

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, London, SE15

FONC News

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Donkin family visit to Nunhead. L-R Jeremy Partington, FONC Acting Chairman; Maureen Greenland; Richard Donkin's niece - Ann; Richard Donkin; his sister - Jo Storr; Russ Day; Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator, in front of the three memorials.

Photo: Jane Hart

See Donkin article on page 15

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MEMBERS' INFORMATION

Membership including your contact preferences: Membership of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery costs £2 UK (£10 overseas), renewable on 1st April each year. Donations are always welcome. UK taxpayers are encouraged to sign a Gift Aid declaration. Please advise FONC if you wish to cancel your Gift Aid declaration, or if you change your name or home address, or no longer pay sufficient tax on income and/or capital gains. Data is held by FONC to help us to send members their copy of *FONC News* and also for the purpose of reclaiming tax. You can decide not to receive communications or change how we contact you at any time.

Write to FONC Membership 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 until 5.00pm in March and 7.00pm from April to September. *All times are subject to change.* See notice at entrances and Southwark Council website. 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 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

Editor: Ron Woollacott. **Contributors:** Michèle Louise Burford; Jane Hart; Jeff Hart; Jolanta Jagiello; Jeremy Partington; Carol Stevenson. **Proof-reader:** Gwyneth Stokes. 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.*

~ **A message from the editor** ~

I am pleased to be back at the 'editor's desk' again, and should like to thank both Jeff and Jane Hart for editing your journal whilst I was indisposed. I should also like to express by heartfelt thanks to all those kind and thoughtful members who sent me their best wishes during my recent illness. *RW*

AT LAST!

**Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator,
reports on the exciting news that the East Lodge is to be restored
by Southwark Council**

I can't tell you how depressing it has been over the years to have to explain to members how the progress that we thought was being made to bring about the restoration of the East Lodge as an interpretation centre had come to nothing. Although never giving up hope, there have been moments of real despair when I have really felt like giving up.

Despite Southwark's/Historic England's commissioning of the recent Thomas Ford Associates feasibility report on the future of the Lodge raising hopes once more, I was not surprised to hear Southwark officers state at the October 2017 project meeting that there was no money available, even for the £47,000 required for essential 'enabling works'. Nevertheless, we persevered, particularly with lobbying our ward councillors, and were open to finding other ways of funding some sort of rescue project before the dilapidated ruin collapsed.

In January and again at the beginning of March we had been chasing the East Lodge project officer, John Wade (Southwark's Group Manager - Business Development (Parks and Leisure)), for an update on progress in following up the Thomas Ford report but without much response.

However, when attending a Neighbourhood Council meeting on 17th Jan-

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uary, we were given very guarded hints that there might be some good news on the horizon. We subsequently found that there was a Southwark Council Cabinet meeting held on 6th February 2018 to set the Council's budget for the forthcoming financial year - a budget that would not be able to be substantially changed by the new Council to be elected on the 3rd May.

Then on the 9th March I received an e-mail from John Wade stating that the February Cabinet meeting had 'approved £150k capital towards the enabling works for the East lodge and a further £850k capital to deliver a full refurbishment of the lodge.' Naturally we were astounded! But then I applied a very large pinch of salt and asked for sight of the relevant Cabinet papers and the minutes confirming this and asked whether the decision was still subject to any further review. There it was in black and white! Since then, the Council's ruling Labour Party manifesto has heralded the fifteen commitments it is giving to Southwark voters, prominent among them being the recognition of the historical and cultural importance of the cemetery and undertaking the full restoration of the East Lodge.

This, of course, is wonderful news and I should like to pay tribute to the support of Southwark Council's Finance Cabinet member, and Nunhead ward councillor, Fiona Colley and to our other ward councillors Sandra Rhule and Sunil Gupta. It should also be recognised that the support of John Wade has been essential in taking this decision forward.

Needless to say with the unexpected nature of this decision, there are a great number of questions FONC would like the answers to. For example, we do not know what 'full restoration' means as the Thomas Ford report options are only outline in nature. And what will the restored Lodge be used for - an interpretation centre as FONC would like or some other purpose? Who will run and fund the building after restoration? We have put these and many other questions to Mr Wade. A meeting to which Historic England, Thomas Ford Associates, various borough officers and ourselves have been invited is to take place on the 1st May (*too late to report on in this issue*) when we hope to find out much more about what is intended and what role FONC may have in realising the outcomes.

I have not quite run out of optimism and FONC Committee member Gwyneth Stokes provided the Committee with celebratory bubbly at its last meeting. But until I see the last brick in place and the last coat of paint applied I will not be providing the next bottle to crack open!!

BEYOND THE BOUNDS!

You wait years for good news and then it all seems to come at once! We have reported extensively in the last two issues of *FONC News* on the par-

lous state of the Limesford Road boundary walls and precipitate action to address this and possible concerns with the other cemetery boundaries. We were given assurances that Southwark would investigate restoration of the Limesford Road walls ‘sometime in the summer’ of 2018. But in the same Southwark Cabinet meeting that agreed funding for the East Lodge, a sum of £650,000 has been allocated to ‘restore the boundary wall at Nunhead Cemetery’ a commitment that also appears in the current Labour Party manifesto for the Southwark elections!!

We have yet to learn any further details of what is planned and the impact this may have, for example, on the trees adjoining the walls. We hope to be able to discuss this with Southwark in May but tackling two major projects at once does seem to be asking rather a lot. ■

NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No 30

by Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator

Poets Day on a Thursday evening

We are pleased to add a further event to our crowded schedule. On Thursday 12th July, Chris McCabe, author of ‘Cenotaph South - mapping the lost poets of Nunhead Cemetery’ (*available for £10 from FONC*) will be leading a shorter version of his very successful ‘Poets of Nunhead Cemetery’ walk. This will start at 5.00pm and is free of charge. Booking is not required, just turn up at the Linden Grove flint circle in good time.

Running it up the flagpole!

Members may be aware that for several years now a flag denoting the award of a Green Flag for Nunhead Cemetery has flown from the flag-pole situated at the east side of the bottom of the Main Avenue. This denotes that the cemetery has continued to meet the criteria set by what used to be the ‘Keep Britain Tidy’ campaign and that improvements have been made to the care of the site year on year. The flag indicates the financial year of the award. The 2016/17 flag has been caught-up rather forlornly on an adjacent Turkey oak tree and with the heavy snows of March finally came down. We are not sure where the 2017/18 flag is – and nor is Southwark Bereavement Services – but in the meantime the flag-pole has now received a much needed coat of paint!

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Flint repairs

Priest Restoration and Conservation have recently carried out repairs to cracks in the Linden Grove flint circle wall and to the flint edging on both sides of the Main Avenue. This work was commissioned by Southwark following requests from FONC to ensure the integrity of what was restored as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund works carried out in 1999/2000.

The patience of a martyr!

Patience is certainly what is required when dealing with Southwark's Borough Engineers. Members who have been following the saga of the proposed repairs to the vicinity of the Scots Martyrs memorial (*see the last issue of FONC News*) will have been expecting a report of a meeting between the Engineers and FONC to resolve our concerns about the proposed drainage channel in front of the FONC Portakabin. However, we are still awaiting confirmation of a proposed site meeting in early May! The first date we were offered (which we would have been happy to accept)? 7th May – Bank Holiday Monday!

Bats in the belfry (well, maybe the chapel)

Daniel Greenwood, of London Wildlife Trust, was expected to lead a bat walk in the cemetery on 22nd June but he has now moved on to a new job, in which we wish him well. We are hopeful that a new walk leader can take Daniel's place so that the walk can take place but FONC members should check the LWT website www.wildlondon.org.uk/whats-on? beforehand and book a place.

CGS award not quite

We were delighted to be again being awarded Cleaner, Greener, Safer funding for 2018 by Southwark Council, this time for the provision of waste bins for the cemetery. In the last issue we reported this to be in the sum of £5,400 but, now that formal confirmation has been received, this is in fact a £5,000 grant from which Southwark pays itself an 8% administration fee for 'overseeing' the project!

And finally.....

A few corrections/updates: the Debora Mo exhibit in the chapel is called 'Bear with Us' and not 'Land of Milk and Honey' as previously reported; the Land Use Consultant's conservation management plan walkabout took place on the 14th February as scheduled but further information is awaited; the data protection policy published in the last issue of *FONC News* has been slightly amended and is now on the website along with all other adopted FONC policies.

NOTICE OF FONC'S AGM

***Thursday 21st June 2018 at 7.00pm
at the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green, SE15***

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery will take place in the function room of the Pyrotechnist's Arms. Nominations for election as Officer and General trustees are welcome and may be received up to the elections themselves on the night. Motions, however, should have been submitted no later than the 19th May. All nominations should be sent to Carol Stevenson, FONC Vice-chairman, c/o fonc@btconnect.com

The business part of the meeting will be followed by:

THE MUSIC HALL GUILD OF GREAT BRITAIN AND AMERICA

**A PRESENTATION BY MATTHEW NEIL, CHAIRMAN,
*ABOUT THE WORK OF THE ABOVE THEATRE HERITAGE CHARITY***

***Light refreshments will be available
Donations to offset costs will be appreciated***

FILM NIGHT AT NUNHEAD by Jeff Hart

We are hopeful that the Peckham and Nunhead Free Film Festival will be returning to the cemetery again this year, probably on the evening of Saturday, 1st September (if not, the 8th September). As we write the event is in its early planning stages. This popular event 'sells' out its 400 free tickets without difficulty and is hugely enjoyed. Last year the atmospheric 'Dracula' film was shown, which may not have been FONC's choice, but which received the most votes of those attending our annual Open Day. FONC helps facilitate the event by providing access, toilets and stewards and we would welcome FONC members to help on the night (contact Jeff Hart). Look out for confirmation and full details available at www.freefilmfestivals.org/filmfestival/peckham-nunhead

Remarkable Women buried in Nunhead Cemetery No 5

by Ron Woollacott and Michèle Louise Burford

MARY ANN KELTY (Part 2)

A Solitary Victorian Novelist and Religious Writer

Early in the month of November 1831 Mary Ann became seriously ill, and haemorrhaging of the throat put her life in danger. She remained on her sick bed until well into the succeeding spring. Weakened and subdued by illness she decided to leave Cambridge, and in 1834 she settled in Peckham, then a quiet country village in the County of Surrey. She spent the rest of her life residing at 5 Hanover Street (now Highshore Road), where she continued to write, mostly works of a religious nature. She doesn't mention Peckham by name in either of her two autobiographical works, but she does mention walking past a home for the mentally ill that once stood in Peckham:

‘As I was passing this morning by the Asylum for the Insane, an immense establishment very near to my house, a carriage was driving in, and the large entrance doors, which are usually kept closed, being set wide open for its admission, I had the opportunity for seeing the pretty garden profusely filled with flowers, the handsome front and mansion-like look of the building, and of gathering materials for going on my usual walk in Lyndhurst Road (now Way), with my head full of reflections.’

Peckham House was a large mansion which became an asylum for the insane in 1826 and closed in 1952. The main entrance to the extensive grounds was situated in Peckham High Street. (The house was demolished in the 1950s and a girls' school was built on the site which is now the Harris Academy).

Solace of a Solitaire

Living alone was Mary Ann's choice, although she occasionally regretted it:

‘I sometimes feel oppressed and dissatisfied with exceeding loneliness of my lot; but only at intervals, and for a short time. A few minutes of inward stillness suffice to let the cloud pass over.’

In fact she was never entirely alone; in the 1841 census, Phoebe Brown, a nine-year-old child was living with her, together with a 15-year-old female servant, and ten years on, in the 1851 census, Phoebe, now described as Mary Ann's companion, was still living with her, along with a female school teacher and a domestic servant. As late as 1871, when Mary Ann was in her eighties, she employed two female servants, and in August that year she

placed an advertisement in a local paper for a companion: ‘An agreeable young lady is offered a comfortable home in a private family - terms moderate, as companionship is desirable.’ Her next door neighbour at that time was the well-known Camberwell historian, William Harnett Blanch (1837-1900), who mentions her in his epic tome *Ye Parish of Camerwell* (Camberwell) published in 1875: ‘In Hanover Street (No 5) for nearly half a century lived in seclusion Mary Ann Kelty, known to the past generation as a novelist and author of considerable ability.’

Mary Ann and the portrait photographer

Jean Gustave Rousseau, a French photographic artist, was another of her neighbours in Hanover Street, and at the suggestion of a young acquaintance of hers, Mary Ann decided to sit for him, despite noting in her memoirs that ‘it was impossible for a woman of nearly 80 looking any otherwise than grim and repulsive in a picture,’ so much so that she felt ashamed of presenting herself for being so represented. But Monsieur Rousseau, as she observed, didn’t understand, because as far as she could judge, of the matter of old age he had no conception. It wasn’t the first time she had sat for a portrait, however, because when she was much younger, and while on a visit to London, she had her portrait drawn in crayon ‘at great expense’ which she hung on the wall of her room in Cambridge to impress a gentleman friend.

Mary Ann and the Peckham Quakers

Mary Ann was very interested in the lives of the early Quakers. The Friends’ Meeting House was quite near to her home in Hanover Street and she often attended the Friends’ meetings there, but she never became a member. She wrote two books about the Quakers: *Early Days of the Society of Friends* and *Memoirs of the Lives and Persecutions of the Primitive Quakers*, both were written whilst she was living in Peckham.



*The Friends’ Meeting House built 1826
Photographed in 1974 by Ron Woollacott*

In her memoirs she tells us of meeting and conversing with

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one of the Peckham Quakers which took place just a few years after she set up home in Peckham:

‘I was passing an evening *tête à tête* with a prominent member of the Society of Friends who, knowing my great interest in the written experiences of the primitive members of the Society, had kindly opened a box which contained some of the memorials in a manuscript and unpublished state.’

The contents of the box and the stories it contained moved her to tell the stories of the early Quakers and of the persecutions and suffering they endured.

Mary Ann’s last book, *Multum in Parvo (A great deal in a small space) - Thoughts for Every Day in the Year*, was published posthumously in the year of her death. She died at her home in Hanover Street, Peckham, on the 8th January 1873, aged 84, and was buried at Nunhead Cemetery. Her wealth at death was under £450, worth around £36,000 in today’s money.

THE WORKS OF MARY ANN KELTY

The many works by Mary Ann Kelty were mostly published anonymously or with the initials M.A.K. and include: *The Favourite of Nature*, 1821; *Osmond, a tale*, 1822; *The Catacombs. An allegory taken from a work of the last century*, 1822; *Trials*, 1824; *The Story of Isabel*, 1826; *Religious Thoughts*, 1827; *The Speculator and the Believer*, 1828; *Times of Trial, being a brief narrative of the progress of the reformation*, 1830; *Straightforwardness essential to the Christian*, 1838; *On Individual Influence*, 1838; *Spiritual Fragments, selected from the works of William Law, with a brief memoir of his life*, 1838; *Biography for Young Ladies - Biographical studies of famous women*, 1839; *Early Days in the Society of Friends*, 1840; *Mamma and Mary, discoursing upon good and evil, in six dialogues*, 1840; *Peace in Poverty, A memorial of Ann Savage*, 1841; *Facts and Feelings*, 1841; *Fire-side Philosophy, or Glimpses of Truth*, 1842; *Religion of the Heart*, 1844; *Memoirs of the Lives and Persecutions of the Primitive Quakers*, 1844; *Emma, or Recollections of a Friend*, 1850; *Visiting my Relations and its Results*, 1851; *Alice Rivers*, 1852; *Reminiscences of Thought and Feeling*, 1852; *Life by the Fireside*, 1853; *A Devotional Diary*, 1854; *Waters of Comfort*, 1856; *The Real and the Beau Ideal*, 1860; *Eventide, a devotional diary for the close of the day*, 1860; *Loneliness and Leisure, a record of the thoughts and feelings of advanced life*, 1866; *The Unity of Truth*, 1867; *The Solace of a Solitaire*, 1869; *Multum in Parvo - Thoughts for every day in the year*, 1873. ■

Grave No 12140, Square 52 (Headstone). Sources: Burial Records; Memorial Inscription; Census returns, 1841 - 1871; *Bury and Norwich Post*, 8th January 1826, 14th January 1873; Mary Ann Kelty, *Reminiscences of Thought and Feeling*, 1852,

The Solace of a Solitaire, 1869; Olphar Hamst (Ralph Thomas), *Handbook of Fictitious Names*, 1868, pp. 86, 146, 204; *South London Chronicle*, 19th August 1871; William Harnett Blanch, *Ye Parish of Camberwell*, 1875, p. 356; Frederic Boase, *Modern English Biography*, Vol II, I to Q, 1897; John D Beasley, *Who Was Who in Peckham*, 1985, p. 72; Ron Woollacott, *More Nunhead Notables*, 1995, p. 46; Paul Baines. *Dictionary of National Biography*; England and Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations).

A NEW ERA FOR THE FRIENDS OF NUNHEAD CEMETERY

by Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator

As reported in the last issue of *FONC News* (see 'FONC takes a constitutional' on page 13) the FONC Committee (the trustees) are now taking steps to reconstitute the existing FONC unincorporated charity association into a new FONC Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission. At its monthly Committee meeting held on the 15th March the nine committee members (of a possible thirteen) attending voted unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

'Having considered the need to ensure full compliance with current charity legislation and having regard to likely future developments in its relationship with the owners of Nunhead cemetery, Southwark Borough Council, the trustees have resolved:

to set in motion in accordance with Article 18 of the constitution arrangements to dissolve the existing unincorporated charity association, Friends of Nunhead Cemetery;

to register with the Charity Commission a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to be known as The Friends of Nunhead Cemetery;

to arrange the transfer of all assets of the former unincorporated charity to the subsequent CIO in accordance with Article 18 of the current Constitution of Friends of Nunhead Cemetery.'

All of the current thirteen committee members have now signed the declaration to be sent to the Charity Commission supporting this transfer. Once the new Constitution has been approved by the Charity Commission and the new

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charity registered (hopefully with almost the same name), it is intended that the existing Committee (or rather the new committee elected at the June AGM) will designate one of the normal monthly meetings as the meeting at which members attending will be asked to endorse the transfer of assets by the required two-thirds of those attending majority. Given that we have over 800 members, rather than write to each one individually (a costly exercise!), it is intended to give formal notice of this meeting in the next edition of *FONC News*.

Messages, Medals, and Memorials

A public art exhibition curated by Jolanta Jagiello

Messages, Medals, and Memorials - a public art exhibition - commemorates the contribution of Colonial troops and the Labour Corps to the war effort in the First World War. Though never fully acknowledged, Europe's Great War was a war of colonials and a colonial theatre of war. Over four million African, Indian, Caribbean and other colonial troops and personnel played a crucial role in supporting the Allied cause in the First World War. The Labour Corps formed in January 1917 grew to some 389,900 men, more than 10% of the total size of the Army by the Armistice on the 11th November 1918.

In sharp contrast to notions of duty, honour and fighting for King and Country, Colonial troops and Labour corps faced a whole range of inequalities in military and non-military equipment, mobility and privileges that separated them from their white counterparts. Non-white colonial troops and labour corps were routinely segregated, closely watched, subject to curfews and other restrictions.

Messages, Medals, and Memorials through the artworks on display tell the stories of their lives before the war, their war service and their heroism, as well as the memorials that stand as a testament to their sacrifice. Nicky Scott-Francis explores the war service of the Gurkhas. Sara Scott will focus on the Sikh soldiers of the Indian Army who lost at least 174,187 soldiers during the war. Monica Wheeler tells the story of black soldier Walter Tull, whilst Louise Kosinska looks at the contribution of the North and South African Labour Corps. Elizabeta Chojak-Mysko draws attention to the Chinese Labour Corps, the soldiers of 'menial chores' who worked 10 hours a day, six days a week. Jill Rock and Jolanta Jagiello uncover the truly forgotten 'soldiers', Jill Rock commemorating the 210,000 Irishmen who served in the British forces, with Jolanta Jagiello highlighting Conscientious Objectors who refused to kill and were imprisoned for their beliefs fighting in the name of peace.



The exhibition funded by Southwark Council Neighbourhood Fund, and curated by Jolanta Jagiello, is open all weekends during May in the Stearns Mausoleum (Nunhead Cemetery, Linden Grove, London, SE15 3LP) from the 5th May 2018, including FONC May Open Day 19th May, and May Bank Monday 7th May and 28th May 2018, 11am-5pm.

www.artgoingplaces.com and www.fonc.org.uk,

Forthcoming publication - MAKING DYSTOPIA
The Strange Rise and Survival
of Architectural Barbarism by James Stevens Curl

MAKING DYSTOPIA (the opposite of Utopia), a new book by Professor Curl is due to be published by Oxford University Press in August 2018, and will no doubt provide readers with a well-researched and interesting account of how architecture and urban planning led to a devastating decline of the built environment in the 20th and 21st centuries. This latest book by Professor Curl will be of interest to each and every one of us who lives in a town or city, and is concerned about the changes that have taken place to the districts in which they live and work. Hardback, 512 pages, 72 black and white illustrations and 39 figures. Price £45. Professor Curl is, of course, well-known to members of FONC, and is the author of such epic tomes as *A Celebration of Death* and *The Victorian Celebration of Death*. RW

Large Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*) seen in Nunhead Cemetery by Carol Stevenson

On the first warm Sunday of April we went for a walk in the Cemetery and, at the top of the steps by the Beeches, we saw some unusual insects like triangular bees with enormous proboscis. They were hovering low over the dry bare earth, occasionally touching down.



Adult Bee-fly

These were Large Bee-flies (*Bombylius major*), which parasitise solitary bees (the sort of bees that make their nests in holes in the ground rather than in hives).

What we were watching were female Bee-flies laying eggs by firing them into tiny holes and cracks in the ground. When the eggs hatch the larvae crawl into a bee nest and eat the bee

larvae. Since this will not work if there are too few solitary bee nests around, the presence of bee flies is a good indicator of a healthy Miner Bee population. The adult Large Bee-flies feed on nectar from Wood Anemones and Primroses, which were both blooming nearby. ■

~ BURIAL IN A BARREL ~

Michèle Louise Burford found the following article in the Saturday 7th April 1894 edition of *South London Press*

A remarkable funeral took place the other day in Nunhead Cemetery. Residents of Brockley Road have long been familiar with the appearance of a crippled gentleman of remarkably benevolent aspect, who wheeled himself about with considerable activity and much cheerfulness in a little personally-manipulated bath-chair.

The other day the old gentleman died, and he left directions in his will that his crippled limbs were not to be straightened in compliance with the requirements of the conventional coffin. As a result of this instruction the Brockley people were amazed by the passage through the streets of a glass-sided hearse, inside which was plainly visible a round, tub-shaped funeral casket of polished oak, standing some three feet high, and being ornamented with handsome silver handles and name plate.

THE DONKIN FAMILY VISIT NUNHEAD

by Jane Hart and Jeremy Partington

On the 25th March several members of the Donkin family spanning three generations visited Nunhead Cemetery, travelling from as far as Chesterfield to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Bryan Donkin (22nd March 1768 - 27th February 1855). In preparation for the day, family members had contributed towards the repair of subsidence damage and other repairs to the family monument, as well as the neighbouring Nolloth family grave to the right and the grave of John Wilks to the left. Both the repairs and the day were facilitated by FONC.

Bryan Donkin FRS FRAS is remembered for his pioneering work in paper and printing, the development of the tin can and civil engineering. Bryan Donkin worked to develop and perfect the first paper making machine - the Fourdrinier machine - during the first decade of the 19th century. By the 1850s, over 200 of the machines had been built by his company in Bermondsey for export around the world. Donkin also worked with a Norwich printer, Richard Mackenzie Bacon on the development of a 'geometric prism' printing machine for which the pair were awarded a patent.

In 1812 John Hall of Dartford, to whom Bryan Donkin had been apprenticed 20 years before, bought the patent for the preservation of food in metal cans. Bryan Donkin was instrumental in creating a machine to fabricate tin cans for food use. In partnership with Hall in 1813 Bryan Donkin established the Donkin, Hall and Gamble Company with a canning plant in Bermondsey to exploit this advance in food preservation. Within a few years, the company was selling canned food to ships setting off from the south coast. The Admiralty also placed orders with Donkin, Hall and Gamble. An original Donkin tin can is



*Portrait of Bryan Donkin
courtesy of Richard Donkin*

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in the collection of the Science Museum. Given his importance in the development of the tin can, it was perhaps appropriate the 250th anniversary commemoration included floral tributes placed on the Donkin family grave using specially prepared tin cans.

Bryan Donkin also used his skills as a civil engineer contributing to canals and to Marc Brunel's Thames Tunnel. The enterprise for the manufacture of paper that became the Bryan Donkin Company was founded in Bermondsey in 1802 or 1803. As family members explained during their visit, until recently the name was still to be seen at an engineering works site in Chesterfield (to which the company moved from Bermondsey in 1900). As was explained during the commemoration day, the Donkin name remains linked to the manufacture of valves and safety equipment for the gas industry and other associated pipeline systems including in Ontario, Canada, to where other descendants of Bryan Donkin's extended family emigrated. A short biography is included in *Nunhead Notables* Vol I (published by FONC) and his fascinating career is the subject of the biography *Bryan Donkin - a very civil engineer* written by Maureen Greenland and Russ Day, both of whom attended the event on the 25th March.

John Wilks (c.1782-1852) was also an inventor and engineer. Having worked erecting saw machinery for Henry Maudsley under Marc Brunel in the dockyard at Portsmouth, he joined the Bryan Donkin Company c.1809-10 as a workman. He was taken into partnership in 1819. With his full knowledge of the paper-making process, he brought out his own patent, an apparatus to imitate laid paper by means of a ribbed roller in 1830. He was also the inventor of a unique machine, patented by William Congreve, which printed two colour bank notes, tax stamps and decorated labels made with compound plates. John Wilks stayed with the company until 1847 and died on the 9th January 1852, aged 69.

The Nolloth connection

Bryan Donkin's wife Mary *née* Brames had a sister - Hannah - who married John Nolloth. John died in 1861 and Hannah in 1864. They, together with John's sister Jane who died in 1858, were the first occupants of the Nolloth vault. Seven of their 12 children also rest in the Nolloth family vault. Except for their daughter Louisa, none of the children named married, and many lived in the same house or nearby each other according to census data.

Colonel Peter Brames Nolloth (c.1807-1889) (see the soon to be published *Nunhead Notables* Vol. 4) the fourth son of John and Hannah Nolloth, was a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Marines by 1826 and promoted to First Lieutenant in 1834, Captain in 1843 and Major and Lieutenant Colonel in

1854. He was engaged in the Baltic Expedition during the Crimean War. He was made a full Colonel in February 1857, and died on the 16th November 1889, aged 82 at North Terrace, Camberwell.

Admiral Matthew Stainton Nolloth (1810-1882) (see *Nunhead Notables*) joined the Navy aged 14 and as the senior Lieutenant aboard HMS *Childers*, distinguished himself in operations in China when he was 33. In 1856 he carried the explorer Dr David Livingstone from Quilmane to Mauritius. As a Commander he surveyed the west coast of South Africa to Port Nolloth. He was a Fellow of the Marine Society and served on the Committee for the Protection of Ships from Fire and from Loss by Sinking. He retired in 1870 and died in May 1882 at North Terrace, Camberwell.

Fleet Surgeon Edward Nolloth MRCS, a younger brother of Matthew (see *More Nunhead Notables*) was the first to be appointed on the staff of the RN Hospital, Malta. He served as surgeon on board HMS *Victor Emmanuel* during the whole period of the Crimean War, and was awarded the Crimean and Turkish Medals. He died at North Terrace, Camberwell in 1887.

Hannah Nolloth, the second daughter, died 23rd June 1891 aged 79 and Sarah Nolloth, third daughter, died in 1895, aged 77. Charles Nolloth, the seventh son, is also commemorated on the family grave. He was a lieutenant in the Royal Navy. He died on 7th January 1855 in his 40th year in the Naval Hospital in Therapia, Constantinople and was interred in the Naval Cemetery. Also commemorated is John Collard Nolloth, MRCS, RN, the eldest son, who died on 21st June 1839, aged 38, and was interred in Norwood Cemetery. ■

Thanks to Ron Woollacott, author of the Nunhead Notables series and to Richard Donkin for information used in this article.

- A NEW FONC PUBLICATION -

NUNHEAD CEMETERY AND THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

by Jeffrey M Hart

This new book, written by our esteemed co-ordinator, tells the story the Waterloo campaign and those soldiers who took part in it and now rest in peace in Nunhead Cemetery. Jeff's book is rather special inasmuch as it is the only book, to my knowledge, out of the many that have hitherto been written and

continued on next page

published about the Battle of Waterloo and the events leading up to it, to contain the detailed biographies of no less than eight brave soldiers: three privates, a corporal, a lieutenant, two captains, and a lieutenant-colonel who were involved in the Waterloo campaign and whose graves can be found in Nunhead Cemetery.

Jeff has spent many, many months ploughing through the archives, poring over records and consulting numerous existing publications in the preparation of this excellent volume, which I can recommend as a well-researched and interesting account of the Waterloo campaign, and adventures of those brave souls who served in Wellington's army.

The book, illustrated in full colour, was launched on Nunhead Cemetery Open Day 19th May 2018. Price £8 or £7.50 to members, and may be purchased from the FONC publications desk on tour days and workdays. *RW*

NUNHEAD CEMETERY AND THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

*Being an account of the lives of the
Waterloo campaign veterans buried at
All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead*



Jeffrey M. Hart

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

WOODLAND TRAIL TOURS ► *Sunday 10th June 2018 at 2.15pm.* Meet Tim Stevenson, your guide for the afternoon, at the flint circle just inside the cemetery gates in Linden Grove. ► *Sunday 9th September 2018 at 2.15pm.* Meet Tim Stevenson at the flint circle.

WATERLOO ANNIVERSARY TALK AND TOUR ► *Sunday 17th June 2018 at 2.15pm.* A PowerPoint presentation in the chapel crypt followed by an interesting walk, led by Jeff Hart around the cemetery, to learn about Nunhead's eight Waterloo veterans.

FONC'S AGM 2018 ► *In the function room of the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green, SE15 on Thursday evening 21st June 2018 at 7.00pm.* The business part of the evening will be followed by a presentation by the chairman of the Music Hall Guild of Great Britain and America. *For further information see page 7.*

BAT WALK EVENING ► *Friday 22nd June 2018 at 9.30pm.* To join this tour meet outside the cemetery gates in Linden Grove. *To be confirmed.* **Important:** FONC members should check the LWT [website www.wildlondon.org.uk/whats-on?](http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/whats-on?) beforehand and book a place.

CRYPT AND CHAPEL TOUR ► *Sunday 1st July 2018 between 2.15pm and 4.30pm.* Meet your guides Jeremy Partington and Malcolm Collins at the entrance to the Anglican chapel to visit the chapel and crypt that are usually closed to the public.

POETS OF NUNHEAD TOUR ► *Thursday 12th July 2018 at 5.00pm.* Meet at the flint circle just inside the cemetery gates in Linden Grove. The tour will be led by Chris McCabe, the author of *Cenotaph South - Mapping the Lost Poets of Nunhead Cemetery*, who will be accompanied by a FONC guide, either Tim Stevenson or Jeff Hart, or both.

MILITARY CONNECTIONS TOUR ► *Sunday 15th July 2018 at 2.15pm.* Meet Jeff Hart, your guide for the afternoon, at the flint circle just inside the cemetery gates in Linden Grove.

MUSIC-HALL ARTISTES TOUR ► *Sunday 12th August 2018 at 2.15pm.* Meet at the flint circle just inside the cemetery gates in Linden Grove for an interesting tour of the graves of music-hall stars led by Jolanta Jagiello and Jeff Hart.

CEMETERY SYMBOLS TOUR ► *Sunday 14th October 2018 at 2.15pm.* Meet your guide, Keith Turpin, at the flint circle just inside the cemetery gates in Linden Grove for an interesting tour of cemetery symbols and their meaning.

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 ► *these 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 ► *these 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 in advance—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 boards in Nunhead Cemetery.

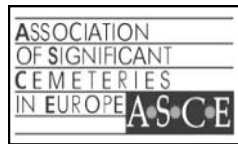
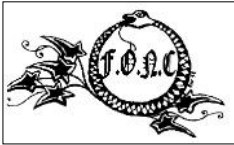
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The editor, *FONC News*, c/o fonc@btconnect.com

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(Please note copy received after this date may be used in a future issue)

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)



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Recipient of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's Birthday Award
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