



Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery

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Newsletter

Some pleasures still in store

In normal times we would over the past few months have enjoyed illustrated lectures about growing flowers to attract pollinators, and about Tunbridge Wells connections with some less favoured blossoms - convicts transported to Van Diemens Land (today's Tasmania) for misdeeds large and small.

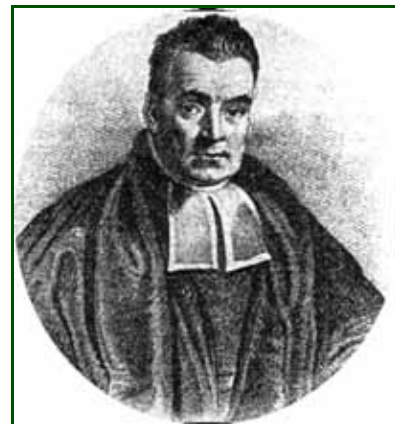
In May you might have strolled around the Craft Fair and plant sale; and in June brought along cushions or other paraphernalia to ease your bones beside those of past Tunbridge Wells worthies while listening to a Brass on the Grass concert by Wadhurst Brass Band to celebrate Fathers Day.

July would have seen local primary schools receiving our Jeffery Hale Achievement Awards, and August a visit to Bunhill Fields burial ground to pay homage to John Bunyan, Daniel Defoe, William Blake and Thomas Bayes whose handsome house still looks out over Tunbridge Wells Common at the corner of Church Road.

All these pleasures have had to be deferred but only to a later date. Meanwhile, the cemetery has remained open as a green place for people to enjoy throughout the lockdown - duly observing the specified precautions. And the flowers there, this summer, enhanced and nurtured by the gardening team, have been magnificent.



Arriving in Van Diemens Land 1830



Thomas Bayes, mathematician and non-conformist minister



One of the new wild flower areas

New arrivals large and small



One of this year's giant teasels

We have successfully grown some dramatic giant teasels, a favourite snack for goldfinches.

And much rejoicing because two varieties of orchid have suddenly appeared, Spotted (so named for the spots on its leaves) and Pyramidal which lives up to its name.



In the spring, we distributed sunflower seeds to a local school and to Flyerz hockey club for people with disabilities – we are looking forward to getting their photos. Parks Department have helpfully given us a variety of flower seeds, some of which we hope you will enjoy in the cemetery next year. Others we plan to encourage local children to grow for us. Let us know if you have a child or grandchild who might like to take part in this.

Butterflies

Favourable weather, selective planting and carefully timed mowing have combined to produce a bumper crop of butterflies this year.

They include Painted Ladies, annual migrants who unbelievably flutter many hundreds of miles from North Africa and Europe to reach Woodbury Park Cemetery. They are the longest continuously migrating butterfly ever recorded. Thistles are first choice for their caterpillars, though they will also use vipers bugloss and stinging nettles.

Their numbers in the cemetery were swelled this summer by an enterprising local family. During lockdown they raised a brood in their kitchen to set free there.



The moment of release



We asked 7 year old Alex how he set about his butterfly project and where the larvae came from. We thought you would all like to read his interesting report - ignore the officious Spellcheck underlinings.

My Butterfly project by

Alex Myers-Lampy

We ordered some caterpillars that come in the post and they were tiny and delicet. The second step was the caterpilars growing from when they were tiny and they got bigger and then made themselves into a cocoon. After that we watched them come out as buterflys. They were called 'painted lady' buterflys and looked very beutiful.

Arfter a few days we let them go and they flyed in the Cemetery. This is now their house. We have looked for them lots of time but have not seen them since we set them free. They can fly a long way away

This was a fun activity to do with my litle brother and sister. We saw a lot watching it happen all on our kitchen tabel.

You can get the caterpilar kit and try it yourself at home from <https://www.insectlore.co.uk/>

Just in case some of you are not yet fully confident about your butterfly recognition skills, here is a visual aid to the difference between a frilly painted lady and a red admiral with his high visibility white epaulettes.



Painted lady



Red Admiral

One of our leaflets lists the varieties you are likely to see at different times of year and the plants their larvae need. Please consider that when tidying up your garden.



A mysterious visitor

Likewise if you take any pictures of interesting flowers and butterflies you happen to spot in the cemetery, noting the date and time, do send a copy to angelaswain@greenbee.net. Record keeping is one of the useful ways we all can help conservation work.

You don't need to use the full kit employed by this unknown recent visitor spotted at work under the Atlas Cedar, with the elegant column of Dr Golding Bird in the background. Unaware - the camera reveals all- that a shaggy green giant is tiptoeing up behind her, arms outstretched

A few plots along, out of sight in this picture, is the tomb of the Rev William Du Pre, Perpetual Curate, whose life and sad end are reviewed later in this Newsletter. David Bushell is looking into the lives of his wife Emily, born into the Baring banking family, and four of their daughters buried here with their parents. He would welcome any information readers have about them and their Tunbridge Wells connections.

Memorial repairs

Inevitably where so many venerable sandstone memorials are involved, there is an annual sick list. Sometimes weather causes facades to crumble and joints to widen, sometimes tree roots or ground slippage undermine kerbs and headstones.

Besides routine minor repairs (coupled with relevant history research) to deteriorating memorials, two major invalids are on our current priority list for treatment. The lofty Panton memorial topped with an urn borders the path just past the giant Atlas Cedar. Its polished granite looks as good as new, but its plinth, bearing the massive weight, badly needs stabilising. We have asked TWBC to ensure there is no risk to public safety.

The other lies a little further on down the hill on the left. Its displaced stones are a testament to ill advised planting of a yew tree, whose massive roots, now dead, have become all that prevents total collapse of the foot of the grave they have undermined. We are examining what might be done to tidy it up and prevent further damage.



The burial vault of Elizabeth Panton, her husband Patrick and his wealthy uncle William



The collapsing grave of Elizabeth Redhead, wife of Edward, Oxford-educated Professor (ie teacher) of Music.

Tail piece



Not every canine we meet in the cemetery is well-behaved or respects memorials. But these recent arrivals are models of doggy decorum, having been knitted for us by a teacher at the Wells Free School.

We would love some more knitted Woodburys to sell in aid of our funds. They are quite small, taking only oddments of wool, and if they come out at less than best of breed standard, no matter - there is a good market for rescue dogs. So could some of you have a go at making more Woodburys for us? We should be most grateful. Ask for pattern via jbman@btinternet.com or 01892 525578.

Other initiatives to add to our funds for memorial repairs would also be most welcome. And of course we are always delighted to welcome new faces at the gardening sessions in the cemetery on Saturday afternoons. Just give Angela Swain a ring on 01892 541881 to be briefed on how it all works.

Wonderful therapy in stressful times.

WPC Memorials

10. The Rev William Maxwell Du Pre 1805-1855: Perpetual Curate

An imposing somewhat severe tomb under the cedar tree marks the grave of William Maxwell Du Pre, Perpetual Curate of St Margarets Chapel, Brighton. With him lie his wife Emily and four of their daughters, Mary Evelyn, Rachel, Emily and Ursula.

Perpetual curates had charge of a parish in much the same way as beneficed vicars, but their income was a cash stipend from an endowment rather than through historic tithes and glebe. Meagre stipends might be topped up with funds from Queen Anne's Bounty, set up for the Augmentation of the Maintenance of the Poor Clergy. William's tomb signals a man with comfortable means of his own, while at the same time having regard to the request in his Will that *"my funeral be conducted without unnecessary expense or shew"*.

As second son of a wealthy and well-connected county family he typically took Holy Orders and was given the living owned by his father at nearby Wooburn. Newly minted at 25, he conducted the 1830 marriage of his sister, Emily Madalena, to Lord William Montagu, second son of the fifth Duke of Manchester, after which *"the happy couple set off in his lordship's travelling carriage and four for Tunbridge Wells"*. The only surviving son of Emily's marriage, William's nephew Francis Du Pre Montagu, was 20 when he was killed carrying the 33rd Regimental colours in the Battle of Alma.



Wilton Park Beaconsfield where William Du Pre grew up

Tunbridge Wells was a favourite health resort with the Montagu family. Lord William's ailing Duchess sister in law was staying there in 1848 and his brother the sixth Duke died there in 1855.

In 1837 William Du Pre married another Emily, daughter of wealthy baronet banker Sir Thomas Baring, a useful connection for a working clergyman. Two of her brothers were appointed by him as executors of the Will he drew up in 1850 leaving everything and full charge of their children to his wife, perhaps after some worries about his health. The third executor was John Labouchere, married to his sister Mary and the son of one of Emily's Baring aunts.

Du Pres and Barings were like Canon Edward Hoare evangelical in outlook. They subscribed to the ideas of the Clapham Sect who fought for the abolition of slavery, and preached philanthropy and moral guidance for the poor as well as setting up a number of national institutions like the National Gallery, the Bible Society and the RSPCA.



Emily Baring with her younger sister Frances

After 17 years at Wooburn, possibly itching for a larger field to exercise his missionary zeal, William gave up his living there to become Perpetual Curate of St Margarets Chapel, in the busy heart of Brighton. There his energetic espousal of an evangelical Brighton Mission in 1850 to tackle *“the melancholy state of existing depravity”* of the benighted poor and win over *“apostate”* local Roman Catholics, plunged him into controversy with St Nicholas Church Wardens, no doubt many of them local traders. He was accused of stigmatising Brighton as the most profligate town in England in an address *“containing material not fit to find its way to the table of any mother in the town”*.

They were particularly incensed by his quotation from a scripture reader’s report that *“Brothels abounded in every street and that in a typical one with 50 families he had found only two respectable houses”*. Heated exchanges scorched the columns of the local press.

Once matters calmed down again, he seems to have avoided further public contretemps of this sort with church brethren, directing his efforts with those of like mind into general missionary causes. They included a society for providing a superior form of religious educators to instruct emigrants while on board ship, publication of tracts, a flannel clothing fund for the poor, fund - raising for Colonial churches and schools, and developing an auxiliary branch of the YMCA. Perhaps not surprisingly, his chapel raised a large donation for widows and orphans of those who died in the Crimea.

Tunbridge Wells was a town which was not only esteemed by his family for its health restoration qualities but also had a religious culture congenial to them. In early 1853, he began to show symptoms of *“Disease of the Brain”*. The precise nature of this is unknown. He took no steps to give up his tenure at St Margarets, but in 1855, the household moved from Brighton to Mount Nevill in Frant Road where on the 16th October he died aged 50. The burial service was conducted by Edward Hoare.

The following summer, the Brighton press reported,

“A beautifully-executed tablet, in black and white marble, the work of Mr Bennett, Church Street, bearing an appropriate inscription to the memory of the late Rev W.M Du Pre was fixed on Thursday last in St Margarets Chapel”.

Its fate is unknown. A hundred years later the Chapel was declared redundant and in 1959 demolished in what many saw as an act of architectural vandalism. It was replaced by Sussex Heights which towers behind Brighton seafront dominating the skyline.

