

The Brookwood Express

The Newsletter of the Brookwood Cemetery Society



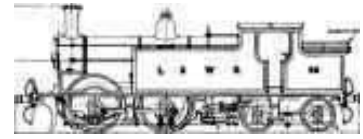
Editor: Margaret Hobbs

75 Ranelagh Crescent, Ascot, Berks, SL5 8LQ

☎ 01344 891041

email: margarethobbs@hotmail.co.uk

www.tbcs.org.uk email: info@tbcs.org



🌿 **No. 109 AUGUST 2017** 🌿

A Woman of Note

Dorothy Sa Whitelaw
(1862-1936)



Off St Chad's Avenue, in Plot 36 stands the memorial to Dorothy Whitelaw, the niece of the famous Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881). Dorothy was born on 19 May 1862 in the Kensington area and was the eldest daughter of the prime minister's brother Ralph and his wife Katharine (nee Trevor). When she was baptised at St James's, Paddington on 12 June her father was Registrar at the Court of Chancery.

Dorothy's position within Disraeli's family, especially with regard to inheriting his property, such as Hughenden Manor (now a National Trust property), was quite important as Disraeli had no children, nor did his

sister Sarah. Another brother, James (1813-1868) had two children, but they were illegitimate and had no claim upon the estate.

Dorothy had married Alexander Whitelaw, JP, DL (1862-1938), the great-uncle of Viscount (Willie) Whitelaw (1918-1999) in Kensington in 1886. He was the son of Alexander Whitelaw and Barbara Forbes, daughter of Robert Lockhart. The family came from Scotland and politics had long been in their blood. During their marriage Dorothy and Alexander sailed to North America on the ocean liners a number of times and, like their famous great-nephew, they had a home at Gartshore, Kirkintilloch in Scotland. They also had a home at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London and it was here that Dorothy died on 10 May 1936. However, the reasons for Dorothy's burial in Brookwood seem unclear.

Disraeli himself was buried beside his wife in the churchyard of the Church of St Michael and All Angels at Hughenden. In his will he left Hughenden to Dorothy's only brother, Coningsby (proudly named after the hero of his uncle's 1844 novel of the same name). Although Coningsby (1867-1936) was married, he had no children so when he died, shortly after Dorothy in 1936, Hughenden went to Dorothy's sister Sybil Isabella, wife of

John Selwin Caverley (1855-1900) of Oulton Hall. Dorothy had missed out owning the house by only three months. This fact may well have eliminated her from being buried with her uncle, who was later joined by Coningsby. The Disraeli family vault also contained Dorothy's father, Ralph and Mrs Brydges Willyams, who had bequeathed Disraeli her fortune on condition that she would be buried there (!).

Alexander Whitelaw died in a nursing home London on 10 June 1938 and was buried in Scotland; leaving Dorothy alone in Brookwood, a fact that certainly arouses curiosity.

Inscription on the art-deco garniture-style gravestone reads as follows:

“AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH
NEITHER SORROW NOR CRYING
NEITHER
SHALL THERE BE ANY MORE PAIN FOR
THE FORMER THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY
“SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF DOROTHY
SA
DEAR WIFE OF ALEXANDER WHITELOW
OF GARTSHORE
AND DAUGHTER OF RALPH DISRAELI
SHE FELL ASLEEP ON MAY 19TH 1936”

Jenny Mukerji

Sad News

The Society was very sad to hear earlier this year, of the death of Mr. Hand, who had been a long term Society member. Secondly of the death of Mr T. Toogood; husband of the Society Membership Secretary, Jo Toogood, who died in June. The Society send their condolences at this difficult time.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES: WALKS & OTHER EVENTS

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

Sunday 6th August 2017: British Colonials & Muslims led by Barry Devonshire. **NEW!** This will be preceded by a lecture in the Chapel in the North Section of the Cemetery.

Saturday 2nd September 2017: Family Day at the Brookwood Military Cemetery from 10am - 4pm.

Sunday 3rd September 2017: Sculpture and Symbolism led by Margaret Hobbs and Eileen Rogers. **NEW!** This walk will visit examples of the varied and beautiful memorials within the Cemetery.

Saturday 9th September 2017: Heritage Day at the Cemetery 11am - 3pm. There will be members of the Society to lead short walks around the Cemetery. Refreshments will be available.

Sunday 1st October 2017: Tree Walk led by George Hounsman.

Saturday 28th October 2017 at 7pm Halloween Walk followed by refreshments. Please bring a torch.

Sunday 5th November 2017: Mausoleum Walk led by Kim Lowe. This walk will visit some of the fine mausoleums within the Cemetery.

Society and Cemetery News

The Military Cemetery 28th May 2017

New Names of Jewish SOEs added to the Brookwood Memorial to the Missing.

On the Sunday morning of the 28th May 2017, a ceremony took place to honour and commemorate, 24 Jewish personnel of the Special Operations Executive. The names of these gallant men, 23 of which lost their lives in *Operation Boatswain*, on 18th May 1941, have been added to the 1939-1945 Memorial to the Missing, on Panel 27. Their commanding officer Major Sir Anthony Palmer is commemorated on panel 2 Column 1.



The new inscriptions on the Memorial

The other addition on the panel is to Fortunato Picchi an Italian who fled his native country to live in Britain. He died on 5th April 1941 while serving in the British Army.

All the Jewish men in *Operation Boatswain* had be recruited from the Palmach, the elite element of the Haganah Defence Force, (later the Israeli Army) and it was the first of their operational missions. The operation's aim was to sabotage an oil

refinery at Tripoli in Libya. The boat carrying the men from Israel was lost at sea in unclear circumstances, either by enemy action or by an internal explosion. Those who attended the ceremony included the Israeli ambassador to the UK, His Excellency Mark Regev who unveiled the plaque, relatives of the commandos, representatives of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Sandhurst Royal Academy, the Army Training Centre at Pirbright Barrack. Also present were Martin Sugarman of the Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Women, whose research confirmed that all 23 men were volunteers and Paul McCue, a trustee of the Secret WW 2 Learning Network, organized the service.



Photo courtesy of David Rose, The Guildford Dragon NEWS



Crosses at the bottom of Panel 27

**For further information see:
jewishnews.timesofirael.com
Guildford Dragon NEWS**

Memorial Day at the American Military Cemetery Brookwood 28th May 2017

The annual Memorial Day Service this year at Brookwood American Military Cemetery coincided with the 100th Anniversary of the entry of the USA into WWI. American and British flags had been placed on each individual serviceman's grave, including



At the American Chapel, at the beginning of the ceremony.

those of members of the Eagle Squadron from WWII, who are buried in the RAF plot, and the founder of the Squadrons Charles Sweeney in plot 119 in the civilian cemetery.



Flags placed by the memorials

The Memorial Service was hosted by Mr. Craig P. Rahanian the Superintendent at the American Military Cemetery, and in the presence of representatives of the US Air Force 422nd Air Base Group, the US Air

Force Europe Band Five Star Brass, VADM Christopher W. Grady, Commander of the U.S. 6th Fleet and Mr. Lew Lukens, the Chargé d' Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in London.

British representatives included Sword Company of the Army Training Centre, Pirbright, members HM Police Force, the HM Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey Mr. Michael More-Molyneux and the Mayor of Woking Borough Council, Councillor Graham Cundy.

The Master of Ceremonies was Commissioner Edwin L. Fountain, Vice Chair of the WWI Centennial Commission.

The Ceremony commenced with the presentation of the colours by the Colour Guard of the USAF 422nd AGG, RAF Croughton and members of HM Police Force. This was then followed by the national anthems of Britain and the United States of America, which were played by the Five Star Band. Mr. Craig Rahanian gave an introduction followed by the invocation by Rev Major Josefa Mairara, Chaplain of Forces at ATC, Pirbright.

There were two very interesting memorial addresses one by VADM Christopher W. Grady and the other by Mr Lew Lukens then the memorial prayer led by Major Joshua Payne, Chaplain 422nd Air Base Group USAF.

The laying of the many wreathes was to the very poignant "Going Home" and then a moment of silence. This was immediately followed by a stunning flypast by two fighter jets of 48FW 494th Fighter Squadron U.S. Airforce. The benediction was led by Mayor Josefa Mairara and after a final few words by Craig Rahanian there was the retiring of the Colours.

Right on 3pm at the commence of the service the rain came down, but this did not mar this very moving occasion.

Margaret Hobbs

Ceremony to Commemorate an Un-named Polish Soldier at Brookwood Cemetery.

Buried at Brookwood Cemetery, in the north section alongside the grave of Brig. Gen. J. Gorzechowski, is the grave of an unnamed Polish Soldier who died 54 years ago.

During renovation work on the memorial to Brig. Gen. Gorzechowski at the request of the Ministry of Defence in Warsaw, Poland, and the Polish Embassy in London, the grave of the unknown Polish soldier was discovered, by a member of the English charity, *The Polish Heritage Society*.

With the assistance of staff from the Brookwood Cemetery office, the burial details were found of the soldier's name and burial. He was Wlasylaw Kopytnicki and it was then decided to erect a memorial and give him the recognition he deserved.

On the morning of 7th June there was a memorial service for these two brave Polish soldiers. The service began with "Spij Kolego", the Polish version of The Last Post. The Reading, Eulogy and prayers, sensitively led by the Reverend Father Wladyslaw Wyszowadski, were partially in Polish and partially in English, so enabling everyone to share the sentiments. These were followed by a beautiful Polish hymn, "Boze Cos Polske", and the congregation left the chapel to the music of the "Warsaw Concerto".

The service was followed by a Blessing and wreath-laying at the grave and the re-dedication of the memorial to Brig. Gen. Gorzechowski.

The guard of honour comprised of three members of the Polish Military Police and three members of the Border Guards for Brig. Gen. J. Gorzechowski. The Consul

General, the Military Attaché and the assistant Military Attaché with four naval officers from NATO formed the guard of honour around the "unknown Polish Soldiers" grave. There were also members of the Polish Heritage Society present and there was about 30 people present at the ceremony.

The Society was represented by Eileen Rogers and Alison Vince.

This was the main memorial project for The Polish Heritage Society for 2017 and the memorial was funded by donations.

Eileen Rogers

AGM Report

The AGM on 28th June 2017 was held in the St Edward Brotherhood's newly restored Mortuary Chapel and was well attended with 23 members present.

The meeting started with the news that five of our long-term members, Mrs. Bridget Smith, Mr. Maurice Lawson, Mr. C. Refoy, Mr. Hand and Mr. Tim Toogood have passed away. The Society's sends condolences to all their families, and especially to Jo Toogood the Society's Membership Secretary.

The committee have continued with the Society's regular monthly walks, as well as the many private walks and talks, all of which have been well supported, and have raised funds for our restoration projects.

The mausoleums are continuing to be unbricked and gated. Two doors are in the process of being repaired, and we hope to repaint the railings around the Chichester memorial in plot 3, in the near future.

The St Edward Brotherhood were thanked, for allowing our many tour visitors access to their church, and to Father Nippon for giving them his

enlightened talks on the history of the St Edward Brotherhood.

The owners of Brookwood Cemetery, Woking Borough Council are still investing in the cemetery and are planning toilet facilities and parking areas in the former Non-Conformist side. Keeping the grass cut and the plots looking tidy is always a continual job.

Certain areas are looking a little unkempt, due partly to the fact that it is the fast-growing season, and partly from instructions from the Surrey Wildlife Trust; especially in regard to the appropriate time to cut the bracken down to weaken the future growth. Other areas in the Cemetery have been left uncut because the areas are inhabited by a particular species of orchid, and cutting will be carried out when they have finished flowering. It is all a fine balance.

A great amount of clearance work has uncovered a lot of previously lost from view headstones. Some memorials to notables, lately uncovered, could be researched and restored.

A statement of accounts was presented (enclosed with this newsletter) and the finances are still strong, although down on last year due, to the expenditure on the Lodge and restoration projects.

The St Edward Brotherhood was presented with a cheque for £200, towards the continuing restoration of the Mortuary Chapel and thanked for their hospitality and for the use of the Chapel for the meeting.

The New Cemetery Workshop

In May the new workshop in the area behind the Cemetery office was completed, and the car park now clear of equipment and storage containers. The

workshop looks very smart and secure and the car park has been resurfaced.

Society Sales Stand

The Committee will be taking the Sales Stand to the Family Day at Brookwood Military Cemetery on September 2nd and to the West Surrey Family History Society's Open day on 4th November.

NFCF AGM 2017 and Tour of Kensal Green Cemetery

On Saturday 10th June the AGM of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends was hosted by The Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery, and Alison Vince and Eileen Rogers were pleased to represent The Brookwood Cemetery Society. Attendees came from all over the British Isles, some even as far away as York and Glasgow.

We were given a very warm welcome on arrival, followed by a most informative illustrated history of Kensal Green Cemetery given by the NFCF chairman, Robert Stephenson. This cemetery was designed by George Frederick Carden, who was inspired by the beautiful burial grounds of Pere Lachaise in Paris. It was the first commercial cemetery in London, opening in 1833 and covering some 72 acres.

During our long and interesting guided walk around the burial fields, we were able to see the graves of some of the more celebrated personages who are interred there: Charles Babbage, Charles Blondin, Wilkie Collins, Henry Mayhew, William Makepeace Thackeray and Anthony Trollope, to name but a very few. In the first half of the 19th century, the cemetery became favoured as the burial ground for those in high society after the interment of HRH Prince Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex in 1843, followed by that of his sister HRH Princess Sophia in 1848. We were shown many splendid examples among the impressive monuments in this cemetery - so different from Brookwood, as of necessity the graves have had to be very closely spaced. The burial fields also serve as a conservation area, and there is

an air of beauty and tranquility in this historical ground.

The AGM meeting itself took place in the afternoon, after our wonderful lunch. It was interesting to listen to the reports of the members of the committee, and then later to the various delegates discussing problems encountered, some of which are very similar to ours at Brookwood, and some totally different.

Altogether a most enjoyable and thought-provoking day, and our thanks go The Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery for their excellent hospitality.

Eileen Rogers and Alison Vince

Facebook

The Brookwood Cemetery Society now has a Facebook page. Why not take a look.

Lieutenant General Bernard Cyril Freyberg

In the churchyard of the tiny St Martha's in Guildford lie 3 graves belonging to the Freyberg family. The beautiful setting, at the top of St Martha's Hill, with picturesque view of the woods and fields of Surrey below, lend a sort of appropriate grandeur, particularly to one of the graves, that of Lieutenant General Bernard Cyril Freyberg, 1st Baron Freyberg, VC, GCMG, KCB, KBE, DSO & Three Bars (21 March 1889 – 4 July 1963) who was a British-born soldier and Victoria Cross recipient, and served as the 7th Governor – General of New Zealand from 1946 – 1952.



The Freyberg family graves

Born in Richmond, Surrey, but brought up in New Zealand, Freyberg's military career was dazzling. A veteran of the Mexican Revolution, he served as an officer in the British Army during World War One and became its youngest general. He took part in the Gallipoli Campaign, receiving a Distinguished Service Order, and later served on the Western Front, becoming the youngest in the British Army at that time. He was decorated with the Victoria Cross after the Battle of the Somme and received two further Distinguished Service Orders. By the end of the war, Freyberg had added the French Croix de Guerre to his name, making him one of the most highly decorated British Empire soldiers of the First World War. He liked to be in the thick of the action – Winston Churchill called him “the Salamander” due to his ability to pass through fire unharmed. He was wounded nine times during his service in France; at one point a shell exploded at his feet.

During the Second World War, he commanded the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the Battle for Crete, the North African Campaign and the Italian Campaign. Freyberg was involved in the Allied defeat in Greece, defeated again as the Allied commander of the battle of Crete and performed successfully in the North African Campaign commanding the 2nd New Zealand Division, including, during the Battle of El Alamein.

In Italy, Freyberg was defeated again at the Second Battle of Cassino as a corps commander, but later relieved Padua and Venice, and was one of the first to enter Trieste, where he successfully confronted Josip Broz Tito's Partisans. By the end of the Second World War, he has spent altogether ten and a half years fighting the Germans.

On 14 June 1922 he married Barbara McLaren (a daughter of Sir Herbert and Dame Agnes Jekyll, and widow of the Honourable Francis McLaren) at St Martha on the Hill, where he is now buried.

Barbara had two children from her previous marriage; she and Freyberg later had a son, Paul (1923-1993).

After the Second World War Freyberg served as Governor – General of New Zealand from 1946 – 1952. In this post, he played an active role, visiting all parts of New Zealand and its dependencies. On 1 January 1946 Freyberg was appointed a Knight of the Order of Saint John. The Crown raised Freyberg to the peerage as Baron Freyberg of Wellington in New Zealand and of Munstead in the County of Surrey in 1951.

After his term as New Zealand Governor-General had finished, Freyberg returned to England, where he sat frequently in the House of Lords. On 1 March 1953 he became the Deputy Constable and Lieutenant- Governor of Windsor Castle.

In 1955, Freyberg High School in Palmerston North, New Zealand opened. There are a number of streets named after him in New Zealand.

Freyberg died in Windsor on 4 July 1963 following the rupture of one of his war wounds, and was buried in the churchyard of St Martha on the Hill near Guildford, Surrey. His wife is buried at his side, and their son Paul, who had been awarded the Military Cross, is buried at the end of their graves.

The Sir Bernard Freyberg Cup is awarded to the winner in single sculls at the New Zealand Rowing Championship.

Helen Reeves

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



SOCIETY CONTACTS & COMMITTEE

(1) Committee members

Kim Lowe (Chair) ☎ 01483 834421

Margaret Hobbs Secretary 01344 891041

Rose Falkner (Treasurer) ☎ 01252 726995

Lynne Cowley (Publicity) ☎ 01276 474421

Barry Devonshire (Webmaster) ☎ 01276 857292

ORDINARY MEMBERS

Eileen Rogers

Alison Vince

+++++

(2) Other Contacts

Jo Toogood (Membership Secretary)
4, College Close, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 4JU
☎ 01276 63703

Sarah Burt (Auditor)

Kim Lowe Publications by Mail Order ☎01483 834421

Margaret Hobbs Newsletter Editor ☎01344 891041

(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.)



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