

~~~~ Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, London, SE15 ~~~~

# FONC News

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FONC volunteers cutting back the undergrowth and preparing the ground in readiness for monuments to be restored (see page 3) Photo: Jeff Hart

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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 the 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 enable 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. Please send your request to: FONC Membership c/o 31 Normanby Road LONDON NW10 1BU or email: [membership@fonc.org.uk](mailto:membership@fonc.org.uk).

**Further information** about FONC and Nunhead Cemetery can be found on our excellent website managed by Simon Quill at [www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk)

**Cemetery Opening Times:** 8.30am to 4.00pm daily. The cemetery stays open until 5.00pm in March and October and until 7.00pm from April to September. *All times are subject to change.* See notice at cemetery entrances and Southwark Council's 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 for sale at FONC's portacabin from 2.00pm to 4.00pm on Sundays when tours or workdays take place. If you would like to help on an occasional Sunday contact Jane Hart on 020 8694 6079 or by email: [jane.c.hart@btconnect.com](mailto: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 phone the vice-chairman on 020 7732 8396 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**

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**Proof Reader:** Gwyneth Stokes.

All other text is by the editor. *The editor and FONC's General Committee do not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by contributors.*

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## MAJOR MEMORIAL REPAIR WORKS ON MAIN AVENUE

*Report by Jeff Hart*

We reported in the winter issue of *FONC News* (Nunhead Cemetery News No 32) that plans were afoot by Southwark Council to assess the condition of major memorials along path edges in the cemetery. Although we were assured that we would be consulted on any proposed works to these memorials, we were rather concerned about what this might mean in practice. In fact, this has proved to be nothing but good news!

It seems that Southwark have been awarded central government funding to address memorials posing a health and safety risk in each of its three cemeteries. Nunhead has been allocated its fair share of such funding and work is now proposed in three tranches. A survey of memorials along the major path edges has been undertaken and recommendations made on those needing immediate work. Southwark have decided to address those on the Main Avenue in the first instance which will transform the visual impact for visitors.

FONC representatives were then invited to a site meeting with Southwark officers and contractors on 16th November to discuss the work proposed. We were pleasantly surprised that this comprised 15 large memorials on the east side of the Avenue and three on the West side. They include the very large Beardmore vault at the north end of the Avenue and the Lewis vault at the south end, both of which are in a very poor state. We also suggested that two flat body stones behind Beardmore should also be re-set at the same time and this was agreed. This is great news as one commemorates John Dickson, who charged with the Royal Scots Greys at Waterloo.

Together with the tree officer, we discussed and agreed the need to remove a couple of ash and sycamore trees that have caused considerable damage or would prevent tree work. We did, however, oppose the removal of a Holm oak and hawthorn near the Lewis memorial and emphasised the need to retain the vegetation screen behind the front line of memorials. As we felt that the vegetation clearance work around memorials to allow access needed a sensitive approach, it was agreed that FONC volunteers rather than contractors could carry

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Volunteers clearing the ground around monuments in readiness for repairs. *Photo: Jeff Hart*

out this work. This was carried out during our 6th January practical work day. It was inspected and approved prior to work starting on site on 14th January.

The work is scheduled to be completed, weather permitting, by the end of March. Southwark contractors, Conway, will address work below ground level whilst Priest Stonework and Restoration will

take down the memorials, clean and repair and then reinstate on new sound bases. We are delighted that Priest is involved as they have previously carried out work for FONC that we were very pleased with. FONC Trustees decided last year to set aside a proportion of our financial reserves to carry out further memorial repairs during 2019. We thus took advantage of Priest being on site with

all the heavy plant in place, to ask them to cost the repair of a number of smaller memorials on both sides of the Avenue to complement the major memorial repairs, Southwark having given their approval for us to do so. We are thrilled that managing director Brian Whybrow has agreed to carry out all of the work we jointly looked at, comprising at least a further nine



Monument repairs in progress January 2019. *Photo: Jeff Hart*

memorials (some piles of stone may be from more than one memorial!) at a very competitive price. FONC will again carry out the vegetation clearance and the memorial work will be fitted in around the Southwark works.

The further two tranches of repairs are expected to be scheduled for some time before the end of the 2019/20 financial year. We believe that these are located along the East Crescent and the Catacomb Path but we are not aware of the proposed scale of works. However, we are confident that we will be consulted beforehand and have the opportunity to contribute to these major improvements to the cemetery. ■

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## **NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No. 33**

*by Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator*

### ***Future of East Lodge still not decided***

Regrettably, progress on the project to renovate the East Lodge has been very slow. Consultants held a workshop to consider the potential future use of renovated building on 10th October. FONC representatives Jeremy Partington and Tim Stevenson fed in the views of the trustees, emphasising our view that the building must remain in public ownership and be at least in part accessible to the general public. We reiterated our preference for the building to be used for community activities and to provide a base for FONC. The Southwark Cabinet member was due to consider the draft consultants report in December and it would then have been released to FONC and Historic England to consider. However, this was subsequently postponed to sometime in January. The next East Lodge Project Board meeting has been scheduled for 14th February but that leaves very little time for us to consider the full implications of the report. In the meantime, the contract for the enabling works on the East Lodge has still not been let and we do not know when works are likely to start on site.

### ***Cracking up***

The new path surfacing in front of the Linden Grove portacabins and around the Scottish Martyrs memorial is looking great and provides a much more pleasant site for the FONC Publications and Enquiries desk. It may even have improved the drainage of the area, as the surface is water permeable. However, after just three months fine cracks are beginning to appear in parts of the area. We have reported this to Southwark and they and contractors, Conway, are, as they say, 'looking in to it'.

### ***New plans for old?***

Members may recall that Land Use Consultants were appointed by Southwark over a year ago to develop new conservation management plans for each of the Borough's three cemeteries (Camberwell Old and New and Nunhead).

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FONC was consulted on the Nunhead plan and we also contributed thoughts during site walks for the two Camberwell cemeteries. With a projected time scale of six months for delivery of the new plans it is disappointing to report that even a draft of the Nunhead plan is yet to emerge.

### ***Walks and talks***

The Friday Walkers Group enjoyed a tour of the cemetery on 28th September; a meeting with the Friends of West Norwood cemetery to discuss membership bases was held on 25th November; woodland, music hall and Christmas cemetery tours have been well-attended; a further corporate work-day has been booked for 21st February; and a talk on Nunhead's Waterloo veterans has been booked by the Southwark Local History Group on 19th March.

### ***Girl Power***

Look out for the International Women's Day tour of the cemetery to be led by Jolanta Jagiello on Sunday 10th March at 2.15pm. Jolanta will be highlighting the work and graves of a number of women buried at Nunhead who have contributed much to society as we know it.

### ***.....and a Happy New Year!***

The FONC Christmas social was well attended (although there is always room for more!) on 20th December and a presentation on FONC's Great War commemorations was given with several contributors recalling how we have participated in such events between 2012 to 2018. The 'everyone's a winner' raffle was great fun and the cost of refreshments was off-set by donations, publication sales and raffle ticket sales totalling £118.30.■

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## **CEMETERY ALL SOULS AND REMEMBRANCE SERVICES GREATLY APPRECIATED**

*Report by Jeff Hart*

**W**e were very pleased that Fr Dele Ogunyemi, from St Antony with St Silas Church, Nunhead, was able to lead an All Souls Service at the cemetery on Sunday 4th November. Organised by FONC trustee Ish Lennox to remember all those interred at Nunhead, the service began with the lighting of candles at the Linden Grove flint circle before processing to the ruined chapel where, following prayers for the dead, those attending placed glass beads in remembrance of a loved one.

Perhaps because it coincided with the commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the ending of the First World War, the Nunhead Cemetery Act of Remembrance held on 11th November was attended by nearly 150 people! FONC laid wreaths at each of the principal areas of war graves.



We were joined by representatives of the Nunhead Women's Institute who laid their own wreath at the civilian war dead plaque at the Limesford Road entrance and a

All Souls service attendees enjoy a hot cuppa. Father Ogunyemi is on the right. *Photos -Jane Hart*

splendid knitted wreath at the Anglican chapel. The chapel also featured a

sobering display of maps by FONC Chairman Jeremy Partington showing where nearly all those killed in the Great War, and buried at Nunhead, came from. It also featured vivid exhibition panels by Jolanta Jagiello recalling the 1918 Armistice. The secular service was followed in the afternoon by a tour put together by Jeremy Partington and Jeff Hart highlighting a number of First World War memorials and headstones and the stories of those buried there. Attendee Luke Hornus took the trouble to write to FONC thus:



Remembrance wreaths on chapel bench.

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*My girlfriend and I attended the Great War Tour on Sunday afternoon, having been to the morning remembrance service, and would just like to say that I thought it was absolutely superb. Led by Jeff (who was very informative and certainly knew his stuff) it was a fantastic way to spend the afternoon. It's the first such walk we'd been on and will recommend to any friends of ours who live in the area. Please pass on our well wishes to Jeff, Jeremy and the tour team.*

Let's hope that future Remembrance attendance will be just as good and that the All Souls Service is better attended in future.

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## **MONUMENT INSCRIPTION RECORDING TEAM PICKS UP THE PACE**

*Report by Garry Wiles,  
Volunteer Co-ordinator Monument Inscription Recording*

**B**etween July 2018 and 31st December 2018 three volunteers have put in nearly 95 hours of monument inscription recording work.

During this time, we have worked on recording inscriptions in the path-side areas of squares 74, 75, 91, 92 and 93, all close to the left side of the chapel. I answered one piece of correspondence from someone wanting to trace their Grandmother's burial. During this investigation, I discovered a grave marker for someone killed in action in the First World War, namely Henry James Peters. This was hidden deep in overgrown square 152.

We have recruited another volunteer, this time someone who, although generally unable to attend the cemetery due to family and work commitments, is keen to work on data entry to get the inscriptions uploaded to the FONC website. I am trying to establish with web-master Simon Quill how best to approach this. Free assistance on digitising our records is also available from Layers of London's '#GetMapping' project, after one of the volunteers attended an information day about this in Croydon. Thanks to the assistance of Paul Dyer (despite still being severely restricted by a broken foot), I have finally been able to complete the map of the areas of the cemetery for which monument inscription recording work has been completed. This will ensure we do not duplicate our efforts in future. I will keep it up to date as the work progresses and have made it available to all the volunteers.



The dates for monument inscription recording work for the rest of 2019 are as follows:

**Tuesdays:** 12th March; 16th April; 14th May; 11th June; 16th July; 13th August; 10th September; 15th October; 12th November.

**Sundays:** 31st March; 28th April; 26th May; 30th June; 28th July; 25th August; 29th September; 27th October; 24th November.

*For further information of timings and how to volunteer contact Garry at: [foncinscriptions@gmail.com](mailto:foncinscriptions@gmail.com)*

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## The mark of Zorro in Nunhead Cemetery

*by Richard Jones*

Late in 2017 various environmental websites were in a flurry of speculation about the arrival of a potential new forestry pest species just discovered in Britain. The aptly named zigzag elm sawfly, *Aproceros leucopoda*, originally a native of East Asia, had turned up near Dorking in Surrey. Sawflies are rather demure relatives of bees and wasps, but do not make nests, and have small leaf-eating caterpillar-like larvae. The saw they possess is the serrated edge of the egg-laying tube with which they cut into plant leaves and stems. This species gets its name from the winding zigzag cuts that its larva chews into an elm leaf, and after the decimation of elms following the invasion of Dutch elm disease in the 1970s, it was worried that this might prove another blow to the already struggling elm trees.



*Photo: Richard Jones*

I like to think that I'm very good at finding insects, so it wasn't too much of a surprise to discover signs of the larval chewings in Peckham Rye Park

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on 29th July 2018, and then in Nunhead Cemetery on 2nd August. By this time there had also been reports of the insect from over 50 other localities across England. Since its appearance in Europe (Poland and Hungary) in 2003, it has spread by an estimated 50 km/year, but has also made jumps of over 300 km, moved around on horticultural material, which is probably how it got to Britain in the first place.

This photo (page 9) was taken near the William Chadwick obelisk at the top of Nunhead Hill. On a positive note, when I posted a picture on social media, Facebook was convinced that I should tag it with somebody's name because it thought it recognized the outline of a face. I take the idiot algorithm as a good sign that robots won't be taking over any time soon. ■

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## CENTRAL CEMETERY, PORTO

*by John Turpin*



Ron's account of Nunhead's only surviving mausoleum (*FONC News* Nos 141 and 142) prompts me to share photos and recollections of the central cemetery in Porto, Portugal which boasts some interesting examples of the genre.

It has been very well maintained and is a member of the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe. Nunhead and most of the Magnificent Seven are also members. Like the London examples, the finest memorials date from the later 19th century and speak of the prosperity of this city. The strong influence of British business in the wine trade may be one reason why this compact city-centre site has some familiar characteristics.

As in most European cemeteries there are numerous mausolea – whole terraces of them – in standard gothic style. But there are examples too of

bold redesigning of the model with severe modernist lines – one indicating that it houses the remains of its architect.

There are other examples of discrete panels in front of memorials that name and describe the



‘notable’ person buried there – something that might be considered here in London. Trees and shrubs are dotted around, but this is essentially a stone and gravel cemetery. However, such is the care extended that colour is seen everywhere (albeit more plastic than natural).



Dominating the site is a tall glass-and-metal structure that would not be out of place in Kew Gardens. It was probably a cutting-edge design in the 19th century. I was able to wander inside this large space and observe tiers of what could be loculi for the deposition of ashes. There were also tiers of tablets with family names. Gravediggers’ gear was also stored inside.

Porto’s central cemetery is clearly well-respected and has a secure future as part of this beautiful city.■

*All photos by John Turpin.*

## **Cathy Mercer invites you to join her on FONC's trip to New River on Saturday 30th March 2019**

The New River is not a river and it is not new!

It is an aqueduct made in the early 1600s to bring fresh water 28 miles into London from Hertford. It runs through north-east London to Islington via Enfield, Wood Green and Stoke Newington.

The prettiest section of the New River is in Canonbury and Islington. Here the New River is landscaped as it flows past delightful Victorian villas before reaching New River Head and the Claremont Reservoir. It also flows over the Grand Union Canal Tunnel in Angel, making for an attractive and easy walk of about 1½ miles.

We meet at Canonbury Station on the Overground and finish at the Angel Inn café for lunch. Afterwards people may want to visit the nearby New River Head, all very close to Angel Station on the Northern Line.

To find out the starting time and book a place on this trip, please contact Cathy on 020 8452 5239 or [cs2000hm@care4free.net](mailto:cs2000hm@care4free.net)

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## **LOOKING FOR NEW RECRUITS**

*by Jane Hart*

At the start of a new year - January surely must be the best time to capture everyone who wishes to put their new year resolutions into action. So with this in mind, FONC was lucky to secure one of over 30 stalls at the 'mega' volunteering fair organised jointly by the Voluntary Action Lewisham and Community Southwark held at Goldsmiths College on 18th January 2019, aimed at anyone thinking about volunteering. The fair was attended by a wide range of people looking for volunteering opportunities - from students to pensioners - who visited the various stalls to investigate what they might be able to contribute to the local and national charities represented.

FONC set up stall armed with information of our volunteering opportunities: practical work in the cemetery undertaking woodland management from tree clearance to bramble 'bashing', and repairing monuments; helping on the Publications & Enquiries Desk; greeting visitors to the cemetery; providing information and selling the wide range of FONC publications; helping capture the history through monument inscription recording from decaying headstones before the inscriptions disappear forever;

providing conducted tours of the cemetery either of a general nature or topic specific such as cemetery symbols; helping at one-off events such as the annual Open Day where many hands made light work of setting up and dismantling the exhibitions and attractions available on the day; marshalling at the Peckham and Nunhead free film festival; home based roles involving archiving and cataloguing material; publicising FONC's work and local quarterly journal delivery.

Active volunteers often play a crucial role in helping charities achieve their aims and FONC is no exception. With increasing pressure on everyone's resources encour-

aging people to give some their valuable time to contribute to FONC's aims of conserving, improving and promoting the beautiful 52 acres of Nunhead Cemetery is a continuing issue. We hope that our aims and the types of volunteering opportunities we can offer, captured the imagination and resonated with some of those attending the volunteering fair. We would also welcome the assistance of anyone reading this and feels - yes, that's for me! Ish Lennox, one of FONC's trustees has taken on the role of volunteer co-ordinator and anyone interested in helping FONC in our work can contact Ish at [volunteering@fonc.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@fonc.org.uk)

At our volunteering events we try to achieve a friendly atmosphere, provide hot drinks and biscuits to keep helpers sustained and hope that everyone leaves feeling that they have made a difference.■



Jane Hart describing volunteering opportunities in Nunhead Cemetery.

~~~~ *LEST WE FORGET* ~~~~

**Metropolitan Borough of Bermondsey's Civilian War Dead  
interred at Nunhead Cemetery 1940 - 1945**

*by Michèle Louise Burford and Ron Woollacott*

**S** In the last issue of *FONC News* we focused on the Borough of Camberwell's civilian war casualties buried at Nunhead during the Second World War. In this issue we turn our attention to the civilian war dead of the Metropolitan Borough of Bermondsey. Both boroughs, together with the Metropolitan Borough of Southwark, were merged in 1965 to form the present day London Borough of Southwark. The old Borough of Bermondsey did not have a cemetery of its own and as a consequence many of its war dead were interred at Nunhead and elsewhere. Although the official date of the start of Germany's Blitz on London is 7th September 1940, the Luftwaffe attacked Bermondsey on the 6th and Sarah Hough (62) was seriously injured when a bomb struck her house at 103 Storks Road. She died later that day in St Olave's Hospital, and was the first air-raid victim from Bermondsey buried at Nunhead. On the same night, however, three unfortunate persons sheltering in Linsey Street Railway Arch died when bombs wrecked the arch, and two persons died in the street. All five were interred at Nunhead.

***The Start of the Blitz on Bermondsey***

On 7th/8th September 1940, the Luftwaffe attacked the Surrey Commercial Docks with high explosive and incendiary bombs, and the tons of burning timber created a conflagration that could be seen for miles around. On that fateful day and night no fewer than 73 citizens of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe lost their lives, ten of whom were laid to rest at Nunhead, including three members of the Downer family Theodore (51), Edith (45) and Edward (10), and John Cassidy (70), who were all killed at Ambrose Street Shelter, and Rosina Cassidy (30), Catherine Pullum (16), Joseph Carter (64) and Charles Whitworth (51), killed at Keeton's Road School Rest Centre. Charlotte Lindley (50) was killed at the Star and Garter pub in Lower Road, and Henry Knight (44), station officer, London Fire Brigade, was killed at Swedish Yard, Surrey Docks. (He was commended by HM King George VI for brave conduct in civil defence).

On the night of 8th/9th September the Royal Oak pub, Maltby Street received a direct hit. Four people were killed including James Vaughan (40) who was buried at Nunhead.

No 341 St James's Road was hit on 15th September and William Baker

(55) a member of the Home Guard, and his daughter Annie (25), were both seriously injured. They died later the same day in St Olave's Hospital and were buried at Nunhead. The night of 16th September was particularly terrifying for the residents of Bermondsey. An air-raid shelter at Neptune Street, near the Surrey Docks, received a direct hit burying 35 persons under tons of rubble. Rescuers managed to pull 15 persons from the debris alive, but 20 others had died. Just seven of those who perished in the shelter were buried at Nunhead. That night, the shelter at Linsey Street in which people had died ten days earlier, was struck again, this time killing seven, and injuring two who later died in St Olave's Hospital. All nine were interred at Nunhead.

### ***The Luftwaffe returns***

Although there were a number of isolated bombing raids on Bermondsey during the remainder of the month, in October 1940 the Luftwaffe returned in force, and at 9.00pm on 25th October, the billiard hall in Druid Street Arch, which was being used as a shelter, was struck by a high explosive bomb igniting a gas main. Of the 87 persons who were killed that night, 26 were buried at Nunhead, including seven children under the age of nine.

On 8th/9th December the John Bull Arch at the Blue, Bermondsey, used as a shelter, received a direct hit killing 16 persons, four of whom were buried at Nunhead, including three members of the Harris family of Galleywall Road, Beatrice (24), Ivy (17) and Charles (12), and Kate Shears (70). On 17th February 1941 a bomb struck Stainer Street Arch shelter, causing the heavy steel doors to be blown back into the shelter. Of the 300 persons taking refuge there at least 68 were killed. Just eight victims were interred at Nunhead including four teenagers. During the months of March and April 1941, a number of locations in Bermondsey were bombed including, Fort Buildings, Delaford Road, and Tower Bridge Road, and 15 victims were interred at Nunhead. On 10th/11th May 1941 the death toll was particularly horrendous, for no fewer than 154 unfortunate citizens of Bermondsey were killed during the Nazi air-raids on London, of which just 21 victims were interred at Nunhead. There were a number of isolated raids on London between the end of the Blitz in May 1941 and the end of December 1942.

### ***The Little Blitz and Nuisance Raids***

For around 18 months London was left alone, whilst the Germans concentrated their efforts elsewhere. The Luftwaffe returned to London in January 1943 and carried out a number of nuisance raids during the 'Little Blitz'

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which ceased at the end of February 1944. Just nine Bermondsey citizens killed in air-raids were buried at Nunhead during that period.

### ***The Terror Weapons - Flying Bombs and Rockets***

The first Flying Bomb (V1) to land in Bermondsey came down on the railway near the Grand Surrey Canal. Fortunately, there were no casualties. Seven people died on 16th May 1944 when Raymouth Road was struck, and four victims were buried at Nunhead. 18 persons died when a V1 came down between Croft Street and Chilton Grove, SE16, and three victims, Lucy Bridge (22), Victor (22) and Daisy (21) Perry, were buried at Nunhead. A V1 struck the Whites Ground Estate on 15th July and seven people died. Only one of the victims, 14-years-old John Smith of 45 Whites Ground, was buried at Nunhead. On 6th July 1944 a V1 struck a block of flats in Snowsfields killing 16. Three of the victims were interred at Nunhead, Sarah Ward (69), and Emma (39) and Doris (17) White. On 17th August a V1 demolished 17 houses in Riley Road killing 11 persons of whom only George Clark (33), of the Home Guard, of 39 Riley Road was buried at Nunhead.

On 26th October 1944 the first rocket (V2) to strike Bermondsey came down in Southwark Park Road killing eight, two of whom, Florence Callow (54) and Doreen Heron (10), were laid to rest at Nunhead. The last rocket to strike the Borough of Bermondsey was a V2 in Gomm Road, Rotherhithe, causing much damage but, thankfully, no loss of life.

Bermondsey's civilian death toll from September 1940, to the end of hostilities on 8th May 1945, totalled 706 and of those, 209 victims, men, women and children were laid to rest at Nunhead Cemetery.

*In the next article in this series we shall concentrate on the Metropolitan Borough of Southwark's civilian war casualties buried at Nunhead 1940-1945.*

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## **RING IN THE NEW**

*by Jeff Hart*

As highlighted in the last issue of *FONC News*, the winding up of the 'old' Friends charity was unanimously confirmed at the Special General Meeting held 15th November 2018, and has now been removed from the Charity Commission register of charities. The 'new' Friends charitable incorporated organisation number 1178763 is now in place but there is still much work to do. Unfortunately, in seeking to hand over the assets from the old charity to the new charity by 30th November 2018 as required by the adopted motion, our current bankers now require us to operate a new bank account which is



taking time to achieve. This will affect future payment of membership subscriptions by Standing Order which we hope to address later in the year. In the meantime, the trustees have, after careful consideration, decided to keep the membership subscription rate for the new FONC at £2.00 per annum. At the December FONC trustees meeting, previous FONC committee members Alan Till and Keith Turpin were appointed as additional trustees of the new FONC.

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## **ANNUAL OPEN DAY 2019**

Once again we shall be holding our annual Open Day in Nunhead Cemetery. This will take place on Saturday 18th May from 11.00am to 5.00pm. We shall require as many volunteers as possible to help set up trestle tables etc, and to assist in the cemetery in other ways from 8.30am onwards and to clear up afterwards between 5.00pm and 6.30pm. As the event grows from year to year we really do need more helpers if we are able to cope with all that needs to be done so any time you could spare would be appreciated.

We also very much welcome lots of donations of homemade cakes etc, to sell on our popular refreshments stall, and lots of plants for the hugely in demand 'Contrary Mary' plants stall. We also need volunteers to help run FONC stalls and to provide marshals during the day. If you are able to help us in any way at all, please contact a FONC trustee (see details on back page of this issue of *FONC News*).

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## **ADVANCE NOTICE OF FONC'S AGM 2019**

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery will take place in the function room of the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green, SE15 on Thursday 20th June 2019 at 7.00pm. Nominations for election as Officer or General Trustees are welcome and may be received up to the elections themselves on the night although prior notification of willingness to stand is preferred. However, any motions should be sent to Carol Stevenson, FONC's vice-chairman, 30 Kirkwood Road, Nunhead, London, SE15 3XX. A reminder of the meeting and full details, including guest speaker, will be published in the June issue of *FONC News*.

## ***CHANGES TO 2019 TOUR PROGRAMME***

*Please note the following changes to the tour programme published in the last issue of FONC News, all of which have been amended in the cemetery notice boards and our web-site: The military connections tour was held on 17th February, not 10th February; the 26th May event is a general cemetery tour and a crypt/chapel tour.*

## MAKING DYSTOPIA - a new book by JAMES STEVENS CURL

Among the numerous presents in my Christmas stocking was a copy of Professor Curl's latest book sub-titled: 'The Strange Rise and Survival of Architectural Barbarism,' in which he casts a critical eye over Modernist architecture between the two World Wars and the redevelopment of our cities after 1945. This is perhaps a rather controversial book that has received numerous reviews, generally favourable. I was particularly interested in the Professor's comments concerning the buildings that went up in the second half of the 20th century, in which he argues that the triumph of architectural Modernism led to massive destruction and the creation of alien urban landscapes.

In the 1970s I wrote several letters to the *South London Press* criticising the wholesale and unnecessary development of parts of Peckham and Nunhead. In December 1976 I wrote: 'One only has to visit the North Peckham Estate to see what has replaced the attractive 19th century terraces ..... the buildings replacing the houses in north Peckham may be attractive and 'modernistic' to some, but they are merely sterile compartments and not homes in the true sense of the word.' In another letter in March 1979 I commented on a proposal to build a new town hall complex in the centre of Peckham: 'The proposed complex is ugly in the extreme - Le Corbusier like and forbidding..... and I for one don't want the kind of urban-environs-scape created by this kind of building in Peckham.'

When the Acorn Estate, Peckham, (by borough architect F O Hayes) was built in the 1960s covering 13 acres and housing 500 families, it was admired by architects from all over the world, yet the new tenants complained of bad heating and rain leakage, and the tenants' association sent a sample of dust to the council that had been blown around a flat by the central heating system. In 1965, the brutalist architect, Owen Luder, former President of the RIBA, is reputed to have said: 'Tenants are simply not educated into taking pride in living adventurous new lives in estates planned for twentieth-century living, rather than carrying on their humdrum normal existence in worthy but immensely dull boxes of bricks.' What arrogance! It is interesting to note that both the unloved North Peckham and Acorn Estates have since been razed to the ground and, happily, the new town hall complex never materialised. Incidentally, several buildings by Owen Luder have since been demolished.

Returning now to *Making Dystopia*. It is a beautifully produced book and contains numerous photographs and illustrations. It is, perhaps, of more interest to architectural professionals and town planners, rather than the man in the street. It will, however, be of interest to anyone who cares about the built environment in which they live and work, domestic dwellings, public buildings, or both. The late David Watkin FRIBA, FSA (1941-2018), architectural historian, is better qualified than me in summing up Professor Curl's book: 'The most gripping and complete account of how architecture and urban planning were corrupted in the twentieth and twenty-first century, leading to a catastrophic deterioration of the built-environment. A brilliant, thoroughly researched, and completely novel book.'

Ron Woollacott

*Making Dystopia* ISBN 978-0-19-875369-8, OUP, 592 pages, hardback, £45

## ~ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ~

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY TOUR** ► *Sunday 10th March at 2.15pm.* Meet your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle just inside the main entrance to the cemetery in Linden Grove.

**CRYPT/CHAPEL TOURS** ► *Sunday 17th March from 2.15pm and Sunday 26th May.* Meet your guides Jeremy Partington and Malcolm Collins at the cemetery chapel.

**WOODLAND TRAIL TOURS** ► *Sunday 24th March at 2.15pm.* Meet Jeff Hart your guide at the flint circle inside the front entrance in Linden Grove. On *Sunday 9th June at 2.15pm* Tim Stevenson will be your guide.

**CEMETERY SYMBOLS TOUR** ► *Sunday 14th April at 2.15pm.* Meet your guide John Turpin at the flint circle inside the front entrance to the Cemetery in Linden Grove .

**ANNUAL OPEN DAY IN THE CEMETERY** ► *Saturday 18th May from 11.00am to 5.00pm.* This is FONC's biggest event in the year. Volunteers required. *Please see page 17 for further details.*

**WATERLOO ANNIVERSARY EVENT** ► *Sunday 16th June at 2.15pm.* Meet Jeff Hart your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle inside the front entrance in Linden Grove.

**MONUMENT INSCRIPTION RECORDING** ► Transcribing the inscriptions in Nunhead Cemetery is an important and ongoing task. We meet at the FONC portacabin opposite the Scottish Martyrs' memorial near the Linden Grove entrance. For future dates please see page 8. Garry Wiles is the MI Co-ordinator, telephone 077 999 71597 *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 portacabin 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.*

**GENERAL 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. Whenever possible up-to-date information concerning any changes will be announced in FONC News, on the website at [www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk) and on notice boards in Nunhead Cemetery.*

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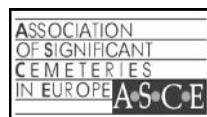
Please send all letters, news items and feature articles for publication to:

**The editor, *FONC News*, c/o 185 Gordon Road, LONDON SE15 3RT**

***The deadline for copy for the next issue is 16th April 2019***

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

## Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)



***Friends of Nunhead Cemetery - Established 1981***

***Registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation No 1178763***

A member of the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCE).

A founder member of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends (NFCF)

FONC is a recipient of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's Birthday Award for Environmental Improvements (National Commendation) 1998.

**[www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk)**

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