

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, London, SE15

FONC News

No 137 Autumn issue (Sept ~ Nov 2017)

ISSN 1478-0631



Main Avenue - Open Day May 2017 - see page 16 - photo: Ron Woollacott

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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 email 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; Daniel Greenwood; 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.

OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND IN NUNHEAD CEMETERY

Saturday and Sunday 16th-17th September 2017
1.00pm to 5.00pm on both days



We have taken part in this event for many years. The chapel and crypt will be open to visitors and we shall need volunteers to act as stewards and to generally assist with enquiries and the sale of publications, etc. If you can help us on either or both days please contact an officer or committee member whose names and phone numbers appear on the back page. Although this is a fairly low-key event it is still most enjoyable, so if you can help please let us know.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017

We all have our own reasons for becoming a Friend of Nunhead Cemetery. Some of us have family members buried there, while others have an interest in the wildlife and ecology of the place, or else an interest in family history and local history, while others enjoy working in the cemetery, or simply appreciate the beauty of the place. The one thing that we all have in common, is that we all wish the cemetery to be cared for, and it is quite remarkable what has been achieved since we first got together around 36 years ago.

Another busy year has flown by and despite a much depleted committee we have managed to do everything we have set out to do. That said, we really do need more members to come forward who are willing to spread the load and continue to run FONC efficiently in the future.

Our thanks are offered to all those volunteers who have contributed to the work of FONC during the last year; everything we achieve is through members devoting their own time and skills to our various projects. Both the

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Open Day and London Open House Weekend are now firmly established popular annual events, only made possible by the dedication of our volunteers, their families and friends. But we do require more volunteers, so please help if you can.

My thanks go to Simon Mercer our efficient membership secretary, and of course to Jeff Hart, our co-ordinator; Carol Stevenson, our vice-chairman; to Cathy Mercer and Ann Coley for looking after our finances, and Jane Hart, who took on the task of minutes secretary during the year, and Carole Tyrrell who stood down as minutes secretary for personal reasons.

Thanks are also due to our hardworking committee, Dr Jolanta Jagiello, Jeremy Partington, Gwyneth Stokes and Maureen Woollacott. Thanks also to our auditor George Young, and webmaster Simon Quill for maintaining such an excellent and informative website.

To all those members who have contributed to the work of FONC we offer our sincere thanks, in particular Nicola Dunn and her team of *FONC News* distributors; Pat Manning and Peter Blount, postal co-ordinators, and to Linda Martin for stepping in when Pat and Peter were unavailable. Thanks also to our tour guides Chris Knowles, Tim Stevenson, John Turpin and Keith Turpin, and to all our workday volunteers, and publication and enquiry desk volunteers, too numerous to mention by name, who do much valuable work within the cemetery.

Last, though by no means least, thanks to all our members for their support, wherever they are, especially those volunteers who make our Open Day so successful by baking and donating cakes for our refreshment stall, and for growing and giving plants for sale on Contrary Mary's plant stall.

Ron Woollacott

FONC'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery was held in the function room of the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green, on the evening of Thursday 15th June 2017. The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the arrangement of the evening's business. After the opening remarks and apologies for absence, the minutes of the 2016 AGM were read and duly adopted. The Annual Report was presented by Jeff Hart, co-ordinator, who highlighted various items contained in the report as follows:

Membership: Jeff Hart noted that membership had increased to 852, an increase of 30 from the previous year with 126 new members being recruited,

which was encouraging. He thanked Simon Mercer, the Membership Secretary for managing the membership database. He also thanked Cathy Mercer, who had been, for many years, the Treasurer but had stood down during the year after a smooth handover of the accounts to Ann Coley, as Acting Treasurer. He also expressed the committee's thanks to Carole Tyrrell who had also stood down during the year, for her important contribution to FONC's work, both as Minutes Secretary and as a tour guide.

Affiliations: He noted that FONC maintained contact with many local and national groups. FONC had met twice with the Friends of Camberwell Cemeteries (FoCC). This group had originally been concerned with loss of trees in the cemeteries but had progressed its concerns to the re-use of graves by Southwark Council in the two Camberwell cemeteries. He noted that Nunhead and the Camberwell cemeteries should be viewed differently and that FONC's Constitution was specific to Nunhead and therefore could not provide support to FoCC's controversial campaign.

FONC Meetings and members' visits: The General Committee held ten meetings and the Voluntary Work Sub-Committee met quarterly during the year. The Committee have decided to add a meeting of the Committee to be held in August. Botanist Roy Vickery gave a presentation at the 2016 AGM, and former vice-chairman Chris Knowles gave an excellent presentation on the work of the Victorian engineer Bryan Donkin whose grave is in Nunhead Cemetery. Chris and Mary Ann also organised a members' visit to Frogmore Paper Mill to see a Donkin paper machine.

Sunday FONC publications and enquiry desk (PED): Jeff Hart thanked Gwyneth Stokes for her sterling work over many years in organising cover for the Sunday PED. Jane Hart had now taken over its organisation. Although some new volunteers to help on the desk had been recruited, more were still very welcome.

Annual Open Day: Jeff Hart apologised that last year's Open Day report had been included inadvertently in the written report. He reported verbally on this year's Open Day which was held on 20th May – and again it was a well attended and successful event though the rather inclement weather probably resulted in slightly lower receipts on the refreshment and plant stalls than in previous years. Unfortunately Richard Jones – the 'bug man' – had been unable to attend but would be present again in 2018. He also noted that

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the family who provided the birds of prey was moving away from the region so would not be available in future years and as a result other stalls and attractions were being considered.

FONC News: Our quarterly journal continues to keep members informed about the work and activities of FONC. The last four issues comprised a total of 88 pages of news and interesting articles. The editor wishes to thank all contributors and everyone concerned with the production and distribution of *FONC News*. Articles and letters are always welcome.

Grave search and monument inscription recording: FONC no longer carries out searches of the burial records held by Southwark Council. The Council has, however, entered into an agreement with Deceased on Line, and some records i.e. names, grave and square numbers, are now available on line at www.deceasedonline.com. A small fee is payable. Our grave search desk at Open Day is always busy and appreciated by visitors trying to locate a family grave. A small band of volunteers, under the guidance of Paul Dyer, continue to transcribe grave inscriptions. Progress is slow, however, but with more volunteers we could achieve so much more.

Other events: In July FONC hosted a dedication of a new memorial to a US Civil War veteran – John Davis – which was attended by, amongst others, family members, Sons of Union Veterans, the Southwark Deputy Mayor and the naval attaché of the US Embassy. This helped maintain FONC's profile with Southwark Council.

Arts projects: A programme has been organised by Jolanta Jagiello to host a continuous series of arts events in the chapel. This was launched with 'Doggies on Leads' followed by 'Sacred Bodies'. Further events planned are – 'Industrial Garden' from June to September followed by 'Gargoyles and Cherubs' to coincide with the Nunhead Arts Trail in September. FONC again participated in the CWGC Living Memory Project in 2016 with six display boards and six metal landscapes commemorating the First World War Battle of the Somme being displayed in the Chapel. CWGC had recognised FONC's efforts with the award of a certificate of participation. In May 2017 Jolanta curated 'Women in Front' a public art exhibition in the Stearns' Mausoleum, commemorating women's work in the First World War.

Religious services: Jeff Hart noted that FONC had been unable to hold an All Souls Service for a number of years but was still keen to find a minister

to hold such a commemoration. We continued to run a secular Remembrance Service and wreath laying on Remembrance Sunday.

Management of the Cemetery by Southwark Borough Council: Jeff Hart noted that Nunhead Cemetery was both a Grade II* listed landscape, a designated nature reserve and a working cemetery. Partly as a result of the numerous complaints that Southwark had received regarding unacceptable dog behaviour in the cemetery, the Council had run a public consultation exercise on 'responsible dog ownership'. The consultation was borough wide but included a couple of specific questions relating to cemeteries. With responses required by 5th June, the FONC Committee had written to every FONC member to encourage responses in line with the views set out by the Committee to keep dogs on leads at all times in the cemetery and to restrict each dog walker to no more than four dogs. Feedback received from members had been, in general, very positive towards the Committee's views. As the consultation exercise was being run by the Council, FONC was not, yet aware of what the response to the initiative had been nor its outcome.

Cemetery improvements: The new war memorial in square 89 had suffered badly from subsidence, so much so Commonwealth War Graves Commission had funded a major repair programme, which was currently being undertaken. The first part of the work to underpin the memorial had been completed and work on reinstating it was due to commence during the summer. FONC was awarded a grant of £8,000 under Southwark's Greener, Cleaner, Safer scheme, for the renovation of two memorials on the main avenue. Successful judicious use of the contractors on site enabled four memorials to be restored and a fifth one cleaned for the amount of the grant.

East Lodge: Southwark Council, with encouragement from Historic England, had commissioned a consultant to undertake a feasibility study on the future of the East Lodge which had involved re-scaffolding around the structure. The consultant's report was now overdue and was still awaited.

At the conclusion of the presentation of the Annual Report the Chairman invited comments from the floor: A number of members present raised concerns regarding the consultation on possible dog controls. There was concern that the Committee's letter sent to all members did not represent the experiences of the dog owner members who, although recognising some of the issues identified with commercial dog walkers and the number of dogs under an individual's control, had seen none of the alleged unacceptable dog

behaviour and further they felt that their presence provided an enhanced safety environment in the cemetery. The main concern appeared to be the need to keep dogs on leads whilst walking in the cemetery plus the apparent lack of quantitative or documented analysis of complaints regarding problems with dogs in the cemetery to support the Committee's letter to members. Jeff Hart reported that Southwark had been keeping comprehensive records regarding these issues and FONC had undertaken sample recording. There was considerable evidence to support the Committee's view on the impact of dogs on the cemetery and its visitors over the last few years. It was emphasised that the consultation had been undertaken by Southwark Council but the FONC Committee had agreed that it was important that FONC members should be made aware of the Committees' view. It was recognised that the FONC Committee view might differ from those of dog walkers. Jeff Hart and Ron Woollacott noted that they had both received positive feedback to the Committee's letter from members including both dog and non-dog owners. The dog control issue and the comments raised at the AGM would be further discussed at the next Committee meeting in July. The Chairman thanked Jeff Hart for presenting the report and proposed its formal adoption.

Voluntary work sub-committee report: Carol Stevenson presented the report, noting that the reporting period had changed to the end of March instead of the end May to bring it in line with the accounting reporting period. She reported that clearing fallen trees had been a major task during the year starting with the remains of two massive beech trees which had come down early in 2016. Coppicing had been carried out on most of the hazel trees in the Hazel Glade and that the coppiced material had been used in dead-hedging activities. She thanked all the volunteers who had contributed well over 500 hours during the year and appealed for more volunteers to help with the work.

The Chairman thanked Carol for her report and invited questions from the floor. A question on how FONC's tree clearance could be managed against caring for nature/ wildlife was raised. Carol replied that FONC's work, particularly clearing, always tried to take into account the aspects of the site as both a nature reserve (with a need for mixed habitats) and as working cemetery and was all within the context of Southwark Council's ten year management plan.

Treasurer's report: Ann Coley presented the report. She thanked Cathy Mercer for her hard work and smooth handover of the accounts. She noted that the accounts were presented on a receipts/expenditure basis. Subscription and donation income was up. Fund raising was mainly associated with

the Annual Open Day with the income slightly down on the previous year. She noted that running costs (covering postage, stationery etc) were around 4% higher than the previous year. Major expenditure for the year had included path material and tables to replace the rather dilapidated trestle tables used at the open day. The total assets held were in anticipation of work on the East Lodge. RW thanked AC for her report and both AC and CM for their work throughout the year. He invited questions from the floor. A question on what was included under fund raising was explained. Ann Coley noted she was considering introducing further categorisation to make sources income and expenditure even clearer. The Chairman then moved the formal adoption of the report.

Auditor's report: The Chairman highlighted the auditor's report, prepared by George Young, noting that this was not a requirement of the Charity Commission. He proposed a vote of thanks for George Young and George said he was willing to audit FONC's accounts for 2018. This was noted.

Election of officers and committee: The Chairman explained the FONC Constitution allowed for five officers and up to 10 committee members. He referred to the agenda noting that this set out the nominations received to date. One nomination had been received for each of the five officer posts and six nominations for places on the committee. He noted that FONC was a registered charity and under the constitution the officers and committee members were its trustees. The officer nominations were: Chairman - Ron Woollacott; Vice-chairman - Carol Stevenson; Co-ordinator - Jeff Hart; Treasurer - Ann Coley; Minutes Secretary - Jane Hart. As no other nominations were received it was agreed that those identified should be elected unopposed. Proposer: Gwyneth Stokes, Seconder: Malcolm Collins. The officers were duly elected by unanimous agreement. Nominations received for committee members were: Jolanta Jagiello; Cathy Mercer; Simon Mercer; Jeremy Partington; Gwyneth Stokes; Maureen Woollacott. Malcolm Collins volunteered to be nominated to return to the committee. As no further nominations were received it was agreed that those identified should be elected unopposed. Proposer: Ron Woollacott, Seconder: Carol Stevenson. The committee members were duly elected by unanimous agreement.

No motions were proposed and no other business was identified. The business part of the meeting was then concluded. After a short break for refreshments, Dr Brian Parsons gave an interesting illustrated presentation on 'Crematoria and Cemeteries in South London' which was much appreciated by those in attendance.

VISITORS GO BATS FOR NUNHEAD

Daniel Greenwood, London Wildlife Trust Conservation Project Officer, Sydenham Hill Wood writes:

For the third year in a row London Wildlife Trust and the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery led a bat walk at this much loved Local Nature Reserve with the support of Southwark Council. 140 people turned out to tune into the nocturnal world of bats. The group was so large that London Wildlife Trust volunteers were called in to split the group into two so everyone could hear and hopefully see a bat. As we set out we were met immediately by the sight of pipistrelles hunting along the edge of the avenue of lime trees, making iconic bat-shapes against the evening sky. We encountered two species, the soprano and common pipistrelles, as well as another call which was difficult to read. Using bat detectors - a kind of radio that brings the high frequency calls of bats to an audible level for us humans - we could listen in to the bats echo locating, calling and even capture the sound of an insect being caught! It was a very enjoyable event and we thank all those who made it along to search for these much misunderstood mammals. They need our support and understanding if they are still to survive in Southwark for the foreseeable future. ■

Women in Front Public Art Exhibition in the Stearns Mausoleum by Jolanta Jagiello

Women in Front: a public art exhibition open all weekends in May 2017, commemorated the contribution of women to the war effort in the First World War. As the war progressed, the mounting casualties and the introduction of conscription meant over one million women in domestic service were employed for the first time in occupations previously reserved for men. These were in factories as munitionettes, as police constables on the beat, and postal workers delivering post. Women took the opportunity to play football in the Women's Football League, practise medicine in hospitals as doctors, and privileged princesses disguised themselves as men to fly as combat pilots.

The exhibition was attended by over 1,200 visitors; these selected comments from the Comments Book express their appreciation: 'Fabulous exhibition. Wonderful, imaginative artworks covering so many areas of work done by women to keep the country functioning during the First World War. So many remarkable unsung heroines. As usual undermined, undervalued &

forgotten” (Moyra, 6/5/17). ‘Extremely interesting exhibition in a unique installation. Imaginative and creative way of portraying an important and possibly overlooked part of WW1 & Women’s history!’ (Hugo, Elizabeth, 6/5/17). ‘Really impressed that this wasn’t just a room of photographs, think this interpretation of different women and their roles as art objects is fantastic and much needed. As a woman I am desperate to see more of this kind of thing ...’ (Alana, SE22, 21/5/17).

The exhibition was funded by Southwark Council Neighbourhood Fund and is part of a five year programme (2014-2018) of public art exhibitions commemorating the First World War at Nunhead Cemetery. The last exhibition in the programme is ‘Messages, Medals and Memorials’ (2018) which will focus on colonial troops contribution to the war effort. ■



Recruiting Bus Conductors by Monica Wheeler

NUNHEAD TREASURE HUNT PROVES A WINNER (ALMOST!) by *Jeff Hart*

At the end of the ‘Waterloo’ tour of the cemetery on the 18th June, Jane Hart was a little surprised to have a leaflet thrust into her hands announcing a treasure hunt to be held in the cemetery on the following Sunday that we knew nothing about. On closer examination this turned out to be the opening event of Southwark LGBT Pride Festival fortnight supported by the now famous local community pub, The Ivy House!

It also turned out that the event had been planned as a tribute to long-time FONC member and ex-Committee member and tour guide, Rex Batten. Now in his 90th year, Rex has been a fantastic contributor to the work of FONC over the years, organising and liaising with local school visits to the ceme-

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tery, a regular tour guide and, of course, author of three of FONC's popular publications: *The Walworth Scouts*, *Nunhead Remembered* and *Nunhead and the Music Hall*. So, how could we not participate? Especially as the first prize was to be a £50 bar tab voucher for The Ivy House!

Simply needing to answer questions about, and identifying pictures of, the cemetery Jane and I decided to enter ourselves as a team. We named ourselves 'The FONC Cheats'. After all, with our inside knowledge of the cemetery how could we fail to win? So, we arrived at The Ivy House at 2.00pm ready for the start of the hunt full of confidence. However, we were somewhat daunted to be confronted by a cryptic question sheet requiring 52 answers and a montage of 20 photographs to identify, some of which were about The Ivy House pub itself. Nevertheless, we were looking forward to a fun walk (with our bikes) following the directions given, expecting to finish the hunt in less than the hour or so we were told it would take.

We were a little taken aback by the number of very competitive fellow treasure hunters all trying not to give away where they had just found the answer to the next question in the hunt. But we were all having a thoroughly enjoyable time trying to defeat the question setters. After nearly two and half hours of effort and despite the mocking of the FONC volunteers manning our publications and enquiries desk, we were convinced we had all the answers and pedalled back to The Ivy House for a well-earned beer (or two!) ready for the results to be announced at 6.00pm. Imagine our horror then to find that, thanks to Jeff answering two questions without bothering to actually check the site in question, failing to read a question properly and neither of us working out the answer to a particularly cryptic question, we did not score the full 72 points on offer! Not only that but a team from Bishops Stortford (Clive's crew – Clive Weatherley, Janet Ratcliffe, Nicola Quinn and Tango the dog) were declared the winners with 100% correct answers, the Bengal Cats (Mum, Dad and young daughter) came second and choosing the chocolates on offer as their prize, leaving the FONC Cheats in third place (68.5 out of 72) but with the compensation of two tickets for 'Crazy For You' at the Barbican.

Talk about pride coming before a fall! However, it was great fun on a hot, sunny afternoon and a fine tribute to Rex Batten. We also made a donation to the collection taken at the end. Speaking to the organisers, Peter Scott-Presland and Keith Bursnall afterwards they were very happy to share their hard preparation work with us so that we can run a shorter version of the Nunhead Cemetery Treasure Hunt at the Open House weekend in September and next year's Open Day. And we can't wait for the 2018 LGBT Treasure Hunt! ■

Letter from Mr Derek E O'Brien

I write to send my apologies for absence at the 2017 FONC AGM to be held on the 15th June. I have an overriding commitment that day. My recollection is that I have been a regular attendee of FONC AGMs since I became a member in 2006.

I see in the summer 2017 issue of *FONC News* there is a reference to the funeral of FONC member Mr S B J LeBon of Nunhead. He lived at 3 Machell Road - a nice little road between Howbury Road and Kimberley Avenue. I was born at 3 Machell Road. On the morning of the 17th September 1997 I walked along Machell Road and saw a man standing at the front of No 3. I told him that I was born in his house and he invited me indoors to have a cup of tea and a chat with him and his wife. He told me his name was Stan LeBon. It was a very interesting experience to go inside the (much-modernised) house where I grew up from 1933 until about two months after the Blitz which started in 1940. Until I read *FONC News* I did not know that Stan LeBon became a FONC member.

My interest in Nunhead Cemetery is that my Dutch grandparents are buried there. I will always be grateful for the help that you and the cemetery staff gave to me and to my cousins in locating that grave. It is 'off the beaten track' and it was then unmarked.

OBITUARIES

JOHN MATHEWSON, *FONC Member 2206*. It is with much sadness that we learned of the death of John Mathewson, a member since April 1997. John, who had been very poorly for some time, died in a Camberwell nursing home on Tuesday 17th July 2017 aged 73. John, who was Rex Batten's partner, usually accompanied Rex when he conducted tours of the cemetery grounds, and the pair were often to be seen together when Rex displayed his collection of photographs of cemetery symbols on Open Day.



John Mathewson (seated) and Rex Batten at one of FONC's Open Days

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CHARLES GRAVES, FONC Member 2901. I was so sorry to learn of the death of Charles (Charlie) Graves, a member of FONC since July 2001, who passed away in May 2017. Charlie was a local man. When the Nunhead area was being redeveloped in the 1970s, Charlie was rehoused at Priory Court, Peckham Rye, as were my family, and I believe Charlie was still living at Priory Court at the time of his death. His favourite pub was the Pyrotechnist's Arms at Nunhead Green, and that is where I last saw and spoke to him.
RW

NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No 27

by Jeff Hart, Co-ordinator

Further East Lodge delays

It is so depressing to have to report that there have been further delays in delivering and considering the first draft of the feasibility study on the future of the East Lodge. Southwark project officers said that the delay on completion of the report was caused by 'third parties'. The report, together with officers' initial consideration, was due to be presented to Southwark Council Cabinet member, Councillor Ian Wingfield, on 20th July. We are also not sure that the draft report has been sent to Historic England for consideration. It certainly should be as they have paid for half of the costs of the report. However, it is apparently not yet appropriate for the draft to be sent to FONC despite the input we have provided, although we are assured that we will be able to comment before the report is finalised. We assume that it is eventually intended to go to public consultation on a recommended way forward for the Lodge – whatever that might be – but it is unclear what account of FONC views will be taken before then. All things considered, it seems unlikely that final decisions will be taken in 2017.

War memorial repairs to be completed before Remembrance Sunday?

We reported in the last issue that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) had begun the work of repairing the new First World War memorial in Square 89. However, there has been a delay whilst CWGC reassessed what needs to be done to complete full reinstatement. It has now been decided that the work needs to be undertaken by the Commission's in-house specialist masons and work commenced in mid-July. Following a site meeting with the CWGC Regional surveyor, when we raised concerns about reinstatement of the path in front of the memorial and the long-term maintenance of the Himalayan birch trees planted behind the retaining wall, we were given assurances that the work will be completed by the end of Octo-

ber. This will enable us to place our Remembrance Sunday wreaths on the repaired memorial as usual.

Going walkies?

We are very grateful to FONC members and others who acted on our request to respond to Southwark Council's consultation on responsible dog-ownership in the Borough. Many FONC members took the trouble to write or telephone us to express their support for the recommendations that the Committee offered on how to answer questions in respect to Nunhead Cemetery. Some felt that we were being too reasonable and wanted to see stricter controls introduced. Only two written responses were received opposing the line the Committee had taken. However, following the closing date for responses on the 5th June, we were not surprised that a number of mostly new FONC members attended the June AGM to challenge the Committee's basis for the position we had adopted. We have asked Southwark Council for the data analysis of the response to the consultation but we have been advised that this will only be available when officers' recommendations are put to the Council in October.

Walk this way!

In co-operation with Southwark Council contractors *IdVerde*, FONC supervisors spent the day with volunteers from PwC (PriceWaterhouseCooper) on the 19th May to lay new path matting to help stabilise the Lower Cross Path. Using materials supplied jointly by PwC and Southwark, the existing path was levelled and the matting laid and pinned into place. Hopefully this will reduce wear on the previously muddy and worn path and we will be able to seed the area to restore the previously green walkway. Similar work previously undertaken on the West Hill is now beginning to blend in well. PwC volunteers also carried out dry hedging work and cut back bramble growth on the West Hill view of looking towards St Paul's.

Out and about

With the summer season in full swing, the FONC travelling stall has been in evidence at the Blythe Hill Fayre, Catford, and the Brockley & Ladywell Cemeteries Open Day. This helps to raise public awareness of Nunhead Cemetery and generates new members and additional funding for FONC. We have also hosted tours of the cemetery for groups such as the Tonbridge History Group in addition to our annual tour programme. Meanwhile Simon Saville and colleagues of the Surrey and SW London Branch of Butterfly Conservation are undertaking surveys in the cemetery and confirmed three sightings of the rare White Letter Hairstreak butterfly.

OPEN DAY IN NUNHEAD CEMETERY - MAY 2017

Visitors were entertained by various attractions at this year's Open Day. Besides choir performances in the chapel, they were also treated to a display of Morris dancing. Francis Chappell's handsome horses and Victorian style hearse were again present and were much admired. Bodgers demonstrated traditional woodturning, and visitors were fascinated by the birds of prey. Large crowds gathered around FONC's home-made refreshments and plants stalls, but sadly, for the children at any rate, the bugman, was absent owing to a commitment elsewhere, but he promised to be back in 2018. Children, however, could still be amused by making their own badges. The publications stall did well, and the grave-search enquiry desk was kept busy as usual.

This year there appeared to be an abundance of stalls in addition to ours, only a few of which are listed here: Camberwell Arts Guild; City of London Archaeological Society; Dulwich Horticultural Society; East Surrey Badger Protection Society; East Surrey Family History Society; Friends of Brockley and Ladywell Cemeteries; Friends of Brompton Cemetery; Herne Hill Society; London Wildlife Trust; Nunhead's Voice; Peckham Society; Society of Genealogists; Southwark Local History Library; Women's Institute, etc, etc.

Conducted tours of the cemetery were all well-attended, however, when it was the turn of the writer's to take a tour at 2pm the heavens opened, but thankfully the heavy downpour soon passed over and the tour was able to continue. The unsettled weather of wind, sunshine and showers, meant the number of visitors attending was probably fewer than last year, nevertheless, a good day was had by all, both visitors and stall-holders alike.

Many thanks to all those who took part, including all our hard-working volunteers and everyone who donated delicious homemade cakes and savouries for sale at our refreshments stall, and the wonderful selection of plants for sale at Contrary Mary's plant stall. Thanks also to our Open Day organisers Tim and Carol Stevenson, and Jeff Hart for controlling the event and keeping everyone informed. ■

PS It takes an immense amount of effort to organise the Open Day which we achieve with the minimum of volunteers. If you think that you could help in any way for the 2018 event on Saturday, 19th May 2018 please contact Tim Stevenson or Jeff Hart as soon as possible!

Remarkable Women buried in Nunhead Cemetery No 4
by Ron Woollacott and Michèle Louise Burford

MADAME CICELY NOTT (Part 2)
Singer and Actress

CICELY MARRIES THEATRE MANAGER SAM ADAMS

On returning to England in 1861 Cicely made her first appearance as an actress on the London stage playing Little Boy Blue in the burlesque *Little Red Riding Hood* at the Lyceum. In March 1862 *The Era* carried the following announcement: 'The favourite actress at the Lyceum, Madame Cicely Bellini, so well-known to the public under her maiden (sic) appellation of Miss Cicely Nott, has again entered into the bands of matrimony. The marriage took place on Saturday, 22nd March, at St James's, Piccadilly, the happy gentleman being Mr Samuel Adams junior, of Mosely, Ware, Hertfordshire.' (Samuel Adams, popularly known as Sam or Cham Adams, was a successful theatre manager, and a future founder and proprietor of the Trocadero Music Hall, Piccadilly). Their first child, Ada Cecelia Blanche, was born at Brixton on the 16th July 1863.

When Falconer and Chatterton revived Lord Byron's *Manfred*, a dramatic poem set to music by Robert Schumann (1810-1856), Cicely was engaged for the principal soprano part of *Miscrema* at the Drury Lane Theatre in October 1863, after which she stayed away from the stage for a time to concentrate on caring for her growing family. Edith Maude was born in 1865, followed by Albert George Down (Bertie) in 1867 and Rosaline May in 1869. Quite soon after giving birth to Rosaline May, Cicely returned to the stage. She played Mabel in Carpenter and Hime's *Coming of Age*, and at the opening of the Charing Cross Theatre on the 19th June 1869 she played Pollio (a breeches role or male part) in W S Gilbert's operatic burlesque *The Pretty Druidess* which ran until September 1869. Reporting on the first night *The Era* mentioned 'Rise Gentle Moon' a song sung by Cicely as Pollio 'with good effect.'

CICELY AND SAM GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS

Cicely gave birth to her fifth and last child, Adelaide Emily (Addie), in August 1870, and later that year found herself in trouble with the law when she, along with several others, including Alfred Trotman, the new proprietor of the Bedford Music Hall, were summoned to appear at Marylebone Police Court for 'unlawfully acting or presenting a part in a stage play at a music

continued on next page

hall.' At that time serious plays could only be performed in 'legitimate' theatres. The Dramatic Society had taken out the summonses which were later withdrawn when Alfred Trotman agreed to pay the costs of the prosecution. Cicely's mother died on the 19th February 1871, aged 69, and was buried in the family grave at Nunhead Cemetery.

Sam and Cicely appear to have separated quite soon after the birth of their last child. In the 1871 census Cicely is recorded as the head of the household, and residing with her five young children, all of whom were under the age of seven, at 8 De Laune Street, Kennington Park. In the same census Samuel Adams, theatre manager, is recorded as living in St Pancras with a young American woman calling herself Louisa Adams.



THE LATE MISS CICELY NOTT.

CICELY RETURNS TO THE STAGE

Cicely Nott returned to the stage at the Adelphi Theatre in March 1873 to play the part of Lucy Locket in *The Beggars' Opera* and played Sedona in *Elizabeth, or The Exiles from Siberia* in March 1874; Countess de Brissac in *Thirst for Gold, or The Lost Ship and Wild Flower of Mexico* from the 28th March to the 11th September 1874; and Lady Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet* at Drury Lane in December 1874, before returning to the Adelphi Theatre as Rosa in *Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Slave Life* in February 1875; Mrs Micawber in *Little Emily* from the 30th October to the 22nd December 1875; Mrs O'Kelly in the Irish drama, *The Shaughraun* in December 1875; Widow Kavanagh in *Peep o' Day* from the 24th January 1876 to 8th April 1876; Mrs O'Scuttle in *Poor Pillicoddy* in April 1876; Mrs Cribber in *My Own Ghost* also in April 1876; Sheelah in *Colleen Bawn* from the 20th May to the 11th August 1876; Lady Wry in *Race for a Wife* in September 1876; Dame Margery in *Fortune's Frolic* from the 23rd September to the 17th November 1876; Rose in *Rendezvous* from the 28th October 1876 to 3rd August 1877; Bridget Madigan in *The Shaughraun* from 18th November 1876 to 2nd March 1877; Clarissa in *Give a Dog a Bad Name* in November 1876; Lady

Meadows in *Bamboozling* from the 18th December to 2nd February 1877; Sheelah in *Colleen Bawn* in March 1877; Mrs Puffy in *The Streets of London* from 19th May to 10th August 1877; and Mrs Moggridge in *Sarah's Young Man* in February 1878. She later played a few seasons at Astley's Amphitheatre, Westminster Bridge Road.

In the census of 1881 Cicely is once again shown as the head of the household and living at 33 Osborne Terrace, Kennington Park, with her five children and two servants. Her sister, Rosina, lives nearby at 1 Osborne Terrace with her husband, Charles Bolton, author, and their five children. In the same census Samuel Adams, Cicely's estranged husband, is living alone and describes himself as 'married and separated' manager of the London Pavilion.

In 1882 Cicely took the contralto role of Peronella in Emily Soldene's touring company's performance of Franz von Suppé's operetta *Boccaccio*, and her daughter Ada Blanche took the soprano part of Fiametta. In July 1884, at the re-opening of the renovated Avenue Theatre, Sunderland, Miss Lila Clay's company of ladies, under the management of Madame Cicely Nott, appeared for the first time to a 'moderately good' audience. According to *The Era* the first part of the performance went exceedingly well: 'Special mention must be made of the splendidly executed violin solo by Miss Ada Molteno, and the topical duet most humorously rendered by the Misses Ada and Edith Blanche. The performance concluded with the operatic absurdity *Posterity*, in which the Misses Addie and Ada Blanche, Miss Hoban, and Madame Cicely Nott specially distinguished themselves.'

FEWER APPEARANCES AND EVENTUAL RETIREMENT

Cicely Nott's appearances became fewer as she devoted herself to her daughters as they became established on the stage. She eventually retired from the profession and claimed her annuity from the Royal General Theatrical Fund. In March 1890, George Lupino junior, who had been appearing as Mother Shipton in the pantomime *Cinderella* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Birmingham, gave a private supper at the Colonnade Hotel to many of his theatrical friends and acquaintances, among whom were Cicely Nott and her daughters Ada and Addie Blanche.

Cicely's estranged husband, Samuel Adams, died at The Rowans, St John's Road, Brixton, on the 3rd June 1893, and was buried at West Norwood Cemetery. He left effects of £12,867 (£1.3 million in today's money). Probate to Florence (Florrie) Dorling, a former serio-comic actress, and 30 years his junior, with whom he had been co-habiting.

Cicely Nott lived in retirement with her eldest daughter Ada Blanche, and

with occasional visits by her other children: Edith Maude, stage name Edith Blanche (Mrs John Tully); Rosaline May, whose stage name was Rosie Nott (Mrs Robert Courtneidge); Adelaide Edith, whose stage name was Addie Blanche (Mrs William Peacock); and Bert Adams. She died at 23 Albert Square, Clapham Road, South Lambeth, on the 3rd January 1900, aged 67. The first part of her funeral service was held at St Stephen's Church, Albert Square and conducted by the Revd J Grundy. Her wealth at death was just £395 (about £39,000 in today's money. Probate to her daughter Ada Cecelia Blanche Adams.

POSTSCRIPT

In 1910, Ada Blanche, Cicely's eldest child, recalling her first appearance on the stage at the age of 14 in 1877, wrote: 'My mother, who had been a well-known concert singer in her day, and was then a serious actress of 'heavy parts' at the Adelphi, under the name of Miss Cicely Nott, never intended that any of my sisters or I should go on the stage. Necessity, however, willed it that the whole four of us should do so, while my brother, the late Bert Adams, later on went into acting management. My mother taught me to sing, but, apart from that, we were all of us acting-mad at home, and were always acting and dancing in the nursery. When it was known at the Adelphi that there was going to be a children's pantomime, one of the other artistes, Mrs Edmund Phelps, suggested to my mother that she should endeavour to get an engagement for one of us. My mother decided on me, and I was taken down to the theatre to sing to Mr Chatterton with a view to an engagement for a special singing part. The song I sang was 'Silver Threads among the Gold', it was the popular song of the year and everybody knew it. Mr Chatterton evidently approved of the way I sang, for there and then he told my mother he would engage me.'

NB. Cicely Nott's granddaughter, Dame Esmerelda Cicely Courtneidge DBE (1893-1980), better known as Cicely Courtneidge, comedienne and singer of both stage and film fame, was married to the actor Jack Hulbert (1892-1978) with whom she often appeared. ■

Grave No 25248 Square 125. Headstone. **Sources:** Memorial inscription; Burial records; Census returns, 1841 to 1891; *The Times*, 8 December 1851 and 5 January 1953; *Birmingham Journal*, 20 December 1851; *Dublin Evening Post*, 27 December 1851; *Inverness Courier*, 21 October 1858; *The Era*, 30 March 1862, 25 December 1870, 2 August 1884, 22 March 1890, 12 March 1898; 6 January 1900, 13 January 1900; *The Sketch*, 21 December 1910; Frederic Boase, *Modern English Biography*, Vol VI, 1921; H Chance-Newton, *Idols of the Halls*, 1928, pp. 132-3; Ron Woolacott, *Nunhead Notables*, 1984; revised edition 2002; *The Adelphi Theatre Calendar* 2013; www.umass.edu/AdelphiTheatreCalendar

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NFCF 2017

The AGM of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends was hosted by the Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery, and took place in the Dissenters' Chapel at Kensal Green Cemetery on Saturday 10th June 2017. The Friends of Nunhead Cemetery were represented by Jeff and Jane Hart, Jeremy Partington and Ron Woollacott. FONC's Gwyneth Stokes and Carol Stevenson attended respectively as Secretary and Treasurer of the NFCF. Following registration we were welcomed by Robert Stephenson, NFCF chairman and FOKGC trustee, who gave an interesting illustrated presentation of the history of the cemetery, after which we all enjoyed tours of the cemetery visiting some of the many magnificent mausoleums and sepulchral monuments. The weather was fine which made the visit particularly enjoyable.

After a splendid lunch, the business of the day commenced at around 2.00pm. The chairman opened the proceedings, after which the secretary and treasurer presented their reports. The following agenda items were discussed: NFCF website; National Cemeteries Week; Report by Colin Fenn on NFCF liaison with Commonwealth War Grave Commission; John Moffat on the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe; National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces; Dogs in cemeteries by Jeff Hart. There was little discussion on this subject, however, the NFCF agreed to raise the issue with the government's Burial and Cremation Advisory Group (BCAG).

The following officers and committee were elected: Robert Stephenson (chairman); Colin Fenn (vice-chairman); Gwyneth Stokes (hon secretary); Carol Stevenson (hon treasurer). Committee: Lynda Kitching; Emer Seemark; Ann Wilkinson; Stuart Wilkinson. Our thanks go to the Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery for hosting the event and for their wonderful hospitality. *RW* ■

GREAT NORTH WOOD EVENTS

Events are free although a suggested donation of £2 is greatly appreciated and will go towards the conservation of the Great North Wood Living Landscape. The events are open to everyone and booking is only necessary if specified. ***Autumn Tree Walk***: Saturday 11th November 2017 from 2.00pm to 3.30pm. *A guided walk of the largest remaining fragment of the Great North Wood.* Meet outside Sydenham Hill Station. Autumn is one of the most exciting times to visit woodland.

To find out more about volunteering at Sydenham Hill Wood please contact Daniel Greenwood at dgreenwood@wildlondon.org.uk

MEMBERS' VISIT TO GLADSTONE PARK

Fifteen of us visited Dollis Hill on a sunny Saturday in August—not a place you'd put top of the list for a fun day out but we had a fantastic time!

Cathy led us to glorious Gladstone Park, named after Victorian prime minister William Gladstone, who spent his summers in Dollis Hill House, in the middle of hay meadows, which are now the park. There are fantastic views from the top of the park over London and as far as the North Downs. It was also interesting to see how the remains of Dollis Hill House has been made into a children's play area and meeting point. We enjoyed the plane tree-lined paths and visited the lake and pretty walled garden. We also admired Fred Kormis' Grade II listed monument to victims of prisoner-of-war and concentration camps from 1914 to 1945.

We then climbed even further up Dollis Hill to the 1933 Post Office Research Station, a splendid building where much of the work for cracking the Enigma Code was done in World War Two. This was where the first computer, Colossus, was developed by Tommy Flowers and his team. It was also where another Post Office engineer, Arnold Lynch, developed the world's first electronic optic reader, essential for cracking the codes.

We rounded off our afternoon sociably with tea and cakes in the delightful Stables Café next to Dollis Hill House.

P.S. At the end of the tour Cathy was presented with a gift token in appreciation for the many years of service that she has given to FONC as Treasurer. She stood down in June but remains a Committee member.

ALL SOULS SERVICE RETURNS

We are delighted to announce that after a gap of three years we are again able to hold an All Souls Service in the Anglican chapel. This ecumenical service to remember all those who have been interred at Nunhead will be held at 2:00pm on Sunday, 5th November and will be led by Ross Gundersen, the curate of St. Barnabas in Dulwich Village. All are welcome to attend – please meet inside the Linden Grove gates just before 2:00pm.

~ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ~

WOODLAND TRAIL TOUR ► Sunday 10th September 2017 at 2.15pm. Meet Tim Stevenson your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle just inside the main gates of the cemetery in Linden Grove. ► **Sunday 10th December 2017 at 2.15pm.** This woodland tour will be conducted by Jeff Hart.

OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND IN NUNHEAD CEMETERY ► *Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th September 2017 from 1.00pm to 5.00pm on both days. See page 3 for further details.*

CEMETERY SYMBOLS TOUR ► *Sunday 15th October 2017 at 2.15pm.* Meet Keith Turpin your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle just inside the main entrance to the cemetery in Linden Grove, to look at some of the interesting symbols on monuments and gravestones.

ALL SOULS SERVICE ► *Sunday 5th November at 2.00pm.* Ecumenical service to be conducted by the Revd Ross Gunderson of St Barnabas, Dulwich. Meet inside the main gates in Linden Grove.

MILITARY CONNECTIONS TOUR ► *Sunday 12th November 2017 at 2.15pm.* Meet at the flint circle inside the main entrance to Nunhead Cemetery for an interesting tour of the military graves in the cemetery led by Jeff Hart.

REMEMBRANCE DAY EVENT ► *Sunday 12th November 2017 at 10.45am.* Meet at the War Memorial by Limesford Road entrance to the cemetery. Wreaths provided by the Royal British Legion, for which we make a donation, will be laid at all the main British and Commonwealth War Graves sites.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL ► *Thursday 21st December 2017 at 7.00pm in the function room of the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green.* This is an opportunity for FONC members to meet with other Friends and supporters. Full details will be published in the December (winter) issue of *FONC News*.

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 to 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

The deadline for copy for the next issue is 16th October 2017
(Please note 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

Member of the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCE).
Recipient of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's Birthday Award
for Environmental Improvements (National Commendation) 1998.

www.fonc.org.uk

Printed by Catford Print Centre, LONDON SE6 2PN
and published by Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, c/o fonc@btconnect.com

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