

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, London, SE15

FONC News



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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, c/o 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**

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: jane.c.hart@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 c/o 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

Editor: Ron Woollacott. **Contributors:** Michèle Louise Burford; Cyril Clark; Jeff Hart; Jolanta Jagiello. All other text unless otherwise credited is by the editor. *The editor and FONC's General Committee do not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by contributors.* **Proof-reader:** Gwyneth Stokes.

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER: Please note that all subscriptions are due to be paid by the 1st April 2017. The annual subscription for UK members is just £2 (£10 for overseas members). Donations are most welcome. If you received a reminder with this issue 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.

ANNUAL OPEN DAY 2017

This year's Open Day will take place on Saturday 20th May 2017 from 11am to 5pm. We shall require as many volunteers as possible to help set up trestle tables etc., and to assist in the cemetery in other ways from 8.30am onwards and to clear up afterwards (the event officially opens to the public at 11am and closes at 5pm).

We also very much welcome lots of donations of home-made cakes etc., to sell on our popular refreshments stall, and lots of plants to sell on our ever popular 'Contrary Mary' plants stall. If you are able to help us in any way please contact a FONC officer or committee member (see list of CONTACTS on back page).

ADVANCE NOTICE OF FONC'S AGM 2017

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery will take place in the function room of the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green, SE15, on Thursday 15th June 2017 at 7.00pm. 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 15th May 2017. All nominations and motions should be sent to Carol Stevenson, FONC vice-chairman, c/o fonc@btconnect.com. A reminder and full details will be published in the next issue of *FONC News*.

NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No 25

by Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator

Trees for life: We recently planted two new specimen trees in the cemetery donated by New Cross resident Nicole Schmid. Whilst the cemetery is not short of trees, there is still space to site trees which will form a focal point in a particular area in the years to come, just as the London Cemetery Company did in its heyday. Thus we now have a fine new yew tree (*Taxus baccata*), a traditional burial ground planting, at the rear of the Dissenters' chapel site, and a monkey puzzle (*Araucaria araucana*) filling a gap left by a fallen poplar near the Limesford Road gates.

Still running in the slow lane but now with a little spark!: There has been little progress on proposed works around the Scots Martyrs memorial, the condition survey of the Limesford Road and Brockley Footpath boundary walls or repairs to the Hope memorial. However, Southwark did react with speed when we reported that the electricity supply box in the East Lodge grounds appeared to have been damaged and left open to the elements. This has now been repaired and a new padlock fitted.

Barking mad: FONC committee members met with Cllr Ian Wingfield, Cabinet member for the Environment & Public Realm, Fiona Dean, Southwark's new Director of Leisure and Rebecca Towers, Head of Parks & Leisure at the cemetery to discuss the long running and controversial issue of dog controls in Southwark's open spaces including cemeteries, and Nunhead in particular. It was agreed that the measures taken by Southwark thus far have not produced the desired effect of keeping dogs – and their owners – under appropriate control whilst in the cemetery. Our views were received sympathetically but it was reiterated that this is considered to be a very 'political' issue for Southwark. Officers are expected to make recommendations to councillors shortly and it is anticipated that a full public consultation will be held in early spring. Unfortunately, it has been made clear that for FONC's response to the consultation to carry any weight, the Committee cannot just submit a single letter on behalf of the membership but that individual members' letters will be needed to offset the number of responses likely from the dog owner lobby. The FONC committee is currently considering how best to offer a standard draft letter reflecting our views to members that can be submitted in response to the consultation.

East Lodge works update: There was a short delay before conservation architects Thomas Ford and Associates were able to begin work on the feasibility study on the future of the Lodge but the programme is now proceeding satisfactorily. In the meantime FONC met with the architects to discuss our thoughts for the future of the Lodge together with necessary follow-up work. Two further project team meetings have been held between Southwark Council and FONC, and Historic England representatives have visited the Lodge and have been able to tour the impressive interior of the building. Hopefully, by the time this issue of *FONC News* distributed we will know more about the possible future of the Lodge and how to proceed from there.

In Remembrance: The annual Remembrance event in the cemetery on the 13th November was well attended and wreaths were laid at seven sites in the cemetery, culminating at the ruined Anglican chapel. Here the event was supplemented by committee member Jolanta Jagiello's display of the service records of men buried at Nunhead who fell during the Somme battles from July to November 1916. The commemorative event began at the Limesford Road war grave plots where the terrible events of the Somme were recalled and two of the poems of Wilfred Owen were read. A donation of £250 was made to the Royal British Legion for the wreaths that were laid.

Cemetery contractor re-appointed: Quadron, the Council's open spaces contractor who is responsible for grounds maintenance at Nunhead Cemetery, was successful in bidding for the new five year contract on offer from Southwark. We are pleased that the good relationship FONC has with what is now known as Quadron/*Idverde* can continue. We have also agreed with Andy Robinson, Quadron's community development officer, the content of a new flyer aimed at encouraging corporate volunteers to the cemetery that also gives prominence to FONC's workdays.

Poetry postscript: As reported in the last issue, Chris McCabe's book, *Cenotaph South*, is now available either from the cemetery publications desk or direct from Jeff Hart at the discount price of just £10 (*plus p & p if necessary*). There is also a beautifully illustrated map listing many of the poets laid to rest in London's Magnificent Seven cemeteries, again at a discount price of £1.50.

Saint Michael and All Angels Churchyard, Haworth, West Yorkshire *by Cyril Clark*

Perched above the West Yorkshire village of Haworth is the Bronte Parsonage Museum. Each year more than 50,000 visitors from all parts of the world travel to the Parsonage which was the home of the famed Bronte sisters, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, their brother Branwell and their widower father, the Reverend Patrick Bronte.

Having completed their pilgrimage to the Parsonage, most tourists make their way to the steep, cobbled Main Street with its variety of small shops and cafes. It all looks very picturesque, but most visitors will miss Haworth's jewel in the crown, the nearby churchyard of Saint Michael and All Angels.

There has been a church on this site since the 14th century but the present structure was consecrated in 1881. The base of the tower is all that remains of the 15th century building.

The churchyard has been in use at least since the 17th century and its burial records date back to 1645. There have been numerous estimates of the number of persons buried in the churchyard. A figure of 40,000 or more is often suggested; however there is no evidence to support this number. Careful research has produced the more realistic estimate of 19,000 burials since 1645. This takes into account the incompleteness of the earlier registers. The current church register contains 15,277 entries up to the present day.

In its past, Haworth was not the picturesque village now visited by the many thousands of tourists each year. The Industrial Revolution had quickly enlarged the small hamlet and with the arrival of three spinning and weaving mills came inadequate housing, together with a lack of clean water and basic sanitation.

By the middle of the 19th century, the unacceptable living conditions endured by the inhabitants of Haworth were comparable with the three most unhealthy districts of London. An open sewer ran down Main Street and the dreadful state of the churchyard at the top of the hill did not help either. Effluent was leaching from the churchyard into the various springs that were supposed to supply 'clean' water to the hapless residents.

In 1849, the Reverend Patrick Bronte started a chain of events which led, in 1850 to a visit to Haworth by Benjamin Herschel Babbage (the son of the mathematician and computer pioneer, Charles Babbage). Later that same year, Babbage reported his findings to the General Board of Health in Lon-

don. In his scathing *Report* on the appalling living conditions endured by the villagers of Haworth, Babbage made a number of recommendations concerning the churchyard. He condemned the local practice of covering burials with heavy sandstone slabs and the graves that were too closely packed together with no spaces left for trees, shrubs or grass to flourish in between. Quoting Edwin Chadwick's 1843, *Report Upon the Practice of Interment in Towns* Babbage wrote, 'A rich vegetation exercises a powerful purifying influence.....'

The churchyard was only nine-tenths of an acre in area at the time of Babbage's *Report*. Babbage considered it to be almost full and recommended that there should be an immediate halt to any future burials. Babbage also suggested that any extension to the churchyard should be properly drained so as not to interfere with the village's water supply.

The churchyard was eventually extended and the old sections closed for burials in 1857, although unfilled graves could still be used. In the new extension, standing memorial stones were erected instead of the flat gravestones so disliked by Babbage. In 1887, the whole graveyard was closed for new burials although interments still took place in existing graves until as recently as 1995.

At last in 1864, trees were planted in the churchyard and these are still flourishing to the present day. A visit to the churchyard is a rewarding experience. The old flat gravestones that cover a good half of the churchyard can still be seen; however many are now covered with leaf litter and debris which makes it difficult to read their inscriptions. The later, standing headstones vary in condition depending on the quality of the stone used. The inscriptions on some stones have worn away almost completely while on others, the inscriptions look as crisp as the day they were carved.

My most recent visit to



Memorial inscription as crisp as the day it was carved
Photograph by Cyril Clark

continued on next page

the churchyard was on a warm, sunny autumn day. I was alone as usual except for the company of a flock of chickens who had wandered in from the nearby smallholding and were scrambling over the graves searching for food amongst the fallen leaves. Their bright plumage provided a welcome splash of colour against the sombre grey of the gravestones.

Today the churchyard is a quiet, peaceful place but inscriptions on the graves tell of the tragic loss of life arising from the poor living conditions suffered by the residents of Victorian Haworth. At the time of Babbage's *Report*, 41.6% of the population died before reaching the age of six years and on average, life expectancy in Haworth was only about twenty-five years. I have never visited a cemetery where so many children and young people lie buried. The Industrial Revolution brought huge prosperity to the few but enormous hardship and disease to so many.



Chickens scrambling over the graves searching for food amongst fallen leaves in Haworth Churchyard
Photograph by Cyril Clark

Saint Michael and All Angels churchyard is now a 'closed cemetery' and is the responsibility of Bradford City Council who are tasked with cutting the grass around the graves and keeping the place tidy. Unfortunately, budget constraints mean that such maintenance is fairly minimal. This splendid old place could certainly do with some 'friends' and I urge anyone visiting West Yorkshire to pay it a visit. I leave Emily Bronte to have the last word: *I see around me tombstones grey Stretching their shadows far away.* 1841 ■

NB. The Brontes are buried in a vault inside the church, except Anne who was buried at Scarborough.

Special thanks goes to Steven Wood of Haworth for his valuable information and guidance. Thanks also to John Huxley and Jens Hislop of St. Michael & All Angels Church, Haworth.
References: Ann Dinsdale, *The Brontes at Haworth*, ISBN 0-7112-2572-9
www.haworthchurch.co.uk www.haworth-village.org.uk.
Babbage Report, Haworth, 1850.
Edwin Chadwick, *Report upon the Practice of Interment in Towns*, 1843.

MAGNIFICENT SEVEN CEMETERIES SEMINAR

Report by Jeff Hart

On the 5th November FONC's Gwyneth Stokes, Jolanta Jagiello and Jeff Hart attended the '*Diversity in Cemeteries*' seminar hosted by the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, which had been organised by Brompton Cemetery Royal Parks as a requirement of their recent lottery grant. Jolanta made a short presentation on art exhibitions in cemeteries at the seminar whilst Gwyneth represented the National Federation of Cemetery Friends. Although the event was primarily aimed at representatives from the Magnificent Seven (Abney Park; Brompton; Highgate; Kensal Green; Nunhead; Tower Hamlets; West Norwood), representatives from some other cemetery groups were also present. Presentations were given (*available electronically from Jeff Hart*) on 'Rules, Glorious Rules'; Diversity of Park Users; Biodiversity in Cemeteries; Holistic Site Management; People and Wildlife; Diverse Memorialisation at Brookwood Cemetery; Developing Community Engagement; Art Exhibitions in Cemeteries; and Using Social Media. In addition to the presentations there were a number of discussion groups. Whilst recognising a number of commonalities between the cemeteries, they also highlighted differences in view regarding the value of the event and future co-operation given the differing emphasis that applies between operational cemeteries and those closed to new burials, together with the implications of differing cemetery ownership. ■

STEPHEN HUMPHREY

It is with much regret that we learned of the death of Stephen Humphrey, a former Southwark archivist and local historian. Stephen had been a member of FONC and was often seen at our annual Open Day, sometimes assisting on Southwark's local studies publications stall. He was the author of numerous books and booklets about Southwark. In 2005 he started writing a regular column about Southwark in the *South London Press* at about the same time as I began writing a column about growing up and living in Peckham. I gave up after just four years having written over 100 articles, Stephen, however, had a cornucopia of knowledge and interesting stories to tell about his beloved borough, and continued writing his column up to his untimely death from a heart attack in November 2016 at the age of 64. A funeral service was held on the 18th January 2017 in St George's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Southwark, and he was laid to rest at All Hallows Churchyard, Tillington, Petworth. *RW*

CWGC Living Memory Project 2016: Battle of the Somme *by Dr Jolanta Jagiello*

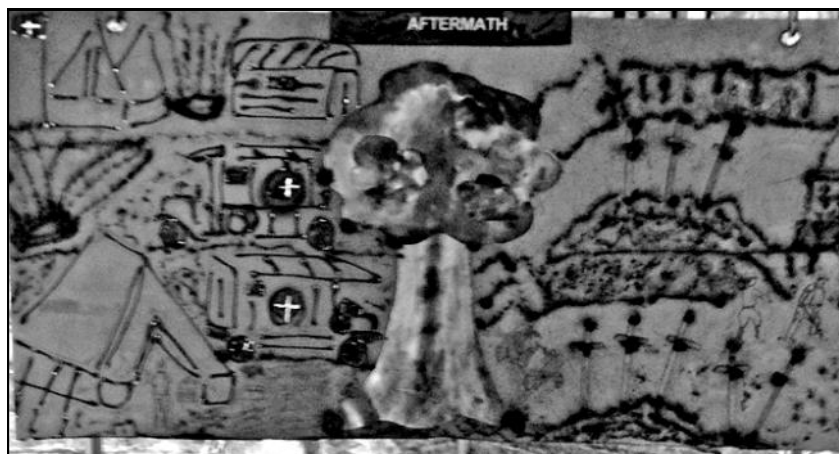
Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC) participated in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Living Memory Project 2016 commemorating the Battle of the Somme 1st July -18th November 1916. The battle was intended to hasten a victory for the Allies, and was the largest battle of the First World War on the Western Front with more than one million men wounded or killed, making it one of the bloodiest battles in human history.

FONC produced four display boards covering the casualties lost in July through to November 1916 who lie buried in Nunhead Cemetery, together with four steel sommescapes covering Major General Douglas Haig's Plans, Howitzer Gun Preparations, Somme Battles, and the Aftermath. Research conducted by Jolanta Jagiello identified a total of 27 casualties buried at Nunhead Cemetery who died during the conflict: four who died in July; eight who died in August; four who died in September; two who died in October; rising to nine in November 1916. The boards and the sommescapes were displayed in Nunhead's Anglican chapel on Saturday 12th November and Remembrance Sunday 13th November 2016. On Remembrance Sunday a wreath laying ceremony took place which laid five wreaths, starting at Limesford Road First World War Memorial and Second World War Screen Wall; Australian War Graves Plot; Commonwealth War Graves Plot; First World War Re-dedication Memorial; and ending with the last wreath being laid in the Anglican chapel.

The Battle of the Somme took place along the River Somme on the Western Front and consisted of nine battles of various sizes, which collectively came to be known as the Battle of the Somme. This started in July with the Battle of Albert 1st - 13th July with 57,470 British casualties and 19th, 240 British soldiers killed. This was followed by the Battle of Bazentin Ridge 14th -17th July 1916 adjacent to Delville Wood, in which the advantage of attack failed due to British communication failures, casualties and disorganisation. And then Battle of Fromelles 19th - 20th July 1916 which according to McMullin was 'the worst 24 hours in Australia's entire history' with 5,533 losses incurred by the 5th Australian Division.

As the conflict progressed more Commonwealth troops were drafted in. The Battle of Delville Wood took place 14th July - 15th September 1916. Today the wood is well preserved with the remains of trenches, a museum and a monument to the South African Brigade at the Delville Wood South African National Memorial. During the Battle of Pozières, 23rd July - 7th August 1916 the Australian 1st Division suffered 5,285 casualties on its first tour of Pozières. When the survivors were relieved on 27th July, one observer said 'They looked like men who had been in Hell... drawn and haggard and so dazed that they appeared to be walking in a dream and their eyes looked glassy and starey.'

The last offensive of the British Fourth Army with the participation of the New-



CWGC Living Memory 2017: Battle of the Somme - Steel Sommescape 'Aftermath'

foundland Regiment was in the Battle of the Transloy Ridges 1st October - 11th November 1916. This battle is commemorated by the Gueudecourt Newfoundland Memorial which marks the furthest point that the British advanced from the front line of 1st July. During which time the Battle of the Ancre Heights also took place where telephones, runners, pigeons and visual signals were used to cope with the unpredictable conditions on the battlefield. The Battle of the Ancre 13th -18th November was the last big British operation of 1916 before resumption of offensives in 1917. A total of 419,654 British and Commonwealth soldiers lost their lives during the Battle of the Somme including 24,029 from Canada, 23,000 from Australia, 7,408 from New Zealand, and over 3,000 from South Africa and over 2,000 from Newfoundland respectively. ■ *See additional article concerning this event on page 16.*

Forthcoming Event: Women In Front First World War Exhibition, May 2017

The next First World War exhibition *Women In Front* will commemorate the two million women who served in 'a man's job' in the many occupations, trades, and professions that were open to them in the First World War, such as police constables, bus conductors, firefighters, postal workers as well as doctors and pilots. Curated by Jolanta Jagiello and open during the weekends in May from 11am to 5pm in the Stearns Mausoleum starting on the 6th May and including the Open Day Saturday 20th May and Bank Holiday Monday 29th May 2017.

DRY-HEDGE TRAINING EXERCISE - A GREAT SUCCESS

Report by Jeff Hart

In addition to the general concern about the increasingly worrying proliferation of unsupervised dogs in the cemetery, particular complaints have been received by Southwark Council from members of the Turkish Muslim community who have recently interred family members in the area behind the Anglican chapel. Irresponsible owners have allowed their dogs off the lead to frolic over the new grave areas and to defecate without clearing up after them. The problem has been exacerbated by commercial dog-walkers with often five, six or sometimes even eight dogs that they are unlikely to be able to keep under control.

In response, Southwark Council proposed fencing off the area completely to prevent access by dogs. However, FONC was not happy that this one area should be singled out for intrusive protection when other new burial areas would not be addressed. Our view was, and remains, that a comprehensive dog's policy for the whole cemetery needs to be adopted and enforced. As a compromise, we suggested perhaps erecting intermittent dry hedge fencing, with suitable signage, to indicate that the area behind the chapel should be appropriately respected by dog-owners. Fortunately, Southwark officers came round to our way of thinking. Not only that, but they asked FONC whether we would be willing to train their contractors in the art of constructing dry-hedging.

We were delighted to be able to do this and at 9.30am on the 9th December, Tim Stevenson and Jeff Hart, met with six Quadron staff, including Andy Robinson, Quadron's community development officer, to begin work. Initially, levels of enthusiasm among the trainees seemed a little low. After an initial briefing session to explain the purpose of the hedging and the techniques to be used, we split into two teams. One began to plot the position of chestnut paling posts and then knock them into place; the other starting to pollard sycamore and ash saplings from the area to the west of the Limesford Road gates adjacent to the boundary walls. In the latter case, this will now be managed as an area that FONC volunteers intend to use as a nursery site for future dry-hedging material. The teams swapped roles half way through the day and by this time the trainees had not only begun to see the value of their work but also to enjoy and take pride in the results they were achieving. By the end of the day a friendly rivalry had developed to see who could produce



Dry-hedging in Nunhead Cemetery

the ‘best’ dry-hedge hurdle! By four o’clock in the afternoon we could all stand back and admire with satisfaction the completed fencing. It had proved to be an extremely successful pilot for co-operation between contractors and volunteers. Following hand-shakes and good wishes all around, FONC hopes to be able to lead at least one more joint project in another part of the cemetery in 2017. The Southwark cemeteries operations team have expressed their satisfaction with the work carried out, and their thanks to FONC, and we hope that the explanatory signage will soon appear to reinforce the message to dog-owners.■



Remarkable Women buried in Nunhead Cemetery No 3

MRS LOUISA SIMS

A Forgotten Pioneer in the Women's Movement (Part 2)

by Ron Woollacott and Michèle Louise Burford

At the conference convened by the central committee of the National Society for Promoting the Enfranchisement of Women, held at the Westminster Palace Hotel in May 1872, some speakers argued that married women were not yet sufficiently educated to obtain the franchise, and suggested that when they were they would have it. Louisa Sims' friend, Lydia Becker, addressed the meeting and considered the progress made in public opinion by saying that all women should have votes equally with men. Of all the speakers that day, it was said that Louisa Sims, described in the press as 'a lady of stately proportions', made the most characteristic speech of the day. She said that she was quite willing her husband should vote, although his political opinions were totally opposed to hers (laughter). However, she thought they should leave the Bill as it was at present. Referring to a gentleman who had spoken earlier, she said he had not been so long a married man as she had been a married woman, he therefore was walking on the sunny side, but she knew there was a shady side in matrimony, which remark caused much amusement. She went on to say that although she was a married woman, she was content to wait until after her single sisters were enfranchised. Then turning her attention to the comments made by some earlier speakers that married women were not sufficiently educated, she said that most married women were married in their 'green youth', and therefore had to be subsequently educated. She concluded her speech by advising the ladies present to use all available methods of persuasion to attain their object, and left the rostrum to enthusiastic cheering and applause.

At the Women's Suffrage Conference which took place at the Masonic Hall in Birmingham, on Friday 6th December 1872, Louisa Sims and Lydia Becker were just two of several speakers that day. The last speaker, a Dr Langford, moved the following resolution: 'That this meeting approves the object of the Women's Suffrage Society, that every effort should be made to unite all parties support of Jacob Bright's Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women.' The resolution was seconded by Alderman Hawkes and carried unanimously.

THE WOMEN'S PROTECTIVE & PROVIDENT LEAGUE

Jacob Bright (1821-1899), a Liberal MP, who was described as an advanced radical and 'The Apostle to the Women', presided at a grand meeting held in March 1874 in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, in support of a Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women. With the exception of Jacob Bright, all the speakers were women, Louisa Sims and Lydia Becker being among the principal speakers on that occasion. Resolutions in favour of the object of the meeting were passed by an overwhelming majority, and a petition to Parliament was adopted, and in the year that followed the Women's Protective and Provident League (WPPL) was founded by Emma Paterson (1848-1886).

The third annual meeting of the WPPL was held in the hall of the Society of Arts, Adelphi, in June 1877. There was a large attendance. Mrs Emma Paterson read the annual report, and stated that the object of the League was to encourage trade unionism among women, for the protection against undue depression of wages, and to make provision against the uncertainties of trade and health, etc. Louisa Sims also addressed the meeting and eventually became president of the organisation.

POSTSCRIPT

Louisa Sims died on the 11th April 1892, aged 69 years, and was laid to rest in the family vault at Nunhead Cemetery where her youngest son and parents had been laid to rest before her. Her husband died in 1907, aged 79 years, and he too was laid to rest in the family vault.

Florence Fenwick-Miller (1854-1935), the Victorian feminist and journalist, speaking at the Women's Suffrage Debate in 1897, recalled an amusing occasion in public discussions concerning Mrs Louisa Sims. It was at a meeting, she said, organised by Louisa, who was then honorary secretary of the West Middlesex Suffrage Committee, who regrettably was unable to be present, and her husband attended on her behalf. 'The women cannot fight' argument was put by 'a feeble-bodied, yet impertinent, waspish tongued male.' An indignant George Sims stood up and made his view clear: 'As far as physical force goes', he said, drily, 'my wife, if she liked, could pick that little man up and carry him round the room on her left arm, and shut him up in a cupboard until he grew polite.'

NB. It wasn't until 1918 that women over the age of 30, who were also

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householders, the wives of householders, owners of property and university graduates, were given the right to vote in parliamentary elections, and ten more years were to elapse before the Equal Franchise Act granted the vote to all women over the age of 21. ■

Grave No 8289, Square 113. Monument over brick grave. Sources: Memorial inscription; Burial records; Marriage records of Trinity Church, St Mary Newington, 1847; Census returns 1851—1891; *Preston Chronicle*, 4th May 1872; *The Star*, 7th May 1872; *Leicester Chronicle*, 23rd June 1877; *Bury and Norwich Post*, 3rd March 1874; *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 18th February 1897; George R Sims, *My Life: Sixty years' recollections of Bohemian London*, 1917, pp. 5, 8; *Dictionary of National Biography* (see under George R Sims).

SACRED BODIES

Sculpture exhibition in the Anglican chapel at Nunhead

Sacred Bodies is an exhibition of recent metal sculptures by Sara Burgess based around the 'Bodies' series. The exhibition intends to explore the connection between the inevitable physicality of our earthly, human existence and our volition to overcome suffering. The exhibition was due to open in the Anglican chapel at Nunhead Cemetery on Monday 20th February 2017 and the sculptures will be displayed up to and including Saturday the 22nd April 2017.

THE LIVING MEMORY PROJECT

Event held at Brookwood Military Cemetery report by Jeff Hart

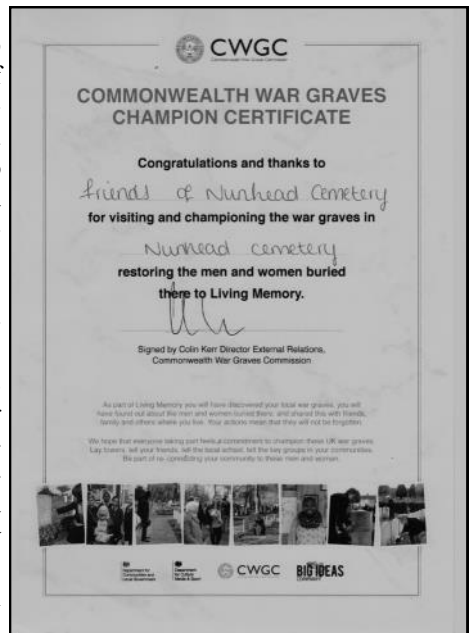
As Jolanta Jagiello reported on page 10 of this issue, in 2016 FONC participated in a pilot project run on behalf of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) for community groups to involve people in marking the anniversary of the First World War. FONC's arts curator, Jolanta Jagiello, put together the Animals at War exhibition which subsequently transferred to other London cemeteries. As the pilot was judged a success, we were again invited by the Big Ideas Company, CWGC's partners for delivery, to contribute to the Living Memory Project to mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme. We were one of over 650 groups nationwide to participate in the event.

Jolanta worked with our chairman, Ron Woollacott, to identify some of the men who were wounded during the Somme battles and who were subsequently buried at Nunhead. She then put together a number of illustrated display boards telling their stories together with artworks of etched and cut metal plates (sommescapes) illustrating various aspects of the battle. These were displayed in the Anglican chapel over the Remembrance weekend of the 12th and 13th November and formed a

poignant back-drop to the placing of the final wreath at our Remembrance Commemoration. Many other visitors admired the artworks and carefully studied the display boards. We felt that we had certainly met the desired outcome of reconnecting the public with the war dead buried in the United Kingdom.

We were delighted, therefore, to be invited by the CWGC to attend an event to mark the conclusion of the Living Memory Project held on the 18th November at Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey. Jane and Jeff Hart represented FONC and FONC Committee member Gwyneth Stokes attended in her capacity as Secretary of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends. Held in the Canadian Pavilion, CWGC Director General Victoria Wallace welcomed some 200 guests to the event following a performance of First World War songs by the Chepstow Singing Club. CWGC Director Colin Kerr recalled the ambition of the Living Memory Project and CWGC lead historian Dr Glyn Prysor gave an overview of British casualties from the Somme battles. A video of project events all over the country was shown and Virginia Crompton, CEO of the Big Ideas Company introduced presentations by groups from Dunbartonshire, West Norwood, Northern Ireland and Portsmouth of their contributions. Finally, CWGC Vice-Chairman, Vice-Admiral Sir Tim Laurence (husband of the Princess Royal), presented CWGC Champion certificates to those groups present, received by Jeff Hart for both FONC and our neighbouring group, the Friends of Brockley and Ladywell Cemeteries. FONC was also the only group to manage to squeeze a complete display board into the Canadian pavilion!

Following the indoor ceremony, the assembled participants braved the freezing weather to process in the dark, illuminated by hand-held candles, towards the 1914-1918 Memorial led by a piper of the Royal Scottish Pipe-band Association. The Act of Remembrance included a reading, two minutes silence, and a poignant rendition by the Chepstow Singing Club of the Last Post accompanied by a lone bugler following which the candles were laid at the memorial. As we left Brookwood, a floribunda rose named 'Remembrance' was collected by Jane Hart which will be planted at Nunhead Cemetery adjacent to the 'new' First World War memorial in Square 89. ■



FONC'S CHRISTMAS SOCIAL 2016

Around 30 people attended our Christmas social in the function room at the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green, on Thursday 15th December. Plenty of seasonal eats and nibbles were provided, including a couple of delicious brandy fruit loaf cakes baked and donated by long time member Linda Martin. A raffle was held and donations helped towards the cost of the event.

We were delighted to welcome our speaker for the evening, Dr Chris Knowles and his wife Mary Ann Bonney. Chris is a founder member of FONC, a former vice-chairman and tour guide, and Mary Ann was secretary in the early days of FONC. The subject of Chris's talk was Bryan Donkin FRS, the great Victorian engineer and inventor, who was laid to rest at Nunhead Cemetery in 1855 and, who, together with the Fourdrinier brothers, invented the world's first fully-mechanised paper making machine. Chris's excellent presentation was well illustrated with slides and was well received.

More Nunhead Cemetery News *Memorial repair grant award*

Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator writes:

As we go to press we have just heard that FONC has been awarded a grant of £8,000 from Southwark Council's 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer' funding for 2017/18. The award was announced by Nunhead Ward Councillor Fiona Colley at the Peckham and Nunhead Neighbourhood Forum meeting on the 28th January. The grant application was made to enable us to commission stonemasons to repair two monuments at the north-east end of the cemetery's Main Avenue. This is a focal point as visitors enter the Linden Grove entrance gates and will greatly improve the first impression visitors receive. The Shand pedestal memorial covers the very first grave excavated at Nunhead Cemetery, and marks the final resting place of sail-maker George Shand's two young daughters and other members of the family including the sail-maker himself. It forms part of an important group of memorials together with the adjacent ruined memorial and that of Mr Ernest Brackley, Nunhead's gatekeeper for around 50 years.

~ **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY** ~

WOODLAND TRAIL TOUR OF NUNHEAD CEMETERY ► *Sunday 12th March 2017 and 11th June 2017 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.

CEMETERY SYMBOLS TOUR ► *Sunday 9th April 2017 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.

CHAPEL & CRYPT TOUR ► *Sunday 23rd April 2017 at 2.15pm.* This is an opportunity to see inside the chapel and to go down into the crypt, both of which are normally kept closed to the public. Please meet your guides for the afternoon at the Anglican chapel in the cemetery.

ANNUAL OPEN DAY ► *Saturday 20th May 2017 from 11am to 5pm.* Volunteers are needed to help set up trestle tables and to assist from 8.30am and to tidy up after the event. If you can help please contact a committee member. *See also page 3.*

WATERLOO ANNIVERSARY EVENT ► *Sunday 18th June 2017.* Meet at the flint circle just inside the main entrance gates in Linden Grove for an interesting tour 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 the Linden Grove entrance. For more information and dates and times, please contact Paul Dyer (MI Co-ordinator) c/o 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 take between one and a half and two hours. The publications and enquiry desk will be open, weather and volunteers permitting.

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 announced in FONC News, on the website at www.fonc.org.uk and notice board in Nunhead Cemetery.

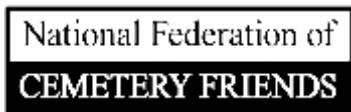
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Please send all letters, news items and feature articles for publication to:
The editor, *FONC News*, c/o fonc@btconnect.com

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(Copy received after this date may be used in a future issue)

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)



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