

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, London, SE15

# FONC News



No 134—Winter issue (Dec 2016 ~ Feb 2017)—ISSN 1478-0631



*Visitors assemble for the John Davis Memorial Dedication - see page 18*

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## 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**, [membership@fonc.org.uk](mailto:membership@fonc.org.uk)

**Further information** about FONC and Nunhead Cemetery can be found on our excellent website managed by 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.*** See notice at entrance. The cemetery may be closed without notice for safety reasons, for example during very 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 Jane Hart by email: [fonc@btconnect.com](mailto:fonc@btconnect.com)

**FONC Meetings and Events:** Committee meetings take place on the *3rd Thursday of each month. 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 the chairman email [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's address is: Linden Grove, Nunhead, London, SE15 3LP**

## *The Seasons Greetings to all our readers*

**Editor:** Ron Woollacott. **Subeditor:** Gwyneth Stokes. **Contributors:** Mary Anne Bonney; Michèle Louise Burford; Jeff Hart; Jolanta Jagiello; Christina Lawrence; Simon Mercer; Brenda Wilkins. All other text unless otherwise credited is by the editor. *The editor, subeditor and FONC's General Committee do not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by contributors.*

### **FONC'S CHRISTMAS SOCIAL**

**Thursday 15th December 2016 at 7.00pm**  
*in the function room of the*  
***Pyrotechnists Arms, Nunhead Green, SE15***

**BRYAN DONKIN:**  
**A REMARKABLE ENGINEER BURIED AT NUNHEAD**  
*An illustrated presentation by Chris Knowles*

**Meet with other Friends and supporters of FONC in the convivial surroundings of the Pyrotechnists Arms. Members and their friends most are welcome**

*A grand raffle will be held and seasonal food will be available*

*Donations to offset costs will be gratefully received*



## FONC'S 5,000th MEMBER by *Simon Mercer*

Miss S Amaradivakara is our 5,000th member. She has accepted a complimentary copy of our guide to Nunhead Cemetery to mark her receipt of Membership Number 5000 from FONC. Members may recall that that we had marked our 4,000th member in 2008, 3,000th in 2002 and 2,000th in 1995. Looking further back, number 1000 joined in 1989 and number 1 in 1981.

All new FONC members receive a unique membership number. The earliest numbers were issued in 1981 and members who joined in that year form one percent of the current membership. For various reasons FONC does lose some members each year and their membership numbers are lost with them (they are not reused). Where are our members now? Over 51% of members live in the south east of London; the same figure was reported in 2008. Kent and Surrey have 10% and 5% (9% and 6% in 2008). The majority of our members live locally to the cemetery, with 32% (down from 33%) of current UK membership living in SE4 (Brockley), SE14 (New Cross), SE15 (Peckham and Nunhead) and SE22 (East Dulwich). We have ten overseas members: two each in Canada, France and USA; and one each in Cyprus, the Netherlands, Spain and South Africa. The remaining members live all over the UK: from Inverness (1 member) to Hampshire (3 members); Anglesey (1 member) to Norfolk (2); and Yorkshire (4) to Bristol (3 members). FONC have always made high levels of participation and membership a top priority. We feel that it is important to have as many members as possible, so that we really are a local group with a loud voice campaigning for Nunhead Cemetery. The price of membership has been kept low to allow as many people as possible to join. This has been a great success and at the moment we have over 800 members, making us one of the largest voluntary groups in London.

We manage to maintain the low subscription (£2- UK and £10- overseas) because of the large team who deliver our journal *FONC News* to nearly 300 members in south east London by hand and save postage costs.

FONC is run entirely by volunteers and members can help us to continue running FONC efficiently in two simple ways:

1. Please fill out a standing order form. The banks are efficient and standing orders really do help us because we don't have to send out reminders to members who have them. Banks do not charge their customers for paying standing orders and it saves members postage. Standing orders may be stopped at any time by informing your bank. To start a standing order, please request a form by emailing [membership@fonc.org.uk](mailto:membership@fonc.org.uk) giving your name and postcode.

2. Please renew your subscription when it's due - 1st April. Thank you to everyone who paid by cash, cheque, PayPal or standing order in 2016. We hope that you enjoy your membership including our quarterly journal and that you'll wish to renew in 2017. Thanks for your support!

*Christina Lawrence tells the fascinating story of Carter's Kitchen and the charity workers buried at Nunhead*

## THE TERRIBLE SIGHT OF LONDON

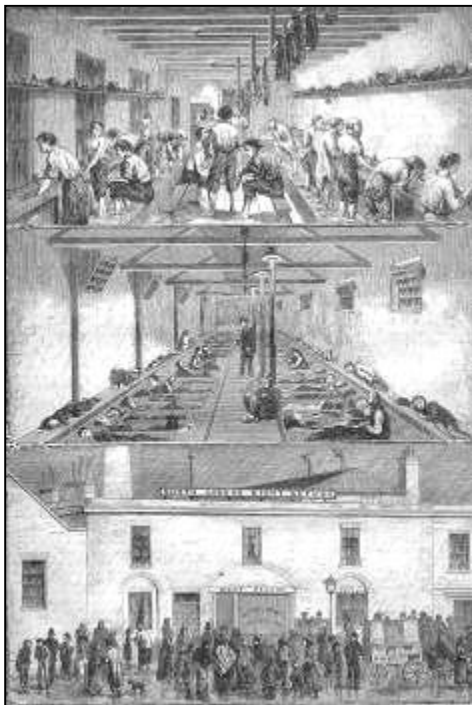
Thus goes the title of a book published in 1870 by Thomas Archer, presenting its Victorian middle class readers with his survey of charity work in London. Among familiar names like Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital and Coram's Foundling Hospital, we find *Carter's Kitchen*, run by William and Hephzibah Carter, who now lie buried in their family grave at Nunhead Cemetery (number 12070, square 131), just off the Welsh Path. Archer had personally inspected every institution in the ever increasing catalogue of necessary charities set up in 'the Great City', as London was known. Thomas Archer (1830-1893) was a London society newspaper columnist and author of books with often historical background. His ideas on charity work resemble that of our modern times, proposing a centrally managed scheme of donations, also through the tax system, to ensure a fair distribution between the many worthy causes. Carter's Kitchen was a point in case. Despite succeeding in feeding and sheltering up to 250 people every night, the same number again had to be turned away at the door. When we realise how easy it could have been to become disillusioned with providing only partial relief, for the needs of so many, then the Carters' motivation to keep going is all the more to be admired.

### **Come in your thousands**

Archer's account of his visit to Carter's Kitchen, one foggy London night, takes us back to the time when the New Blackfriars Bridge of iron and steel construction had just been opened in 1869. He describes how the road surface had not been quite completed, thereby leaving exposed some gas pipes, inadvertently providing heat through open fires used by small groups of homeless people to keep warm at night. What a stark and poignant contrast to the day of celebration on 6th October marking the completion of the bridge, attended by the royal procession of Queen Victoria, which had been advertised beforehand with the invitation to 'come in your thousands'. What a contrast also to the thousands of people needing to come to charities like Carter's Kitchen. In addition to its location at Southwark Bridge Road, the Carters oversaw similar relief efforts across the so-called Surrey Side, at Lambeth, Waltham and Bermondsey. In the harsh winter of 1867, a daily number of 3,000 vouchers was distributed, through third-party officials like council district home visitors, entitling the recipient to whatever they most needed in terms of clothing and food, typically a half pound of bread and a quart of stew (about one litre). Depending on the resources in hand, it was not unusual for Carter's team of volunteers to distribute provisions by horse-drawn cart across south-east London (e.g. Dockhead, New Cut

*continued on next page*

Market, Lambeth Walk) and even to Deptford which was then part of Kent. Transparency of the charity's operations was ensured by William Carter's publications from 1862 onwards, in the form of annual financial reports, and books with pictures from copperplate engravings, so that we today can get an idea of the scale of the work and put faces to names. In January 1867, £1,200 was used for the work with the homeless, which is about £54,840 today. Apart from a caring attitude, some tenacity was also needed. His highly successful gospel preaching – accompanied by the free distribution of good quality bread, butter, fruit cake, tea and coffee at teetotal meetings, where Hephzibah led the activities for women, typically mothers with babes in arms – regularly met with the hostility of others who wanted the large buildings, such as Victoria Hall ('Old Vic'), for cheap but profitable mass entertainment that invariably turned the districts into high crime areas.



*South London Night Refuge  
from a German magazine 1866*

*(archive of Christina Lawrence)*

## **The wretchedly paid city clerk**

The largest proportion of people coming to Carter's Kitchen or South London Night Refuge in its official name were unemployed and homeless labourers, painters, seamstresses and servants. People were already trying their best to change occupation to avoid applying for charity support, but this could also have an adverse effect, so that William Carter was surprised to find that so many leather tanners existed in London: a popular choice at first, but soon resulting in a glut of people being able to offer that service. An endless list of occupations was represented at the night shelter, some fallen on hard times because their once prosperous employers in the metropolis had themselves fallen on hard times. So we also find the typical example of the 'wretchedly paid' and then unemployed city clerk, as also represented by Charles Dickens' archetypal figure of Bob Cratchit in his 1843 novel *A Christmas Carol*. At the time of Archer's inspection, he noted two men in particular who were spending

three consecutive overnight stays at Carter's refuge, while they were waiting for re-employment, their professional skills as lawyers being put to good use within the charity's clerical administration. Temporary – but timely – aid was usually all that was needed, to tide people over to the next opportunity, which would otherwise be lost to them and result in permanent poverty. Apart from overnight accommodation, practical help included: clothes donations; tools of trade to labourers or carpenters; the lending of maternity linen boxes to young mothers; or starting a costermonger (street vendor) off to a new business venture with a shilling (5 pounds sterling in today's money) – thereby helping people to help themselves, as the expression still goes today. The Carters' own family backgrounds in the chimneysweep trade no doubt gave them a good head on their shoulder. The entire building of the night shelter was kept at a regular warm temperature via air shafts leading from the hot water boiler in the downstairs storey, situated next to the huge oven used for baking the bread: household standard for the men; cottage loaf for the women, who were often expectant or breastfeeding mothers.

## **A touch of real nature**

The premises had been converted from a disused flour factory. Archer described the location in somewhat enigmatic words by observing that 'by a remarkable foreshadowing of its present relation to bread, it was originally a flour-mill; which at once explains our going up a short flight of stone steps and down another flight before we reach the basement, where a great oven is all a-glow after the drawing of a batch of such sweet and wholesome bread as scents the whole place, as though some lingering perfume had been left behind by the fragrant meal that once fell through the upper storey' (page 279). He describes the dormitories in the male and female wards on the higher level of the building with low ceilings of wooden beams as having been 'the flour and grain floors of the mill' (page 284). Would this be on or near the site of the ill-fated Albion Mill? Perhaps the cellar foundations of that building remained after its masonry structure was demolished in 1809. If Archer does not specifically mention it by name, that may be because the factory had been maligned in Blake's poem as 'satanic mills'. Archer chose similar words for Blackfriars Railway Bridge: 'the great iron railway loomed with hideous utilitarian tyranny, and shut out the seaward view of sky and stream' (page 274). By contrast, the cottage loaves in Carter's Kitchen showed 'a grateful touch of real nature' (page 279).

The two large dormitories had the capacity to accommodate 150 men and 100 women. The doors would open after 6 o'clock in the evening, to admit alternate groups of seventeen people at a time, allowing them to have a foot bath and quick wash after their long day of walking the streets of London. Five hundred gallons of stew (2,250 litres) would be kept ready in the basement kitchen in two steam-heated copper cauldrons containing meat, carrots, and barley grain, not forgetting the sea-

*continued on next page*



*William and Hephzibah Carter*

soning. Another cauldron held coffee served with milk and sugar. Archer could not stop singing the praises of the toothsome provisions, compared with some of the other examples he had had the misfortune to witness in his inspections – of workhouses and prisons, the first choice of that other Dickensian character, Ebenezer Scrooge. By contrast, Archer with his family background of Huguenot immigrants could empathise with people having a bad start in life but desperate to change it for the better (French Huguenots settled in England as early as 1544, compare <http://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/>).

## **Lasting legacy**

As might be expected, the first generation descendants of William Carter (born 1824/1825 in London, died 1st November 1872 in Brixton) and his wife Hephzibah, née Boulter (born August 1830 in Brighton, died 27th April 1877 in Brixton) were born in London and Kent, but a busy internet blog (<http://www.brethrenarchive.org/>) also showed genealogical interest from as far afield as Australia, because one son, Samuel, born 1858 in St. Pancras, emigrated and worked there as a ‘minister of the gospel’ within the Christian Brethren movement. This takes me to my interest in the story of the work of William and Hephzibah Carter. The national census of 1861 records their visit at a house called ‘The Folly’, in the small market town of Leominster, in the county of Herefordshire on the Welsh border, staying with my great-grandparents George Lawrence and Sara Mytton (another Huguenot name). My great-grandparents were then a newly married couple, expecting their first baby, and waiting to start missionary work under the auspices of the German born Georg Müller, director of the orphanages in Bristol (<https://www.mullers.org>). So another legacy of



the Carters was their influence on George Lawrence, who founded in 1873 a charitable hospital in that other great city, Barcelona. This medical aid and other initiatives like free schools to combat widespread illiteracy were only possible through the combined support from caring individual donors and a range of missionary societies based in different locations, such as London, Edinburgh, and New York. A *London Times* newspaper reporter, examining my great-grandfather's work at Christmas 1874, reminded the readers of 'the good one man alone can achieve when working upon the impulse of true, earnest, and disinterested charity'. I am sure that my great-grandparents were inspired by the single-minded determination of William and Hephzibah Carter. Witnessing such dedication in the face of *the terrible sights of London* allowed Archer to give his book its qualifying sub-title *and labours of love in the midst of them*. ■



*Ruins of the Carter  
monument at Nunhead Cemetery*

*References:*

Thomas Archer, *The terrible sights of London and labours of love in the midst of them*, 1870, reprinted by Dodo Press. (Some of his books are available at <https://openlibrary.org/> )

William Carter, *The power of grace*, 1868, London, Morgan and Chase.

Tom Chantry, *William Carter*, including photos of the grave at Nunhead Cemetery, <http://www.brethrenarchive.org/people/william-carter.aspx>, accessed 5th August 2016.

Ron Woollacott & Michèle Louise Burford, *Buried at Nunhead: Nunhead Notables*, Vol 3, 2014, entry for William Carter, pp. 25-26, FONC Publication.

Wikipedia entry for George Lawrence

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Lawrence\\_Davis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Lawrence_Davis)

# **Animals in Service: Mascots**

## **World War One: The Story of Winnie**

*by Jolanta Jagiello*

**A**nimals in Service - a public art exhibition in the Stearn's Mausoleum at Nunhead Cemetery open during the weekends 7th to 30th May 2016 commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme through the huge contribution that 16 million animals made in the First World War. Over 1,000 Visitors including families have enjoyed reading 'Flo of the Somme' to their children, about a First World War Rescue and Mercy Dog. The focus of the exhibition was on the service of animals in transport, logistics, cavalry and communications, as well as in the morale of troops. Each artist made three artworks telling the story of their animal, before the war, during the war, and the lasting legacies they left after the First World War. The horses and camels used for transportation, the dogs, pigeons and songbirds used as messengers, body lice in the spread of trench fever, together with those used in the propaganda of war and those chosen as mascots.

The most famous mascot of the First World War (even made into a film) is Lieutenant Harry Colebourn's small female black bear cub named Winnie. Lieutenant Harry Colebourn was born in England in 1887 and emigrated to Canada at the age of 18. As with many Canadians born in England, there was still a close attachment to the old country and Harry immediately volunteered to serve in the Fort Garry Horse Regiment. On the 24th August 1914, while en route to Valcartier to report to the Canadian Army Veterinary Corps (CAVC) he purchased a young bear cub for \$20 at a train stop in White River, Ontario.

In late August, hundreds of thousands of pink salmon begin surging their way up the inlet of White River in Ontario, attracting dozens of bears converging on the spawning channels to fish for salmon to fatten their bodies in preparation for the coming winter. This is captured in the sculpture (opposite) showing the bear cub in her natural habitat.

White River had been built as a stop-off point by the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 and became



*Black Bear's Natural Habitat*  
*by Jolanta Jagiello*

an important trading centre. The area had a number of bears owned by local people and White River was a good market where very good prices could be fetched. The bear was named Winnipeg or Winnie for short, after Lieutenant Harry Colebourn's home city of Winnipeg. Winnie accompanied him all the way to England, becoming the unofficial mascot of the CAVC and a pet to the Second Canadian Infantry Brigade Headquarters.

Before leaving for France to fight on the Western Front including the Battle of the Somme, Colebourn left Winnie at London Zoo. From 1915 until the death of Winnie in 1934 she remained at the London Zoo, where she was much loved for her playfulness and gentleness. Winnie was the only animal allowed to play with children and would lick jam off their hands as a special trick. The sculpture below shows Winnie with her ZSL London Zoo record card outside London Zoo at that moment of time.

The bear was very popular with A A Milne's son Christopher Robin, who was a fan and consequently changed the name of his own teddy bear from Edward Bear to Winnie the Pooh, providing the inspiration for his father's stories about the loveable bear Winnie-the-Pooh. The Pooh comes from the then common Army expression a 'Poo-bah', meaning a useless regular Army Officer whose main claim to fame was that he had served in Poonah... which he repeated interminably.... When I was in Poonah.....

The adventures of Winnie-the-Pooh were published by Methuen on the 14th October 1926, and 'The House at Pooh Corner' in 1928. All these books were beautifully illustrated by Ernest Shepard who donated 300 of his preliminary sketches for the Pooh drawings to the Victoria and Albert Museum, where they were exhibited in 1969. This is illustrated overleaf in the sculpture with a page out of the book that sees 'Winnie-the-Pooh' walking in Hundred Acre Wood.

'Animals in Service' exhibition was funded by Southwark Neighbourhood Fund 2016-2017, and followed last year's very successful 'ANZAC In Spirit: Diggers in Gallipoli'. A pop-up display of the exhibition, including 'Lieutenant Colebourn's Mascot' by Jolanta Jagiello, toured the other 'Magnificent Seven' Victorian Cemeteries in 2016: Tower Hamlets Cemetery on 4th June; Kensal Green Cemetery on 2nd July; and Brompton Cemetery on 17th July. The whole exhibition was on display on the 10th and 11th September 2016 in the chapel at Brockley and Ladywell

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*Lieutenant Colebourn's Mascot  
by Jolanta Jagiello*



*London Zoo's Winnie by Jolanta Jagiello*

Cemetery during National Federation of Cemetery Friends Inaugural National Cemeteries Week 10th -18th September 2016. 'Animals in Service' is part of a five year plan of exhibitions commemorating World War One from 2014 to 2018. Next year's show will be 'Women in Front' in 2017, and followed by 'Messages, Medals, and Memorials' in 2018. ■

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## **Mrs Brenda Wilkins writes from Shanklin, Isle of Wight**

### ***Memory of Dad 'on safari' in Nunhead Cemetery***

Mum and Dad moved into Daniel's Road, Nunhead in about the early sixties, 1960s that is. Dad used to go 'on safari' to the cemetery every Sunday afternoon and we often joined him. The main gates were locked but a side gate was open and it was well used by the locals: some people tending graves but a lot just using it as a country park, to stroll in or even picnic.

I was one of three girls, married by then with a baby and enjoyed our walks; as my two sisters married and produced offspring, we made quite a family outing. This was many years before the Friends came into existence but the cemetery was very well used. I eventually became a teacher, first in Bermondsey then in Brixton and enjoyed introducing the older children to the wilderness of the cemetery. It was amazing how much work could be got out of them and how many introduced their parents to 'Miss's special place.' They knew they had to respect the environment or they would be in trouble with me.

I think I eventually joined the Friends when I retired, I can't really remember but my membership number is 0623 so it must have been some time ago.\* I don't get 'up

the smoke' as London used to be called, very often now, but each time I get *FONC News* it brings back fond memories.

Thank you for all the work you do in keeping the old place going. Don't tidy it up too much - a little bit of safari is still important, especially to kids.

*\*Mrs Wilkins joined FONC over 29 years ago in June 1987 (Ed).*

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## **NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No 24**

*by Jeff Hart - FONC Co-ordinator*

### ***Running in the slow lane***

Unfortunately despite constant cajoling at the monthly site meetings held with Southwark officers progress on a number of current issues remains painfully slow. The revised planning application for proposed works around the Scots Martyrs memorial was only submitted in October despite being assured when writing for last quarter's Journal that this would happen 'next week'. We are still not convinced it has been improved well enough to receive approval. A report of the initial condition survey of the Limesford Road and Brockley Footpath boundary walls conducted by AECOM has still not appeared yet. The long running and controversial issue of dog controls in Southwark's cemeteries are still under consideration by the Council, although we understand that officers will make recommendations to councillors shortly. Even the second meeting of the new NON-Council led Southwark Greenspace Forum meeting has been put back to November. Repairs to the Hope memorial are still to be commenced. However, the long awaited repairs to the Hardwidge vault, damaged by Southwark's tree team more than eighteen months ago, were successfully completed by the beginning of September. At least grounds maintenance undertaken by Quadron continues to be conducted sympathetically under the direction of the council Cemeteries Operations team with significant input from FONC.

### ***The 'Vital Spark' rekindled!***

After some three years of planning - and coincidentally to the inclusion of Jenny Hill in the 'Remarkable Women Buried at Nunhead' series in the Journal - the leaning headstone commemorating the 'Vital Spark' and her daughter has been restored by the Music Hall Guild of Britain and America. It is now in pristine condition and a highlight of our Music Hall stars tour.

### ***Remembering those interred at Nunhead***

Unfortunately it was still not possible to find a minister willing to conduct an All Souls Service at the cemetery this year. This is a matter of great regret for the Committee because we do realise that many members, although not able to attend in person, find great comfort in knowing that their loved ones are remembered in this way.

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However, the FONC publications and enquiries desk was invited to participate in Southwark's Annual Memorial Service held on the 26th June at Camberwell New Cemetery when all those interred in Southwark's three cemeteries are celebrated. Southwark Deputy Mayor, Charlie Smith, visited our stand and expressed his appreciation for all the work that FONC does.

### ***Knotweed treatment kneeded!***

Another area of the invasive Japanese Knotweed has been identified in the cemetery to the west of the West Path towards the Brockley footpath boundary. Southwark Council have a rolling programme of chemical treatment to eradicate this controlled plant and this has now begun in the area. Regrettably this entails fencing off the area for the duration of the three year period needed to ensure treatment is successful. Whilst this restricts access and looks rather un-aesthetic we have to accept the necessity for the work.

### ***East Lodge works update***

After some delay in starting, and a hiatus in the middle with a dispute over the payment of additional 'taxes', new scaffolding being erected around the building both internally and externally was completed on the 14th October. Conservation architects Thomas Ford and Associates have been appointed to produce the feasibility study on the future of the Lodge. Now safely able to begin the initial measured survey of the building, work was expected to start around the 24th October. The contract period for the report is thirteen weeks and FONC expects to meet with the architects early in this period to discuss our thoughts for the future of the Lodge. Following completion of the report, officers will make their recommendations to councillors, and public consultation on the future of the Lodge is expected thereafter. FONC will be doing all it can to ensure the building is kept for the public good and we will report more extensively in the next issue.

### ***Out and about in the wider community***

In addition to the tours of the cemetery open to the public, FONC often runs private tours for specialist groups which usually result in generous donations and publication sales to boost our funds. The Society of Genealogy visited in June. We also attend other events such as the Blythe Hill Fields Fayre and the Brockley and Ladywell Cemeteries Open Day, both in July. Illustrated talks are also given to a variety of groups – recently the Lewisham Local History Society and Forest Hill Lively Minds group. The co-ordinator can also offer talks on Nunhead Cemetery; Nunhead and its Waterloo veterans; Around the World in 80 Cemeteries; Nunhead's Music Hall stars; Brockley and Ladywell Cemeteries; and other FONC members can cover topics such as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. If any members want to suggest events to attend or groups interested in tours or talks, or even to help out with these, do let us know!

## Celebrity Immortality Exhibition - Open House Weekend and Nunhead Art Trail 2016 by *Jolanta Jagiello*

Nunhead Cemetery participated in Open House Weekend 17th -18th September and Nunhead Art Trail 24th -25th September 2016 with an exhibition: Celebrity Immortality in the restored Anglican chapel as well as participating in National Cemeteries Week 10th -18th September 2016. This public art exhibition displayed steel cut-outs of celebrities by welded metal sculptor Jolanta Jagiello, immortalised in bronze life-size sculptures of celebrities installed around the world from the Golden Age of Hollywood, as well as Legendary Musicians and Singers, and Great British Comedians.



Above: *Amy Winehouse steel cut-out by Jolanta Jagiello*. Right: *Bronze sculpture of Amy Winehouse in Camden Town (photos: Jolanta Jagiello)*

The Golden Age of Hollywood is celebrated with the slapstick comedy antics of *Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy*, the famous Blonde Bombshell *Marilyn Monroe*, *John Wayne* famous for his Westerns, and *Bruce Lee* the greatest martial arts fighter on film. Not forgetting Legendary Musicians and Singers such as the ‘King of Pop’ *Michael Jackson*, the electrifying guitarist *Jimi Hendrix* to the home-grown talent of *Billy Fury* Britain’s answer to *Elvis Presley*. Tributes include *Fred-*

*die Mercury*, lead singer and showman of *Queen*, and the iconic jazz singer-songwriter with her famous beehive *Amy Winehouse*. The Great British Comedians of the 1980s are remembered, *Eric Morecambe* from *Morecambe & Wise*, famous for their signature tune ‘Bring me Sunshine’, *Benny Hill* slapstick seaside humour, *Jim Henson* creator of the world’s most famous Muppet ‘Kermit the Frog’, and *Tommy Cooper* the magician who famously died performing magic tricks.

Over 700 visitors enjoyed the exhibition, which was joined by BlackFriars Settlement Stall during Nunhead Art Trail 2016 weekend, who thoroughly enjoyed the experience: ‘Lovely people, lovely church and a great weekend, so peaceful and resting. Lovely weather and our creative arts sold well. Lovely place to socialise.’ (Juliet Alcoran, BlackFriars Settlement). ■

*The exhibition was curated by Jolanta Jagiello in association with Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (www.fonc.org.uk) and is archived on www.artgoingplaces.com.*

## VISIT TO FROGMORE PAPER MILL ON 4th SEPTEMBER

*Bryan Donkin, inventor and celebrated ‘Nunhead Notable’ is remembered at Frogmore Paper Mill, Herts. Mary Anne Bonney describes an interesting discovery leading to FONC visit.*

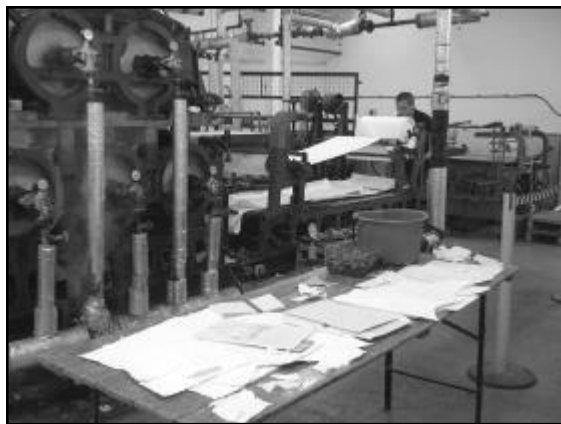
When Chris and I came upon the Bryan Donkin narrowboat on our first visit to Frogmore Mill, we felt as if we had unexpectedly met an old friend. I had not appreciated the central role that the Bryan Donkin I ‘knew’ as a Nunhead Notable played in bringing mechanised paper making to England, nor that the first of Bryan Donkin’s improved Fourdrinier paper making machines went into production at the Frogmore Mill, near us in Hertfordshire, now preserved and opened to the public by the Apsley Paper Trail Charity. It, therefore, gave Chris and me great pleasure to welcome a group of FONC friends old and new to



*Bryan Donkin Narrowboat - photo: Linda Martin*

Apsley to share our discovery. We were delighted to be joined, too, all the way from Derby, by members of the Bryan Donkin Archives Society, including Maureen Greenland and Russ Day, authors of a newly published book: *Bryan Donkin, The Very Civil Engineer, 1768-1855*.

We were welcomed to the mill by our guide and the Paper Trail archivist and, fortified with tea and biscuits, started the tour with handmade paper—ably demonstrated by two of FONC’s representatives. We were able to appreciate Bryan Donkin’s contributions to the production of paper by the reel,



*Paper making at Frogmore Mill - photo: Linda Martin*

rather than a sheet at a time, on a model of a refined Fourdrinier machine. In the early 19th century when paper making began at Frogmore, the Gade valley on the outskirts of Hemel Hempstead was home to a succession of mills. Today it is left to the Frogmore Mill, with its warren of spaces, to conjure up an idea of the cradle of mechanised papermaking in England in its heyday.



Paper making machines are big – to turn a watery soup of pulp into a reel of dry paper, two metres or more wide, in one continuous process requires the space to drain then press water out and subsequently to apply heat to remove the remaining moisture. We were able to walk the length of the main paper making machine at the mill which was last operated in 2008, making sugar paper and paper for tickets and were fortunate that the ‘small’ machine was in operation and were talked through the whole process. The machine is operated commercially to produce relatively short runs of specialist papers – including the paper used to shape the pointes of ballet shoes - and it still plays a role in training paper makers of the future, giving them hands on experience of the processes that are now carried out under computer control on an enormous scale and, I suspect ‘sanitised’ by modern health and safety regulations. We were also able to examine the hollander beater used for processing the raw materials (today largely recycled paper but earlier rags and wood pulp) and explore the comprehensive displays about paper making as well as a collection of associated items including printing machines, a paper dress worn by a local teacher at her wedding and decorated by her pupils, and the mill’s own fire engine – essential in a factory with so many opportunities for accidental combustion.

Our tour concluded with a trip on the Bryan Donkin, along the now quite overgrown canal branch that joins the mill to the Grand Union Canal. Those who were able to linger rounded off the visit with refreshments at the aptly named Paper Mill pub, a short distance along the canal, where Maureen Greenland and Russ Day



*The Mill's own fire engine - photo: Linda Martin*

shared their enthusiasm for Bryan Donkin and gave us an introduction to his numerous other inventions. If you would like to know more, I can recommend their excellent book, *Bryan Donkin, The Very Civil Engineer, 1768-1855*. See [www.phillimorebookpublishing.co.uk/](http://www.phillimorebookpublishing.co.uk/) Not only does the book look at Bryan Donkin’s many achievements, it places them in the context of their time. ■

For details of Frogmore Mill’s opening times telephone 01442 234600 or see [www.thepapertrail.org.uk/](http://www.thepapertrail.org.uk/)

*Our thanks to Chris Knowles and Mary Anne Bonney of St Alban’s for organising such an unusual and very enjoyable day out for FONC members. Chris will be speaking about Donkin at the Christmas Social, see details on page 3.*

## HEADSTONE DEDICATION SERVICE

### Ensign John Davis, US Navy

*John Davis (1839-1917) was an Englishman who served in the United States Navy during the American Civil War of 1861-1864, and narrowly escaped death when his ship, USS Tulip, was destroyed by an exploding boiler and sank in the Potomac River. The vessel was blown apart and sank off Ragged Point, Virginia, on the 11th November 1864 with the loss of many lives. On returning to England Davis became a London City Missionary in Bermondsey, and was also the Honorary Secretary of the London Branch of American Civil War Veterans. He died at the age of 76 and was laid to rest in an unmarked grave at Nunhead Cemetery.*

The formal dedication of a new stone to mark the grave of Ensign John Davis took place at Nunhead Cemetery on Saturday 23rd July 2016. Among those present were Doug Fidler, Secretary, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW); Peter J Collins, Camp Commander, Ensign John Davis Camp 10, SUVCW, and other members of the 'Davis' family; Michael Hammerson, Associate Brother of Ensign John Davis Camp 10; Eugene Mortorff, Commander-in-Chief, SUVCW; Captain Rudeshill, Naval Attache, US Embassy, London; Chaplain Paul Cherico, London City Mission; Charlie Smith, Deputy Mayor of Southwark; Avril Kirby and Candy Edwards, Southwark Cemeteries Department; Members of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC), and others.

FONC's Jeff Hart welcomed the large party of visitors to Nunhead Cemetery and invited FONC's chairman to say a few words by way of introduction. Southwark's



*Doug Fidler, Secretary of the SUVCW wears a US Army civil war kepi at the dedication of a new stone to mark the grave of Ensign John Davis US Navy*

Deputy Mayor also addressed the party, after which the procession, led by Peter Collins and other members of the 'Davis' family, proceeded along the Dissenters' Road to the last resting place of Ensign John Davis. Everyone crowded around the grave to hear Doug Fidler explain who John Davis was and why it had taken so long to honour him by placing a marker on his unmarked grave. He said it was mainly through the efforts of his descendants that he was now being honoured. After the placing of a wreath, a rose and a garland on the grave, the dedication service concluded with the blessing by Chaplain Cherico. The stone was provided by the United States Veterans Committee, and the entire event was facilitated by FONC, who also provided light refreshments. ■

**Remarkable Women buried in Nunhead Cemetery No 3**  
*by Ron Woollacott and Michèle Louise Burford*

**MRS LOUISA SIMS**  
**A Pioneer in the Women's Movement (Part 1)**

Though largely forgotten today, LOUISA AMELIA ANN SIMS deserves to be remembered as one of the early activists in the Women's Movement during the 19th century, who campaigned for the enfranchisement of women. Louisa was born in Worcester, the daughter of John Dinmore Stevenson (c.1800-1864) and his wife Mary Yardley, and was baptised at Claines, Worcester, on the 10th March 1823. Her father, a copper plate printer, was an activist in the Chartist Movement and the erstwhile leader of the Worcester Chartists.

It was at some time in the 1840s, whilst on a visit to London, that Louisa first set her eyes on her future husband: he was George Sims, a young gentleman, who whilst riding along a street one day his horse shied and almost threw him. On hearing a 'musical' female voice cry out at his near calamity, George noticed a young lady at an open window. He thought she was the 'prettiest girl he had ever seen' and was determined to find out who she was and obtain an introduction. He very soon learned that she was Miss Louisa Amelia Ann Stevenson, a Worcestershire girl on a visit to London. Having been introduced and following a brief courtship, George and Louisa were married at Trinity Church, St Mary Newington, Southwark, on the 22nd May 1847. Their first child, George Robert Sims, was born at 8 Newton Terrace, Kennington, on the 2nd September 1847, and was baptised at St Nicholas Church in his mother's home town of Worcester.

**AT HOME IN HAMPSTEAD AND MARYLEBONE**

At the time of the 1851 census George and Louisa were living in St John's Street Road, Clerkenwell. In 1861 their address was 62 Chelcote Street, Hampstead, where they were residing with their six children, all of whom were under the age of 14, Louisa's father John, and three servants. George Sims, a property owner and successful manufacturer, employed 25 men at his plate glass factory in Aldersgate. In 1871 the family's address was 48 Hamilton Terrace, Marylebone, where they were attended by four servants. The family business had grown considerably by 1881, and no less than 84 men and nine boys were employed at the factory. The Sims' eldest son, George R Sims, assisted his father for a time, but left the firm in 1874 to join the staff of the satirical magazine *Fun*, edited by Tom Hood (see *Nunhead Notables*). A crusading journalist, poet, novelist and bon viveur, George R Sims is perhaps best known for editing *Living London* (1902), and for his poem 'Christmas Day

*continued on next page*

in the Workhouse'. The Sims' second son, Walter, became a partner in the firm before taking over the entire business in 1890.

### **LOUISA TURNS HER ATTENTION TO THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT**

Perhaps motivated by the activities of her politicking Chartist father, Louisa was to become one of the leading lights in the women's movement at a period in British history when a married woman's role was to stay at home and look after the house. Louisa believed that women, as well as men, should have an active role in politics, and she was acquainted with virtually everyone involved with the women's movement, including the journalist and lecturer, Florence Fenwick Miller (1854-1935), and the suffragists, Lydia Ernestine Becker (1827-1890) and Frances Power Cobbe (1822-1904). Other cosmopolitan and progressive friends she and her husband entertained at their home in Marylebone included, George Zerffi (1820-1892), the Hungarian art historian and revolutionary; the theosophist Anna Kingsford (1846-1888); poet Augusta Webster (1837-1894); Samuel Butler (1835-1902), author of *The Way of All Flesh*; and the German revolutionary and author, Karl Blind (1826-1907).

### **LOUISA JOINS THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE**

The first ever public meeting on women's suffrage to include women speakers was held in Manchester in 1868, and in 1870 the first Women's Suffrage Bill (Jacob Bright's Women's Disabilities Removal Bill) was rejected by Parliament. Bright was successful, however, in carrying an amendment to the Municipal Corporations Act of 1869 at the suggestion of Lydia Becker, enabling women householders to vote in municipal (local authority) elections.

In May 1872 Louisa Sims was one of the principal speakers at the Women's Suffrage Conference presided over by Edward Eastwick (1814-1883), MP for Penryn and Falmouth. The conference which was convened by the central committee of the National Society for Promoting the Enfranchisement of Women, was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel in London.

*to be continued*

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## **ALL CHANGE AT FONC by Jeff Hart**

**A**fter a long period of stability with FONC's organisation we suddenly find ourselves with a number of changes since last June's Annual General Meeting. Cathy Mercer has been our Honorary Treasurer for many years and we have been extremely fortunate in the way that she has expertly managed our financial affairs. However, she has for some time now indicated a desire to stand down if a suitable replacement could be found. Fortunately, relatively new committee member Ann Coley, a trained accountant with many years' experience, has agreed to stand for

election as Treasurer next summer and is currently working with Cathy to effect a smooth hand-over should the membership approve the change at the AGM.

In August, we also lost the services of Minutes Secretary Carole Tyrell who has resigned from FONC for personal reasons. Carole has also provided sterling service for FONC and is an able general and symbols tour leader. Fortunately Carole has agreed to fulfil her tour and Publications and Enquiries Desk (PED) commitments to the end of the year. In the meantime, Jane Hart has been appointed by the Committee as our acting Minutes Secretary. PED organiser (and FONC Committee member and NFCF Secretary) Gwyneth Stokes has also found the task increasingly arduous travelling from her home in South Croydon. Having now retired from her demanding full-time employment, Jane Hart has agreed to also take this task on and is in the process of transferring responsibilities from Gwyneth.

Finally, although the Committee has worked hard over the last two years to ensure that we have all the current required processes, policies and procedures in place to ensure good governance of our registered charity, recent charity law changes have led us to consider whether our current Constitution is still fit for purpose. Co-ordinator Jeff Hart is now beginning the thankless task of reviewing and rewriting as necessary for the Committee to consider with a view to presenting the results at the 2017 AGM. Given the increasing volume of work, the Committee has also decided that it will hold a monthly meeting in August in future years. ***We also have four vacancies on the Committee at present, so please think about whether you might want to contribute in this way!***

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## ***NEW POETRY BOOK LAUNCHED IN THE CHAPEL AT NUNHEAD CEMETERY***

Chris McCabe, the author of *In the Catacombs: A Summer Among the Dead Poets of West Norwood Cemetery* (2014) read excerpts from his latest book, *Cenotaph South: Mapping the Lost Poets of Nunhead Cemetery*, to a group of around 60 visitors in the Gothic chapel at Nunhead Cemetery on Sunday 30th October 2016. Regrettably we were not informed early enough to make an announcement in *FONC News*. The publishers, Penned in the Margins, specialise in publishing poetry, fiction, criticism and literary non-fiction. Copies were available to purchase at the book launch, and will be available to purchase from FONC's publications and enquiry desk in the future. Further details in the next issue of *FONC News*.

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***At the time of going to press the Remembrance Day Event in Nunhead Cemetery has yet to take place. A full report will appear in the next issue of FONC News.***

## FONC'S TOUR PROGRAMME 2017

All tours start from inside the main entrance in Linden Grove at 2.15pm  
(except Open Day and Open House Weekend or as indicated below)

- Sunday 15th January - - Music Hall artistes tour  
Sunday 29th January - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 12th February - - Military connections tour  
Sunday 26th February - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 5th March - - Crypt and chapel tour  
Sunday 12th March - - Woodland trail tour  
Sunday 26th March - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 9th April - - Cemetery symbols tour  
Sunday 23rd April - - Crypt and chapel tour  
Sunday 30th April - - General tour of the cemetery  
**Saturday 20th May - - 11am to 5pm - Annual Open Day**  
Sunday 28th May - - General tour of cemetery  
Sunday 11th June - - Woodland trail tour  
Sunday 18th June - - Waterloo Anniversary Event  
**Friday 23rd June - - 9.30pm - London Wildlife Trust - Bat sighting walk**  
Sunday 25th June - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 16th July - - Military connections tour  
Sunday 30th July - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 13th August - - Music Hall artistes tour  
Sunday 27th August - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 10th September - - Woodland trail tour  
**Saturday and Sunday, 16th/17th Sept - 1pm to 5pm Open House**  
Sunday 24th September - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 15th October - - Cemetery symbols tour  
Sunday 29th October - - General tour of the cemetery  
*Saturday 4th November - - LWT fungi tour (to be confirmed)*  
Sunday 12th November - - Military connections tour  
Sunday 26th November - - General tour of the cemetery  
Sunday 10th December - - Woodland trail tour  
Sunday 31st December - - General tour of the cemetery

*Please note all tours and events are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. If possible up-to-date information concerning any changes will be published in FONC News, on the website at [www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk) and notice board in Nunhead Cemetery.*

## ~ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ~

**WOODLAND TRAIL TOUR OF NUNHEAD CEMETERY** ► *Sunday 11th December 2016 at 2.15pm.* Please meet your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle just inside the main entrance to the cemetery in Linden Grove.

**FONC'S CHRISTMAS SOCIAL** ► *Thursday 15th December 2016 at 7.00pm* at the Pyrotechnists Arms, Nunhead Green. *Full details on page 3.*

**MUSIC-HALL ARTISTES TOUR** ► *Sunday 15th January 2017 at 2.15pm.* Join Jeff Hart by the flint circle, just inside the cemetery's main entrance in Linden Grove, and see the restored Jenny Hill headstone.

**MILITARY CONNECTIONS TOUR** ► *Sunday 12th February 2017.* Meet at the flint circle just inside the entrance gates in Linden Grove for an interesting tour of the military graves in Nunhead Cemetery led by Jeff Hart.

**MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION RECORDING** ► Transcribing the inscriptions in Nunhead Cemetery is an important and ongoing task. We meet at the FONC Portakabin opposite the Scottish Martyrs' monument, near Linden Grove entrance. For more information and dates and times, please contact Paul Dyer (MI Co-ordinator) email [fonc@btconnect.com](mailto:fonc@btconnect.com). *Appropriate clothing and sturdy footwear is essential.*

**VOLUNTARY WORKDAYS** ► *take place on the first Sunday in the month from 10am to 4.30pm.* New volunteers are always welcome. Meet at the FONC Portakabin near the Linden Grove entrance. 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** ► *take place on the last Sunday in every month starting at 2.15pm.* Please 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 may take up to two hours. The publications and enquiry desk will be open, weather and volunteers permitting.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** *The December tour of Nunhead Cemetery will take place on Boxing Day, Monday 26th December 2016 at 2.15pm.*

~ 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](mailto:fonc@btconnect.com)**

***The deadline for copy for the next issue is 21st January 2017***  
(Copy received after this date may be used in a future issue)

**Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)**



National Federation of  
**CEMETERY FRIENDS**

***Established 1981 – Registered charity number 296413***

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