was used until 1893 space at Brookwood was negotiated.

### WILLIAM 1839-1917 AND EVELYN 1855-1919 DE MORGAN PLOT 24

William was a ceramic artist with a kiln in Chelsea and Evelyn was a pre-Raphaelite painter. At one time they lived in Chelsea where they had a studio. Some of their work is in the Victoria and Albert Museum but the majority is in the De Morgan Centre in Wandsworth.

### JOHN SINGER SARGENT 1856-1925 THE RING



The son of American parents, he was a painter and trained in Paris before coming to England in 1884 where he became a portrait painter and was popular with members of fashionable society. During the First World War he was an official war artist and in 1914 painted "Graveyard in the Tyrol" which is in the British Museum and in 1919,

### The Bronze Plaque in St Paul's Cathedral

the famous picture "Gassed" which is in the Imperial War Museum in Lambeth. He has works in the National Portrait Gallery, the National Gallery and Tate Britain. His very dramatic bronze sculpted memorial in the crypt of St. Paul's was given to the cathedral after his death by his sisters.

### Val Pretlove

(Val is a Registered City of London Guide, and as well as guiding at Brookwood Cemetery, she guides at St Paul's Cathedral and Lambeth Palace.)

## The Byfleet Crosses

### The Artists Rifles Cross

The Great War memorial in St Mary's Church, Byfleet is probably unique. It includes 22 wooden crosses recovered from the battlefields after the war by the then Rector and Frederick Stoop, a Byfleet resident and local benefactor. The crosses contain the names of 22 out of the 36 Byfleet men killed in the Great War included on the plaque in the Church. One of the crosses lists 8 names '*1st Artists Rifles – Killed in Action 1st June 1918*', one of whom is on the church memorial, Corporal EJ Morrish, who was obviously a local man and, although from the Rifle Brigade, had been posted into the Artists Rifles.

Of the 8 names on the Artists Rifles Cross, two, Privates Edwin Firth and Hugh Frederick Denys Pring, enlisted in the 28th London Regiment (Artists Rifles) in 1917 while the other 6 soldiers were from the Rifle Brigade (5) and the London Rifle Brigade (1). The 5 Rifle Brigade soldiers had been posted into the Artists Rifles as also probably the London Rifle Brigade soldier as this was a common occurrence towards the end of the war. By June 1918 probably 2/3rd of Artists Rifles officers and men were from other regiments, principally the Rifle Brigade and the London Rifle Brigade.

In February 1918 the Regiment had been brought up to strength by the addition of a ½ battalion from the 2nd Bn London Rifle Brigade to make good casualties following the 3<sup>rd</sup> battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) and following the general reduction in the size of brigades from 4 battalions to 3 because of manpower shortages. After the big Allied withdrawals in March and April 1918, when there had been a further 300 casualties, there would have been a further need for replacements. All 8 soldiers were killed at Aveluy Wood, on the outskirts of Albert, during a period of continuous raids and counter raids (Col. HAR May, Memories of the Artists Rifles, 1929).

Both Private Firth and Private Pring are listed in the Artists Rifles Roll of Honour. All 8 are buried at Varennes Military cemetery together with 2 other Artists Rifles soldiers and one soldier posted into the Regiment, all killed around that date. 7 of the 8 are listed on the two Commonwealth War Graves

Cemetery listings for the Artists Rifles - from the Artist Rifles Regimental list - Pring and Firth, - from the Artist Rifles Associated list - 5 soldiers from the Rifle Brigade. The London Rifle Brigade soldier, although buried there, is not listed as AR Associated.



**Private HF Pring – AR,  
Private E Firth – AR  
Corporal EJ Morrish – RB,  
Rifleman J Davies - RB  
Rifleman CG Heather – LRB,  
Rifleman B North – RB  
Rifleman JC Ives – RB,  
Rifleman A Pearce – RB**

An interesting detail is that the ranks carved on the cross are all privates (except the corporal) which is correct for the Artists Rifles but not for the Rifle Brigade and London Rifle Brigade who as in all other rifle regiments are called Riflemen!

Private Pring also has a plaque in St John the Baptist Church, Alresford Hants which reads –

“To The Glory Of God/ And In Loving And Devoted Memory Of/ Hugh Frederick Denys Pring/ Who Fell In Action Near Aveluy Wood France/ On June 1st 1918/ And Is Buried At Varennes/ Aged 18 Years 9 Months/ They Shall Mount Up With Wings As Eagles, They Shall Run/ And Not Be Weary, They Shall Walk And Not Faint”.

See also

Memories of the Artists Rifles, Col. HAR May CD, VD, 1929.

Artists Rifles Roll of Honour and War Record 1914 – 1919, 1921

From

Mars & Minerva

Regimental journal of the Artists Rifles Association



**St Mary's Church Byfleet, Surrey**



**Interior of St Mary's Church Byfleet, Surey**

#### **Artists Rifles footnote**

The Artists Rifles was raised in 1860, one of a number of famous London volunteer rifle regiments formed in the patriotic fervour due to the threat of invasion by France.. The Regiment was formed originally from patriotic painters, sculptors, engravers, musicians, architects and actors and included the likes of Wyndham Phillips, Millais, Leighton, William Morris and other Pre-Raphaelites. In the early days the Regiment met at the Royal Academy. Over the years its membership

widened into include many professionals but maintained a significant 'artistic' core.

The Artists provided the largest contingent to the famous City Imperial Volunteers sent to South Africa for the Boar War in 1900-1901. It was mobilised as a regiment in August 1914 and after London Duties at the Tower of London went to France in October 1914 initially as GHQ Guard Battalion at St Omer where it also provided officer training and specialist machine gun training before the formation of the Machine Gun Corps. At the same time a 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion was formed as an Officer Training Corps. Over 10,000 officers were trained for all 3 services. In June 1917 the Regiment went into the line as part of the 63 (RN) Division until the end of the war. Its battle honours include Ypres 1917, Passchendaele, Hindenburg Line and Canal du Nord.



**Regimental badge**

In World War 2 the Regiment went into suspended animation and became an Officer Cadet Training Unit while serving members were disbursed over other units of the armed forces many as officers. In 1947 the Regiment was reconstituted as 21 Special Air Service Regiment (Artists) TA, (now Reserves) which it remains.

### **Derek Newton**

Note: Byfleet, Surrey, is a few miles from Brookwood Cemetery.



## **SOCIETY CONTACTS & COMMITTEE**

### **(1) Committee members**

**Kim Lowe** (Chairperson) ☎  
**Gail Naughton** (Acting Secretary) ☎  
**Rose Falkner** (Treasurer) ☎

**Lynne Cowley** (Publicity) ☎

### **ORDINARY MEMBERS**

**Jenny Graveson**  
**Margaret Hobbs** ☎

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### **(2) Other Contacts**

**Jo Toogood** (Membership Secretary)  
☎

**Rose Falkner** (Publications by Mail Order) ☎  
**Sarah Burt** (Auditor) ☎

**Margaret Hobbs** Newsletter /Necropolis News Editor ☎

(The Newsletter exists to promote contact between all members about all things regarding the Society. Margaret welcomes short personal contributions and aims to keep the content of the Newsletter current, varied and informative.)



**The views expressed by contributors to this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the editor and the society.**