



Spring 2018 - Issue 4

FRIENDS OF THE DOWN CEMETERY

Chairman's Ramblings

Welcome all to the fourth edition of the friends newsletter, with a whole new look for 2018. It is bigger and I hope you agree, better.

We have added an area for a biography for the war dead that are remembered at the cemetery, expanded the area of nature's corner and in the next edition, a page to celebrate the general public remembered in the cemetery. I hope you like the new look.

If you have any suggestions or family history that you would like included in future editions, please let me know.

Since the last edition, we have held our first AGM. This event was well attended. The meeting included a brief update on how well we did in our first year and what we wish to accomplish this year.

We then had a talk by Glyn Coy about drone photography. Glyn spoke of plans to use his drones to photograph the cemetery from the air which will be done this year. These pictures will be published on our website - <http://www.fotdc.org>, so watch this space!

We are starting the wild flower meadow experiment by marking out four areas for the trial. We will be leaving one as grass, the second will have the grass cleared, the third will be a wild flower seed mix and the fourth will be for wild flower turf. The trial will last for two years and I will keep you posted.

If you have any comments about this newsletter or anything linked to the cemetery, please let me know at robertw@fotdc.org



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WE FEW WE HAPPY FEW, WE BAND OF BROTHERS

Edmund John Hilary Sylvester DFC



Edmund was born on the 13th January 1914 at the Orchard, Hilperton. His father was Fredrick Arthur Percy Sylvester (38) whose occupation was Solicitor and Coroner. His mother Mary Winifred Duncan (19) of private means. He was baptised on the 7th February 1914 and attended Harrow School from 1928 to 1930.

Not much more is known about his early years but it is reported in the London Gazette on the 19th September 1939. 'That acting pilot officer is confirmed in his appointment as pilot officer on the 27th August 1939. He went on to serve in squadron 501 and his service number was 90556.

Squadron 501 went to Betheniville in France on the 10th May 1940. Sylvester clamed a Henkel He111 destroyed and shared in the destruction of a Dornier Do17 with Sergeant P.C.P Farnes on the 12th. He shared in the destruction of another Do17 A1KH of 2KG53 which came down at Beaumont-en-Argonne on the 14th. The squadron the moved to Anglure on the 25th - on this day he failed to return from patrol last seen diving near Abbeville with his engine smoking.

Sylvester turned up the next day, having made a forced landing after his aircraft was damaged by return fire from a Do17 and flack over Dieppe at

15000ft.

He probably destroyed a Messerschmitt BF110 On the 27th but this kill was unconfirmed

Moving ahead of the advancing Germans, 501 went to Le Mans on the 2nd June and then on to Dinard on the 11th. By this time Sylvester possessed a Caterpillar club badge for parachute descents on the 3rd and on the 14th

The squadron was withdrawn to Jersey on the 17th and it re-assembled at Croydon on the 21st.

Sylvester was lost on the 20th July 1940 in a Hurricane P3082, shot down by Lieutenant Zirkenbach of I/JG 27 into the English Channel in the Lyme Bay area.

Recorded in the London Gazette 'On the 24th April 194 Pilot Officer Auxiliary Air force deceased was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with effect from 27th June 1940

Recorded in the local paper 'Sylvester reported missing July 1940, now officially presumed killed in action. Pilot Officer Edmund John Hilary Sylvester beloved son of Mr & Mrs Sylvester of Bath.'

Recorded in a local paper. Sylvester, Edmund John Hilary of 8 Rivers Street, Bath. Died 20th July 1940 on war service administration. He left his effects to Fredrick Arthur Percy Sylvester – Solicitor a total of £1198 18s 8d.

He is remembered on the family grave in the Down Cemetery and at Runnymede memorial. Casualty number 20287 panel 10.



PHOTO GALLERY



JAMES LONG **JL** (MASONS) LTD
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Robin

Erithacus Rubecula Melophilus

Description

A small, fat bird with seemingly no neck, the most obvious plumage features in the bold orangey-red face and breast bordered by grey. The round head is olive-brown on the crown and nape, as are the remainder of the upperparts. The wings are slightly darker brown, particularly on the primaries, and the tail often appears darker on the tip. The under parts (from below the breast) are off-white, with a buff wash on the flanks. The bill is short and relatively fine and black. The eyes are beady and black, while the legs and feet are light brown.



Distribution

The Robin is a permanent resident of the British Isles and is distributed widely across the whole of the country and is a frequent garden visitor

Nesting

Will nest in most places but if using a nest box prefers an open fronted box. Nest will be made up of dead leaves, moss, hair and a few feathers. Usually 5 or 6 eggs (19.8mm x 15.5mm) coloured white or blush white, sometimes covered in fine orange-red freckles. Laying begins about the end of March, incubation by the Hen is approximately 13 days. There may be two or three broods per season

Food

Largely insects, including small beetles, moths, caterpillars, flies, larvae and ants. Earthworms are freely taken, seeds of many weeds, berries and sometimes fruit. Will visit bird feeders and tables and enjoy suet, seeds and other scraps



Red Admiral Butterfly

Vanessa Atalanta



Description



The Red Admiral is a powerful flyer with expansive wings (wingspan 45-60mm) and a cylindrical body. Its bold colouration makes it easily recognizable, whether settled or in flight. No other British butterfly has a similar distinctive combination of black, white and red. The upper surface of the wings are velvety black with a bright red stripe across each forewing, a bright red boarder to the hind wings, and small but striking white patches on the outer front corners of the forewings. The sexes look very similar but the male is smaller than the female.

Distribution

The Red Admiral butterfly can be seen in almost any habitat. It is one of the most familiar garden butterflies and is most common around woods, hedgerows and parklands, where there are places to shelter as well as an abundance of flowers, nettles and rotting fruit.

When

The Red Admiral regularly migrates to Britain from North Africa and Continental Europe from spring through summer. The immigrant females lay eggs from which fresh adults later emerge from July onwards. They can be seen from March to November.

Life Cycle



Eggs are laid singly on the underside of leaves of young stinging nettles and take a week to hatch. The caterpillar feeds on the leaves and lives in a tent that it makes by spinning them together with its silk. These shelters can be found in early July and September. The caterpillar feeds for about three weeks and then forms a chrysalis suspended from the roof of the leaf tent. The adult butterfly subsequently emerges from the chrysalis



What do they do?

Although it is mainly a migrant visitor, there is increasing evidence that the Red Admiral is surviving our warmer winters, both as adult hibernation, eggs or caterpillars. In southern areas however, it is a mystery why so few survive British winters, as they overwinter in parts of Central Europe. The Red Admiral is not a threatened species but, since nettles are unpopular, the continual spraying and removal of these food plants may cause long-term reduction in its population

WILTSHIRE HISTORY CENTRE

There is a wealth of information at the Wiltshire history centre . They are all catalogued and have the prefix G15. Here is just a taste of some of the things you could find.

G15/2006/1 Payment account book

This is small unmarked leather bound ledger dated 1855.

March 16th 1855

10 Acres of land	£1300
Timber	£4/19/-
Redemption of land Tax	£29/18/-
Redemption of tithe	£53
Measuring & surveying	£8/8/-



Buildings

15th June 1855

Paid to Mr Smith drawn down each month till Feb 26th 1858: Total £1997- 4 shillings and 11pence

Fencing: Stother & Walker	£221/7/6d
Drainage & Ditching	£422/2/4d



Hedging and Ditching	£26/6/8d
Levelling and trenching	£122/2/5d
Planting	£159/16/-
Material for roads	£155/6/8d
Labour for making roads	£91/5/4d
Superintendent of Drainage:	
40 weeks work	£38/4/6d
Architect Mr Davis	£78/4/6d

Salary & Clerks	£70/16/8d
Office Expenses	£4/9/9d
Stationary	£33/8/11d
Legal: (Barnes & Bernard London)	£49/16/5d
Consecration Fees: Rev Macdonald	£26/4/-

Furniture

March 9th 1856

Wilcox: 2 x Glastonbury Chairs	£5/7/6d
Chimney Cowl	£14
Notice Board	£1/6/ -
Chiverill Bell	£13

Written in the back of the book

Contracts

GH Stone	Main Drain
Butler	Hedging & Ditching
Woodfine	Iron Fencing
Wheeler	Planter



2018 DIARY

Thursday 8 th March	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Thursday 12 th April	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Thursday 10 th May	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Saturday 26 th May	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Thursday 14 th June	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Saturday 23 rd June	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Saturday 30 th June		Armed forces weekend
Sunday 1 st July		Armed forces weekend
Thursday 12 th July	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Saturday 28 th July	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Thursday 9 th August	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Saturday 23 rd August	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Thursday 13 th September	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Saturday 22 nd September	10am - 12pm	Cemetery
Thursday 11 th October	10am - 12pm	Cemetery



We meet at the non conformist chapel, if you are only able to make part of the morning we still look forward to meeting you.

The Committee

Chairman	Robert Wall	robertw@fotdc.org	01225 777266
Vice Chairman	Lynn Drewett		
Treasurer	Dom McDonald		
Membership	Robert Colebourne	robertc@fotdc.org	
Secretary	Jenny Wall	jenny_wall63@hotmail.com	

How can you help?

We are always looking for more volunteers to help with the following

Cemetery gardening	Grave stone transcription
History centre research	Computer processing
Nature conservation	Grant applications and fundraising

If you know of anybody that maybe able to help, please ask them to join.
If we all found one other member it would move the project on, so that
we could accomplish this year's goals

Follow us on facebook

A WARM INVITATION TO BECOME A FRIEND OF THE DOWN CEMETERY

The Down Cemetery is a grade II listed Victorian cemetery opened on the 13th December 1855.

The Friends aims are to assist the Council in keeping the cemetery as something that the town can be proud of. Our mission is to clear overgrown graves, transcribe headstones (before inscriptions are lost to erosion). Photograph all headstones, plot graves and make this information available to the public.

We will be looking at ways to conserve and repair graves and mausoleums with our partner James Long.

Nature conservation is also a large part of our aims, with bird feeding and nest sites, bat boxes, hedgehog boxes, wildflower meadow and anything that we can do to enhance this area as a wildlife haven

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Membership costs just £1.00 per year (January to December)

Please return completed form to: -

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This newsletter has been produced by the Friends of The Down Cemetery. We would welcome contributions for future news letters