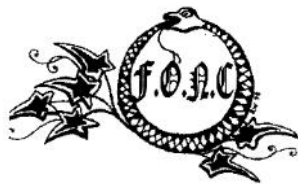


# FONC News

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*Journal of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery*



F A Thompson (1869-1923) Nunhead Cemetery Gatekeeper. *See page 16*  
*Photo: courtesy Jeff Young*

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## ~ INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS ~

**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** 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:** The cemetery is open. Check for opening and closing times on the cemetery gates. The Publications and Enquiry Desk is temporarily closed and will open as soon as possible.

**FONC Meetings and Events:** All meetings and events previously announced have been cancelled or postponed.

**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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*Readers will notice several changes to this issue. There is, of course, the usual up-to-date news about Nunhead Cemetery by Jeff Hart, our hard-working co-ordinator, but much of this issue has had to be given over to information relating to the coronavirus lockdown in connection with Nunhead Cemetery and its impact on the work and activities of the Friends.*

*I am very pleased, however, to have received several articles from Friends which I'm sure readers will find of interest. Articles and letters are always welcome so please keep sending them in. Your stories and views are very much appreciated.*



*Ron Woollacott*

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Uncredited text is by the editor. *The editor and FONC trustees do not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by contributors.*

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## ***Important: Announcement by FONC trustees*** **FONC AGM POSTPONED**

FONC is by no means the only charitable incorporated organisation to have been affected by the current Covid-19 crises. The Charity Commission has been providing guidance on various possible impacts including the holding of mandated meetings and Annual General Meetings required by constitutions. As notified in the last issue of *FONC News* we were due to hold our AGM on 18th June 2020. In accordance with the Charity Commission guidance, FONC trustees have decided to postpone the AGM and to hold this, circumstances permitting, as part of our Christmas members' meeting on Thursday 17th December 2020. We will produce the usual annual report and annual accounts and try to make these available on the FONC website and to members on request to the Co-ordinator by 30th June 2020. The trustees due to retire and seek re-election will continue in post until the December meeting. By providing papers well in advance, we will endeavour to keep the AGM business short so that we can enjoy the usual Christmas festivities, refreshments and raffle.

In the meantime, the trustees have been able successfully to hold its first 'virtual' meeting in order to continue with the business of the Friends. These meetings will now follow the usual monthly pattern.

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## **COVID - 19 CLOSES CEMETERY FOR ONE MONTH** ***Report by Jeff Hart***

Perhaps of little consequence in regard to its global impact, the Covid-19 corona virus has nevertheless made its mark on Nunhead Cemetery and its Friends. As its increasingly serious impact on British society became clear in early March, FONC trustees took the difficult decision to cease all activities requiring face-to

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-face contact. On the 17th March 2020 the following statement was issued:

*It is clear that the impact of the current Covid-19 corona virus on the health and safety of people in the UK (and elsewhere) and the consequent effect on the economic and social activity of the population has become increasingly serious. The impact in London appears to be more immediate than for other parts of the country. As the trustees of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that has regular inter-action with people through various activities, we have a responsibility to consider the possible implications for both our own volunteers and the wider community. Given current requirements and advice from government and Public Health England, FONC trustees have decided upon the following course of action:*

- ◆ **THE ANNUAL OPEN DAY PLANNED FOR 16th MAY 2020 IS CANCELLED.** *We will not be seeking to hold the event later in the year but intend to reinstate the event as usual in 2021. All monies received from stall-holders etc, will be returned as soon as possible.*
- ◆ *All FONC organised cemetery tours, practical work-days, monument inscription recording and other **FONC events are CANCELLED WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT AND FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.***
- ◆ *FONC trustees **meetings** will be held electronically for the foreseeable future. We will further consider what arrangements can be made in regard to the June **Annual General Meeting.***
- ◆ *A decision on participation in the September Open House Weekend in September will be taken nearer the time.*
- ◆ **Further information** on any other impacts for FONC members, volunteers and the general public in regard to planned FONC activities will be posted on the FONC website, the cemetery notice-boards and FONC News at the earliest opportunity.

*The trustees very much regret having to take what might seem to be draconian action. However, the situation could get worse before it gets better. We hope and trust that everyone affected (particularly financially) will understand the need for this action. We will seek to return to all of our normal activities at the earliest opportunity, having regard to appropriate official advice.*

In the light of subsequent events this proved to be a very prescient course of action. It does, of course, have considerable consequences for FONC both in terms of loss of income and of momentum in our work. Fortunately we have not been committed to any unrecoverable expenditure and even our insurers have given a three-month free cover extension. It will be difficult to pick up from where we left off once some form of normality returns but we are determined to do so. Other consequences are reported elsewhere in this issue.

As more people were unable to attend their workplaces and schools closed, so visitor numbers to the cemetery increased significantly. Whilst most visitors tried to observe social distancing, this became difficult at the two cemetery entrances and on some of the narrower paths. Increasingly concerned about the possible consequences and with new government regulations being introduced, and having first informed FONC, Southwark Council closed Nunhead Cemetery to visitors, except immediate family attending burials, with effect from Monday 31st March 2020. Southwark provided the following statement to FONC:

*Parks in Southwark are open and there are currently no plans to close them to the public. Access to and use of our parks is being kept under constant review and will remain in line with government guidance. Parks are considered important spaces for people to enjoy their daily exercise and we are satisfied that the parks provision across the borough supports this. Southwark's parks open by 7.30 am and from April will remain open for longer, closing at 8.00 pm.*

*The new measures set out in the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 along with guidance announced on 27th March 2020, require that all crematorium and burial grounds are closed to members of the public, except for funerals or burials until further notice.*

*In response to this the following sites in Southwark have now closed to the public:*

- ***Nunhead Cemetery***
- ***Camberwell Old Cemetery***
- ***Camberwell New Cemetery***

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*Public access to these grounds will only be permitted for those attending funeral services or burials.*

*Southwark Council recognises that this closure will be disappointing to regular visitors to these spaces and that these are very difficult times for everyone. However, it is essential that we continue to implement the necessary restrictions in place to fight Covid -19, protect the NHS and save lives.*

Having sought clarification in regard to both the guidance and the regulations, FONC accepted that Southwark had no choice but to close the cemetery. This has also stopped work on site including on the East Lodge, the Anglican chapel, tree planting and other non-essential works. Most other local authorities, certainly in London, have also closed their cemeteries. Of course, the closure was regrettable but under the circumstances we trust that all cemetery users understood the need for this measure.

On 18th April 2020 the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced that cemeteries and burial grounds should be open for people to visit graves to lay flowers and to grieve but to observe social distancing and not to congregate. No detail was given as to how this might be managed and so we contacted Southwark Council to ask their intentions. They took the decision to re-open Nunhead Cemetery on 25th April 2020 with the following conditions:

In line with government guidance, Southwark Council is opening cemeteries in the borough to allow those who have lost loved ones the opportunity to pay their respects. Please respect Southwark cemeteries as places of reflection by following this guidance:

- stay on the paths and not on lawns unless attending to a grave;
- do not enter wooded areas;
- cemeteries should only be used for exercise in line with national guidance (one form of exercise per day, no group gatherings);
- please keep all dogs on leads to assist with social distancing. Commercial dog walking is not allowed in cemeteries at this time; staff are focusing on maintaining a safe, quiet and respectful environment for grieving families during these difficult times. Abuse of staff will not be tolerated.

Additionally, the opening times were extended to 8.30am to 8.30pm in April and 8.30am to 9pm in May in line with Southwark's other parks and open spaces during the Covid-19 emergency period, to give everyone additional time to visit safely while maintaining social distancing. The cemetery would also be closed when funerals were taking place to help make the area safer

for grieving family and friends, at an incredibly difficult time. Some closures for funerals would necessarily be at short notice. When placing notices on the gates to this effect at mid-day on 25th April 2020, we saw that visitors were already returning to the cemetery in surprising numbers. It is to be hoped that visitors observe the new restrictions for as long as they remain necessary.

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## **ALICE ELIZABETH BUTTIVANT**

*by Carol Buttivant*

**M**y mother-in-law, Alice Elizabeth Buttivant, who was born in Peckham, died recently and she had great joy reading your magazine. She was just two months short of her 100th birthday and this is on her behalf (donation enclosed). My Bermondsey family is buried in Nunhead, and there are quite a few, so I have great interest in keeping the great burial ground looking beautiful as well. Thank you to everyone for all their hard work. My donation is to thank you and the wardens.

*(FONC trustees offer their condolences to Carol and grateful thanks for her generous donation which is much appreciated).*

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## **ANN BROWN 1814-1872** *by Jean Alker*

**S** have been a member of FONC for some years now, the main reason for joining was I discovered a relation on my father's side was buried in Nunhead. I managed to find out the grave number and location and a photo, and wondered if this part of the cemetery had been cleared. During my research I was surprised to find that Ann Brown was in London as most of the family were in Dumfries and Galloway area and NW England. I have put together part of her later life as follows: she was born in Old Luce, Dumfries and Galloway, on the 14th March 1814. Her father was Alexander Brown and her mother Agnes McCaul. Ann had seven brothers and sisters, all born in the same area. According to the 1851 and 1871 censuses she was working for Edward and Lady Mary Stanley of 14 Grosvenor Square, Westminster, London, as housekeeper/cook. According to 1851 census it seems they kept a large staff from butler to ladies maid, etc. Ann was 58 and unmarried when

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*Grave of ANN BROWN died 7th February 1872  
Photograph courtesy Jean Alker*

she died. Her residence was given as Fleming Road, Walworth, and the grave owner is listed as Alexander Brown, her brother, of Winchester Tavern, Fleming Road, Walworth. Ann is also the only occupant of the grave. Judging by the size of the gravestone in my photo, it must have cost quite a lot for that time period. Her brother, Alexander, died in 1878 in Creebridge, Dumfries and Galloway. I have been unable to find out much about the household Ann worked for, or the Winchester Tavern listed as a residence. Maybe it was a boarding house/pub, does it still exist? I think Alexander must have travelled down from Scotland to see to the burial and I guess purchase the grave. I still have gaps to fill in the Brown family generally, and hopefully sometime in the future I can fill in the gaps in Ann's life. She was buried at Nunhead in *Grave 11820, Square 51*. ■

Looking forward to next issue of the journal.

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## **NUNHEAD CEMETERY NEWS No 38**

*By Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator*

### ***Remembered for Evermore***

Some ten new names have recently been added to the panels at the First and Second World War memorials by the Limesford Road entrance. These war casualties, newly identified by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as having been buried at Nunhead Cemetery, include two Second World War casualties as well as those who died in the First World War. Quite how they were overlooked previously is something of a mystery but we are delighted that this omission has been rectified.



### ***Anglican chapel works start and stop***

Further to the report in the last issue of *FONC News*, work began on 17th March 2020 to remove friable plaster work from the chapel's interior walls, remove vegetation from the walls and floor and to remove flaking and damaged stonework from the exterior of the chapel. The work is being carried out by Priest Restoration under the supervision of Conway and Southwark Council's Borough Engineers. Further survey work was to be undertaken once the massive cherry-picker being used arrived on site. Unfortunately work has now been interrupted by the current Covid -19 situation and we do not know when it will be recommenced.

### ***From little acorns.....***

Shortly before the Covid -19 'lock-down', work began on planting ten new fastigiated hornbeam trees, agreed with FONC to enhance the Limesford Road entrance following the recent felling of the diseased poplars in that area. Two Judas trees are also to be planted to the west of the Anglican Chapel: a magnolia to replace the felled horse chestnut at the start of Scouts Path and a lime to fill the gap on the Main Avenue from wartime bomb damage. The old poplar stumps have been ground out and preparations for planting completed but it was then decided that it would be too late in the season to plant new trees that Southwark Council could not ensure were maintained to the required standard over the summer. We are expecting the planting to take place in November instead.

### ***G5 victory!***

The appeal against the rejection of the application to erect a 20 metre high mobile phone mast near the East Lodge has been rejected by the government's Planning Inspector. Very much in line with FONC's original objection to the planning application, the reasons given for not allowing the appeal were the importance of the visual integrity of the cemetery, its important historical and ecological value and the lack of considering viable alternative sites for the mast.

### ***Grant us success***

At Southwark Council's East and Central Ward meeting held on 11th March 2020 it was announced that FONC's application for Neighbourhood Funding for our Annual Open Day in the sum of £1,000 had been successful. It was also announced that we had been successful in our bid for Cleaner, Greener, Safer

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grant funding of £1,125 for a new winch and other tools to facilitate our practical work sessions in the cemetery. Under the current circumstances it is believed that the Open Day funding can be carried over to the planned 2021 event. Thanks to Jane Hart and Keith Turpin for their hard work in putting the applications together.

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

One of the last FONC events to take place before the Covid -19 restrictions were applied (the crypt visits on 15th March 2020 were the last) was the first to be led by Jane Hart as a tour guide. Despite the poor weather beforehand, Jane had an enthusiastic group to lead on the International Women's Day Tour of the cemetery on the 8th March. The lives of some 15 women were recalled, including a suffragist, missionary, teachers and authors. This is now an annual fixture in our programme of free tours.

### ***Getting the wind up!***

For the first time as long as anyone could remember we had to cancel a planned regular tour of the cemetery. The Music Hall Tour on 9th February 2020 was cancelled following a risk assessment earlier in the day during extremely windy conditions. Three trees had already come down across paths and others were waving about wildly! We were sorry to disappoint anyone wishing to participate but, frankly, it was unlikely that anyone would be venturing out anyway.

### ***Hedging our bets***

During our February practical work day in the cemetery, FONC volunteers planted a new hawthorn and blackthorn (on a 6 to 1 ratio) hedge at the foot of the Dissenters' picnic area to replace the crumbling woven fence. We had purchased 250 mixed hedge saplings that also included hazel (planted in the bluebell glade near the east Linden Grove boundary) and field maple at a very competitive price. Much to our surprise, however, a little later we received a further delivery of another 250 saplings as a result of a mix-up by the suppliers - for which we were not charged! On the March work day we planted 150 hawthorns around the Scots Martyrs triangle to provide a new hedge to replace the current timber boards and also planted at the top of West Hill. The plants left over were either heeled-in for what we thought would be April planting or potted-up for sale at the Open Day. Just before 'lockdown' all of the new plantings seemed to be doing well.

## WHY I'M A MEMBER OF FONC *by Owain Rawrees*

I am pleased to be a member of FONC as my great-great-grandfather William Rees (a Welsh dairyman from Cardiganshire) was buried at Nunhead in 1879 along with his youngest son and also his brother-in-law. It has taken many years to search out the location of the burial. No gravestone but detailed review of the archive records and plans allowed me to access the exact plot a few metres beyond the small Commonwealth War Graves area. His widow was buried back in Wales in 1896 with a large monument with three blank faces. It is the family's intention to have the detail of those buried at Nunhead added to her monument.

I wish you and your colleagues all success with your good work for FONC.■

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## THE CLEMENTS FAMILY *by Ann Baker*

I was very interested to read Michèle Louise Burford's article about my great-grandfather, Charles Clements, in *FONC News* No 147 (March/May 2020). I knew that he had committed suicide because I have a copy of his death certificate but I didn't know all the gruesome details. My grandfather James Clements was only 15-months-old at the time so he never remembered his father. Unfortunately my great-grandmother died in February 1882, at the age of 42, this left James an orphan at the age of five. His five siblings were Henry aged 17, William 15, Elizabeth 13, Mary Ann 11, and Emma nine. Their uncle William Watts was living with the family in 1881, but James (born 1876, died 1955) always told me that he was brought up by his brother Henry.

As Michèle mentioned, Henry went on to become the Cemetery Superintendent. He married Kate Comley in 1911, and died in 1915 aged 51, after falling off a stool during a fit. He died in Cemetery Lodge which I believe is in fact the East Lodge. William Clements joined the merchant navy at a young age and does not appear in any censuses until 1911. He never married and family legend always said he was an alcoholic. He died at Hill House, Minster, Kent in 1920. Hill House was in fact Thanet Workhouse although from 1915 to 1920 it was used as a military hospital. Elizabeth was in 1911

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working as a housekeeper for T Lloyd and Company Ltd, lace men (haberdashers) in Oxford Street, London. She never married and later ran a hotel in Margate, and died there in 1922, aged 54. She was obviously quite successful because she left almost £2,000 which was a considerable amount in 1922.

Mary Ann never worked or married and died in 1909 aged 38. Emma married William Roberts, a licensed victualler, and together they ran successful public houses in Weybridge and Walton-on-Thames in Surrey. They had three children and three grandchildren. James married Sarah Ann Stickley who came from a village near Winchester in Hampshire. They had three daughters and now have one grandson, two granddaughters, one great-grandson, six great-granddaughters, one great-great-grandson and 10 great-great-granddaughters.

Incidentally, both Henry and James died of fractured skulls and brain haemorrhages after falls, although 40 years apart. There is one interesting fact about Henry which I have never been able to solve. Henry was buried in a private grave in Nunhead Cemetery which had been bought by his wife in 1908. Already buried there was Edward Hand who was a butler in a house where Kate worked as a maid before her marriage to Henry. Edward, who died in 1908 aged 39, left Kate some money, so I wonder whether they were engaged to be married. Edward's mother Mary was also buried in the same grave. There is also a Frederick Hand buried in an adjacent grave. I would like to discover what the connection is between Henry Clements and the Hand family, but I think it is unlikely that I will find out.■

*Ann Baker is the granddaughter of James Clements, former Secretary of the London Cemetery Company (founders of Nunhead and Highgate cemeteries).*

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## **SEPTEMBER OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND AT THE CEMETERY TO BE EXPANDED - by Jeff Hart**

In the hope that some kind of public gatherings will again be permitted by mid-September, the FONC trustees have been giving consideration to our participation in the Open House City events to be held on 19th and 20th September 2020. At the time of writing the organisers are still expecting to run this popular event. FONC usually runs general tours and crypt visits between 1.00pm and 5.00pm with our Publications and Enquiries Desk (PED) on both afternoons.

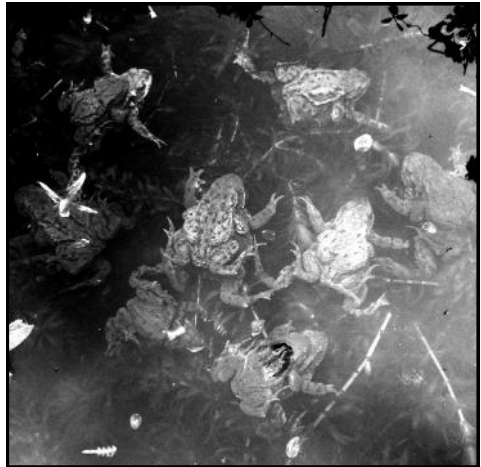
However, we are tentatively planning to enhance the event by also running the FONC stalls that usually form part of the May Open Day. This will include, in particular, the very popular plants stall, limited home-made refreshments, the ‘bodger’ camp, practical monument inscription recording and treasure. Subject to confirmation, we may also be able to run badge-making and the famous ‘Bug Hunt’. We will not be inviting non-FONC participants as we cannot guarantee going ahead on this basis and we would prefer that they put their effort into returning to the May Open Day in 2021. We will also not be able to advertise the event as widely as we would do the Open Day. We will need additional volunteers on both afternoons to help run the event, so if you have nothing else in your diary please pencil this in!

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## **A Garden in Nunhead by Ron Woollacott** *Photographs by Linda Martin*

It is only a short uphill walk to Nunhead Cemetery from where we live, but at the time of writing it is currently closed to the public due to the coronavirus pandemic. It’s a strange state of affairs having to stay at home and not being able to leave the house or receive family members or friends, but of course that’s how it is for many folk that are ‘shielding’ due to existing health problems. We, however, are rather more fortunate than those Londoners and all the other folk cooped up in flats and high-rise tower blocks, because we can escape into a secluded back garden.

Nearing the end of March, despite a rather keen and chilly east wind, our garden started showing signs of life when a single toad appeared quite suddenly in the pond. Within a couple of days there was a great deal of activity in the pond with no fewer than 30 pairs jostling for space and more than one male trying to



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cover a struggling female. The toads remained in the pond for around two weeks, leaving the pond filled with long ribbons of spawn spiralling the spirogyra. No sooner had the toads departed then the newts arrived to join the pond skaters. Two kinds of snails remained in the pond throughout the winter, and now thirsty bees began alighting at the pond's edge. It's rather sad to say but we haven't seen any frogs for the last few years.

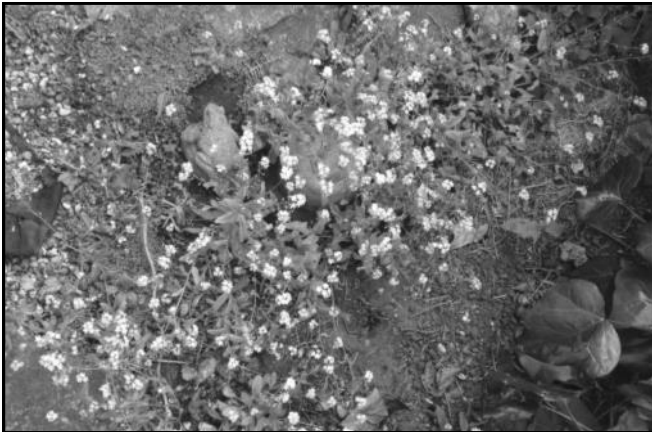
Come June, pretty damsel flies will hover over and around the pond, although, during the last couple of years they have been a dark reddish-brown in colour, so not quite as pretty as the electric blue damsel flies that we used to see. Last year the damsel flies were joined by two beautifully marked dragon flies. Not many butterflies are to be seen at present other than the ubiquitous white and several holly blues.

The climbing hydrangea is in full leaf and a pair of robins flit between the hydrangea and the ivy. One robin, with a particularly bright red breast, spends each morning perched on top of a tree singing its heart out. Greedy starlings make quite a row squabbling among themselves while feeding on the meal worms Maureen puts out first thing, and they are joined by blackbirds and sparrows. Of course, the pretty blue tits, great tits and coal tits are always a delight to see - but where are the wrens this year?

Cheeky bushy-tailed squirrels can be a nuisance, especially when they dig over the patio pots in search of buried nuts, and they are now burying figs from a nearby garden. We have seen just one fox during the day, but several kick up quite a din at night and early in the morning, causing all kinds of

damage around the garden.

It is now early April and patches of blue and white forget-me-nots and violets cover the ground, and here and there early bluebells have started flowering. Ferns are unfurling and the white lilac is in bloom. The



*Forget-me-nots (the toad is an ornament)*

ornamental hop has climbed its support and the rosy pink and flame coloured azaleas are now blooming, so too are the beautiful rose-like camellias. The sunny yellow forsythia gives out its warm glow and the cherry tree is smothered in blossom that floats gently to the ground. For many years we could pick pound upon pound of delicious Morello cherries, but for the last few years they have been affected by a nasty worm that arrived from America - but our loss means more for the birds. The far end of the garden has been colonised by borage, covered with a mass of tiny star-like blue flowers, and the evergreen pittosporum is flowering. The variegated holly tree still retains some of its berries, and the berberis (barberry) is already attracting bees.



*Borage or starflower*

I must admit that I'm useless when it comes to gardening, I'm not able to do much although I'd very much like to, but Maureen strives to keep the garden looking nice and does a 'blooming' good job - pun intended! She and her sister Linda are currently busy preparing the hanging baskets. So there it is, we are very fortunate to have a garden, and we really do appreciate the breathing space while being confined to barracks, so to speak, during the interminable coronavirus lockdown.■

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## THANK YOU AND STAY SAFE

**The FONC trustees would like to thank all those FONC members and supporters who have helped to keep the Friends going during this difficult time, particularly those who have hand delivered this issue of the journal. We trust that everyone stays safe and well and that we can all look forward to better times in due course.**

## F A THOMPSON (1869-1923) - NUNHEAD GATEKEEPER

Jeff Young has sent us this splendid photograph of his grandfather Frederick Albert Thompson who looks quite dapper in his top hat and wearing the uniform of the London Cemetery Company. He was born in India and baptised at Pothenore, Madras. His father, Henry James Thompson, was an engine driver on the national railway who died of a tropical illness in India in 1880. After his father's death Frederick came to England and in 1911 he was working in a paint factory so he must have started work at Nunhead Cemetery at some time after that date.





## **Remarkable Women buried in Nunhead Cemetery No 6 (Part 1)**

*By Ron Woollacott and Michèle Louise Burford*

### **MRS MARIAN RICHARDSON (1830-1872)**

#### **Poet, Friend and Supporter of Garibaldi the Italian Patriot**

Marian's father was Samuel Straker, an apprentice printer, who married Sarah Isabella, the daughter of his father's sister, at St James's Church, Clerkenwell, in 1829. Marian was the first of the Straker's seven children and was born on 27th April 1830 and baptised at St Mary's Church, Islington, on 23rd May 1830. In 1835 the family's address was 17 Aske Terrace, Hoxton, by which time Samuel had established his own lithographic and letterpress printing works at No 3 George Yard, Lombard Street, in the City of London, later removing to larger premises at Bishopsgate Street Within.

Marian was about thirteen years of age when the Straker family moved to 'Sunnyside,' a large house at the edge of Peckham Rye Common. In later years she wrote warmly of her family life there; to her childish eyes Peckham Rye had seemed like a virtual paradise, with its 'green nooks and leafy shade,' and she described 'Sunnyside' as 'a large house, grand in modern style and taste.'

When she was nineteen Marian became engaged to John Richardson, a wholesale druggist, who was her father's neighbour in Bishopsgate. John Richardson, however, was living near Peckham Rye at No 16 South Street Terrace, Rye Lane, when on 13th December 1851 he and Marian were married at St Giles' Church, Camberwell. They set up home at No 30 Bishopsgate, next door to John's warehouse, and their first child, Alice Mary Louisa, was born on 21st September 1853 and baptised at St Botolph's Church, Bishopsgate. Alice was followed by Florence Emma in 1855, Joseph Hall in 1857, and John Herbert in 1859.

In about 1860 the Richardsons removed with their growing family to No 3 King's Cottages, Peckham Rye. Their new home was situated between the King's Arms public house and Warwick Place, and was just a short walk across the common to 'Sunnyside.' The Richardson's children numbered eight in the 1871 census. Their fifth child, Percy Samuel, was born at Peck-

*continued on next page*

ham Rye in 1861, Kate Annie arrived in 1863, May Bell in 1866, and their last child, Horace Cobden, was born in 1868. A growing family needs more space and to that end John Richardson later acquired a fine house nearby at No 30 Warwick Place and called it 'Lancaster House' after his place of birth. At 'Lancaster House' the Richardson family was attended by three servants. Christmas holidays and other social occasions were celebrated with the Strakers at nearby 'Sunnyside.'

Marian Richardson was indeed a remarkable Victorian woman; a devoted wife and a fond mother of eight children. She began writing poetry as a teenager, and between the years 1849 and 1865 she had penned many poems that were 'accomplished in rhythm and fresh and perceptive in detail.' The poems provide an interesting commentary on the events both public and private in which both she and her husband were involved over the years. Joseph Hall Richardson, their eldest son, mentioned his mother's artistic temperament in his autobiography *From the City to Fleet Street* published in 1927.

In spite of everyday pressures of the household and caring for a large family, Marian somehow managed to find time to spend one day in every month with her friend Mrs Isabella Fyvie Mayo (1843-1914), a successful poet and novelist who wrote under the pseudonym of Edward Garrett.

Marian's sympathies were wide and by no means rigid or straight-laced, for instance she was compassionate towards prostitutes, and her poem 'The Voice of the Fallen' was written in the persona of a prostitute.

*to be continued*

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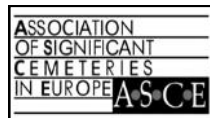
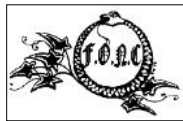
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