

# FONC News



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*1914-1918 Australian war graves at Nunhead Cemetery 2013*

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*The Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC), London SE15*

## MEMBERS' INFORMATION

**Subscription and supporter information:** Membership of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery costs £2 pa (overseas members pay £10 to cover the cost of sending four copies of *FONC News* abroad each year) renewable on the 1st April each year. We ask members to pay their subscription on this date to avoid sending out individual reminders throughout the year. Donations are always welcome. *New members receive an initial membership card. UK taxpayers are encouraged to sign a Gift Aid declaration.* Please advise FONC if you change your address or, for Gift Aid, you no longer pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the tax FONC reclaims on your donations. Data is held by FONC to help us to send members their copy of *FONC News* and also for the purpose of reclaiming tax. Please contact the **Membership Secretary, c/o [membership@fonc.org.uk](mailto:membership@fonc.org.uk)**

**Further information** about FONC and Nunhead Cemetery can be found on our excellent website produced and managed by webmaster Simon Quill at: **[www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk)**

**Cemetery Opening Times:** 8.30am to 4.00pm daily. The cemetery stays open later during the spring and summer months. *All times are subject to change.* The cemetery may be closed without notice for safety reasons, for example the danger of injury to visitors during windy and stormy weather.

**Publications and Enquiry Desk:** A wide range of books and leaflets about Nunhead Cemetery are available and on sale at FONC's Portakabin every first and last Sunday in the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. *If you would like more Sundays can you spare the occasional one to help.* Contact Gwyneth Stokes [gwyneth1@btinternet.com](mailto:gwyneth1@btinternet.com)

**FONC Meetings and Events:** Committee meetings take place on the *3rd Thursday of each month (except August when there is no meeting).* *Committee meetings are open to ordinary members who may attend in a non-voting capacity.* If you would like to attend a meeting please contact [fonc@btconnect.com](mailto:fonc@btconnect.com) for details. Occasional talks, walks, presentations, and all forthcoming events are announced in *FONC News*.

**Nunhead Cemetery Staff:** The cemetery staff can be contacted by phoning **020 7732 9535**. If unavailable please leave a message or call the main cemetery office at **Camberwell New Cemetery** on **020 7525 5600**.

**The cemetery address is: Linden Grove, Nunhead, London, SE15 3LP**

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**Subeditor:** Gwyneth Stokes.

**Contributors to this issue:** Rex Batten; Jeff Hart; Cathy Mercer; Rosemary Porecha; Carole Tyrrell. All other text unless otherwise credited is by the editor.

*The editor, subeditor and FONC's General Committee do not necessarily agree with the views expressed by contributors.*

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## **NUNHEAD CEMETERY BATTERED BY WINTER STORMS**

*Report by Jeff Hart*

**W**hilst moderate in comparison to the huge damage many other parts of the country suffered, the recent winter storms have taken quite a toll on the trees in the cemetery whilst damage to memorials has, mercifully, been minimal.

For those FONC members who remember the aftermath of the great hurricane of 1987 when it hit the cemetery, forecasts of winds nearly as powerful for the night of 27/28th October would have been of great concern. Unfortunately, the cemetery did indeed suffer the effects of what has become known as the 'St. Jude's Day Storm' and even more damage over the New Year period. This resulted in the cemetery being closed to the general public for long periods much to the consternation of visitors.

### **Lombardy poplars brought down by gale force winds**

At the end of October the most significant effect was near the Limesford Road entrance where two very large Lombardy poplars came down and boughs were torn off others. At least one of the poplars was found to be almost hollow in the centre which had obviously seriously weakened the tree. Several headstones in the new burial area were flattened as a result but seem not to have been broken and should be able to be re-erected. One of the poplars came down in the direction of the Second World War memorial screen wall and the top branches covered much of the area where the FONC Remembrance Service was to take place. Upper Cross Path also had a tree

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blocking it and there was a tree down near the picnic area and two blocking the East Crescent. Two large sycamores on the East path were also blown down causing minor damage to a couple more memorials.

Southwark Council officers needed to undertake a risk assessment for the tree and memorial damage and to take a view on other trees that may have been snagged and prevented from falling before starting the task of tidying up. However before that, given their confidence in FONC's ability to supervise volunteers' work sensibly and safely, we were allowed to proceed with our monthly workday on 3rd November whilst keeping the gates locked to prevent access by the general public. With a good turn-out of volunteers, by the end of the day we had cleared several paths that had been blocked, leaving only one path closed by the massive poplar that had fallen over the war memorial screen wall. Even here, we cleared everything encroaching on the memorial lawn thus enabling our Remembrance Day Service to proceed as planned in safety.

### **Cemetery closed to public for long periods**

As all other Southwark parks had been re-opened, many visitors to the cemetery were very disappointed not to be able to gain access to the cemetery whilst the FONC workday and All Souls Service were taking place. Of course, the first call on Southwark's tree team was to deal with other areas in the borough to which the public has access. This meant that, since the cemetery could be closed very easily, it became the last site on the list to receive clearing-up attention thus prolonging the closure period from 29th October to 8th November. When Southwark's decision and the potential dangers were patiently explained by FONC members almost all were very understanding. The Council placed notices on the gate and said that staff would escort visitors to graves whilst they were on site from Monday to Friday.

### **More storms and further cemetery closures**

Unfortunately the cemetery was again closed to the public from 28th December until at least 2nd January (we are not sure when the site re-opened as Southwark Council did not keep us informed). This was as a result of yet more storm force winds which resulted in a fallen tree blocking the Upper Cross Path, a large branch on the ground at the top of the Beeches area and another tree overhanging the footpath steps behind the John Allan memorial. Two large ash trees caught up in branches needed to come down on the Welsh Path and there were hanging branches on the West Crescent side of the Scottish Martyrs' garden. A large ash tree came down across the East

Path between the Loop and the new First World War Memorial with a large branch down on the East Path between the Slope and the Lower Cross Path and an ash tree behind this was left hanging. Again, Southwark were content for FONC to proceed with the December tour of the cemetery on 29th December providing that we kept the cemetery gates locked and only allowed tour attendees into the site under our supervision. Twenty-two visitors thus enjoyed the tour but we did have quite a difficult time explaining that we could not admit others wishing to visit family graves, some of whom had travelled from as far as Hastings. Although Southwark had put information about the closures on their website it was unfortunate that they did not share this with FONC so that we could try to advertise the closures on our website too. Both we and Southwark have learnt lessons from this and FONC will work hard in future to minimise any inconvenience to visitors if similar circumstances arise again.

### **Annual All Souls Service**

Despite the cemetery being closed to the general public as a result of extensive tree damage continuing to pose a risk, FONC was given special permission by Southwark Council officers to proceed with our annual All Souls Service on 3rd November organised, as usual, by the Reverend Alan and Joan Bond.

This ecumenical service offers the principal opportunity of the year for anyone wishing to join us to remember all those interred at Nunhead Cemetery since the first burial in July 1840. Usually processing from the Linden Grove entrance up to the Anglican chapel, this year we simply began the service in the chapel as there would be no passing members of the public to join us! Welcomed by Reverend Alan Bond, the small congregation sang *For All the Saints* followed by opening prayers and a Bible reading by a FONC member and then *The Lord's my Shepherd*. With a gospel reading, prayers and a Blessing, Jeff Hart was then able to thank those attending and emphasise that almost every religion was represented by those interred at Nunhead and that this was an opportunity not just to express our sorrow at the passing of loved ones but also to celebrate their lives and achievements that contribute to society as we know it today. The final hymn sung was *'Abide With Me'* to a backdrop of blue skies and sunshine on a mercifully mild day.

We would love to have more FONC members, their families and friends attending this year, so why not pencil in the date of 2nd November 2014 and the time 3.00pm now? ■

## **Cathy Mercer invites you to join her on a visit to Highgate Cemetery on Sunday 27th April 2014**

Highgate Cemetery is one of the best known and most beautiful cemeteries in London, with fabulous views and famous residents such as George Eliot, Malcolm McLaren and of course Karl Marx. We are delighted that the Friends of Highgate Cemetery have arranged a special visit for FONC members, with guided tours of both the East and West Cemeteries and tea. There is no charge but donations are welcome.

To find out the time of this visit and to join our group, please contact me on email [treasurer@fonc.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@fonc.org.uk)

Numbers are strictly limited, *so first come first served*. However, Friends of Highgate Cemetery run tours daily, so if we can't fit you in you can visit by yourself. See [www.highgatecemetery.org](http://www.highgatecemetery.org)

Highgate Cemetery is on Swain's Lane, N6 6PJ and we're meeting at the entrance to the East Cemetery. It's about 15 minutes from Archway on the Northern Line. Take the Highgate Hill exit. Then either take a bus (210,143, 271) two stops to Waterlow Park or walk up Highgate Hill. It's then a very pleasant five minute stroll through Waterlow Park to the gates. Alternatively you can take bus C2 to Parliament Hill Fields or Overground rail to Gospel Oak and a brisk walk. Limited parking on nearby streets but please note that there's no access to Swain's Lane from the north. Please check for engineering works before travelling!

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## **A visit to St Leonard's Church, Streatham** *report by Carole Tyrrell*

**S**t Leonard's is a substantial church on a corner in Streatham, SW London but I was unaware of its fascinating history until Cathy Mercer very kindly organised a tour last year. Our guide was John Brown who had an obvious affection for St Leonard's.

There has been a chapel on the site for over 1,000 years. The first church was built in 1350 and the lowest part of its tower still stands. St Leonard's was rebuilt in 1778, altered again in 1831 when the nave was completely rebuilt and a crypt created with a further change during the 1860s with the addition of the chancel. But in 1975 a fire completely destroyed the interior. It was re-designed with a whitewashed interior within the 19th century walls

creating a bright airy interior on which the surviving wall tablets and monuments are well displayed—a wonderful and inspiring blend of the ancient and the new.

We stopped outside to admire the tower which had the highest oak tree between the Thames and Croydon, according to John, growing halfway up it. It's known as Sir John Ward's tower, built from Surrey flint and topped by a modern spire dating from 1841. The churchyard contains over 250 memorials with the last burial having taken place in 1841. It was bombed during the Second World War and later landscaped, as a result creating a Garden of Remembrance. John revealed that some of the burials had only a wooden grave-board which had disintegrated. I was impressed that several of the monuments still had their substantial iron railings around them.

John pointed out some of the more illustrious tombs: Merian Drew, the Lord of the Manor and his daughter Jane Agnes Fisher; George Pratt of Pratt's Department Store in Streatham; the Colthurst who owned Coutts Bank, and the very lovely angels on the Montefiore monument. He pointed to the broken cross that topped the monument to the Pre-Raphaelite painter William Dyce who painted 'The Baptism of Ethelbert' for the House of Lords, and the monument to Robert Garrard, the royal jeweller. There was a flat, plain slab on the grave of a nephew of the novelist Trollope. There were several tombstones dating back to the 1700s with a sprinkling of skull and crossbones. A large monument was made from Coade stone, the wonder material of the 19th century. It was invented by Mrs Coade but the recipe has been lost, and although it has been analysed and the ingredients found, no one has been able to recreate it.

John then took us back inside the church to admire two 17th century imposing and magnificent monuments in the porch. The dramatic Massingberde memorial commemorates a London merchant and the treasurer of the East India Company who died in 1653 and features a brooding skull and several cherubs. The impressive Howland monument was erected by a grieving widow, Elizabeth, to her husband John who died in 1686 and symbolises the triumph of life over death with two figures facing each other.

At the top of the chancel by the altar John showed us the Thrale monuments. These were to Henry Thrale and his mother-in-law, Mrs Salisbury. There were two epitaphs written in Latin by Dr Johnson and a beautiful tablet set into the wall which had three figures on it, reputedly carved from the life. One of them is Sophia Hoare and is by John Flaxman.

The Chapel of Unity had four significant memorials on its walls. John drew our attention to Edward Tylney's; he was the Master of Revels, under

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*Massingberde monument (detail). Photo: Carole Tyrrell*

Queen Elizabeth I and King James I, who put on plays and other entertainments. He was renowned for being vain and had the memorial created during his lifetime which is why there is a blank space for the date of his death. The monument nearby was much plainer and simpler and dated from Cromwell's reign. This was William Lynne's affectionate tribute to his departed spouse, Rebecca. Part of it read 'should I ten thousand yeares enjoy my life I could not praise enough so good a wife.' The oldest inscription was to John Else Field, Rector, and dated from 1390

Then we descended the spiral staircase to the crypt. This was an unexpected surprise. Although not as extensive as West Norwood or Kensal Green it was still impressive and atmospheric with incumbents in their loculi. The crypt was laid out with two corridors and the individual family vaults led from them. Some contained entire families. John showed us one in which the body was now bricked up but had been buried in only a shroud. This was Mr Costa, a silk merchant, who left instructions that every pauper who carried his coffin was to be given a guinea. Needless to say his coffin was carried by many poor men and so his wealth was redistributed. Only the undertaker was left empty-handed. The crypt was rebuilt in 1831 and was used as an air-raid shelter during the Second World War during which time



an experiment was carried out to determine the depth of the charnel pit under the flagstone floor. The measure went down as far as it would go which was 20ft but the pit extended far below that.

As a finale, John showed us the substantial headstone of the local rat catcher which proved that he was certainly busy and successful. Afterwards a couple of us strolled about the churchyard amid the increasing rush hour traffic admiring the fine epitaphs on several memorials.

We offer our grateful thanks to John Brown for his knowledge and enthusiasm, St Leonard's and Cathy Mercer for organising the visit. ■

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**HELPERS WANTED FOR OUR  
ANNUAL NUNHEAD CEMETERY OPEN DAY  
SATURDAY 17th MAY 2014**

We shall require lots of volunteers to help us in setting up trestle tables etc. and to generally assist in the cemetery from 8.30am onwards and to help us tidy up when the event finishes at 5.00pm. We also very much welcome lots of donations of homemade makes and plants to sell on the day which Open Day visitors always appreciate. If you can help in any way please contact a committee member (see contacts on back page) or email Open Day organisers Tim and Carol Stevenson on [Openday@fonc.org.uk](mailto:Openday@fonc.org.uk).

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**ADVANCE NOTICE  
FONC'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
WILL TAKE PLACE ON  
WEDNESDAY 18th JUNE 2014\***

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery will take place on Wednesday 18th June 2014 starting at 7.00pm in the function room (upstairs) at the Old Nun's Head pub, Nunhead Green, London, SE15 3QQ. Nominations for election to the General Committee and officer posts are welcome and may be received up to the elections themselves on the night. Motions, however, should be submitted no later than the 19th May 2014. All nominations and motions should be sent to FONC's vice-chairman, Carol Stevenson, [fonc@btconnect.com](mailto:fonc@btconnect.com).

*\* Please note the date has been changed from Thursday 19th June.*

## **In Memory of the Nine Boy Scouts\***

*drowned off Leysdown, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, on Sunday 4th August  
1912 and interred at Nunhead Cemetery on 10th August 1912*

The following poem about the Walworth scouting tragedy at Leysdown in 1912 was sent to Rex Batten by Rosemary Porecha. It was written in a notebook by Mrs Edith Nellie Buddell *nee* Brandley, Rosemary Porecha's grandmother, who was born in 1892 and lived at Honor Oak Park. Rosemary thinks it is very likely that her grandmother saw the funeral procession as it passed along the streets. The author of the poem is not known.

### **For Others**

I am looking across a cold grey sea  
Beneath a cold grey sky;  
An icy wind is blowing free,  
And the waves are rolling high.  
The gale alternately squeals and sings  
in the piles outside the wall,  
And splashes of rain in rage it flings,  
The harbingers of a squall.

There's hardly so much as a ketch in sight,  
And a solitary brig  
is ploughing her course up the fairways light,  
A Dutchman by her rig.  
But though wind be high and sea be rough,  
I suspect by tomorrow's morn  
We're likely to have it calm enough  
On this beach by ages worn.

But looking across the darksome waves  
Towards Sheppey's distant shore,  
I think of nine lads in their tear-stained graves  
Who were drowned in the storm-fiends' roar.  
Lads who barely one week ago  
Were full of strength and glee,  
Suddenly drowned in the cruel flow  
Of the estuary sea.

I think of fathers and mothers who  
Waited and watched in vain  
For news of the boat and its hapless crew,  
With hearts all rent with pain,  
One knows the horrors of suspense,  
Of hope that is mixed with dread,  
Of the vigil that seems to dull every sense,  
And then—the names of the dead.

What can I say to comfort such?  
Only that their boys died  
Like men and heroes; when put to the touch  
Their duty to do they tried.  
And the lads in camp on Sheppey's Isle,  
Proved themselves to be heroes too,  
As they swam through the raging sea for a mile,  
To the creed of the Boys Scouts true.

'For others!' Be that our watchwords high,  
And amid the world's long strife,  
To be ready to live or even die,  
For others to give one's life.  
And the Great Scoutmaster up above  
Will I think, take these scouts, each one,  
And dismiss them to rest in His home of love.  
With this word of praise, 'Well done!'

\* The nine lads who perished on that fateful summer Sunday in August 1912 were Albert Edward Dack, 13; William Beckham, 12; Edward Smith, 11; Percy Huxford, 11; Noel Filmer, 15; Thompson Filmer, 12; James Skipsey, 12; Harry Gwynn, 12; and Frank Masters, 14, of the Training Ship *Arethusa*, Greenhithe.

Rex Batten of the Friends Of Nunhead Cemetery has written extensively about the terrible scouting disaster at Sheppey that claimed nine young lives, and the subsequent funeral and burial at Nunhead Cemetery in his book *The Leysdown Tragedy* published by FONC in 1992 and *The Walworth Scouts* published by FONC in 2003. ■

## **\*SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER\***

Please note that all subscriptions are due to be paid by the 1st April 2014. The annual subscription for UK members is just £2 (and £10 for overseas members). Donations are always welcome. If you received a reminder with this issue of FONC News please send your payment as soon as possible—if there is no form this will be because you have already renewed or have sent a standing order. Thank you for your continued support.

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## **NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No 13**

*by Jeff Hart—FONC Co-ordinator*

### ***Water, water everywhere!***

Whilst the incredible amount of rain this winter has kept the temporal pond well topped up, we have had to pump plenty of water out of the ‘moat’ surrounding the derelict East Lodge to try to limit damage to the remaining structure. Rain water run-off has also moved loose gravel on the paths downhill and left plenty of silt in its place. Earthen paths throughout the cemetery have sometimes resembled mud baths and sad to report that some graves on the eastern side of the Linden Grove boundary wall have been found to be under water. Although mild in temperature, the wet weather has also held back the early spring growth in the cemetery. The winter heliotrope has struggled to flower and the usual mass of snowdrops we enjoy in the cemetery are only just starting to appear as we write towards the end of January. Surely it can’t be long now before the first drought warnings are issued!

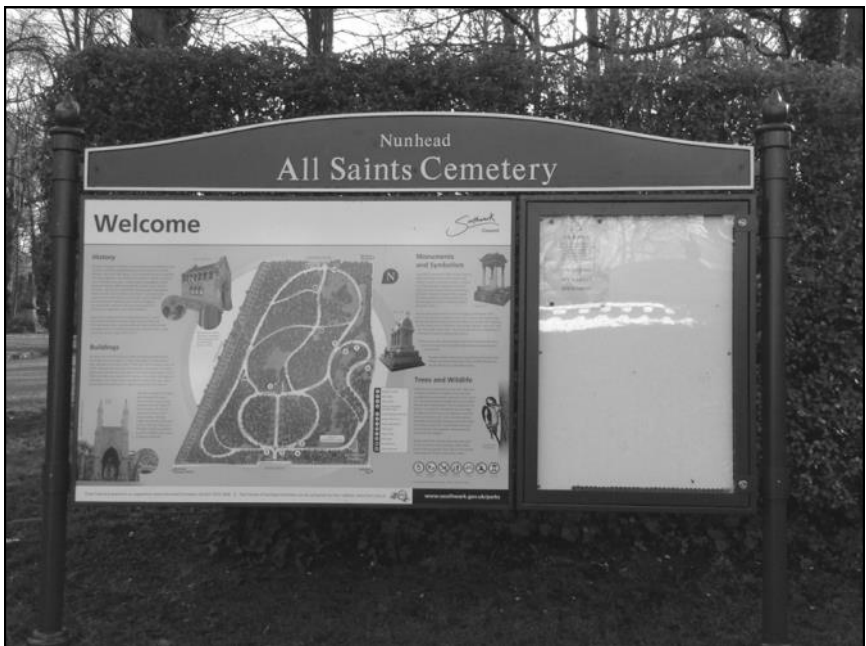
### ***Santa Claus comes to Nunhead!***

Following up on the article in Nunhead Cemetery News 12, we are pleased to report that Groundwork Trust, in cooperation with Southwark Council and FONC, supervised a further 15 volunteers from News UK to complete clearance work on the West Hill area of the cemetery on 11th December. Getting into the spirit of the season by donning bright red Santa Claus hats, the group cleared bramble and undergrowth from the area before constructing a splendid dry hedge boundary fence. This is to discourage visitors from entering the area unsupervised during the current very wet weather. In future, however, greater access will be possible for those wanting to visit family graves or carry out family history research. It also helps to vary

the habitats available for wild flowers to re-emerge into the lighter, more open hillside. Although the day was cold and misty, the volunteers kept warm by working hard, buoyed up with a seasonal serving of hot tea and mince pies during the refreshments break. They were also rewarded with a visit to the viewing platform at the top of the Anglican chapel and to the crypt below which is always popular. We now look forward to a return visit by Groundwork around Valentine's Day!

### ***Notice anything new?***

Two projects have recently come to fruition that helps to inform visitors to Nunhead Cemetery. As a starting point to the Green Chain Walk, a splendidly colourful cast metal notice has been placed at the entrance to Nunhead's railway station inviting walkers to head towards the cemetery, highlighting its historical and wildlife importance. It entices visitors with questions relating to aspects of the cemetery and includes one of Ron Woolcott's illustrations from *Nunhead Notables* - that of Thomas Tilling, the



*New sign at the entrance to the cemetery. Photo: Jeff Hart*

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omnibus entrepreneur. Much of the text was rewritten by FONC from that initially proposed by the Green Chain officers, who also highlighted Nunhead Cemetery in its winter 2013 Newsletter and Events calendar. We hope that this will encourage more commuters to visit the cemetery, although experience so far seems to be that they are too determined to catch their trains or to get home to stop and read the detail of the noticeboard!

There is also now a splendid new noticeboard just inside the Linden Grove entrance to the cemetery. This has been provided by Southwark Council and incorporates a large scale plan of the cemetery, complete with path names. The accompanying text, mostly provided by FONC, gives a brief introduction to various aspects of the cemetery, including the buildings and symbolism to be found on headstones. It also highlights FONC's website for more information. The noticeboard has been painted in the same maroon to be found on the gates and railings of the cemetery that English Heritage advised was probably the original colour used when first painted by the London Cemetery Company. Erected at the end of November, we have observed that most visitors to the cemetery have made a point of stopping to look at the map to help orientate themselves and to read a little about the cemetery. Fortunately, there is no sign of these affecting FONC publications sales!

### ***Cleaner, greener, safer***

Another effect of the appalling winter weather this year following a very dry summer has been the movement in the clay sub-soil under most of the cemetery. This has evidenced itself in the breaking-up and level changes of the York stone flagstones around the Scottish Martyrs' memorial which now produces a serious tripping hazard where many visitors congregate. Southwark Council invites bids from the community for funds of up to £10,000 under its local area 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer' initiative for improving the built or natural environment. FONC has made a bid to reset the kerbing and re-lay the flagstones around the memorial; to clean off the green algae which now covers the monument's inscriptions; and to refresh and re-plant the 'garden' area behind the bench from which visitors can sit and admire the memorial. If sufficient funds were available, it might also be possible to replace the rather ugly metal bars that surround the memorial that were put in place in 1992. FONC has twice been successful in the last few years in receiving funding to repair memorials on the Main Avenue under this initiative, so we are delighted to have again been shortlisted for consideration on this occasion. *Look out for good news in the next issue!*

# FONC'S CHRISTMAS SOCIAL 2013

Some 33 members and their friends attended our Christmas Social at the Old Nun's Head on the evening of 19th December 2013 despite torrential rain. Seasonal refreshments were eagerly consumed as were the two delicious fruit and brandy loaf cakes freshly baked by organiser Maureen Woolcott. Jeff Hart gave a thoroughly entertaining PowerPoint presentation featuring an amazing number of cemeteries that he and Jane have visited over the years, about which more below. A convivial evening was rounded off with FONC's (in)famous Christmas raffle and a good time was had by all!

## AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 CEMETERIES

### A sprint around burial places strange and familiar

~ *PowerPoint presentation by Jeff Hart* ~

To say that Jeff and Jane Hart are well-travelled is an understatement, and although Jeff didn't quite manage to take us to all 80 cemeteries in the time allowed, he still managed to entertain us with photographs and colourful descriptions of lots of different burial sites in virtually every corner of our big wide world!

The first burial ground we visited in our virtual tour of the world's cemeteries was Calton Hill in Edinburgh, and Jeff compared the Scots Martyrs' memorial at Nunhead Cemetery with the principal monument at Edinburgh. He next took us to a beach somewhere in Spitzbergen, which belongs to Norway, and the most basic of burials in beach shingle for crews of whaling ships. The Bryggen district of Bergen, Norway, includes burials of Norwegians killed in Allied bombing raids.

Our next stop was France and the monolithic church in Saint Emillion and stone sarcophagi in a church carved out of a limestone hill, then on to Neuhausen am Rheinflall, near Zurich, Switzerland— very neat and Germanic in style. St George's Cemetery at Geneva was more rustic and French in style but includes wonderful large wildlife ponds.

Jeff then took us to Italy and the Isla di San Michele Cemetery in Venice— an entire island used as a cemetery reached only by water taxi and containing many ex-patriot burials from all over Europe. We next visited two cemeteries at Volterra in Tuscany; the first an old abandoned cemetery now left to nature, the second a new cemetery highly 'urban' with many niches

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for cremated remains. At Palermo in Sicily, southern Italy, we saw the capuchin catacombs containing dressed mummified human remains.

At Nin in Croatia we visited the 9th century Church of the Holy Cross—the smallest cathedral in the world. The town cemetery at Nin is just around the corner from the cathedral and right up against the waterfront.

Jeff took us next to the mausoleum of Mohammed V and Hassan II at Rabat, Morocco, and mosque burials at Marrakesh called the ‘Saadian Tombs’ in the shadow of the Kasbah mosque. Still in Africa, at Damaraland, Namibia, we saw Deriet Farm Cemetery. Crossing continents Jeff took us to Ghandi’s eternal flame memorial and ‘garden’ burial ground at Delhi, India; a cemetery in Jodhpur Rajasthan; and of course the Taj Mahal, Agra. Our next stop was China and hillside burials outside Guilin in southern China, and St Michael’s Catholic Cemetery in Hong Kong.

We were shown several burial places in Vietnam including a Buddhist cemetery near Cu Chi tunnels, Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City; waterside coffin makers on the Mekong delta, south of Saigon; imperial mausolea outside Hue on the Perfume river; two war grave cemeteries between Hanoi and Ha Long Bay; and Ho Chi Minh’s mausoleum at Hanoi containing the mummified body of Ho.

On our sprint to the USA Jeff took us to the Presidio Military Cemetery, San Francisco, with the infamous Alcatraz prison looming in the background—perhaps surprisingly there are no burials on the island; a pets’ cemetery in San Francisco, near the Golden Gate bridge; a pioneer cemetery in Nevada City; four burial grounds (town, miner’s union, freemasons, Chinese—Bodie ghost town) in California, complete with abandoned funeral director’s shop and horse drawn hearses; Elvis Presley’s resting place at Gracelands, Memphis, Tennessee; Jimi Hendrix memorial in Greenwood Memorial Park Cemetery, Seattle; Bruce Lee and Brandon Lee’s memorial at Lake View Cemetery, Seattle; Savannah Cemetery, Georgia, the oldest cemetery in Savannah with early War of Independence heroes and Confederate States’ generals; Lafayette No 1 Cemetery, New Orleans, containing the cream of New Orleans society and voodoo burials; St Louis No 1 Cemetery, New Orleans for the moderately well-to-do, and adjacent to the freeway, St Louis No 2 Cemetery for the poor. In South America we saw the burial place of Evita at La Recoleta Cemetery, Buenos Aires, Argentina, which is similar to Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris and very European in style.

Our sprint around the cemeteries of the world ended at Ford Park Cemetery, Plymouth, England—and it only took an hour. Phew! ■

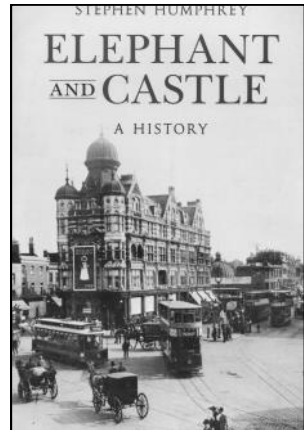


**Book Review: ELEPHANT AND CASTLE—A HISTORY**  
by Stephen Humphrey. Amberley £14.99 ISBN 978-1-84868-780-6

This long awaited history tells the fascinating story of this famous part of South East London. Stephen has concentrated on the period between 1850 and the Blitz in 1940. He tells us that this was the area's heyday with large stores, numerous smaller shops, pubs, restaurants and places of entertainment. He laments the destruction of the area during the Second World War and subsequent 'unsympathetic redevelopment' by the London County Council.

Just like Nunhead, the locality gets its name from a public house, and several places featured in the book have connections with Nunhead Cemetery. For example, William Byartt, the very first superintendent of Rowton House, a hostel for working men, is buried at Nunhead, as is William Tarn, the founder of a smart department store that once stood at the corner of New Kent Road and Newington Causeway, and Frederick Upton, hatter, whose ornate shop and factory stood at the corner of London Road and St George's Road. All three establishments are discussed in detail in Stephen's excellent book along with many more, including the Trocadero, a super cinema, where, in the 1950s, my future wife and I enjoyed many Sunday concerts. Sadly, the 'Troc' went the way of many grand cinemas—it closed in 1963 and was subsequently demolished.

This profusely illustrated in-depth account of the history of the Elephant and Castle will be enjoyed by everyone who has an interest in the history and development of this fascinating district of South East London. **RW**



## **FONC'S REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE**

FONC's Annual Remembrance Day Service was held in Nunhead Cemetery on Sunday 10th November 2013 and was again well-attended. In addition to the five wreaths laid by FONC, for which a donation was made to the Royal British Legion, we laid a wreath on behalf of the Honor Oak and Brockley branch of the Royal British Legion and other persons present also laid wreaths.

## FONC's CEMETERY TOUR PROGRAMME 2014

All tours start from the main entrance in Linden Grove at 2.15pm on Sundays, except Open Day in May and Open House Weekend in September

<i>Date</i>		<i>Tour</i>	<i>Guide</i>
March	16	Woodland Trail tour	Jeff Hart
March	23	Crypt, chapel and viewing tower	J Partington and Malcolm Collins + 1
March	30	General tour	Carole Tyrrell
April	13	Cemetery symbols tour	Carole Tyrrell
April	27	General tour	Ron Woollacott
<b>May (Saturday)</b>	<b>17 11am to 5pm</b>	<b>Annual Open Day: general tours; crypt and tower visits</b>	<b>Various tour leaders</b>
May	25	General tour	Tim Stevenson
June	15	Woodland Trail tour	Tim Stevenson
June	29	General tour	John Turpin
July	20	Crypt, chapel and viewing tower	J Partington and Malcolm Collins + 1
July	27	General tour	Carole Tyrrell
August	10	Music Hall artistes tour	Jolanta Jagiello
August	31	General tour	Jeff Hart
September	14	Woodland Trail tour	John Turpin
<b>September (Saturday and Sunday)</b>	<b>20/21 1pm to 5pm</b>	<b>Open House weekend: general tours; crypt, chapel and tower visits</b>	<b>Various tour leaders</b>
September	28	General tour	Ron Woollacott
October	19	Military connections tour	Jeff Hart
October	26	General tour	Jeff Hart
November	16	Crypt, chapel and viewing tower	J Partington and Malcolm Collins + 1
November	30	General tour	Tim Stevenson
December	14	Woodland Trail tour	Tim Stevenson
December	28	General tour	<i>to be confirmed</i>

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### ANNUAL OPEN DAY (NUNHEAD CEMETERY)

► *Saturday 17th May 2014 from 11.00am to 5.00pm.* We shall need lots of helpers to assist in setting up trestles and to generally assist on the day from **8.30am** onwards, and to tidy up after the event closes at **5pm**.

### FONC'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014

► *Wednesday 18th June 2014 starting at 7.00pm.* The AGM will take place in the function room (upstairs), Old Nun's Head pub. The business meeting will be followed by a presentation by Robert Stephenson. *See page 9.*

### MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION RECORDING

► *Sundays 9th March, 6th April and 11th May 2014 from 10.00am to 4.00pm.* Transcribing the gravestone inscriptions in Nunhead Cemetery is an important and on-going task. Volunteers meet at the FONC Portakabin near the Linden Grove entrance. *Please contact Paul Dyer (MI Co-ordinator) on [fonc@btconnect.com](mailto:fonc@btconnect.com) before travelling.*

### VOLUNTARY WORKDAYS

► *Voluntary workdays take place on the first Sunday in the month from 10am to 4.30pm.* New volunteers are most welcome. Meet at the FONC Portakabin (opposite the Scottish Martyrs' monument) near the main entrance in Linden Grove. Stay an hour or two or all day—it's entirely up to you. *Appropriate clothing including sturdy footwear is essential.*

### GUIDED TOURS OF NUNHEAD CEMETERY

► *General conducted tours of the cemetery take place on the last Sunday in every month at 2.15pm.* Meet at the flint circle just inside the main entrance in Linden Grove. There is no need to book, just turn up on the day. Tours usually take between one and a half to two hours. The publications and enquiry desk will be open, weather and volunteers permitting. *See page 18 for details and for information about other tours in 2014.*

### SPECIAL TOURS OF THE CHAPEL, TOWER AND CRYPT

► *The chapel will be open for guided tours at 2.15pm on the following Sundays 23rd March, 20th July, 16th November 2014, and during Open Day in May and Open House Weekend in September.* Please see opposite for details and dates of all tours and other events in Nunhead Cemetery during 2014 including general tours, woodland trail tours, cemetery symbols tour, military connections tour, and music-hall artistes tour.

~ CONTACTS ~

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Please send all letters, news items and feature articles for publication to:  
**The editor, *FONC News*, c/o fonc@btconnect.com**

***The deadline for the next issue is 20th April 2014***  
(Copy received after this date may be used in a future issue)

**Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)**

Established 1981— *Registered charity number 296413*

A founder member of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends (NFCF).  
Member of the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCE).  
Recipient of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's Birthday Award for  
Environmental Improvements (National Commendation) 1998.

**[www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk)**

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