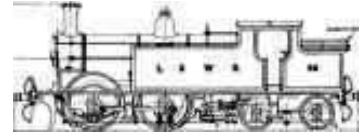


# The Brookwood Express

## The Newsletter of the Brookwood Cemetery Society



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❧ **No. 102: NOVEMBER 2015** ❧

### SOCIETY AND CEMETERY NEWS

#### The Lodge

The Society has just been informed that planning permission went in at the end of September, for the wooden lodge, which will be used as a Council meeting room and a base for the Society. So hopefully in the New Year, the Society will be able to offer permanent displays and a sales and a refreshment area.

#### Mausoleums

This year the Mausoleums within the Cemetery have been very much on the restoration agenda.

The Montagu – Winch Mausoleum was cleaned by the Victoria Cross Trust in March, and in time for Heritage Day the outside of the Columbarium was also cleaned.

Due to the raising of sufficient funds from the Society's monthly, private walks and lectures, (of which there has been an increased interest this year), the Committee, as reported in the August Newsletter were able to order the wrought iron gates. Installation was carried out on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015, on the Hughes, Normand and Braine Mausoleums

So a couple of days before, members of the Society and Cemetery staff, unbricked the doorways of these mausoleums. This was an exciting time as these mausoleums had not been open for approximately eighteen years. More information on the openings is on pages 3 & 4.

At the present time estimates have been received from the manufacturers for a further two more sets of wrought iron gates; for the Colquhoun and the Montagu – Winch Mausoleums. These will be fitted next year.

#### Clearance around the Colquhoun Mausoleum

During the latter part of the summer the Cemetery staff cleared the ground around the Colquhoun Mausoleum (the oldest in the Cemetery). The thick scrub was chopped back and a pathway made. This was then covered with wood chippings, processed from the felling of the diseased trees earlier in the year. The area looks stunning.



#### The August & September Walks

The Introductory Walk Part II held in August, which

covered areas of the Non-Conformist section and was well attended.

The Nature Walk in September was again popular and the fungi within the Cemetery were at their very best Thank you George for a lovely walk.

### Heritage Day September 13th 2015

This event attracted over 60 visitors with tours throughout the day. Diane and her staff laid on a BBQ, which was a great success. There was a lot of interest in the Society, resulting in several new members.

### The Re-binding Project

Another funeral index book has been renovated by Father Thomas, and this will make the fifth book that that Society has sponsored.

### The Society Committee

#### 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> December 2015: *Extra Event* Restoration Walk** led by Kim Lowe and Margaret Hobbs. This will be a walk highlighting the restoration projects of the Society over the years.

**NO WALKS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2016.**

### Sunday March 6<sup>th</sup> 2016 : A *New* Introductory Walk Part I

led by Barry Devonshire . This new walk will visit graves not previously covered in the Society's Introduction Walks.



## SOCIETY CONTACTS & COMMITTEE

### (1) Committee members

**Kim Lowe** (Chairperson) ☎

**Gail Naughton** (Secretary) ☎

**Rose Falkner** (Treasurer) ☎

**Lynne Cowley** (Publicity) ☎

### ORDINARY MEMBERS

**Barry Devonshire** ☎

**Margaret Hobbs** ☎

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### 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.**

## **The Opening of the Mausoleums**

### **The Hughes Mausoleum Plot 19**

The ground around the Hughes Mausoleum had been cleared by Cemetery staff, to enable the opening and installation of the new protective grill. After the removal of the breeze blocks the interior was found to be dry, and after a little oiling, the granite doors pushed open. There are four caskets of ashes. *(The history of the Hughes & Bell families can be found on pages 6-8)*

The chance discovery by Kim Lowe of a lovely memorial plaque, just under the soil at the entrance was an added bonus.



***The Hughes Mausoleum with the Wrought Iron Gates***



***The Hughes Mausoleum before and after the clearance work***



***The interior of the Hughes Mausoleum including the metal plaque***



### **The Normand Mausoleum Plot 25**

The next mausoleum to be opened up was the Normand Mausoleum, which contains the ashes of Ernest and Henrietta Normand and seven members of their family. The last ashes were interred in 1954.

The interior is decorated with beautiful white marble, with a frieze painted border. Again the inside was dry. The caskets had been placed on beautiful marble shelves on the back wall of the mausoleum.





***The Normand Mausoleum with the new wrought iron gates***



***The inside of the Normand Mausoleum courtesy of Kim Lowe***

### **The Braine Mausoleum Plot 74**

The third mausoleum of the Braine family was the last to have the entrance exposed.

Sadly the door with a metal screen has been forced and damaged and is in a very rotten state of repair. The door will be replaced shortly and the metal covering re-attached. The lovely circular lead glass window in the

rear wall is broken and will need specialist repair work. The interior is of white marble, and on the back wall is an altar with a cross and a kneeling cushion, in the same marble.

There is only one interment in the mausoleum in a coffin encased in marble; the remains of Fanny Robinson Braine who died in 1934.



***The Braine Mausoleum with the new gates***

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### **An Appeal for Bygone Pictures Of Brookwood Cemetery**

Does any member have any old pictures of the Cemetery? Would they be willing for them to be copied or scanned? The Society and the Cemetery Directors are keen to have a pictorial history of the Cemetery through the ages.

If anyone can help with this project, could they please contact Kim Lowe or Margaret Hobbs.

### **The Battle of Britain Talk**

## 4<sup>th</sup> October 2015 by Geoff Simpson



About 40 visitors attended the Battle of Britain lecture on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2015 given by member Geoff Simpson. He gave an excellent talk on different aspects of the Battle of Britain. Sadly there are only twenty – one, of the airman living today.

He explained of the decision to award the clasp and the difficulty in defining the time scale of the Battle of Britain, (10<sup>th</sup> July – 31<sup>st</sup> October 1940) for eligibility. He also talked about the pilot losses, and the German campaign against the airfields.

He also talked about the important role that women in the WAAF played, in the plotting rooms around the country, therefore helping to co – ordinate the Battle. Some of the several incidents of heroic actions by WAAFs during German bombing raids at that time were highlighted, and the awarding of the George Cross Medal to these WAAFs for their brave actions,

It was explained that not all the pilots were young as some in their forties took part in those vital months.

The difficult problem of the recovery and identification of remains, and the discovery and later re-excavations of crash site giving further human remains was highlighted.

Lastly Geoff spoke of the humour of the time, including the use of nicknames by flight personal. Also the big question of which side actually won the Battle of Britain, after the German's change of tactics to civilian bombing targets, and the cancellation of Operation Sea Lion.

The talk was followed by a walk in the Brookwood Military Cemetery where some of the Battle of Britain pilots are buried.

Thank you very much Geoff for a very interesting and entertaining afternoon.

## **FLIGHT SERGEANT SYDNEY JOHN HOBBS (1916-1941) Battle of Britain Pilot**

When one thinks of the Battle of Britain, it is usually of Spitfire and Hurricane planes and pilots; but during this battle there were five Coastal Command Blenheim squadrons. The Fleet Air Arm had two squadrons that flew Fairy Fulmars and Gloster Sea Gladiators, and Fighter Command also had squadrons flying Boulton Paul Defiants and Gloster Gladiators.

**Sydney John Hobbs** was a pilot who flew Blenheims with Coastal Command and was eligible for the Battle of Britain Clasp. Sydney was born in 1916 in Battersea, London, the youngest of four children of Arthur James Bray Hobbs and Alice née Pratt.

He enlisted with the RAFVR early in 1939 and trained as a pilot. On the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939 he was called up and after training, he was sent on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1940 to 5 Operational Training Unit at Aston Down, Gloucestershire. Later that month, after he had converted to flying Blenheims, he was posted to 235 Squadron at Detling, Kent, and it was with this Squadron that he served throughout the Battle of Britain.

The Squadron carried out fighter reconnaissance missions, after the fall of the Low Countries and later during the Battle of Britain, was engaged in convey protection and more reconnaissance over the North Sea.

Sydney is mentioned in the book "Coastal Dawn" and flew 300 sorties with B Flight. The book describes some of the sorties that he was involved in and mentions that he had a wife Joan Moira, who lived in Clapham, London.

The flight was posted to Aldergrove and combined with a flight from 236 Squadron to make 272 Squadron to carry out shipping-escort duties. Sergeant Hobbs is recorded as flying his first operational sortie with the squadron on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1940.

On December 21<sup>st</sup> 1940 Sergeant Hobbs was on the return journey from a convey mission when he encountered bad weather and was low on fuel. He and his crew were forced to bale out over Ireland. The crew were unhurt but were interned. Somehow in July 1941 Sergeant Hobbs managed to get to Northern Ireland and it is unclear how he had escaped from internment. On his return he served with 143 Squadron, which was a Beaufighter coastal- reconnaissance unit, based at Dyce, near Aberdeen. He was killed just a month later on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1941, when his plane, Beaufighter T4648 stalled on landing at Dyce. He was aged 25 years and he is buried at Brookwood Military Cemetery; grave reference 25.B. 20.

### ***Margaret Hobbs***

**Sources:** Men of the Battle of Britain by  
Kenneth G Wynne  
[www.bbm.org.uk](http://www.bbm.org.uk)  
[www.raf.mod.uk/history](http://www.raf.mod.uk/history)  
Coastal Dawn by Andrew D Bird  
[Skynet.ie-dan/war/crashes.htm](http://Skynet.ie-dan/war/crashes.htm)  
Ancestry



## **Birth Announcement**

It is not often that the society gets the news of such a happy occasion as a birth. Many congratulations to members Alex and Sarah Cowley, on the birth of their son Thomas and a brother for Elizabeth. Also congratulations to the happy grandparents David and Lynne Cowley.

Lynne is a member of the committee and David continues to repair and make new avenue signs within the cemetery.

## **Lost Ashes**

The columbarium has not been used for the depositing of ashes since the 1980's, but an exception was made this summer.

Last year an urn of human ashes was left in Sainsbury's. There was no identification on the urn, so the ashes were taken into custody by the police, for about a year. Nobody came forward to claim the urn, even though there was much publicity locally.

After much discussion with the local authorities it was agreed to place them in the Columbarium.

## **The Hughes Family Plot 19**

Following the opening up of the Egyptian style Hughes Mausoleum on 10<sup>th</sup> August, and the discovery of the metal plaque (see page 1), it seemed right to learn more about the family's history.

There are four caskets of ashes in the mausoleum, those of Rosalind Ormond Hughes (1867-1907), her husband John Hughes (1845-1934), Sybil Ormond Bell (1878-1911) and her husband Otto Joseph Bell (1868-1939).

Rosalind and Sybil were sisters, the daughters of Herbert Ormond Williams, an Officer at Arms.

**Rosalind Osmond Williams** was born in Leicester and she married John Hughes in Liverpool in January 1884, giving her age as 20 years; but in fact she was only 17 years old. They appear not to have had any children. In 1891 John and Rosalind are living at Springmead, Windsor Terrace, Hampstead, London, but by 1901 the couple had moved to Kensington, London. They then moved again to The Manor House, Hampton-on-Thames, Middlesex, where they were living at the time of Rosalind's death, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1907.

**John Hughes** was born in Brymbo, a small village in Denbighshire, Wales and was a prosperous Timber Merchant and Engineer. All his residences had a housekeeper and at least six other servants; his wealth was also emphasized by the position and opulence of the family Mausoleum. He died on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1934 at the Manor House, Hampton-on-Thames, and left £151,917. 8s. His executors included his brother-in-law Otto Joseph Bell.

## The Bell Family

**Alfred** (1833-1895) and **Jane Bell** (1833-?) lived next door in Bayford House to John and Rosalind Hughes, at Windsor Terrace, Hampstead. They had a large family of nine children; six daughters and three sons, one of whom was Otto Joseph. This must have been how Sybil met her future husband Otto, while visiting her sister. Alfred's employment was given as a Stain Glass Artist.



*The plaque  
found outside the Hughes Mausoleum*

In 1891 **Otto Joseph** then 23 years old, was an Electrical Engineering Student and three years later he married Sybil on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1894 at Kensington Registry Office, London. She was seventeen years old. They had five children, Rosalind Sybil (1894-?), John Otto (1898 - 1917), Gwendoline Violet (1895 -1948), Molly Irene (1900 - ?) and Reginald Arthur (1901-1919). Gwendoline and Otto John both added

the name Hughes to their surnames, so it can be surmised that as Rosalind and John Hughes were childless, they in some way sponsored their niece and nephew. The Bell family moved several times between 1884 and 1911, living at several addresses in London and in Wales.

Sadly Sybil like her sister, died young, while the family were living in London, and when Reginald was only ten years old. After her death, Otto moved to "Whitehall" Ormond Avenue, Hampton-on-Thames, Middlesex, near to the residence of John Hughes, where he resided for some years, later returning to London.

On the outbreak of WW1 Otto enlisted with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and was gazetted as the rank of Captain on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1914. He was later promoted to the rank of Major and served until 1919.

In 1921 Otto married Ida Davis, and at some point moved away from Baron's Court, London to "Greenaway Cottage", High Park, East Horsley, Surrey, where he died on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1939.

## John Otto and Reginald Arthur Bell

Otto and Sybil's son **John Otto Bell- Hughes** was educated at Elstree and Harrow schools. On the outbreak of WWI he became a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Middlesex Regiment. While serving on the Western Front, he was attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Lancashire Fusiliers, and he was fighting with them, when he was killed in action, near Ypres, on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1917 age 19. He has no known grave, and is commemorated on panel 113-115 at the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium. He is also commemorated on a panel in St John's Church Hampstead, London.

**The younger son Reginald Arthur** was an Engineer's Assistant, who had enlisted with the East Surrey Regiment. While training at Clipstone Camp, Forest Town, near Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, he was tragically killed in a



shooting accident. Below is an extract from the coroner's report and comments from the website [www.ourmansfieldandarea.org.uk](http://www.ourmansfieldandarea.org.uk)

## **Reginald Alfred Bell**

### **(Violent death at Clipstone Camp)**

*"Bell Reginald Alfred, Private 12437, 3rd East Surrey Regiment died from a gunshot to the head 16th July 1919 aged 18. He was the son of Major Otto Joseph Bell of 7, Palliser Court, Baron's Court, London and the late Sybil Ormond Bell.*

*Notes taken from the Coroner's report by G.G. Warburton, Deputy Coroner dated 18th July 1919 state - Reginald Alfred Bell L/12437, the East Surrey Regiment stationed at Clipstone Camp was on the 16th July 1919 shot by a rifle fired by Private 12314 G. Woodward of the same Regiment, whereby he sustained injuries to the mouth and neck and died there immediately, at Clipstone Camp aforesaid, and that the said Reginald Alfred Bell accidentally and by misadventure was killed. That he was 18, and an Engineers Assistant of Manor House, Hampton on Thames.*

*Brief notes from the Military Court of Enquiry - Private Woodward had in fact shot two soldiers at the same time, the other being Private 49137, C. Alexander shot through the right thigh which was severe and he will not be able to continue in the army. On that fateful day Pte Woodward was cleaning his musket in his hut after he and other soldiers had returned from the Rifle Range at the camp. It was claimed by Woodward that he did have a miss-fire and that the bullet was left on the range. On this day at about 12-15 hrs he showed Pte 12458 H Hickman whilst still on the rifle range a round of ball ammunition with a dent in the cap and he then placed it in his jacket pocket. In their hut Woodward showed Pte 12455 C Ings the same ammunition. Private Bell was declared dead at the scene at 14-15hrs. He is buried in St Alban Churchyard, Forest Town, Nottinghamshire. He was training at Clipstone Military Training Camp which was not far from this church."*

## **Sybil and Otto Bell's Daughters**

Of the eldest child **Rosalind Sybil** who was staying or living with Rosalind and John Hughes in the 1901 census, I have as yet found no other information on her life.

**Qwendoline Violet** was married to Stuart Percy Holmes-Smith (1897-1950), a Company Director on 8th January 1923, in Singapore. He also served in WWI in the Royal Flying Corps. They had three children. In 1948 at time of her death, the couple was living at "Ormond House" Sandown Avenue, Esher, Surrey, where two years later Stuart also died.

**Molly Irene** in 1921 married Sir James Perow Ivo Myles Corry in Kingston, Surrey. They had three children Anne (1922-1992), William James (1924-2000) and Susan (1926-1995). They divorced in 1937 and in 1938 she married Captain John Forester Cochrane.

There were no further interments of ashes in the Hughes Mausoleum after the death of Otto Joseph Bell in 1939, and the reason is unclear; maybe with no direct male heirs and the daughters marrying into other families, the mausoleum was forgotten.



***The war graves at St Alban's Church Forest Town, Mansfield***

***Margaret Hobbs***

**Sources:** Peerage.com

Ancestry

[www.ourmansfieldarea.org.uk](http://www.ourmansfieldarea.org.uk)

Pauline Marples

Commonwealth War Grave Records