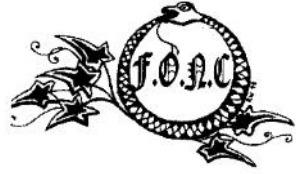


~~~~ Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, London, SE15 ~~~~

# FONC News

No 144 ~ *Summer issue* ~ June ~ August 2019

ISSN 1478-0631



Memorial repairs - a group of monuments on the east side of the Main Avenue near the chapel (see page 5) *Photo: Jane Hart*

## ***INSIDE:***

**Members' Information**  
*p.2*

**Important Decisions**  
*re:-East Lodge p.3*

**Major Repairs to**  
**Monuments p.5**

**New Book Reviews p.6**

**Nunhead Cemetery News**  
**No.34 p.8**

**Report of the New River**  
**Trip p.9**

**Walks in Brookwood**  
**Cemetery p.10**

**A Boot up the AGM p.11**

**Announcements :-**  
**AGM and Bat Walk p.12**

**UN Memorial in South**  
**Korea p.13**

**Metropolitan Borough of**  
**Southwark's Civilian**  
**War Dead p.14**

**Diary Dates p.19**

**FONC Trustees**  
**back page**

## 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:** Meetings of the trustees take place on the *3rd Thursday of each month*. *Trustee 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**

**Editor:** Ron Woollacott. **Contributors:** Michèle Louise Burford; Jane Hart; Jeff Hart; Cathy Mercer; Carol Stevenson.

**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.*

---

## IMPORTANT DECISIONS MADE ON THE FUTURE OF THE EAST LODGE

*Update by Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator*

No doubt we would all have hoped to see progress on site by now in preparation for the restoration of the East Lodge. There were some delays in the tendering process for the preliminary stabilising, under-pinning and drainage work that is necessary. Unfortunately, the response to the tender invitation was very disappointing and a contractor could not be appointed. The design work and scope has now been simplified, helping to reduce both the complexity and the likely costs of the work. Five potential tenderers have now visited the site and we are hopeful that an acceptable tender can be accepted in early June so that the preliminary works can be completed by Christmas.

In the meantime, the delayed feasibility report on the future use of the East Lodge was received and passed to FONC and Historic England for comment following an outline presentation given by Southwark Council officers on 25th March 2019. FONC trustees gave this careful consideration and prepared our initial position for discussion at the next East Lodge Project Board meeting held on 25th April. We outlined some fundamental FONC positions: the Lodge must not be sold in whole or part; it must remain in the ownership of the London Borough of Southwark (LBS); the public and community groups must not be excluded from access to the Lodge; if FONC is permitted space in the Lodge it must only be as tenants of LBS and no-one else.

Historic England representatives first gave their thoughts on the options identified in the report and we were very pleased to note that they were not far removed from our own. The three FONC representatives then set out our views before LBS gave their own initial response to the report. In a really constructive and cooperative meeting, we were delighted that the following points were agreed:

- the restoration of the Lodge exclusively as two apartments for private rental **has been rejected and will not be pursued further;**

*continued on next page*

- the restoration of the Lodge to include any variations of a mix of privately rented accommodation and community use has been **rejected and will not be pursued further**;
- the restoration of the Lodge for the use by a single occupier as offices **has been rejected and will not be pursued further**;
- the restoration of only the front part of the Lodge, albeit for community use, **has also been rejected and will not be pursued further**.

Other options that were reviewed without great enthusiasm included the development of an interpretation and education centre run exclusively by FONC (we do not think that we have the capacity to do this and nor is it the optimum use of the building) and a mix of cafe and community studios or solely community studios.

What options are left on the table therefore? The option favoured by all three parties at this stage is a design that incorporates a commercially operated cafe and a mix of community space to be used by FONC, other community groups and schools and suitable one-off commercial activities. In this context FONC has proposed that the Lodge should encompass the following facilities:

- Office, sales and storage space for the exclusive use of FONC;
- Accommodation and storage space for LBS contractors (*currently Idverde*) employed on the maintenance of the cemetery;
- Toilet facilities for public use;
- A large flexible open space suitable for function, conference, classroom, and/or exhibition purposes;
- Small meeting room facilities suitable for hire/use by both community and commercial hirers;
- Small catering facilities for Lodge users/clients;
- Garden area to the rear of the Lodge accessible to Lodge users with potential use for storage facilities;
- Disabled access.

The next steps are to develop the key criteria to be included in a design brief for the full restoration; to soft market test interest in running a cafe and for community use; to develop new ideas for possible floor plans; and to explore how other recent cemetery building conversions have worked. When the Board meets again on 23rd May it is hoped that we can move to a definitive decision on the future of the Lodge such that work on site can begin early in 2020.■

# MAJOR MEMORIAL REPAIR WORKS ON MAIN AVENUE

*Report by Jeff Hart*

As reported in the last edition of *FONC News*, major monument restoration works have been carried out along both sides of the Main Avenue since the end of January with an expected completion date of just before our annual Open Day on 18th May (*this may or may not have been borne out by the time you read this article!*).

Even before completion, this work has completely transformed the ‘look’ of the Main Avenue by presenting a front line of magnificent structures that now emphasise the grandeur of the Avenue in its hey-day without detracting from the ‘natural’ backdrop of the trees and vegetation that has grown up subsequently. Many visitors to the cemetery have been praising the work, taking photographs and have been fascinated by the process of restoring some massive vaults.



The Lewis grave filled with pea gravel before reconstruction work begins

*Photo: Jane Hart*

The work has not been without its unexpected difficulties and complications. Two memorials have been damaged as a result of inappropriate tree felling (to be repaired at the cost of the fellers) and a major vault behind one of those to be restored was found to have collapsed walls and gaping voids which

*continued on next page*

had to be addressed on health and safety grounds. It took 14 tonnes of pea gravel to fill that particular void! As a result the 18 memorials to be repaired from Southwark's budget has increased to at least 21 whilst FONC's original nine memorials has, thanks particularly to the generosity and cooperation of Priest's father and son team of Brian and Lewis Whybrow, increased to twelve memorials. Southwark have also agreed to pay for the planting of three new trees of FONC's choice to make up for one ash sapling mistakenly felled!

A full report on the completed works and plans for the next tranche of repairs will be given in the next *FONC News*. ■



Memorials on the east side of the Main Avenue awaiting 'restoration'

*Photo: Jane Hart*

---

## ***BOOK REVIEWS by CATHY MERCER***

### **My Godforsaken Life: Memoirs of a Maverick**

**by Barbara Smoker**

Published by Thornwick, £11.99, ISBN 978 1 912664 02 3

238 pages, illustrated

**B**arbara Smoker is a bit of a local star. Born in Crystal Palace, she has always lived in South East London and now, at the age of 95, she has written her autobiography.

Barbara was brought up in a deeply Roman Catholic family and indeed one of her sisters became a nun. However, for most of her life she's been a committed atheist and was president of the National Secular Society for 25 years. She has also always been a great champion of free speech and a great

orator, standing on a soap-box to counter religious preaching. Above all, she is witty and insightful and her memoirs make a great read. She evokes visions of another very different age, with a year spent in Hither Green Isolation Hospital after an attack of scarlet fever, life at a girls' convent school, Second World War posting in Ceylon – now Sri Lanka – as a wireless operator and many campaigns: Greenham Common, euthanasia, secularisation of Radio 4's Thought for the Day, to name just a few.

Readers will not agree with everything she writes but I defy anyone not to enjoy this rollicking read. Available from: [www.thornwickpress.com](http://www.thornwickpress.com)

~ooo00-O-00ooo~

**Nunhead Notables Volume 4 - Notable People Buried at Nunhead Cemetery by Ron Woollacott and Michèle Louise Burford**

£5.00 or £4.50 to FONC members - ISBN 978 0 956 9874 40

130 pages, illustrated

This is the fourth in the excellent *Nunhead Notables* series, all written by Ron Woollacott, former FONC chairman, and now ably partnered by his daughter. Volumes 1 and 2 covered the most notable of Nunhead's many notables. Volume 4 has much longer and more detailed biographies, with very helpful notes on sources of information. The nature of the Notables has also changed – we have cricketers who died young, music hall artistes and actors, mayors and architects, and even the driver of London's first horse-drawn omnibus, William Lilley (1799-1843). Biographical research is now much easier with so many resources available on the internet and this means that Ron and Michèle are able to give us far more detail to flesh out the lives of the great and good, as well as the – almost – ordinary, all buried in Nunhead Cemetery. Helpful notes and a map help the readers to identify where in Nunhead they are buried and maybe even seek out their gravestones, if they have one, because many are buried in unmarked common graves. The range of Victorian and Edwardian notables, as well as the detail, is impressive and makes for a fascinating read. This is the sort of book you can read from cover to cover or dip into at will, exploring areas that interest – highly recommended.

Please note: *Nunhead Notables* volume four, and the other three volumes in the series may be purchased from our Publications desk in Nunhead Cemetery (see inside cover of this issue for details) or by post by visiting our website at [www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk)

~ooo00-O-00ooo~

## NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No. 34

*By Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator*

### ***More Crowes at Nunhead!***

In cooperation with idverde, the cemetery contractors, FONC volunteers facilitated another corporate workday in the cemetery on 21st February with about 36 employees of Crowe UK (an accountancy/audit company) giving up their time to help us improve the site. The team contributed in the region of 30 linear metres of new woodland footpath, managing foot traffic through the Wetland area, as well as clearing approximately 500 square metres of bramble and self-seeded ash from the West Hill. Several large recently fallen trees were logged up to provide material for the path edging. A really enjoyable and fulfilling day was had by all.

### ***Women to the fore!***

At short notice Jeff Hart took over from Jolanta Jagiello in organising the International Women's Day tour of the cemetery held on Sunday, 10th March. Fifteen notable women's graves were identified for the walk ranging from a suffragist, a romantic novelist, a religious prophetess, a writer of a German cookery book and even a martyr of the Boxer Rebellion in China! Well attended, we even had two women who attended the walk who were inspired to help on the next practical work day. We now plan to make this walk an annual event.

### ***Doubly GoodGym***

Runners from GoodGym (*see FONC News No 142*) paid their second visit to Nunhead Cemetery on the evening of 10th April 2019. Jogging from Peckham, they arrived full of enthusiasm and after 45 minutes had collected and bagged up lots of the litter and assorted rubbish along the Linden Grove boundary walls for subsequent disposal by LBS. Then off they ran again to complete their circuit. Many thanks GoodGym, you are always welcome!

### ***No news is good news?***

We still await the Land Use Consultants draft conservation management plans for each of the Borough's three cemeteries (Camberwell Old and New and Nunhead) and the LBS engineer's proposals for restoring the Limesford Road boundary walls. The FONC trustees have not forgotten these important issues and will be pressing for more information on how these issues will be taken forward.



## FONC trip along the New River, Saturday 30th March *Report by Cathy Mercer*

FONC trips usually involve cemeteries and Victorian stuff, so this was a bit different, as we went back more than 400 years to the reign of James the First. The New River is an aqueduct running 36 miles from Hertford to Islington opened in 1613 to bring clean fresh water to the growing city of London. This means that it's neither new nor a river but an aqueduct that flows as an open channel or through pipes through Broxbourne, Enfield and Wood Green.



*Photo: Cathy Mercer*

The New River Path follows the New River along its course, including the pretty landscaping in Clissold Park, Stoke Newington, where you can also visit the reservoirs nearby, and now inner-city wetlands with excellent café. But be warned: the New River is an aqueduct and not a canal and therefore has no towpath. This means that the grassy verges get very muddy in winter!

We followed the prettiest ‘heritage’ part of the New River from Canonbury, where the attractive landscaping and grand Victorian villas take walkers from the hustle and bustle of 21st century London to a rural fairy land. The sun shone, trees were covered in blossom, birds sang: if only London were all like this! Charles Lamb, who lived nearby, writes about children paddling in the New River and indeed we posed for a photo next to a curious cottage apparently built for guards whose job was to stop this. On Duncan

*continued on next page*

Terrace the Regent's Canal flows in a tunnel under the New River in an amazing piece of Georgian engineering and we stopped to look through to King's Cross a mile away at the other side. We also took in the statue of Hugh Myddelton on Islington Green, unveiled by William Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. Myddelton was James I's jeweller and he rescued the New River project, partly by under-writing it himself.

After an excellent lunch at the Angel Inn, surely London's best 'greasy spoon' café, we finished off by looking at the New River Headquarters, with remains of an 18th century windmill and Art Deco labs for testing water quality. These were turned into residential blocks in the 1980s. Some of us enjoyed the walk from Canonbury so much that we walked the same way back for our train home!

An excellent day was enjoyed by all. ■



Statue of Hugh Myddelton  
*Photo: Cathy Mercer*

---

**JOIN THE CAMBERWELL CEMETERIES GROUP AND THE LONDON WILDLIFE TRUST TO EXPLORE THE BUTTERFLIES, BIRDS AND TREES IN CAMBERWELL OLD CEMETERY ON SATURDAY 6th JULY 2019 FROM 2.00 PM TO 3.30 PM. Please meet at the Cemetery Gates on Forest Hill Road. This event is free and open to everyone as part of LWT's Great North Wood Project.**

---

**BROOKWOOD CEMETERY, SURREY, SUNDAY 7th JULY 2019: INTRODUCTORY WALK: (NORTH CEMETERY - NONCONFORMIST SIDE) LED BY BROOKWOOD CEMETERY SOCIETY'S COMMITTEE MEMBERS. This is a continuation of the Introduction to Brookwood Cemetery covering the diversity of plots. All walks start from the Cemetery Office entrance, off Cemetery Pales. A suggested donation of £4 would be most welcome. Walks start at 2.00pm unless otherwise stated. [www.tbcs.org.uk](http://www.tbcs.org.uk)**

# A BOOT UP THE AGM!

## *Co-ordinator Jeff Hart explains some changes of detail for this year's AGM*

OK, so we know that Annual General Meetings are not the most exciting events in most people's calendars! However, as a democratically run Charitable Incorporated Organisation (as our registered charity is now referred to) we do try hard to give full reports to members on our activities over the year and to give you the chance to review what the Trustees have been up to (although members are also welcome to attend the monthly Trustees meetings). There will be the usual Trustees, Treasurer's, Auditor's and Voluntary Work reports for you to peruse and, no doubt, Chairman Jeremy Partington will have a few words to say! To entice you all to attend this important process, we also have a guest speaker (*see adjacent panel*) to entertain you after some light refreshments are served.

This year, however, there will be a significant change in the election procedure that members may be used to. Under our old constitution, a committee of five officers and 10 general members was elected annually where every member elected in the previous year stood down, but was immediately eligible for re-election. With our new CIO Constitution the June AGM will be rather different in this respect. By confirmation of the November 2018 Special General Meeting, 14 trustees (it can still be up to 15) were appointed by the membership. However, it is now for the trustees themselves to determine who holds which officer post rather than by direct election at the AGM to a specific post – although we will still notify members of which trustees we intend to appoint as officers.

The new constitution also only requires the five longest serving trustees to stand down each year although they can also be immediately re-appointed by the AGM. Technically, we were all appointed at the same time (November 2018)! But in the spirit of the Constitution the five longest serving members of the old Committee will stand down in June but will then seek re-appointment by the members. These are (*in alphabetical order*): Jeff Hart; Cathy Mercer; Simon Mercer; Maureen Woollacott and Ron Woollacott.

Hopefully this new procedure is now clear to everyone and the AGM will run as smoothly as it always has done in the past. See you there!

**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
FRIENDS OF NUNHEAD CEMETERY**

**will be held at the Pyrotechnist's Arms, Nunhead Green, LONDON  
SE15 at 7.00pm on Thursday 20th June 2019**

*AFTER THE BUSINESS PART OF THE MEETING*

**SAM BENTLEY-TOON**

**OF LONDON WILDLIFE TRUST**

**WILL TALK ABOUT**

***THE GREAT NORTH WOOD PAST AND PRESENT***

**AND THE WORK THE TRUST DOES MORE**

**GENERALLY IN THE AREA**

*Light refreshments will be provided*

*Donations to offset the cost will be appreciated*

**Information relating to the new arrangements for electing trustees at the  
meeting may be found on the previous page**

*On the evening that follows the AGM why not join the*

**BAT WALK IN NUNHEAD CEMETERY**

**Friday 21st June 2019**

**Meet at the Linden Grove entrance at 9.00pm**

**Join the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery and  
London Wildlife Trust to learn to identify bats from their  
ultrasonic calls using bat detectors.**

This event is free and open to everyone as part of  
London Wildlife Trust's Great North Wood project. Please wear appropriate  
clothing and footwear.

e-mail [greatnorthwood@wildlondon.org.uk](mailto:greatnorthwood@wildlondon.org.uk) with any questions  
about the event



Visit the **Great North Wood** online:  
[www.wildlondon.org.uk/great-north-wood](http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/great-north-wood)  
[www.facebook.com/TheGreatNorthWood](https://www.facebook.com/TheGreatNorthWood)  
Twitter @GreatNorthWood



## United Nations Memorial Cemetery, South Korea

*by Carol Stevenson*

I recently had the opportunity to visit the United Nations War Memorial Cemetery in Buson, South Korea, where the dead of the Korean War are commemorated. This is the only UN cemetery in the world.

Visitors are first directed to a chapel where they are shown a short film about the war (1950-53) and the cemetery, including regular acts of remembrance by Korean schoolboys, Turkish officials, and a British veteran who was on body collecting detail at the age of 19 and now returns every year.

The grounds are landscaped with flowering trees (we were there at cherry blossom time), neatly trimmed bushes and lawns. There are rows of low headstones and memorials and national flags mark the various plots.

The first thing that struck us was how well maintained and how respected it is – and how peaceful, considering it is now in the middle of a busy city.

Established 70 years ago, it commemorates the dead of the two dozen nations who became involved in the battles to resist the invasion of South Korea. Now, with most Americans having been repatriated (only 36 remain), it holds 2297 casualties from Australia, Canada, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, a token 36 from Korea, Turkey, UK, USA, others and ‘unknown unto god’. Other countries with memorials are Norway, Sweden, Ethiopia, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, India, Greece, Thailand and Philippines.

Walls of black marble inscribed with the names of the fallen surround a pond with a helmet sculpture which was being carefully cleaned when we were there. This cemetery does not of course deal with civilian casualties. A visit to any museum will show the traumatic effect of the war on the people of South Korea, with well over half the population forced to flee as refugees and hundreds of thousands killed. People who lived through that time as children still show very stunted growth from the years of starvation, and the threat from North Korea continues to cause fear. Interestingly, we were told several times that without foreign interference Korea would be a single united country. Should you ever be in the south of South Korea, this memorial cemetery is well worth a visit. ■



## ~~~~~LEST WE FORGET~~~~~

### **Metropolitan Borough of Southwark's Civilian War Casualties interred at Nunhead Cemetery 1940 - 1945**

*by Michèle Louise Burford and Ron Woollacott*

The former three Metropolitan Boroughs that comprise the present day London Borough of Southwark are Bermondsey, Camberwell and Southwark. In previous issues of *FONC News* we wrote about the civilian war casualties in the former boroughs of Bermondsey and Camberwell that were laid to rest at Nunhead. In this issue we turn our attention to Southwark, which includes the districts known as the Borough and Newington/Walworth. Southwark did not have its own cemetery therefore many of its war casualties were interred at Nunhead and elsewhere.

#### **The Blitz on Southwark started a day early**

At around a quarter to midnight on the night of 6th September 1940, a high-explosive (HE) bomb came crashing down in Arnott Street, near the Bricklayer's Arms, Old Kent Road, killing 12 people, one of whom, Alice May Prosser (42) of No 64 Arnott Street, was buried at Nunhead. On the 10th September an HE bomb scored a direct hit on a shelter in Ewer Street killing 23 people, including three wardens. Three of those killed were buried at Nunhead, Joan Bentley (12), Sarah (69) and Rosina Cooper (33) of Union Street flats. Just two days later another air-raid shelter at Orb Street, off East Street, Walworth, was struck and 33 people perished, most of whom were in the shelter; four of the victims, including three members of the Soundy family of Eltham Street, Elizabeth (30), Joyce (10) and Herbert (6), and Maud Davenport (49) of 16 Orb Street, were laid to rest at Nunhead.

On 28th September a wardens' post in Great Guildford Street was struck by an HE bomb killing nine of the ten wardens on duty, two of whom, Isaiah Fewtrell (58) and Edward Shanks (60), were interred at Nunhead.

There were fewer raids on Southwark in the first weeks of October 1940 nevertheless the Luftwaffe continued their nightly raids on London. In the early hours of 16th October a parachute mine landed on Queen's Buildings at Scovell Road in the Borough and two shelters were hit. All told 42 people died in that incident, including four members of the Bristow family, Ethel (48), Henry (45), Eileen (20) and Edward (16), along with three members of the Miller family, Theresa (65), William (32) and Ruby (20), and two members of the Findlay family, Ellen (42)) and Sidney (18), all of whom were

killed in No 1 shelter, and Alice (57) and Margaret Morton (21) and Elizabeth (53) and Lilian Easter (19), who died in Queen's Buildings. The 13 persons named above were all buried at Nunhead.

### **Catastrophic bombing incidents in Walworth and the Borough**

In the early hours of 29th October 1940 three HE bombs ripped through the roof of St Peter's Church in Liverpool Grove, Walworth, where around 400 local people were sheltering in the crypt. Around 67 persons perished, and many more were seriously injured. Of those who died that night 23 were buried at Nunhead. They were, Kenneth Ballard (20), Ada Barratt (70), Elizabeth Blackman (76) and John (47) and Sarah Carman (23), and three members of the Carter family, Elizabeth (63), Ivy (20) and William (15), and John (70) and Louisa Hanson (70), Elizabeth Johnson (55), who was injured and died in Guy's Hospital, Edward (54) and Eileen Nunn (18), Catherine Parsons (57), Walter Chamberlain (27), Edith Paul (39), three members of the Preston family, Kathleen (7), Walter (31) and Jessie (30), Jessie Sherriff (60), Eleanor Stewart (28), Ada Vinnie (58) and Kate Riches (64), who was injured and died in Guy's Hospital.

There were very few casualties in Southwark during November and December, however, on 29th December an air-raid shelter was struck in Keyworth Street, Elephant and Castle, killing 13 persons, and four of those who died in the incident were interred at Nunhead, including, William Feldon (53) and his wife Ethel (52) and daughter Ethel (17), and George Swain (17).

January 1941 was relatively quiet and there were very few air-raids during the first two weeks of February; however, on 17th February an HE bomb struck the railway track above Stainer Street arch which was being used as a shelter and at least 68 persons were killed – the exact figure has never been determined, such was the devastation caused by the heavy iron doors being blown inwards and crushing many of those who were sheltering inside. Three of those identified and died later in Guy's Hospital were buried at Nunhead; they were Raymond Armstrong (16), Rosina Wooton (60) and Lily Chance (14). On 8th March an HE bomb struck houses in Manor Place, Walworth killing seven people. Three of those who died at No 160, Louisa Blake (25), Louisa Callow (58) and Ivy Trott (23), were interred at Nunhead.

Grosvenor Terrace in the Walworth area was struck by two HE bombs on the 16th April 1941 killing 16 persons. Four killed at No 150 Grosvenor Terrace were buried at Nunhead, including three members of the Hull family, Elizabeth (48), Vera (17) and Thomas (13) and Dorothy Tatum (21).

*continued on next page*

### **Another bad day in Southwark**

The 17th April 1941 was a particularly bad day in Southwark, and an air-raid shelter in Skipton Street received a direct hit killing Alfred (42) and Jenny Foster (40) along with five members and three generations of the Hassell family, Thomas (65), Beatrice (64), Thomas (34), Elizabeth (33), and Lilian (6) and Maud Jones (46). Those named above were buried at Nunhead. All told 29 people were killed in the shelter and in nearby houses. The Crampton Street School stretcher party depot, Walworth, was also hit and 12 members of the depot were killed, and the following casualties buried at Nunhead: Edward Drew, air-raid warden (59), and stretcher bearers Frederick Edis (32), Henry Gobby (53), Hyams Barnett (51), Thomas Leach (49), John Lee (43), and Charles Wells (27). ARP warden Joshua Henry Barham was first on the scene and managed to rescue four persons from the ruins for which he received the George Medal.

### **The Luftwaffe's last major raid on Southwark**

On the last night of the Blitz, Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th May 1941, London took a pounding, and during an eight hour raid on the capital tons of high-explosive bombs and thousands of incendiary bombs rained down on Southwark. Fires were raging all around and the cellar in the derelict Surrey Theatre in Blackfriars Road was being used as a water storage tank by the fire brigade, and just as 17 firemen were connecting their hosepipes to the water supply, an HE bomb came crashing down on the building and all the firemen were killed. Only one, Leading Fireman James Johnson (46) was buried at Nunhead. The LCC Weights and Measures Office in Harper Road also took a direct hit and two persons were brought out alive from the ruins but unfortunately 13 persons had died, including Charles Hill (33), weights and measures officer, the only casualty to be buried at Nunhead. Many residents of Southwark died that night, 35 of whom were interred at Nunhead.

Although the Luftwaffe left London alone for the next 18 months there were still isolated air-raids and unexploded bombs (UXBs) lying around. On Saturday morning 6th June 1942, a terrible explosion rocked the Elephant and Castle area when a UXB demolished four houses in Gurney Street. 62 persons were seriously injured and many more were slightly injured, but 18 persons had lost their lives including six children under the age of ten. The bomb had lain dormant in the ground since it was dropped on the last night of the Blitz. Edward Carter (4) of No 16 Gurney Street, Frank Dawson (43) of No 8, Caroline Summerfield (54) and Mary Whitehead (65) both of No 12, and William Barnett (15) who was injured at Gurney Street and died in Guy's Hospital, were buried at Nunhead.



## **Isolated Raids and Vengeance Weapons**

The Little Blitz on London began in January 1943 and ended in February 1944. There was very little activity over Southwark during this period, but there had been a number of air-raids and casualties in Bermondsey and several more in Camberwell (see *FONC News* Nos 142 and 143). On the 20th February 1944 six people were killed at No 22 Rephidim Street, but only Florence Baylis (74) was buried at Nunhead. Rosina Small of No 13 Potier Street was killed in the same raid and she too was buried at Nunhead.

The first of the Nazi vengeance weapons (V1s or buzz bombs) were launched towards London in June 1944. The first to strike Southwark was at around 9.15 am on 16th June 1944 when it landed on the Waygood Otis factory at Falmouth Road, off Harper Road, killing 11 persons including Ellen Perkiss (27) who was laid to rest at Nunhead.

Another buzz bomb came crashing down in Union Street at around 10pm on the evening of 19th June and landed on the Jolly Gardener's public house bursting a water main and causing the deaths of 48 people, some of whom had died from drowning in the flooded cellar of the pub. The nearby King Henry VIII pub was also wrecked in the same incident as well as surrounding residential property. Seven victims were buried at Nunhead, they were Sidney Kemp (32) and Louisa King (75), both of the Jolly Gardener's pub, and Emily (70) and John East (69) of the King Henry VIII pub, and Thomas (53) and May Sharman (52), and Frederick Tarrant (20) who were killed at Peabody Buildings, Union Street.

The first buzz bomb to land in Walworth SE17 was at Carter Street in the early hours of 23rd June demolishing five houses and killing ten persons. On the 17th July forty houses were demolished and many more were seriously damaged when a buzz bomb landed in Suffield Road, Walworth, killing 17 people, three of whom, Emma (67) and Emma Bushnell (27) of No 16 Suffield Street, and Emily Davey (51) of No 7, were buried at Nunhead.

The first major V2 (rocket) incident in Southwark was on 14th December 1944 when a rocket came thundering down in Lawson Street and Great Dover Street killing 17 people, six of whom were laid to rest at Nunhead, including three infants and two teenagers: Florence Fitzgerald (58) of No 83 Great Dover Street, Maureen Perry (6) who died in Great Dover Street, Mavis Randall (infant) of No 9 Lawson Street, Pauline Smith (4) of No 78 Great Dover Street, Peter Sutton (17), fire service messenger killed in Great Dover Street, Mary Powell (13), injured in Great Dover Street and died in Guy's Hospital. On 14th January 1945 at least nine people were killed at Horsman Street, Walworth, seven of whom were buried at Nunhead. Maud Callaghan

*continued on next page*

(61) of No 16, Beatrice Glenister (68) of No 12, William Rogers (62) of No 16, and four members of the Verrey family of No 11 Horsman Street, Thomas (69), Ellen (63), Vera (20) and Albert (17).

At around 5.15 pm on 22nd January 1945, a rocket ploughed into shops and offices in Borough High Street and 35 people lost their lives, many of whom were employees of Mosers Ltd, and five of whom were buried at Nunhead including two teenagers, Beatrice Bolton (15) and Mary Poole (17), and Edith Harrison (44), Ernest Morgan (49) and Frederick Stevens (64).

## **Conclusion**

The above are just a few of the many sad stories about the civilian population of the Metropolitan Borough of Southwark that were killed during the Second World War, for all told a total of 993 persons lost their lives during the enemy air-raids of which 237 were laid to rest at Nunhead. It is perhaps surprising to learn that so many persons were killed in communal air-raid shelters - more than 260 in the Southwark borough alone - where they had congregated to be safe from the bombs, and quite possibly it might have been safer to stay at home. The total number of civilians killed due to enemy action in the three Metropolitan boroughs that now form the present day London Borough of Southwark is 2,719, of which no fewer than 558 were interred at Nunhead Cemetery.

Civilian war casualties from the former Metropolitan Borough of Deptford were also brought to Nunhead for burial, details of which have had to be held over to the next issue of *FONC News*.

*Please Note:* It is Ron and Michèle's belief that this is the first time a comprehensive list of all the civilian war casualties killed during the Second World War and interred at Nunhead Cemetery has been attempted, though it is doubtful if we shall ever discover the exact number of civilian casualties buried here from other parts of the country, particularly for interment in private family graves.

---

## **BROMPTON CEMETERY OPEN DAY**

***21st July 2019 from 11am to 5pm***

**A variety of guided tours of the cemetery and a number of events will take place in the chapel. Family activities and opportunities to become a member of the Friends of Brompton Cemetery.**

## ~ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ~

**WOODLAND TRAIL TOURS** ► *Sunday 9th June at 2.15pm and Sunday 8th September at 2.15pm.* Meet Tim Stevenson your guide at the flint circle inside the front entrance in Linden Grove.

**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.

**BAT SIGHTING WALK** ► *Friday 21st June at 9.00 pm.* This walk will be led by the London Wildlife Trust (LWT) in association with FONC. Meet outside Nunhead Cemetery's main entrance in Linden Grove.

**CRYPT/CHAPEL TOURS** ► *Sunday 7th July at 2.15pm.* Meet your guides Jeremy Partington/Malcolm Collins at the cemetery chapel.

**MILITARY CONNECTIONS TOUR** ► *Sunday 14th July at 2.15pm.* Meet Jeff Hart your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle inside the front entrance in Linden Grove.

**MUSIC HALL TOUR** ► *Sunday 11th August 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 further information and timings and how to volunteer please contact Garry Wiles at: [foncinscriptions@gmail.com](mailto:foncinscriptions@gmail.com) *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.*

~ FONC TRUSTEES ~

*Chairman:* **Jeremy Partington**—07909 561654

*Vice-chairman:* **Carol Stevenson**—020 7732 8396

*FONC Co-ordinator:* **Jeff Hart OBE**—020 8694 6079 email: [fonc@btconnect.com](mailto:fonc@btconnect.com)

*Minutes secretary:* **Jane Hart**

*Hon treasurer:* **Ann Coley**

*Hon membership secretary:* **Simon Mercer**—020 8452 5239

c/o 31 Normanby Road, LONDON, NW10 1BU

*FONC News editor:* **Ron Woollacott MBE, FRSA** —020 7732 2501

*Other trustees:* **Malcolm Collins, Ish Lennox, Cathy Mercer, Gwyneth Stokes, Alan Till, Keith Turpin, Maureen Woollacott**

\*\*\*\*\*

*Voluntary practical work co-ordinator:* **Tim Stevenson**—020 7732 8396

*Volunteering co-ordinator:* **Ish Lennox**—email: [volunteering@fonc.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@fonc.org.uk)

*Monument inscription recording co-ordinator:* **Garry Wiles**—077 999 71597

*FONC News Hand-delivery co-ordinator:* **Nicola Dunn**—020 8314 0361

*FONC News Postal co-ordinator:* **Linda Martin**

*Webmaster:* **Simon Quill**

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 July 2019***

(Please note that 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)**

Printed by Catford Print Centre, LONDON SE6 2PN

and published by Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, c/o 185 Gordon Road,  
LONDON, SE15 3RT

***Copyright © FONC and Contributors 2019***