

Friends of the Down Cemetery

Issue No. 6 - Spring 2019

National Federation of
CEMETERY FRIENDS

www.fotdc.org

Chairman's Ramblings



Welcome all to the sixth edition of the Friends newsletter.

Despite the bleak and cold weather, we are already preparing this year's wildlife studies for the spring and summer at the cemetery. We have already installed two new bird feeding stations and have placed 15 new bird boxes around the cemetery, and now wait (with fingers crossed) to see which birds take up these new homes. I look forward to reporting to you all later in the year.

After a successful start to our wild flower area, this year we will be asking Wiltshire Council's permission to increase the number of areas, planting wildflowers throughout to enhance the area. We are also planning to install a large flower planter outside the unconsecrated chapel. We are looking for volunteers to help plan and tend this new part of our project, so if you can help please let us know.

Last year we planted more daffodils on the right-hand side of the cemetery entrance and have recently ordered native snowdrops and bluebells which will be planted in same area. Hopefully the daffodils will look good this year, but next year they are should look spectacular.

Other projects this year will include several nature surveys including, bird, insect and reptile. If you are interested with these please let us know - we are only able to carry these out with your help.

We were lucky to receive a grant from ASDA, which enabled us to buy a laptop computer for use with our historical research. A database that includes all the burial plots on the unconsecrated side of the cemetery, the start of grave descriptions and people buried in these plots is under way. This is an ongoing project which may take several years to complete, but will be invaluable to people researching their family history and will provide a great snapshot of Trowbridge social history.

I must thank all of you that helped organise

Robert

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We few, we happy few, we band of brothers...

Boy 2nd Class William Clement Bray

Seventeen-year-old William joined the Royal Navy in April 1918. He was the second son of Frederick and Annie Bray of George Street in Trowbridge. After just 20 days service on the training ship HMS Powerful at Devonport, he was taken ill with pneumonia and emphysema and admitted to hospital. He died after a long and painful illness on Monday 25th November 1918 at the Royal Naval Hospital Plymouth.



HMS Powerful was used to train "boy" stokers. At this time, ships were powered with steam turbine engines, fuelled by coal, so the atmosphere in the boiler room would have been hot, steamy and laden with coal dust. William's duties would have involved shovelling coal, which was hard, physical work.

The usual training boys received was 18 months. By this time, they became Boys 1st Class and were usually sent to a serving ship. Many of the lads were not well educated (school leaving age was 14). The Navy did its best in the 18 months and many left with a good all-round knowledge of geography, history, and basic maths. He was brought back to Trowbridge by rail and was buried in the Down Cemetery.

HMS Powerful



Extracts from the Burial Board Letters Book (G/12/203/1)

- 1) Start - R Rodway was Clerk of Board - borrowed £4000 October 12th 1854
- 2) Charles E Davies Architect Bath
- 3) Turned down Nelson & Fullers of Bath plans on 11th November 1854
- 4) Mr Stancomb Esq. is chairman of the Board
- 5) Turned down J M Medland and A Maberley of Gloucester on 16th December 1854

Extracts from the Burial Board Letters Book (continued)

- 6) Original site was across the road but was within 200yds of dwellings
- 7) Clerks salary was £20 per year plus £5 so the board could use their offices
- 8) Mr Daniel Butler, Widcombe Nursery, Bath awarded for hedging and ditches
- 9) February 1855 1st instalment of £1700 to start works
- 10) 16th March 1855 Awarded contract to Edward Davis
- 11) 24th March 1855 to plant up sides not to accede £1500
- 12) April 9th 1855 £26/6/8d for Mr Butler for completion of hedging and ditches
- 13) Asked for extra £1000 April 1855
- 14) April 23rd 1855 footings for chapels and lodges ready for inspection
- 15) April 28th 1855 consecrated chapel is not due East and do not approve the furnishings
- 16) 1855 May not set costs yet, they used North Wiltshire Bank
- 17) 24th May 1855 clerk paid first cheque for £20
- 18) June 1855 agree with Hilperton about rates for site
- 19) 27th June 1855 population exceeds 10,000
- 20) June 28th 1855 Roof should be on chapels by 1st October
- 21) July 28th 1855 Messrs Hurber & Walker awarded contract for gates and railings
- 22) November 19th 1855 Bishop of Salisbury says through Rev Hastings. He will come to consecrate ground on 18th December 1855
- 23) December 7th 1855 ordered 2 chairs at cost of £5
- 24) March 16th 1858 though had to pay loan back in 20 years, now find out it is 50 years
- 25) January 1856 asking Davies where are plans for burials
- 26) August 2nd 1856 gates and railings cost £112/12/-
- 27) December 4th find out that income tax is due on interest on loan for burial board

Costs:-

Drainage	£422/2/4d	Butler planting	£26/6/-
Wheeler planting	£158/15/-	Iron Fencing	£74/18/-
Iron fencing	£10/18/-	St?? & Walker	£128/15/6d
Sundry	£98/3/8d	Labour & May	£379/15/5d

- 28) April 12th 1858. Loan now £5000. Will repay 4d in the £- income from internment fees will nearly cover the cost of maintenance of the cemetery.

Side	Size	1856	1857	1858	1859	total
Consecrated	6 acres	63	64	90	75	292
Unconsecrated	6 acres	48	68	75	83	274
Grand total						566

- 29) 27th February 1861. In answer to your inquires, I beg to inform you that no part of the unconsecrated ground of our cemetery is set apart for the use of Roman Catholics, and that no Roman Catholic has yet to be interned in this cemetery. I do not think that there is a Roman Catholic in this parish.

Nature's Corner

Great Spotted Woodpecker

(*Dendrocopos Major*)

Description

The Great Spotted Woodpecker is recognised by the black and white under parts, large white shoulder patch and barred wings. The male has a large red cap which is smaller on the female, both having a bright buff underside, with a large vivid red patch under the tail. They are approximately 22-23cm long with a wing span of 34-39 cm, and weigh 70-90g.



Distribution

The Great Spotted Woodpecker is a permanent resident of the British Isles, they inhabit mature woods and even scrub land and can be regularly seen visiting back gardens.

Nesting

When undisturbed will nest year after year in the same tree making a new hole each year. The hole will be 5-6cm diameter. No nesting material is used with 4-7 eggs laid in the hollowed-out tree trunk. The eggs are predominately white, laid between April – June with just one brood per year. Both male and female take part in the 16-day incubation.



Food

Finds insects and larvae beneath bark, digging them out with their strong bill, also takes seeds and berries. Woodpeckers will often visit garden bird feeders and are especially attracted to nuts, cheese and fat.

Nature's Corner

Fox

(*Vulpes Vulpes*)

Appearance

With their red-brown fur, bushy tail and pointed ears, foxes are easily recognisable. Around the size of a small to medium sized dog, they typically weigh 5-8 kg and stand around 40cm at the shoulder.



Distribution

Foxes are found across the UK and can survive in almost any habitat. Usually you are more likely to see a fox in a town or city than in a more natural setting. The UK's urban fox population may be as high as 150,000 and many of these animals have become relatively habituated to humans. Foxes are primarily crepuscular, meaning they are most active around dawn and dusk; however, it is not unusual to see them during the daytime, particularly in urban areas.

Feeding

Foxes are opportunistic eaters and this flexibility allows them to occupy such a wide variety of habitats. Rabbits and rodents are common prey, but a fox's diet can include everything from birds, eggs, earthworms, beetles and fruit. Urban foxes still catch live prey, but will also readily take advantage of any food discarded by humans.



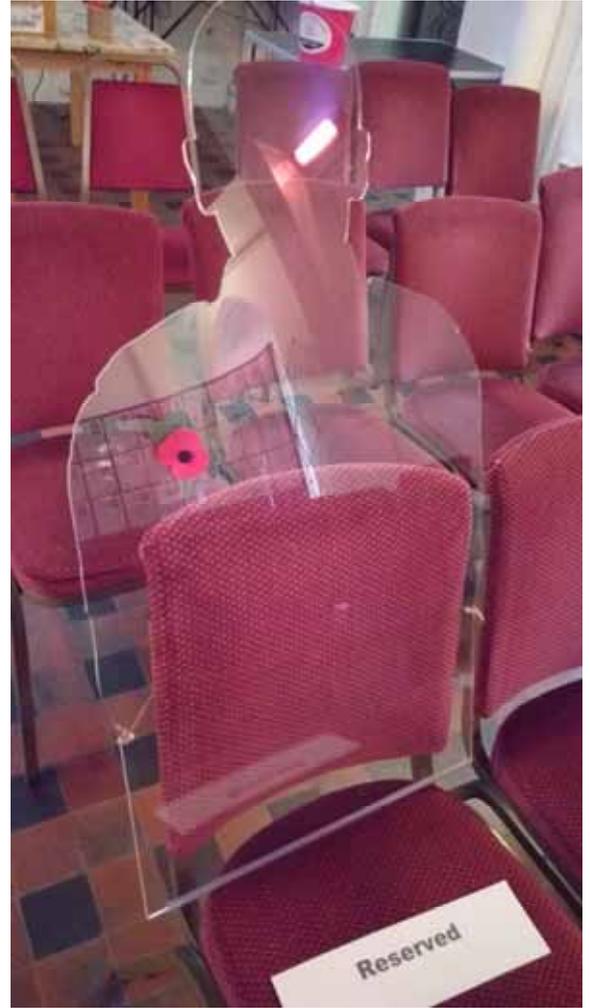
Behaviour and breeding

Foxes live in loose family groups that are normally comprised of a dominant male and female and their young.

Their dens can be holes in the ground or even spaces under structures like a garden shed.

Typically a litter of four or five cubs will be born in the spring and are largely independent by the autumn. Baby foxes are called, pups, kits or cubs. Some cubs will stay with their family group, while others will leave to find their own territory. The majority of foxes live no longer than about three years.

Centennial Event - Saturday 3rd November 2018



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QUALITY HEADSTONES, MEMORIALS & GRAVESTONES

Diary for Spring and Summer 2019

Date	Activity
Saturday 23rd February	Small trees cutting continued
Thursday 14th March	Clear and tidy wild flower meadow
Saturday 23rd March	Keep clearing front right hand side along hedge
Thursday 11th April	Clear small mausoleum front right
Saturday 27th April	Clear Rodway Mausoleum
Thursday 9th May	Keep clearing front right hand side along hedge
Saturday 25th May	Open crypt
Thursday 13th June	Keep clearing front right hand side along hedge
Saturday 22nd June	start clearing Hastings mausoleum
Thursday 11th July	Finish clearing mausoleum and surrounding area
Saturday 27th July	General tidy up of wild flower meadow

We meet at the Non-Conformist Chapel. The sessions run from 10:00 until 12:00. If you are only available 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, Gravestone Transcription
History Centre Research, Computer Processing
Nature Conservation, Grant Applications and Fundraising

If you know of anyone who may be 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.

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' aim is to assist the council in keeping the cemetery as something that the town can be proud of. Our mission will be 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 partners, James Long.

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

Name

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Individual membership costs £2.00 per year (year runs January to December). Corporate membership is £6.00 per year.

Please return the 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 newsletters.