

# The Brookwood Express

The Newsletter of the Brookwood Cemetery Society



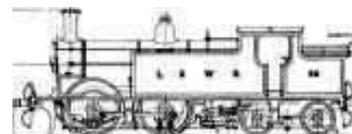
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❧ No. 106: NOVEMBER 2016 ❧

## The 400 Canadian Squadron Poppy Project



Earlier this year the Society was asked by Carl Mills of the 400 Squadron Historical Society, to help with the worldwide Poppy Project, that he was helping to organize, to mark next year's 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the Squadron ("The Toronto Squadron"). Members of this historical society have researched the casualties and their final resting places.

Kim was very pleased to take part in the project, and liaised with Carl about the photography and the delivery of the brass poppies

Brookwood Military Cemetery has the largest number of graves with 18 casualties, mainly buried in the Canadian Section, out of total of 29 casualties worldwide.

The project's aim was to photograph all the graves of Squadron members throughout the United Kingdom and Europe, with a display of brass poppies. The display of poppies arrived in a wooden box in August and were photographed in front of the headstones in early September.

To ensure that Carl received excellent pictures, we enlisted the help of professional photographer Debbie Hare.



***Poppy display (picture by Debbie Hare)***

The pictures have now been sent over to Carl Mills in Canada and the poppies returned.

The Woking News and Mail featured the Society and the Poppy Project in the 22<sup>nd</sup> September edition of the paper, which

was excellent publicity for the Society and the Project.

The 400 Squadron was deployed in Britain from 1940, and was the first Canadian Airforce Squadron to take part operationally in WWII; disbanded in August 1945 in Germany.

The Squadron first flew Lysanders III and Tomahawk I and were active in the evacuation of Dunkirk. In 1942 the Squadron took part in the Dieppe Raid flying Mustang I. Then from December 1943 flew, unarmed Spitfire



***The grave of Flying Officer W.G. Middlebro' Died 17<sup>th</sup> July 1940 aged 24 years.***

***In loving memory of a good and gallant son only child of loving parents of Owen Sound Canada***

***Picture by Debbie Hare***

Mk XI and Mosquitos Mk XVI in a photo reconnaissance role.

The Society would like to thank Debbie of [debbieharephotography.co.uk](http://debbieharephotography.co.uk) for all her help and time, in producing the lovely pictures, and the 400 Squadron Historical Society are delighted.

## **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 6<sup>th</sup> November 2016: INTRODUCTORY NON - CONFORMIST WALK** led by Kim Lowe & Margaret Hobbs. This walk will include visits to the graves of the free thinkers, political dissenters and airplane disasters.

**NO WALKS DECEMBER TO FEBRUARY BUT NEXT YEAR'S MONTHLY WALKS RESTART WITH:**

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2017: Railway Walk** led by Ian Devine. This walk is back by popular demand, and will follow the route of the old Necropolis Railway.

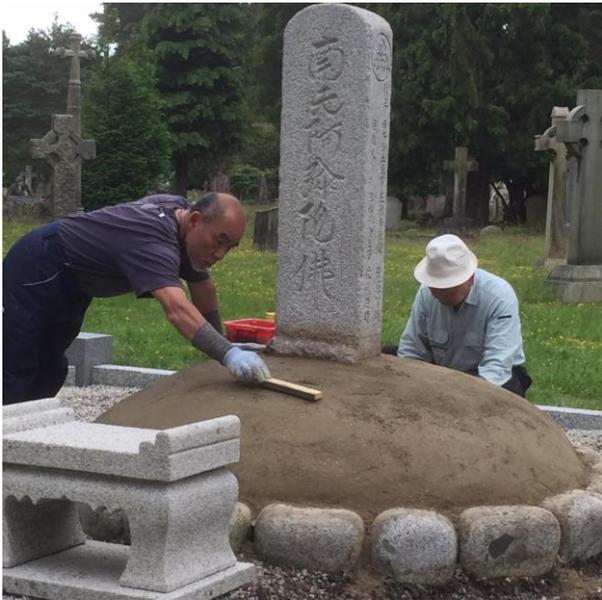
**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017: St Saviour's Southwark Walk** led by Barry Devonshire. **NEW!** This walk will highlight burials in both plots of this London parish.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2017: Prominent Women Walk** led by Kim Lowe and Jenny Mukerji **NEW!** This walk will highlight important women buried in the Cemetery and will cover both sections.



## Brookwood proves it's a small world

“I'm on my way home after spending a wonderful weekend helping Dharma friends rebuild the base of the Namu-Amida Butsu Stupa in Brookwood Cemetery Surrey”, said a message on Facebook from a “friend”, said BCS Press Officer Lynne Cowley. It accompanied a photo of restoration work being undertaken in mid-July 2016.



### *Restoration Work on the Stupa*

Sam Kelly, who made the post, continued: “Rev. Yoshihara and Mr Masayuki Ogawa came from Japan to oversee and complete the work”.

It was quite a surprise for Lynne to receive this post – from her ex brother-in-law Sam, with whom she last had contact some years ago. “I replied to him to say I was sorry I missed him and that I was BCS Press Officer and that it would be nice to meet up again.

Sam came back with: “What a small world we live in! I am a member of Three Wheels Shin Buddhist Temple, which has a big connection with Brookwood as Japanese modernisation pioneers with links to Prof. William Williamson of UCL are buried in the Serbian Church's area. The Stupa is just outside the Serbian enclosure and the ashes of any Buddhist can be placed there. We will have to try and meet again”. [ A Stupa is a mound-like or hemispherical structure containing relics and used as a place of meditation.]

In the summer of 2007 an English Zen monk, Venerable Zenko Croysdale, visited Rev. Prof. Kemmyo Taira Sato at Three Wheels Shin Buddhist temple in Acton, West London, and spoke to him of his intention to leave Three Wheels a bequest in his will. Venerable Chimyo Takehara, Head Priest in the head temple in Japan, suggested that, based on this bequest, Three Wheels might try and construct a grave site, free of any discrimination. This is open to Buddhists of any tradition, and for any friends of Three Wheels who might feel sufficiently comfortable with the Buddhist way of living.

Subsequently in the summer of 2007 the Three Wheels Stupa of Namu-Amida-Butsu was installed at Brookwood with the help of Mr Masayuki Ogawa, a Japanese garden designer from Kyoto, and six other Dharma friends from Japan. The central granite monument, carved in Kyoto by Mr Kinzo Nishimura - the best stonemason in Japan, bears the nembutsu, "Namu-Amida-Butsu" in calligraphy inscribed by Venerable Chimyo Takehara. The recent refurbishment was necessary due to problems with the original grass base.



### *The Stupa*

This is one of four monuments at Brookwood. For further details of Three Wheels Shin Buddhist Temple in Acton, London W3 and the other memorials go to: [www.threewheels.org.uk](http://www.threewheels.org.uk)

*Lynne Cowley*

## **The continuing story of the Lewis Family: Part IV by Jenny Mukerji**

### **Violet Aileen Lewis, née Morley (1875-1950)**

In previous issues of the Brookwood Express we have looked at members of the Lewis family who had theatrical connections and are buried in the Woking Section on the Anglican side of Brookwood Cemetery.

This time we will briefly look at Violet, the wife of James Henry Lewis (1871-1932) and the mother of Lionel Morley Lewis (1900-1944).

Violet was born in Ireland, the second daughter of Lt Col George Lyddon Morley and his wife, Mabel Ingram, nee Wheeler. Her grandfather, the Rev George Bomforde Wheeler was an educationalist in Dublin. She was one of ten children and soon after her birth, the family moved to Jersey and then to Dover where her father was on the Army Transport Staff. By 1891 they were living in South Stoneham and soon after this Violet attended the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts.

It was the acting life for her and by the end of 1894 she was touring the country with Wallace Erskine and Charles McDonna's repertory company. For six years she toured with a number of comedic companies, including The Charley's Aunt Company (W S Penley); and those of F T Thalberg's; Mrs O'Gallagher; W Payne Seddon; and Edward Lytton.

It was probably on tour that Violet met James Lewis as they were performing together in "The J.P." in 1898. In February 1899 they both appeared, along with other members of the Lewis family, in "Monte Cristo" at the Public Hall, in Woking. Later they toured the country together and it was probably when they

were appearing in Manchester that they married in 1899. Violet, like many actresses of her time, worked whilst heavily pregnant and her son Lionel was born in Aberdeen. After some time in London, the couple followed James's father to Woking. James died in 1932 and in about 1948 Violet moved to Colby, Norfolk to be with her surviving daughter, Monica Baker.

In later life, Violet supported amateur dramatic societies and the Workers' Education Association in Woking. She died in a nursing home in Sutton in March 1950 and was buried along with her husband in an unmarked grave in Brookwood.

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## **Cemetery and Society Update**

### **From the Chairman**

Over the last couple of years, I have been booked by many different societies to give a talk on Brookwood Cemetery.

Starting from the very first talk, to the Ladies of Farnham Homemakers, to the more recent Women Institute Groups, I have always received a warm welcome and encouragingly favourable comments on the talk I have just given; it has been a learning process in many ways.

Before I visit each Group, I try to find out what they are about so I can address my talk to them, so each talk is slightly different.

I have noticed also that some members belong to more than one group and some of them have also been the person who has recommended the Society to their talk organizer, to them I say a very big thank you.

So far I have travelled to destinations not unfamiliar to me, for which I thank my

husband for our Sunday afternoon drives, and for making me able to read a map, to a degree, so I have not got lost yet!!

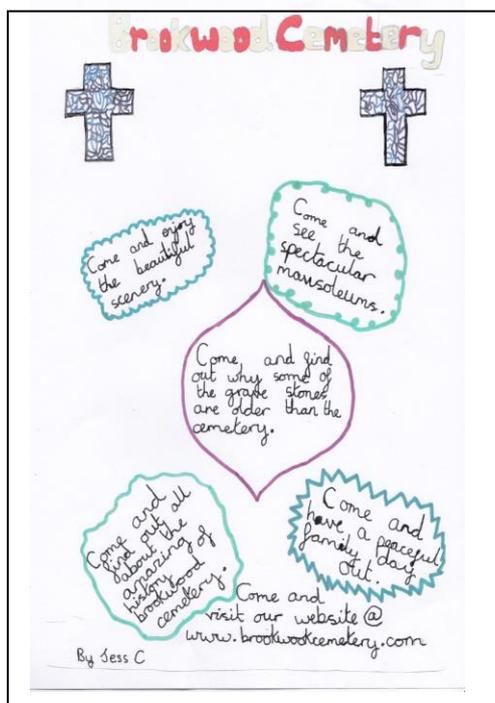
I am always amazed at the fact that a talk on the Cemetery is requested, but on behalf of the Society and our restoration fund I thank all the groups sincerely as they continue to boost our funds.

In conclusion I would like to say, I have spent many pleasant afternoons and evenings in the company of the various groups, and enjoyed some lovely chats afterwards with individual members, so my thanks go to those I have met so far and hope that the groups I have yet to meet enjoy my talks just as much.

### **Kim Lowe**

PS One of Kim's talks was for the Bagshot WI and this was reported in the St Anne's Parish Magazine.

## **Horsell Church of England School Visit**



### **Poster from a pupil of Rowan Class**

On 12<sup>th</sup> July, all the pupils (87 plus 11 adults) of

year 5 from Horsell Church of England School, visited the Cemetery. This trip was part of their school curriculum on Muslims and Victorians.

The pupils arrived on the train and walked to the South section of the Cemetery, where they split into two groups. In the morning the children visited the grave of Dr Gottlieb Leitner, other eminent Victorians, learnt about the St. Edward Brotherhood and re- interments. After lunch they visited the Muslim Sections before returning to school by train.

But unfortunately the day was marked with heavy showers, especially whilst the group were having their packed lunch. But the children coped admirably, and the lodge was well used.

The school has sent a donation of £100 and Rowan Class sent lovely posters that they had designed, and these will be displayed in the Visitor Centre. It is hoped a similar visit will be made next year.

### **Margaret Hobbs**

## **Brookwood Cemetery Conservation Management Framework Meeting**

A meeting was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016 to which Kim and I were invited, along with other interested parties. The meeting was hosted by Ian Tomes the Strategic Asset Manager for Woking Borough Council and Dovetail Building Consultants.

The aim of the meeting was to discuss additions to the 211 page study that had previously been distributed. The meeting last about 2 hours and we were left with the impression that the Council were taking the running and conservation of Brookwood Cemetery very seriously.

### **Heritage Day 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

In spite of a rather damp day there was a steady stream of interested visitors. The Society offered three walks through the day

and displays in the lodge.

Woking Funeral Services brought an information stand and displayed a hearse and a vintage Austin car. Haven Memorials were also present with memorial information. These stands added to the atmosphere of the day.

### **The Watts Gallery Walk**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> September, a group of Friends and Trustees from the Watts Gallery, Compton came for a tour at the Cemetery. As the group were mainly interested in the artists buried in the Cemetery, our art expert Jenny Mukerji assisted with the walk. It proved very successful and many thanks Jenny for all her help.

### **The St Edward Brotherhood Mortuary Chapel Appeal.**

The Brotherhood have reported that the main contractors repairing the exterior of the Chapel has nearly finished and the Romanian parishioner/contractors are beginning work on the internal redecorating of building.

It was discovered during the repairs that the turret finial which was thought to be complete, once had an attachment, so a cross will be fitted.

### **Planning Permission Application**

A planning application was submitted to Woking Borough Council in September, for change of usage of the Red House (the offices off Cemetery Pales on the North Side of the Cemetery) to 29 flats. It is unsure at the moment what environmental impact this will have on Brookwood Cemetery.

## **Signs of the Times**

This photo shows some of the haul of broken road signs recently found in Brookwood Cemetery. As well as making completely new road signs, David Cowley also repairs those that

have been damaged by being reversed into, set fire to or generally abused! As the posts alone are made of wood – the painted name part is actually made from plastic - it is important that they are installed without being hammered in as they will break.

The first signs he made, some years ago, were all wood, but these were affected by the elements and took longer to make than the more durable plastic ones.



*The haul of damaged signs*

**If you see any damaged signs, please let us know, but leave in situ. David will collect them and assess the best course of action!**

### **New Committee Members**

The Committee would like to welcome two new members; Eileen Rogers and Alison Vince. Their added support will be greatly appreciated.

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

## A Different Kind of Memorial Ensign Howard Allen Holding (1922-1944)

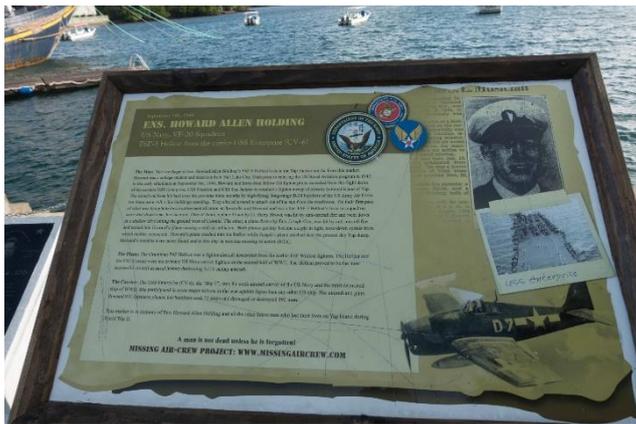
### US Navy VF-20 Squadron F6F-5 Hellcat from the Carrier USS (CV-6) Enterprise.

**On the island of Yap, Micronesia in the Pacific, are a collection of memorials located near air crash sites, to airmen who died over the island in WWII. Some of the bodies were recovered after the war and repatriated but others remain "missing".**

The Missing Air Crew Project have over a period of 20 years researched the crash sites and the history of the air crews who died between 1944-45. The project has been responsible for the erection of these memorials in conjunction with officials in Yap.

"This project is dedicated to the mission of locating the unaccounted men and planes who were lost near Yap Island in WWII".

For some families, sadly their son's bodies were never recovered, and are still one of the "missing". One such airman was Ensign Howard Allen Holding, (service number 3056860 who crashed near Yap town, now Colonia, on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1944.



**Ensign Holding's memorial on Yap Island, erected by the project, photo courtesy of Malcolm Hobbs.**

Howard enlisted in the American Navy on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 1942 and at the time of his death was serving on the carrier USS Enterprise. Early in the afternoon of the 6<sup>th</sup> September 1944, thirty- four F6F-5 Hellcats took off from

three aircraft carriers (including the F6F-5 piloted by Holding), the USS Enterprise, USS Franklin and USS San Jacinto.

Holding and two other pilots from the USS Enterprise were lost in thirty seconds; the two others were Ensign Cox and Lt. Brown. Accounts from witnesses, claim that the aircraft piloted by Ensign Cox was hit by anti-aircraft fire, and then collided with Holding's plane; with both spirally down towards jungle on the west of Yap Town. After much research the wreck of F6F-5 Hellcat was located in Yap Harbour in 2006.



**The crash site of Lt. Brown**

After the war the body of Ensign Cox was recovered and repatriated but those of Holding and Brown were unrecoverable.

The jungle crash site of Lt. Brown is marked by a simple wooden cross, probably erected by local inhabitants.

**Ensign Holding** was the son of Joseph Terrence Holding and Ida Alice Holding née Openshaw. He was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 1922 in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA and had a younger brother Terrence Boyd (1929-1913) and an older sister Bessie Laura (1917-1999).

Here he was brought up and where there is a memorial to him in City Cemetery, Salt Lake City, Utah.



The application for this memorial stone was made by his father in 1961, to the United States Government, who approved a flat granite marker on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1961. The document reveals that Joseph Holding had to agree, that the

placing of this memorial would be at no expense to the Government.

Ensign Howard Allen Holding was awarded the WII American Campaign Medal, WII Victory Medal, Asiatic-pacific Campaign Medal, and the Purple Heart Air Medal.

The recommendation for the Purple Heart Air Medal was made on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1946 and his citation reads as follows;

*"For meritorious achievement in serial flight as a Pilot in Fighting Squadron Twenty attached to the USS Enterprise in action against enemy Japanese forces on Yap, Caroline Islands, September 6<sup>th</sup> 1944. Flying as Wingman during vigorous fighter sweep against vital hostile installation and gun emplacements, Ensign Holding courageously manoeuvred through an intense barrage from Japanese anti-aircraft weapons and pressed home his strafing and rocket attack with determined aggressiveness, steadfastly holding to his target, until his plane was hit by enemy fire and crashed. Ensign Holding's expert airmanship and resolute devotion to duty throughout this and numerous other hazardous combat missions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."*

*From the President*

His father and mother died in 1983 and 1985 respectively, and are buried near their son's memorial in Salt Lake City Cemetery.

I would like to thank Malcolm Hobbs for all his help.

**Margaret Hobbs**

**Sources: The Missing Aircrew Project**



## SOCIETY CONTACTS & COMMITTEE

### (1) Committee members

**Kim Lowe** (Chairperson) ☎

**Margaret Hobbs** Secretary ☎

**Rose Falkner** (Treasurer) ☎

**Lynne Cowley** (Publicity) ☎

### ORDINARY MEMBERS

**Barry Devonshire** ☎

**Eileen Rogers**

**Alison Vince**

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### (2) Other Contacts

**Jo Toogood** (Membership Secretary)

**Sarah Burt** (Auditor)

**Kim Lowe** Publications by Mail Order ☎

**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.)



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