

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, London, SE15

FONC News

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First boundary wall column removed - see page 3 - photo: Jane Hart

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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 tax-payers 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.

NOTE: Over winter the cemetery closes at 4:00pm.

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 vice-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

Temporary Editors: Jeff & Jane Hart **Contributors:** Sam Bailey; Jane Hart; Jeff Hart; Ish Lennox; Simon Saville: All other text and photographs, unless otherwise credited, are by the editors. **Proof-readers:** Gwyneth Stokes and Jane Hart. *The editors and FONC's General Committee do not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by contributors.*

AND THE WALLS COME TUMBLING DOWN

Report by Jeff Hart

More than one year ago, during one of our monthly site meetings with Be-reavement Services, we were informed that Southwark was commissioning a condition survey of the cemetery boundary walls. We were pleased to hear this as, apart from some repairs in the late 1970s; the insertion of reproduction railings along the Linden Grove boundary in 1999/2000; and fencing repairs separating gardens from the cemetery along the Ivydale Road boundary, little has been done to the walls since they were first built in 1840. We asked for, and were promised, access to the reports when completed and consultation on any recommendations that were to be made by the consults, AECOM.

The surveyors did meet us on site on one occasion, principally to seek our background knowledge, and since then we had regularly asked what progress was being made with the report and when we could expect to meet with officers to discuss it. Imagine our shock, therefore, when on 20 September we received the following e-mail from John Wade, Southwark's Group Manager – Business Development (Parks and Leisure) about the Limesford Road boundary walls:

I write to inform you of the outcome of a structural survey that was undertaken on the above-mentioned wall by suitably qualified engineers. The wall is bulging and cracking severely and as such we need to undertake emergency works to ensure the safety of the public as soon as possible. The works will entail the removal of twelve of the columns and removal of 8 sets of coping stones from the remaining columns. Once the columns have been removed a decision will be made as to whether the railings in between the columns can be retained.

The wall will need to be replaced in the future and we will undertake further feasibility work over the forthcoming months to identify a design which con-

continued on next page

siders all the necessary site conditions and protects the integrity of the wall over the long term. We have consulted the planning department and they have approved the emergency works as they are deemed essential health and safety works on the premise that a planning application is submitted in the future to approve the design for the replacement wall. I will keep you updated on the above over the forthcoming months.

We were horrified and immediately requested a halt on the works until we could discuss this further. We explained that we were concerned, in addition to the drastic and apparently needless immediacy of the works, that there was no plan to secure the cemetery once columns had been removed, no plan to reclaim original materials and no plan or timescale to restore the walls to their original condition. We copied in Historic England, who we suspected had not been consulted as required, since the whole cemetery is listed and on the 'Buildings at Risk Register'. Within 24 hours Historic England also expressed their concerns to the Council. In the meantime, a concerned resident of Limesford Road informed us that he had received a letter from Southwark saying that work would begin on 2nd October.

A subsequent Freedom of Information enquiry has revealed that an initial survey report was completed in December 2016 and that a subsequent further report was commissioned this April and completed at the beginning of July 2017. Why on earth were borough officers unwilling to share these reports with us at the time and to involve us in exploring the way forward? Our frantic requests for information and meetings did not take us much further forward – one quote was 'they are only 19th. Century walls' – and in the meantime work began as planned on 2nd October. This was due to take 5-6 weeks at a cost of about £20,000. At the time of writing, it appears that most of the emergency works have been completed and coping stones have been replaced on the stubs of the remaining columns. Our Freedom of Information request response states that:

'Further feasibility work is required to be undertaken before any design work can be commenced. Historic England and the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery will be consulted during the design stages. It is planned, subject to no delays, that we will be starting construction in the summer 2018.'

It is hardly surprising that we feel that we can place little trust in Southwark officers' assurances. Once again we have taken this up with ward councillors and we are determined to ensure that our remaining concerns (security has still not been addressed) are taken account of and that full restoration of the walls takes place as soon as possible. We believe that the survey also addressed the Brockley Footpath walls but we have yet to hear the outcome...

RON WOOLLACOTT RETIRES AS CHAIRMAN

Many FONC members will be aware that Ron Woollacott was taken rather ill in July and in August this necessitated a period in hospital and an emergency operation. Following discharge from hospital at the end of August, a necessary second operation has been delayed by a bout of pneumonia. Whilst the first operation has been successful, Ron has needed a long period of recuperation at home, cared for by wife, and fellow committee member, Maureen. As a result of his illness Ron now reluctantly feels unable to continue in his role as FONC Chairman and, at least for the time being, as a cemetery tour guide, with effect from 12th October.

Ron has been our Chairman from the formation of the Friends in November 1981 and has given FONC sterling service in that capacity ever since. Fortunately Ron does wish to continue as a Committee member and hopes to be able to join members at the Christmas social meeting on December 21st. In the meantime, Vice-Chairman Carol Stevenson has taken the chair at Committee meetings but has indicated that she does not wish to step up as Chairman. The Committee will now be considering how best to fill the huge gap left by Ron in that capacity.

In addition, Ron has been Editor of FONC News for many years and hopes to be able to continue in that role in due course. However, the current issue is something of a stop-gap until then and has been put together by Jane and Jeff Hart. We can only apologise, therefore, that it might not match the high standards set by Ron. Hopefully normal service will be resumed for the next issue! In the meantime, we are sure that all members would want to wish Ron a full and speedy recovery.

SNIPPETS—A ROUND UP OF ODDS AND SODS!

Such is the volume of work, the General Committee held its first ever meeting during August—no time for holidays! ♦ Open House weekend coincided with the annual Nunhead Arts Trail and the '*Grotesques & Cherubs*' exhibition helped boost attendance ♦ Nunhead & Peckham Free Film Festival returned to the cemetery showing '*Nosferatu*' (not the 1926 original!). It was a sell out and much enjoyed ♦ We have been helping an Italian student with a Monumental Funerary Heritage project to boost appreciation of cemetery art in Italy ♦ We have installed a new gate in the East Lodge grounds fencing to enable FONC volunteers to safely reinstate our storage area for building materials etc. away from any works on the East Lodge itself. ♦ See the NCFC website for news of the *National Cemeteries Week* last September at www.cemeteryfriends.com ♦

OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND – *report by Jane Hart*

The annual Open House (now also confusingly called Open City by the organisers) weekend was held on 16 -17 September with FONC hosting both cemetery and crypt tours on both afternoons. In addition, Jolanta Jagiello curated a fascinating arts exhibition in the chapel entitled '*Grotesques and Cherubs*' featuring twenty one sculpted masks by artist Billy Weston which were hung on existing nails in the chapel walls.



'Medieval Minstrel' by Billy Weston

Mainly influenced by medieval church grotesques, the exhibition mirrored the atmosphere of the chapel and, in fact, was so well received, the artist kindly offered to leave a number of them in place until mid-November.

As a result of a number of other buildings, particularly in the locality, only being open on the Saturday, combined with a rather dismal cool afternoon, there were fewer visitors than on the warmer Sunday.

However to help warm our visitors, refreshments were provided at the portacabin with welcoming cups of hot tea and coffee and cake. This feature was started the previous year but extended to providing home-baked goodies this year. Although the cemetery is open every day throughout the year, nonetheless,



it is striking and pleasing how many people take advantage of Open House to visit the cemetery, often for the first time. The tours, particularly of the crypt, as always, proved to be a great draw.

SCOTS MARTYRS MEMORIAL PLANNING APPLICATION DRAGS ON *Report by Jeff Hart*

It is now some two years since FONC first drew to the attention of Southwark's Bereavement Services the deterioration of the flagstones and kerbing surrounding the Scots Martyrs memorial that had become a potential tripping hazard. This was referred to the Borough engineers and following a site meeting with FONC it was agreed that the surround could be removed altogether; that the surrounding paths would be re-laid and levelled; that the bench behind the memorial would be retained; and that re-setting of the four corner stones and replacement of the connecting rolled steel bar might be replaced with something more sympathetic.

However, the somewhat incomplete planning application was rejected, partly because Historic England objected to the removal of part of the structure they had listed some years earlier. In fact, the surrounding had only been added in the eighties by Southwark Council and it took some persuading on our part to convince Historic England that it was not part of the original memorial! There was also a concern expressed by the owners of the West Lodge that the plan could affect the flow of rain water down the hill towards their property, which had been seriously flooded a couple of years before (although the cause of the flood was never clearly established). As a result, a new topographical survey was commissioned and a new planning application developed.

FONC was bemused by this second application. It now made no mention of retaining the bench and changed the proposed surfacing material (with which we have no problem). However, it now introduced a concrete drainage channel with back lip and with a metal grille to run along the north side of the path edge from behind the memorial, in front of the toilet block and FONC portacabin, along the whole side of the West Lodge grounds and around the corner towards the Linden Grove gates. FONC could see no justification for such an intrusive new design element since the water flow would have no effect on the buildings and seemed a waste of public money. How, we also wondered, was this to work in front of the toilets and portacabin entrances with a raised concrete lip? And how was this design in keeping with the original design of the path as part of the Grade II* listed Historic Landscape? We thus posted an objection to the application and suggested another site meeting with officers to discuss the proposal further.

We received a rather brusque response of the '*we know best*' type. The only way we could have our views taken seriously was to obtain the support of ward councillors to submit the application to a full Planning Committee, at which we could be represented, before a decision could be made. This we

did, but in the meantime borough officers have submitted a further amended application that does not address any of our concerns and now re-inserts a mini-version of the surrounding kerb following concerns expressed by Historic England about bonding the new surfacing directly against the memorial. Again there has been no response to our request for a site meeting with officers and so we have had to submit a further formal objection to the planning application. Our ward councillor is following up the lack of response to our request for a meeting on an issue that Southwark has already spent £2,250 on failed applications. If only officers could be open and transparent with us, this whole issue could have been satisfactorily resolved more than a year ago. As it is, we await the next stage of consideration of the, in our view, equally unacceptable application.

COULD YOU BE A F.O.N.C. TRUSTEE?

Over the last couple of years the Committee has been working hard on ensuring good governance of our registered charity in line with recent legislative changes and the much changed charity environment since we first registered in the early 1980s. To that end, the Committee has concluded that we now need to re-register with the Charity Commission as what is called a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

In effect this will make little noticeable difference to members in the way we run FONC but it will require us to replace our existing Constitution with a much modernised version. We shall also stop referring to our governing body as a ‘committee’ but rather to ‘the trustees’. This will not greatly change the legal responsibilities committee members have now but should ensure greater transparency. We will need to consult with the Charity Commission on the new constitution but we expect to be able to propose this to members for adoption at the June, 2018 AGM, if not before.

At the same time, we are now actively seeking to encourage new committee members/trustees to join us. This is partly because some existing members are unable to be as active as they were and because we still have a couple of vacancies. Do you think that you might be able to step up to actively participate in the running of FONC and directing our policy on a whole range of issues that we deal with? It does mean making a commitment to attend the majority of our monthly meetings (held in Nunhead on the third Thursday evening of the month) and, of course, any additional skills you bring with you would be very welcome! Don’t be daunted – we need people with an active interest prepared to say what they think in order to contribute to preserving, conserving and enhancing the cemetery. Not sure? Why not attend a committee meeting just to find out more about what we do? You would be very welcome. Contact Carol Stevenson or Jeff Hart for more details.

ALL SOULS AND REMEMBRANCE SERVICES

After a hiatus of a few years, we were delighted to be able to hold our annual All Souls Service once again thanks to the help of FONC member Helen Hughes and the Rev. Ross Gunderson of St Barnabas church, Dulwich. Whilst rather chilly, the weather at 2:00pm on 5th November was dry and



bright as we processed up the Main Avenue towards the ruined Anglican chapel singing 'Lord of all Hopefulness'. A congregation of some fifteen or so participated in the twenty minute ecumenical service remembering their own loved ones and the 288,000 people of all faiths and none interred at Nunhead Cemetery. Following the service, we all retired to the FONC publications stall (pictured) to enjoy

welcome hot tea and coffee and Ish Lennox's drop scones.

Our annual Act of Remembrance, held at 10:45am on Sunday 12th November, was attended by nearly fifty people. In chilly but bright weather we reflected particularly on those of many nationalities - Chinese; Indian; South African - who served with the various Labour Battalions during the Great War. Many of these men lost their lives constructing trenches, laying railway lines and providing essential support to the front line troops. Some were buried at Nunhead. This was also the subject of the exhibition in the chapel on display over Remembrance weekend (see page 15).



Wreathes were laid at each of the principal areas of war graves by FONC Committee members and local residents. This year we were joined by representatives of both Nunhead and Peckham branches of the Women's Institute who laid a wreath at the civilian Second World War memorial and beautiful hand crocheted wreath in the Anglican Chapel. We also laid crosses representing various other faiths who fought in many conflicts since 1914. The event concluded with a movement performance by Ella Fleetwood. FONC donated £250 for the wreathes to the Royal British Legion annual appeal.



WHAT'S A-FLUTTER IN NUNHEAD CEMETERY?

Simon Saville, Chairman of the Surrey & SW London Branch of Butterfly Conservation, updates the cemetery's sightings and invites members to take part in future monitoring (Photos by Simon Saville)

It is 20 years since Richard 'Bug-Man' Jones published his booklet *The Butterflies of Nunhead Cemetery*, so I thought it was time to take another good look. I visited the cemetery regularly through the spring and summer of 2017, each time walking round the whole site. Members will be aware that the cemetery is a Local Nature Reserve, so it was pleasing to see 15 different species of butterfly - similar to the list identified by Richard Jones.



Comma

In the spring, the Comma could be seen in sunny areas throughout the site - unmistakable with its ragged-edged wings. The pretty little Holly Blue was also common, appearing wherever there was ivy. The brown and yellow chequered Speckled Wood flitted through the dappled sunlight along the many paths. I saw the Orange Tip - the male with its characteristic orange wingtips - in the burial area in the middle of the cemetery. The buddleias and brambles here were often buzzing with all types of insects.

I'm sure that walkers will have seen lots of white butterflies, but maybe they weren't aware that these could be one of three different species - Small White (commonest), Large White or Green-veined White (often in the damper areas). Sometimes confused with these whites is the Brimstone butterfly - especially the female, which is off-white, unlike the bright yellow male. These could be seen in the spring: they overwinter as adults and live for almost a whole year.



Holly blue

It was a good year throughout the country for the striking Red Admiral, and this was also the case at Nunhead. Its close cousins, the Peacock and Painted Lady were also present, though in smaller numbers. I was surprised not to see any Small Tortoiseshells, but this once common butterfly has crashed in numbers everywhere, and nobody seems to know why. Later in the season, grassland species like the Meadow Brown,



Red Admiral

Large Skipper and Ringlet appeared, especially in the southern end of the cemetery where it is more open and grassy. I didn't see any Gatekeeper butterflies, but they normally accompany the Meadow Browns, so I expect they'd be there, too. These butterflies like nectaring on bramble flowers and one of the problems for them may have been that the brambles flowered too early this year. I was picking blackberries in July, which is new for me! The star of the show, though, must be the elusive White-letter Hairstreak.



White Letter Hairstreak

This has been known at Nunhead for some time but is hard to see, so it was good to confirm its presence again. It lives on elm trees, both as caterpillar and adult, usually flying only at the top of the canopy in still, sunny conditions. There are quite a lot of elms at Nunhead, especially to the north and west, and the butterfly was seen in several locations in June and July. Good places to look are to the east of the Anglican Chapel, the glades at the west end of

the Dissenters' Path, the New Burial Area, and on Brockley Footpath (outside the cemetery). We are hoping to set up some regular monitoring of butterflies in Nunhead Cemetery through weekly "transect" walks. We have around 100 such walks in the Surrey and SW London area and volunteers enjoy walking their sites and learning about the wildlife that's there and how it varies through the season. Please get in touch with me (simon.saville@gmail.com) if you might be interested in participating.

EAST LODGE REPORT FINALLY RECEIVED

Report by Jane Hart

After much delay in delivering the feasibility study, commissioned by Southwark Council and Historic England, on the future of the East Lodge, the draft was finally circulated to FONC for review in mid-August. A meeting involving all three parties was held on 16th October to formally receive the report from consultants Thomas Ford Associates and to explore initial reactions.

The study contained ten different options for the future of East Lodge ranging from doing nothing to full restoration as well as setting out the need for enabling works which, due to the parlous state of the building, were essential to be undertaken whatever other decisions might be taken. The enabling works consist of checking the scaffold and repositioning cladding to ensure that the interior is protected; underpinning some parts of the walls; and providing improved drainage around the perimeter to reduce any chances of flooding. Although, when passing on the report to FONC, Southwark indicated there was no funding currently available for any of the work, at the meeting there was a clear and unanimous desire to find funding to progress the enabling works, currently costed at £47,000, so that the different options could then be explored further.

Although the meeting was not intended to determine which options should be progressed further, nevertheless, every group present appeared to dismiss the first three options (do nothing; do nothing but continue to protect the building; consolidated preservation as a ruin) which would effectively leave the building in various states of unusable ruin. Of the other seven options, including just disposing of the ruin), four would take the building out of public ownership, an outcome that FONC would find completely unacceptable given that the West Lodge is already in private ownership.

FONC was heartened that the report's indicative costs for full restoration of the building, although requiring considerable investment, were not as high as we had feared and, of course, this is the option which is most attractive to FONC as it would provide a fully flexible option whereby the whole building would be utilised for public access and accommodation. The remaining public access options provide for a mix of public/private use and less than complete restoration of the building.

Southwark has said that they are committed to fully involving FONC in any future decision making. There is still a long way to go, not least ensuring that the enabling work is carried out as a matter of urgency. A further meeting to discuss these works and their funding is to be held, but there may be some glimmer of light for the future of the East Lodge on the horizon.

THE CURTAIN FALLS ON REX BATTEN'S LIFE

It is with huge sadness that we must report the death of Herbert P. 'Rex' Batten, long time supporter of FONC, ex-Committee member, popular tour guide and author of several of FONC's best-selling books.

Rex was born in rural Dorset in 1928. He moved to London to take up a scholarship at RADA as a contemporary of Joe Orton and Alan Bates. His dashing good looks earned him the name 'Rex' in touring companies. After bit parts in films and free-lance writing for radio, Rex decided the acting life was not for him and spent most of his working life in teaching.

He was the author of *'Rid England of This Plague'* a semi-autobiographical account of the persecution of homosexuals in the 1940s and 1950s. Rex joined FONC as member number 500 in August 1986 and soon after was elected as a

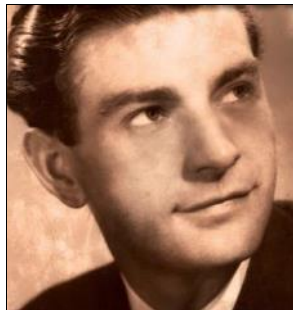


Photo from book dust jacket

Committee member. He was quickly working on collecting stories about the cemetery, published as *'Nunhead Remembered'*, which led to him discovering and researching the tragic story of the Scouts buried there, published as *'The Leysdown Tragedy'* with a later shorter version, *'The Walworth Scouts'*. Rex also wrote *'Nunhead and the Music Hall'* which forms the basis of a popular cemetery tour.



Rex Batten mans his symbols stall at the cemetery Open Day. (Photo: Ron Woollacott)

In later life, Rex suffered from cancer which Ron Woollacott recalls he 'never once complained' and 'remained cheerful and optimistic'. Following a period of remission the cancer returned. Loved by all who knew him, neighbours rallied around to care for him at his home in Landells Road, East Dulwich, but after a short period Rex passed peacefully away on the evening of Tuesday, 7th November. FONC will be represented at the secular funeral. As

Ron said 'Rex loved Nunhead Cemetery and we shall all miss him. Rest in Peace, Rex'.

BORN IN PAISLEY: BURIED IN NUNHEAD

Ish Lennox follows a trail from one of our Waterloo survivors, via Paisley and London, to promote the value of culture

Corporal John Dickson was a weaver from Paisley. He joined the famous cavalry regiment, the Royal Scots Greys, in 1807 aged 18 and was in his first action at Waterloo eight years later. He took part in the Union Brigade cavalry charge that halted a seemingly unstoppable French infantry attack and witnessed the famous capture of the French Eagle standard by Sergeant Ewart.

Following the battle, Dickson was promoted to the rank of troop sergeant-major but some years later was discharged from the army due to an injury caused by a horse falling on him. He was described in his discharge papers as a soldier of 'most exemplary character'.

John Dickson was the last known Scottish survivor of Waterloo when he

died, aged 90, at his home in Nunhead Lane and was buried in Nunhead Cemetery. His portrait, medals and sword are displayed in The National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Dickson was born in Paisley, April 1789, at a time when, beyond farming, textile manufacture had by far the biggest impact on the life of the average person in the region. Despite the importance of powered



The Dickson grave lies behind the large monuments on the Main Avenue. (Photo: Jeff Hart)

manufacturing, at the time when Dickson was working as a weaver most textile workers were employed in hand-loom weaving. He joined the army when he was 17, for much the same reasons that many teenagers join up now. Dickson had been working as a weaver but the industry in Scotland was in a perilous state, due to the war with the French, and so he joined the Army as a private. Then, as now, there would have been a large contingent in the British Army of men from poorer backgrounds who saw security in the military; it was a way out economically.

It was the Paisley weavers who were responsible for innovations in the hand-loom process. The success of this led to the town becoming famous as the largest manufacturer of shawls based on the designs of the Kashmiri shawl. Over time people chose to forget the design was originally from Kashmir and Central Asia and simply referred to it as the Paisley Pattern.

Paisley is currently bidding to be UK City of Culture 2021, drawing on the town's unique cultural and heritage assets to transform its future. As there is a famous Paisley buddy (the name given to someone who hails from Paisley) buried in the cemetery, and as the writer too is one supporting the bid, all our young explorers who attend a cemetery walk are offered a Paisley badge to remember their visit.

Also, here in Southwark, the council is applying to be the Mayor of London's London Borough of Culture in 2019 or 2020. If successful the borough will win over £1 million for a spectacular cultural programme, or £600K as a major award. Involvement in culture is proven to be good for people's health and wellbeing. As all of us who volunteer with FONC would testify to. If you would like to improve your health and well-being by volunteering with us we would love to hear from you.

FORTHCOMING PUBLIC ART IN THE CHAPEL

Over autumn, the successful *'Industrial Garden'* and *'Grotesques and Cherubs'* sculpture exhibitions have been held in the Anglican chapel. These were followed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission funded Living Memory exhibition *'Unremembered of the Great War'* over Remembrance weekend. FONC Committee member Jolanta Jagiello will be curating the next show in the chapel, *'Winter Passage'*, with exhibits by artists Louise Kosinska, Monica Wheeler and Sophie Epton Mock. This will run from 20th November until 21st January. This increasingly popular use of the chapel is attracting more and more requests from local artists to exhibit their works in future in this wonderful space and several are under active consideration. Further details can be obtained from Jolanta or Jeff Hart.

NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS NO 28

by Jeff Hart, Coordinator

Monumental repairs

Wherever possible we like to see memorials in the cemetery repaired and restored whether under the auspices of FONC, the Council, families or others. Recent repairs have included the replacement of the previously beheaded



(Photo: Jeff Hart)

figure of St. Anthony together with cleaning of the headstone and replacement of missing lettering that was arranged and paid for by the Arpino family (see photo).

Currently, descendants of the Donkin family (see FONC News no 132) are planning to arrange the restoration and cleaning of the family vault, together with cleaning adjacent memorials of others associated with Bryan Donkin. It is hoped that this can be completed by March 2018, the 250th. anniversary of his birth.

We also hope to see a new memorial erected on the currently unmarked grave of music-hall star The Great Vance. This follows last years' cleaning and re-setting of the head-

stone marking the grave of Jenny 'The Vital Spark' Hill that was arranged and paid for by the Music Hall Guild of Britain and America.

Fungi failure

Unfortunately, the planned fungal walk planned by the London Wildlife Trust for 4th November had to be cancelled at short notice. This was to have started at Nunhead Cemetery and moved on to two other nearby sites before finishing at LWT's offices at Marsden Road. Walk leader Daniel Greenwood was taken ill a couple of days before the walk and both we and LWT did our best to publicise the cancellation. As it happened, the planned day saw persistent rain all morning – hardly ideal conditions to study fungi anyway. We hope members were not too disappointed and we hope that a similar walk can be arranged for next year.

Rest a while with us

With the passing of FONC member Stan D J le Bon we were grateful to receive a donation from Stan's nephew Ian le Bon. This consists of a beautiful wrought iron bench, much enjoyed by Ian's uncle, which we have placed in the Anglican chapel in front of the Leysdown Tragedy plaques and can be seen from a distance as visitors approach from the Main Avenue. It will provide a useful resting place during occasions when the chapel is open for events.

Staff changes at Southwark

Following a review of staffing levels and numbers across various Council Departments, several officers that we have dealt with in the past have now left the Council's employment. These included Avril Kirby, Bereavement Services Development Manager. Avril has now been succeeded by her former deputy, Sam Rees, to whom we offer our congratulations on his promotion. Sam also now has a new deputy, Margi Singh. We are also pleased that both Candy Edwards and Mark Thompson, with whom we have worked closely for some years, remain in post. At the same time there have also been changes in the staffing provided by Council contractors *IdVerde*. This has been both in terms of experience, numbers and shift patterns and we have raised our concerns about this to Sam.



FONC'S CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Thursday 20th December 2017 at 7:00pm
The Function Room, The Pyrotechnist's Arms,
Nunhead Green, SE15

'THE LEYSDOWN TRAGEDY'

In tribute to Rex Batten, the illustrated 'Story of the Walworth Scouts buried at Nunhead Cemetery' will be presented

*Followed by the infamous FONC Christmas Raffle –
everyone's a winner!*

Seasonal food will be available.



*Members, their friends and family are welcome to join
us. Donations to offset costs will be much appreciated*

COUNCIL MAKE DECISION ON DOG CONTROLS

Report by Jane Hart

As reported in past issues of this Journal, between the end of April and beginning of June this year Southwark Council conducted a borough wide public consultation exercise on the possible introduction of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to tackle dog related anti-social behaviour. This had the greatest on-line response to a consultation exercise that Southwark has ever had. However, it has also been seen as controversial and divisive with highly polarised opinions being expressed by respondents. The consultation covered the Borough of Southwark as a whole but did contain specific questions on the introduction of possible formal dog controls in cemeteries. The FONC Committee drew members' attention to this exercise and suggested a response based on the Committee's proposal to require dogs to be kept on a lead at all times in Nunhead Cemetery and that each walker be restricted to no more than four dogs. We are grateful to the many members who took the trouble to respond to the consultation.

Following on from the consultation exercise, Borough officers prepared a report for presentation at Southwark Council's Cabinet meeting on 31 October. We were disappointed not to have been consulted on this by officers and, despite our requests, we did not see a copy of the report until it was put on-line for all to see one week before it was due to be discussed by the Council Cabinet.

FONC representatives were permitted to make a short deputation before the paper was discussed by Councillors. We explained to the Cabinet that no consideration in the report had been given to Nunhead Cemetery as a Grade II* Historic Landscape; a designated conservation area; a designated local nature reserve; one of the Magnificent Seven Cemeteries in London; and its national importance. We proposed that a dog on-lead policy should be introduced throughout the cemetery with a four dog maximum per walker. The Cabinet paper itself identified that dog controls in cemeteries was the norm – in fact it highlighted a survey of London Boroughs which demonstrated that 14 Boroughs excluded dogs completely from cemeteries and the other 18 insist that dogs be kept on leads at all times. Southwark was thus the only London Borough without any dog controls in its cemeteries. A deputation was also made by dog-owners in Southwark who wanted no restrictions on dog walking, including within Nunhead Cemetery.

In asking questions of the deputations, Cllr. Barrie Hargrove, Cabinet member with responsibility for Communities, Safety and Leisure, and who pre-

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NUNHEAD CEMETERY DOG WALKING ZONES



Amber Zone (*the lighter area on the map above*) indicates PSPO provision for:

- ☐ Dogs on leads at all times.
- ☐ Picking up dog mess after your dog
- ☐ Maximum of six dogs with one handler.

Green Zones (*the darker area on the map above*) indicate areas covered by the borough wide provisions of:

- ☐ Picking up dog mess after your dog
- ☐ Put your dog on a lead when instructed to do so by an authorised officer
- ☐ Maximum of six dogs per owner/walker with up to three dogs off a lead at any one time.

Reproduced from Southwark Council Cabinet Report

sented the report to Cabinet, praised the work of FONC over many years and thanked us for our continuing efforts. As a result of their discussion, the Cabinet approved the following controls: PSPOs are to be implemented requiring that dog faeces must be cleared up by those responsible for their dogs and that there is to be a maximum of six dogs with one handler with three dogs allowed off-lead at any one time – both these requirements are to be introduced Borough wide, including Nunhead. For the cemetery it was agreed that dogs must be kept on-leads in certain areas including current working parts of the cemetery and access routes, together with both entrances and the chapel area. These dog on-lead areas are set out on a map presented in the officers' report (*see map below*). Whilst not as much as we would have liked, this now introduces formal dog controls in the cemetery for the first time since the cemetery's acquisition by Southwark in 1974.

Although PSPOs are normally reviewed on a three yearly basis, the Cabinet also decided that a report should be presented to them in 12 months' time reviewing the effect of the introduction of these controls. The decision took effect from 9th November 2017 but we understand that the Orders will not be introduced until necessary arrangements have been made together with a period of grace before enforcement is undertaken by Community Wardens, Environmental Enforcement Officers and Parks Liaison Officers who will be able to issue fixed penalty notices of up to £1000 to those who fail to comply with the new provisions.

DOG CONTROLS – A DOG OWNER'S VIEW

by Sam Bailey

(Editor's note: FONC member Sam gives an alternate view to that of the FONC Committee. She was a member of the Dog-owners in Southwark deputation to the Council Cabinet meeting on 31st October.)

Over the last five years of living next to Nunhead Cemetery I have grown to love and cherish my calming walks there. In a good week I could visit the cemetery every day. This is because I am also a dog owner so I prioritise walks in the local area for my dog's benefit but it's also turned out to be hugely beneficial for my wellbeing too.

Earlier this year, I read an article on the FONC website calling on members to favour dog restrictions in the Cemetery but as a dog owner and FONC member myself, I simply could not identify with the portrait of dog owners being depicted. The council produced a recent consultation on dogs and my worry is that the use of divisive language will force people to take polarised

positions rather than listen to each other, understand the issues, put them in context and seek proportionate and targeted solutions.

In Southwark there are approximately 10,000 dogsⁱ. If you estimate that they are walked twice a day, in a year this equates to over 7 million dog walks in the borough but the actual number of reported problems is comparatively tiny. Statistics from Southwark Council report that there were 38 instances of dog anti-social behaviour borough-wide between October 2015 and September 2016ⁱⁱ. Given the low incidence it would better to use targeted measures rather than blanket restrictions that will see all dog owners affected, whether they are responsible or not.

Responsible dog owners have a positive impact on local spaces, helping to keep them populated all year round which improves the safety of these areas for everyone.

Nunhead Cemetery is a unique space which welcomes film screenings, art exhibitions, serves as the setting for film and television programmes and welcomes hundreds people for an open day fete each year. As well as being a cemetery it is also a nature reserve. Woodland spaces such as this within London are very precious and we need to each respect each other's right to access and enjoy the areas.

When considering a blanket restriction such as dogs on lead in a space, the possible negative consequences must also be considered. Research by the Kennel Club, Natural England and Hampshire County Council showed that dogs being allowed off leads is the single most important influence for dog walkers when deciding where to walk their dogs and where similar restrictions were proposed at Burnham Beeches 83% of dog walkers said they would go elsewhereⁱⁱⁱ. Removing a large number of the regular users could leave the woodland space open to human anti-social behaviour. Any restrictions would also disproportionately affect the more vulnerable residents, as those who rely on Nunhead Cemetery as their local green space may not be able to walk the distance to another park.

There is strong feeling among dog owners and over 3800 people have signed a petition against unfair dog restrictions in Southwark. Dog owners are a very diverse group of people but I have found them to be very friendly. After the council's divisive consultation process, my hope is that we can all continue to enjoy Nunhead Cemetery.

ⁱ <https://www.pfma.org.uk/dog-population-2017>

ⁱⁱ *Southwark Council Report: Approval to go out to Public Consultation for the Introduction of PSPOs to tackle dog related anti-social behaviour (ASB). NB. The report contains the incorrectly totalled figure of 42, rather than the correct figure of 38.*

ⁱⁱⁱ *Kennel Club Press Release, Dog Walkers Set to Desert Burnham Beeches if Off Lead Restrictions Are Enforced, July 2014*

FONC's TOUR PROGRAMME 2018

All guided tours start at 14:15 hrs (except as indicated below). Free!

- Sunday 21 January — Music Hall artistes tour
Sunday 28 January — General cemetery tour
Sunday 11 February — Military connections tour
Sunday 25 February — General cemetery tour
Sunday 4 March — Crypt and chapel tour 2:15; 3:00; 3:45pm.
Sunday 11 March — Woodland trail tour
Sunday 25 March — General cemetery tour
Sunday 8 April — Cemetery symbols tour
Sunday 22 April — Crypt and chapel tour 2:15; 3:00; 3:45; 4:30
Sunday 29 April — General cemetery tour
Saturday 19 May — Annual Open Day: 11am to 5pm
Sunday 27 May — General cemetery tour
Sunday 10 June — Woodland trail tour
Sunday 17 June — Waterloo anniversary talk/tour
Friday 22 June — LWT Bat sighting walk (tbc) 9:30pm
Sunday 24 June — General cemetery tour
Sunday 1 July — Crypt and chapel tour 2:15; 3:00; 3:45; 4:30
Sunday 15 July — Military connections tour
Sunday 29 July — General cemetery tour
Sunday 12 August — Musical Hall artistes tour
Sunday 26 August — General cemetery tour
Sunday 9 September — Woodland trail tour
Sat/Sun 22/23 September — Open House 1 pm to 5 pm
Sunday 30 September — General cemetery tour
Sunday 14 October — Cemetery symbols tour
Sunday 28 October — General cemetery tour
Saturday 3 November — LWT fungi tour (tbc) 11am
Sunday 11 November — Great War Commemoration tour
Sunday 25 November — General cemetery tour
Sunday 9 December — Woodland trail tour
Sunday 30 December — General cemetery tour

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

~ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ~

WOODLAND TRAIL TOUR ► Sunday 10th December 2017 at 2.15pm. Meet Jeff Hart, your guide for the afternoon, at the flint circle just inside the main gates of the cemetery in Linden Grove. ► **Sunday 11th March 2018 at 2.15pm.** This woodland tour will also be conducted by Jeff Hart.

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 on page 17.

NEW YEAR'S EVE CEMETERY TOUR ► Sunday 31st December 2017 at 2.15pm. Meet at the flint circle inside the main entrance to Nunhead Cemetery. Fresh air before the celebrations!

MUSIC HALL ARTISTES TOUR ► Sunday 21st January 2018 at 2.15pm. Meet at the flint circle inside the main entrance to Nunhead Cemetery for an interesting tour of the graves of music hall stars and the supporting companies led by Jeff Hart.

MILITARY CONNECTIONS TOUR ► Sunday 11th February 2018 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 (again!).

CRYPT AND CHAPEL TOURS ► Sunday 4th March 2018 between 2.15pm and 4.00pm. Meet Jeremy Partington, your guide for the afternoon, at the Anglican chapel entrance to enter the usually closed to the public chapel and crypt.

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. We need a new organiser—can you help? Contact Carol Stevenson. *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.

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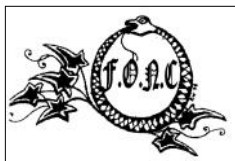
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Please send all letters, news items and feature articles for publication to:
The editor, *FONC News*, c/o fonc@btconnect.com

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Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)



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