

FONC News

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Journal of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery



A clasped hands symbol indicating farewell or reunited in death, of which there are several examples to be seen in Nunhead Cemetery. *Photo: Ron Woollacott*

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~ INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS ~

Membership including your contact preferences: Membership of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC) 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. *Just send your request to:* **FONC Membership c/o 31 Normanby Road, LONDON, NW10 1BU** or email: membership@fonc.org.uk

Further information about FONC and Nunhead Cemetery can be found on our excellent website managed by Simon Quill at **www.fonc.org.uk**

Cemetery Opening Times: 1st April to 30th September, 8.30am - 7.00pm; 1st October to 31st October, 8.30am - 5.00pm; 1st November to 28th February, 8.30am - 4.00pm; 1st March to 31st March, 8.30am - 5.00pm. *Times are subject to change.* See notice at the cemetery entrances and Southwark Council's website. The cemetery may be closed without notice for safety reasons e.g. during very windy and stormy weather.

Publications and Enquiry Desk: The Publications and Enquiry Desk (PED) is open when FONC volunteers are in attendance. 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 cemetery tours or workdays take place. If you would like to help on an occasional Sunday please contact Jane Hart on 020 8694 6079 or by e-mail: jane.c.hart@btconnect.com.

FONC Meetings and Events: Meetings of the trustees that take place on the third Thursday of each month are currently 'virtual'. Meetings are open to members in a non-voting capacity. If you would like to 'attend' please e-mail fonc@btconnect.com for the Zoom website link. Other events are announced in *FONC News* and on the FONC website **www.fonc.org.uk**

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:

Nunhead Cemetery, Linden Grove, Nunhead, LONDON, SE15 3LP

THE SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS

Editor: Ron Woollacott - email: editorfonc@hotmail.com

Proof Reader: Gwyneth Stokes.

Contributors: Michèle Louise Burford; Jane Hart; Jeff Hart; Jim Howard; Cathy Mercer; Jeremy Partington; Roy Vickery, Bryan Welch; Garry Wiles. Uncredited text is by the editor. *The editor and FONC trustees do not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by contributors.*

Editorial:

Welcome to yet another bumper and, I trust, interesting issue of *FONC News*. With energy prices going through the roof, the cost of living rising apace, the death of our beloved Queen, and the Government in complete disarray, it is heart-warming to receive some good news as revealed below by Jane Hart.

As usual we have all the up-to-date information about developments relating to the cemetery by Jeff Hart, a great story by Jim Howard about his pickle factory ancestors who are buried at Nunhead, Bryan Welch pays a return visit to Gunnersbury Cemetery, botanist Roy Vickery writes about the daisy, FONC Chairman Jeremy Partington describes a corporate workday at Nunhead and writes about singer Kate Bush being filmed in the Anglican chapel, Garry Wiles comes across a 'notable' person whilst carrying out a grave search, and Cathy Mercer has fun playing with bricks, while Michèle Louise Burford and yours truly conclude the story of Sister Annie.



Corrections: Re *FONC News* No 157: In the Editorial the name of Ruskin's engraver should of course read Arthur Burgess *not* John Burgess. In the Camberwell Rededication Service article we incorrectly placed the new cemetery entrance gate on Rye Dale. It is actually on Underhill Road, East Dulwich. Our apologies for any confusion caused!

East Lodge Restoration Bid Success

Jane Hart breaks the good news!

FONC and Southwark Council were really pleased to be informed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) of our success in bidding for a grant for the plans to fully restore the East Lodge. The grant of over £100,000 is for the initial development phase in the NLHF funding programme. This will enable us to fully work up our delivery phase proposals, setting out the costs, resources, and timeline for the restoration work and to

continued on next page

detail the event and activities programme designed to engage the local and wider community such as school visits, exhibitions, displays and art events. We anticipate submitting the delivery phase application, in the sum of around £3 million, within the next 12 months, with every hope of success, so that restoration work on the East Lodge can commence in early 2024. In the meantime, the interim structural work, aimed at stabilising the East Lodge is now complete and no further work will be undertaken on site until the restoration work commences. The formal announcement of the grant was given in the following Press Release:

Over £100k boost for historic lodge at Nunhead Cemetery

Southwark Council and Friends of Nunhead Cemetery are delighted to announce that plans to fully restore Nunhead Cemetery's East Lodge are one step closer thanks to a £100,000 development grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The Grade II Listed East Lodge is currently on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. The project, which has received initial support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, aims to reinstate the building as a welcoming gateway to the cemetery with a new café, community space, and new base for Friends of Nunhead Cemetery and their volunteers.

A new role will also be created to lead and grow the existing events designed to engage residents across all communities, such as oral history sessions, exhibitions and art events.

Thanks to National Lottery players, the development funding will help Southwark Council and Friends of Nunhead Cemetery progress their plans to apply for a full Heritage Fund grant at a later date. The restoration of East Lodge is a council commitment within the Borough Plan and once complete, the council will have invested over £2m in the project.

Nunhead Cemetery is the largest of the 'Magnificent Seven' cemeteries established in London between 1832 and 1841. Boasting its original layout and character, it features over 44,000 memorials and is the final resting place for around 290,000 people.

With 52 acres of diverse woodland, grassland and wetland environments, the cemetery is now a haven of peace and tranquillity for both wildlife and people. It is a Local Nature Reserve and is part of the Green Chain Walk pro-

viding a respite from the surrounding urban landscape. Cllr Catherine Rose, Cabinet Member for Parks, Streets & Clean Air, said: 'Working with the local community, we are putting Nunhead Cemetery on the map as a leafy oasis steeped in history that is accessible to everyone. Restoring the East Lodge and opening it up to the community is an important part of the puzzle, so we are delighted to have the support of the Heritage Fund'.

Jeremy Partington, Chairman of Trustees at Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC), added: 'This grant will enable the realisation of FONC's forty-year aspiration to see the East Lodge restored for community use and to further promote the heritage and ecological importance of this wonderful Victorian landscape for contemporary enjoyment.'

Nunhead Cemetery News No 48

by Jeff Hart, FONC Co-ordinator

Chapel repairs stalled again

We were assured by Southwark Council that the Anglican chapel repairs would be completed by the 8th September in time to allow Open House/Heritage Open Day visitors free access to the chapel. Guess what? As a result of the delay in sourcing additional stone copings caused by a failure to authorise this in good time, the work has only now (mid-October) re-started. Hopefully, completion will be achieved by Christmas! We also hope that repairs to the Scottish Martyrs surfacing will be completed by then.

Owls accompany our bats on evening walk!

The 8th September bat walk in the cemetery led by the London Wildlife Trust (LWT) was very well attended and was rewarded not only by many bat sightings but also by the calling of several barn owls! We are very grateful to LWT for providing such expert walk leaders, and donations collected on the night were shared equally between FONC and LWT.

Film night cancelled

By popular vote at our Open Day, the public voted to show the 1992 film 'Bram Stoker's Dracula' in the cemetery on the evening of the 17th September. However, with this being during the period of State mourning for Queen

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Elizabeth II, Southwark Council withdrew permission to the Peckham and Nunhead Free Film Festival to hold the event. It is hoped that the film night will return to the cemetery next year.

Open house/heritage open days

The Open City/House event and the National Trust supported Heritage Open Days events over the weekend of the 10th/11th September were quite well attended. In particular, visitors were treated to atmospheric candlelit crypt visits led by Jeremy Partington and splendid homemade refreshments provided by several FONC volunteers and organised by Ann Coley. Thanks to all our volunteers who helped make this a very enjoyable weekend for all.

No cars in the cemetery please

It is Southwark Council's policy that no vehicles are permitted in the cemetery at any time except for pre-agreed contractor's or other vehicles required for specific purposes such as burials. Unfortunately, as the Linden Grove vehicle gates were opened up during the pandemic and whilst East Lodge contractors have been on site, and with the Limesford Road gates not being able to be properly secured, there are increasing instances of private cars driving around the cemetery, particularly at weekends. Not only is this not permitted, it is potentially dangerous. Visitors do not expect to encounter vehicles in any part of the cemetery and a recent tour party was confronted by a car coming around a bend at an inappropriate speed. Southwark are now planning to put in place controls to prevent such access in future.

New approach to social media and support from Adobe

Our Instagram co-ordinator, Zoe Ellsmore, is stepping down as she is now expecting her second child. We would like to thank Zoe for her efforts over the last couple of years and wish her and her growing family well. As a result, new FONC Trustee Oli Lomer has taken on the task of reviewing how best to promote FONC and its events on social media in future. With Oli as a Trustee comes support from his employer, Adobe, in the form of free licensing to FONC for Adobe software products (such as PDF editing) and a three-year annual grant of \$ 5000! We are very grateful both to Oli and Adobe.

HER LATE MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

FONC Trustees responded to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II by observing a moment of silence at the beginning of the 8th September bat

walk; expressing our sympathy on the Royal Family on-line Book of Condolences and on the FONC web-site and displaying a notice of sympathy at the Open House/Heritage Weekend events. With these marks of respect, we decided that other FONC events during the period of mourning should continue.

West Norwood Cemetery– An Illustrated Guide

Long-time Chairman and activist with the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, Bob Flanagan, has written this beautifully full-colour illustrated guidebook to our Magnificent Seven neighbour. In addition to a brief history of the cemetery, the book contains details of ninety-nine graves (could space have been found for one more!) each one of which is illustrated and, in most cases, includes portraits to accompany the biographies of those interred. Helpful colour-coded maps indicate where to find each memorial. West Norwood is currently delivering a NHLF project of physical works and activities development and FONC hopes to learn much from their experience in delivering our own East Lodge project.

West Norwood Cemetery - An Illustrated Guide, 116pp - £7.50 plus postage (See <https://www.fownc.org>)



FONC'S CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

7.00 pm Thursday 15th December 2022

at EL VERMUT

No 28 Nunhead Green, SE15 3QF



Following the hiatus caused by the Covid pandemic, FONC is returning this year to a face-to-face members' Christmas social! This will take place at the Spanish El Vermut wine bar which is situated at No 28 Nunhead Green SE15 3QF. Serving a wide range of wines, beers, cocktails and its speciality, vermouth, etc. FONC members will be preparing the food for the event (let us know if you can help). The event starts at 7.00pm on Thursday, 15th December and we will give a short update on East Lodge developments and will be holding our 'infamous' Christmas raffle during the evening.

Gosling Sheldrake, Pickle Manufacturer of Camberwell and Grandfather to the 'Pickle King of Xinjiang'!

by Jim Howard

Last year my son James moved house to Ivydale Road, Nunhead, with his family. We heard that the house backed on to Nunhead Cemetery - somewhere that we had never visited and knew nothing about. I grew up in West Wickham, Kent, and then lived in Canterbury. We now live in Derbyshire. I have been interested in family history for many years, and was amazed to find one day when using the website 'Deceased Online' that my great-great-grandfather Gosling Mullinger Sheldrake and his father William Mullinger Sheldrake, who had both lived in Camberwell, were both buried separately in Nunhead Cemetery! William died in 1876 and Gosling in 1916. According to the website the two graves containing other family members were situated in square 97.

We visited James a little later to see his new place, and, during the visit, went to the cemetery. We easily found square 97, but discovered it was very overgrown. We spent ages unsuccessfully searching through the dense undergrowth - we discovered later that the square was designated as a nature reserve!

A couple of days later, on a Sunday, my wife and I, together with our little grandson in his buggy, visited the cemetery, where we planned to sit and have our lunch. Near the entrance gates we came across a group of volunteers from the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery having their lunch. After speaking to them, they very kindly allowed us to take a photograph of a burial plan of the area where we had been looking. It didn't take long for me to find the two grave numbers marked on the plan.

We took our grandson back home, and told my son, who very excitedly, said, 'Come on, let's go and find them!' So I headed back again and we quickly found both the graves - which were, of course, very close to where we had been looking!



Grave of Gosling Sheldrake is uncovered

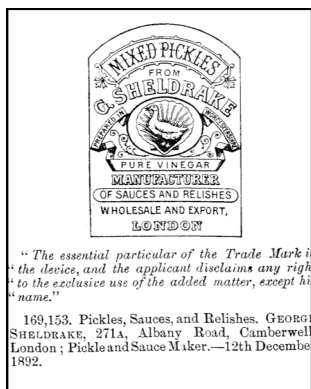
Unfortunately, as can be seen from the photograph, Gosling's gravestone is tipped forward to such an extent that it is almost flat on the ground. It is still in one piece, but the base remains in the earth, so it is firmly fixed in place. Very fortuitously, however, we were able, just, to get our mobile phones underneath and take multiple pictures from which we could see, or infer, most of the inscriptions.

We then searched for and found the other grave. Although older, this is in very good condition and we could read the inscription easily.

As far as I know, William came to live in Bermondsey from Suffolk some time before 1851, bringing his family, including Gosling, with him. In the 1871 census, Gosling described himself as a 'Pickler'. He later moved to Albany Road, Camberwell, where he had a 'manufactory' in the house next door. Eventually there was quite a large factory in Coburg Road - 'Sheldrake House'. On the web there are accounts of people who remember the pickle factory. Gosling, who sometimes traded under the name George, used the trade mark of a duck (i.e. a drake) within a



William Sheldrake's grave



shell. An old friend of mine, very kindly, gave me a small bottle that he had dug up from an old waste dump in Kent - it is exactly the same size as a traditional Worcestershire Sauce bottle - but with the shell and drake insignia. There are lots of

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All photos supplied by Jim Howard

things I don't know about Gosling - for instance I don't have a photograph of him. As far as I know, Sheldrake Pickles carried on after his death in 1916, run by his sons. I know it carried on into the 1940s. I understand that the business was eventually sold to one of the larger national manufacturers.

Incidentally, Gosling's grandson, who was my grandmother's brother, was Bertie William Sheldrake, who converted to Islam and changed his name to Khalid Sheldrake. He had an amazing life story, culminating in becoming King of the Chinese province of Xinjiang! But this is another story ... there are multiple accounts on the internet - many containing errors, You may have seen the April / May 2022 copy of *The Camberwell Clarion* with the story of 'The Man Who Would be King'.....he is NOT buried in Nunhead though!■

Return visit: Attractions in Gunnersbury Cemetery

Text and photos by Bryan Welch

I had visited Gunnersbury Cemetery before, it is a modern cemetery founded in 1929. Also known as New Kensington Cemetery, it was carved out of one corner of Gunnersbury Park in Acton, West London. There are a few graves of distinguished design and some with stories to tell. Many of the graves are of highly polished marble which is destined to defy time; the inscriptions telling how the living will never forget the deceased will remain fresh when the weeds around the grave tell a different story. Many inscriptions are in Polish, a reminder of those gallant officers and men who fought with the Allies and settled with their families in the UK after World War II and whose country was to suffer under communist oppression until the fall of the Berlin Wall.

One of my aims was to find the grave of Sir Carol Reed, the director of *The Third Man* and other films, which I could not find on my last visit. I asked a couple that were cleaning a grave if they knew where I might find his grave, they shook their heads, 'like looking for a needle in a haystack'.

However graves of distinguished people are often found adjoining the main paths, so I walked down the central axis towards the chapel, checking the graves on either side. I found Carol Reed and his second wife, Penelope by the chapel. Their headstones are unusually low, sandstone headstones with some decoration across the top. His is inscribed simply 'Carol Reed KB, Film Director, 1906-1976, In Love and gratitude always'.



Carol Reed's grave in Gunnersbury Cemetery

Beyond the chapel lay my other reason for revisiting the cemetery; to see its most impressive and moving memorial which cannot be seen from the entrance. It is a soaring black marble obelisk commemorating the massacre of 14,500 officers and men of the Polish army, of whom 4,500 were found in mass graves in the Katyn Forest. The massacre was carried out on the orders of

Stalin, but for many years the Soviet Union denied responsibility. The British Government tried hard to prevent the monument being erected as being provocative during the Cold War. It was finally dedicated in 1976 and attributed responsibility to the Soviets, which was finally admitted by President Gorbachev in 1990. The original inscription reads: 'In remembrance of 14.500 Polish prisoners of war who disappeared in 1940 from camps at Kozielsk, Starobielsk and Ostaszkow of whom 4.500 were later identified in mass graves at Katyn near Smolensk'. A further inscription was added in 1990: 'This casket contains soil from their graves murdered by the Soviet Secret Police on Stalin's orders 1940. The soil came from their graveyard 1990. As finally admitted in April 1990 by the USSR after 50 years shameful denial of the truth'.



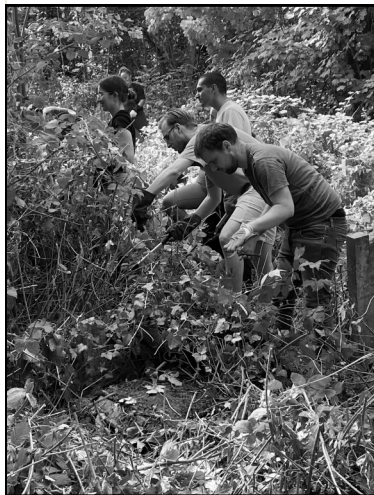
The Katyn Forest memorial

It is a sobering reminder not just of the brutality of totalitarian regimes but also of the length they will go to in suppressing the truth. ■

A Corporate Workday at Nunhead

Text and photos by Jeremy Partington

On Wednesday 17th August 2022, around two dozen volunteers from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) came to Nunhead Cemetery to undertake a corporate volunteering day. Some had travelled considerable distances to do so. A number of trustees attended



to provide supervision and guidance on tool use. The volunteers spent about five hours clearing brambles and other undergrowth from the West Hill to reveal the headstones there. The group worked very efficiently in clearing the graves and some of the volunteers showed a particular enthusiasm for removing saplings! Overall, very good progress was made as can be seen from the accompanying photographs. The work will also make it easier for the London Borough of Southwark's tree team to access trees and to remove high-level branches that are obscuring the view of St Paul's Cathedral from the cemetery. Comments and positive feedback received from the volunteers

strongly suggest that all enjoyed the day.

This August event was the first formal corporate work day in some time. The day was arranged by FONC and demonstrated how effective these vol-



unteering events can be with FONC taking on the organising instead of Southwark Council. It is intended that FONC will promote the offer of corporate volunteering days in 2023.

With luck this will lead to three or four corporate workdays - with donations being requested each year.■



Nunhead Notables discovered during grave searches

An occasional series by Garry Wiles

As well as coordinating the work on recording monument inscriptions at Nunhead Cemetery, I also carry out grave searches at the request of those looking for the final resting place of their ancestors. On occasion I come across some particularly interesting and historically significant people buried in Nunhead. I thought I would share this information with readers of *FONC News*. This is the first story in what will be an occasional and, I hope ongoing series.

I received a request in August 2020 from a family historian looking into the story of Police Constable William Cole, ‘who was awarded the Albert Medal for his actions during a bomb attack on the House of Commons in 1885. I checked the detailed grave plot records for square 3, grave number 25509, and could find nothing for William Cole, who is recorded as being buried in a common grave with 19 other individuals on the 27th November 1900.

Despite this lack of success in tracing the grave, I thought it would be worthwhile sharing a bit more of the story of extreme bravery I uncovered on the Parliament website.

This reveals that on Saturday afternoon of the 24th January 1885, PC Cole was on duty in the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft (the Crypt Chapel), when a visitor alerted him to a smoking black bag, which he saw contained dynamite and a lighted fuse. He immediately rushed up the steps with it into

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Westminster Hall, intending to deposit the device in New Palace Yard, where it could do less harm to bystanders. But before he could reach the door, a hot substance from the bag scalded his hand, causing him to drop it, and as he did so it exploded.

Cole and a colleague, PC Cox, who had rushed to assist, caught the full force of the blast and were thrown into the large crater torn into the floor of the Hall. Two other devices exploded that same day: one in the empty chamber of the House of Commons and another at the Tower of London. The explosions were the work of Fenians (Irish nationalists who opposed British rule in Ireland) who had been conducting similar attacks at other public buildings in the capital.

PC Cole's prompt action had clearly saved the lives of bystanders and had saved Westminster Hall from extensive damage. The Home Secretary, William Harcourt recognised Cole's gallantry in 'knowing full well the terrible risk he incurred', and immediately sought the Queen's approval for him to receive the Albert Medal. The award was duly gazetted just a week after the occurrence.

Cole, who had been promoted to sergeant, was presented with the Albert Medal on the 26th March by the Home Secretary at an impressive gathering in Westminster Hall attended by the Prime Minister, W E Gladstone, the Speaker (Arthur Wellesley Peel), and many members of the Lords and Commons.

Unfortunately, Cole's injuries were severe, and he lived most of his remaining years virtually as an invalid, nursed devotedly by his wife. He was pensioned out of the Force in 1886 and died aged 60 on the 21st November 1900 after undergoing further surgery at Westminster Hospital. ■

Running up that Hill - at Nunhead Cemetery?

by Jeremy Partington

As a result of its prominence in the Netflix series *Stranger Things*, 'Running Up that Hill' (A Deal with God) by Kate Bush finally reached the No 1 spot in the charts in June this year, a full 37 years after it was first released. As you might expect, this is a record (pun not intended!) from a single's release to it reaching the top spot. 'Running Up that Hill' was Kate Bush's first Number 1 since 'Wuthering Heights' in 1978. But perhaps

more surprisingly, there was a rumour that Kate Bush has a connection with Nunhead Cemetery. Trustees did a bit of digging and it turns out to be true.

Although we may never know if Miss Bush took to running up the hill in the cemetery itself, what has come to trustees' attention is that Kate Bush visited the cemetery the year after her first No1. A Kate Bush Christmas Special from 1979 shown by the BBC features a video sequence with Kate Bush that was filmed at the Anglican chapel at Nunhead. In it she is singing 'The Wedding List' that was released on the 1980 album *Never for Ever*. The video very clearly shows the interior of the Anglican chapel with the participants - the wedding couple and the vicar - standing at the top of the steps. This is followed by film of the groom lying on the steps of a grime encrusted chapel having been shot with Kate the distraught bride - yes, it's a Kate Bush Christmas Special! Much of the rest of the video and the programme take place in the studio. Despite being for the festive season, death is a theme for several of the tracks performed through the show.

The full programme is available on YouTube or via an internet search engine. If you wish to watch over the festive season, keeping an eye out for the Nunhead sequence, 'The Wedding List' features at about 20 minutes in the middle of the programme.■

Remarkable Women buried in Nunhead Cemetery No 7 (Part 2)

Sister Annie - the Angel of Surrey Chapel

by Ron Woollacott & Michèle Louise Burford

Because the Surrey Chapel could not afford to pay a steward, and was unable to find a volunteer to serve every night behind the bar of the Working Men's Institute, Sister Annie undertook the task herself, and cheerfully added this to her numerous duties. When the men, who she called her 'boys', left their games of draughts or billiards and gathered at the bar for their cup of hot coffee, milk or minerals, they would often tell her their latest funny story just to hear her hearty laughter. When the accommodation became inadequate, Sister Annie suggested a small disused factory that was nearby should be acquired and made into a new and larger institute. With a loan from the Chapel Aid Association the project was quickly and success-

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fully carried out. The new Institute was opened by Sir Albert Spicer (1847-1934), supported by the Right Hon Lord Southwark, the Mayor of Southwark and other dignitaries. A few days later, Sister Annie surprised the minister of the Surrey Chapel by asking, ‘What about the young women? Can nothing be done for them in the way of providing an institute or parlour?’ It was sometime after her

death, however, that a commodious classroom was fitted out as a Girls’ Parlour, through the generosity of her devoted friend, Dr Morrison, a lady doctor of the Blackfriars Dispensary.

Although she was unmarried, Sister Annie possessed the motherly instinct: to her babies were a great delight, all were beautiful and precious. She assisted two of her friends, Mrs Dupe and Miss Reid, in starting the Lambeth Crèche, in which poor working women could leave their children for the day while they went to work. It began as just two rooms in a back street but soon became one of the largest and ‘most beneficent’ institutions in Lambeth, of which HRH Princess Christian (1846-1923) became president.

Every summer, Sister Annie undertook the duty of seeing off at the railway station the sick and ailing children of the Poor Children’s Mission, to spend a fortnight’s holiday in the countryside.

In 1907, after 14 years of arduous and incessant labour, Sister Annie’s health broke down and she was told to take at least three months rest. Her dear friend Mrs Daymond persuaded her to go with her to ‘Pax,’ her seaside home at Walmer in Kent. At the end of a fortnight she felt much better and, despite all the protestations of her friend, she returned to work, but her strength was waning, and she was again feeling the strain, nevertheless, she continued to fulfil all her duties.

On the 22nd February 1911 Sister Annie was interviewed by another life-long friend, Miss Jennie Street, who was editor of the *Sunday School Times*, and she readily replied to her friend’s questions. Nearing the end of the interview she said she felt quite unwell and gradually lost consciousness. She



Surrey Chapel in Blackfriars Road

passed away on Thursday 1st March 1911.

On the 4th March, the day of her funeral, the Surrey Chapel was crowded, and Blackfriars Road was filled with thousands of people, requiring a large number of police to keep the tram lines clear for tramcars. Among those present at the funeral service, in addition to the officers and members of the church, were the Right Hon Lord Southwark, representatives of Southwark Borough Council and the Board of Guardians, the Women's University Settlement, and many others. In the afternoon a large gathering surrounded the graveside at Nunhead Cemetery to which the coffin of unpolished oak with brass mountings, was conveyed in an open hearse followed by carriages containing Sister Annie's family and representatives of several organi-



Sister Annie in 1893

sations. She was laid to rest in a private grave.

No 30232 Square 132.

Her closest friend, the Reverend J Tolefree Parr said of her: 'The unanimous opinion of all who knew her was, that she was a most remarkable woman.'

Six months after she was laid to rest a headstone was erected over her grave bearing the inscription: IN LOVING AND GRATEFUL MEMORY OF SISTER ANNIE *for seventeen years Sister of the People, entered rest March 1st, 1911. Strong in faith, radiant in disposition, tender in sympathy, faithful in counsel, untiring and utterly unselfish in labour. She lived and died for the poor.*



Sister Annie's gravestone
Photo: courtesy Jeff Hart

Sources: Memorial inscription; burial records, Census returns, 1861-1881; *South London Press* 10th March 1911; James Tolefree Parr, *The Angel of Blackfriars, or the Sister with the Shining Face*, January 1913, 2nd edition January 1914; Ron Woollacott, *More Nunhead Notables*, 1995, p.26.

Playing with Bricks

Text and photos by Cathy Mercer

Central London may use Portland Stone but our suburbs are built of brick. My mother is Swiss and came to London in 1955 to learn English. She often says that she was pleasantly surprised at how pretty suburban London was and still is - a warm red colour due to all the brick houses. In her home town of Zurich houses are usually plastered.

Bricks are so common that we take them for granted, but they were and still are the standard building material for houses in London: in the main because London is built on clay. Often the London clay was extracted and fired on site, as happened in Lewisham Park, on Lewisham High Road, where the square's gardens are lower than street level because of clay extraction. Interesting finds from London clay even gave names to the area where they were found in Ladywell, with street names like Fossil and Sandrock Road. Today houses are often built of concrete blocks but walls are still skinned with a single layer of bricks to give them a traditional look.



fig 1. Houses on Normanby Road,
Dollis Hill, Brent

It's easy to underestimate the complexity of building with bricks but, once we started looking, we found a range of brick patterns, giving brick walls variety. On our own Edwardian street, we were surprised to spot subtle but attractive patterns of bricks in relief, with diagonals contrasting to the standard horizontals and verticals of the house, the relief creating a small shadow to outline the pattern (figure 1). We only noticed this because a neighbour kindly picked out the pattern in a different colour paint, which made it stand out, as can be seen when comparing it to its monochrome neighbour. Bricks are very robust and brick decorations are low cost and low maintenance.

The Victorian estates of Camberwell have many fine Victorian houses, with their brick walls pricked out with fine patterning in brick (figure 2). Here the window and porch arches have been framed with a fine outline of contrasting red and yellow bricks, the porch also ‘supported’ by fine red brick pilasters, all picked out with white stucco key stones and capitals. So not only the colours but also the arrangement of the bricks and other materials contrast to the regular horizontal layout of the bricks in the main walls. On closer inspection one sees that two lines of brick have been laid at sharp angles the whole width of the house, separating the ground and first floor and creating a narrow frieze also under the roof line. The upper lines of brick tiles create evenness, while, on the lower line, the shadows on the many angled brick play with the light, creating an attractive pattern, again low cost and low maintenance.

We see similar use of bricks for patterning in addition to their structural function in older and newer buildings. Small cottages in the old centre of Chesham, Buckinghamshire, at the end of the Metropolitan Line, illustrate this well (figure 3). Again the bricks are also used to frame the windows with a shallow arch and to flank the doors with columns rising up to the roof line. These early Victorian cottages have



fig 2. Brick patterns on a Victorian house in Camberwell



fig 3. flint and bricks of various colours on house in Chesham

continued on next page



fig 4. Brick patterns on a 1920s mansion block, East End Road, East Finchley

ideal for a 1920s block of flats in East Finchley (figure 4). Here we can see the familiar brick pilasters flanking the main door and angled bricks framing the grand arch of the stair window. It is interesting also to see the small patterns on the bays, under the windows on each floor - patterns of bricks laid in squares in different directions, picked out again in shallow relief. The bricks used in the main walls are also gently patterned in a variety of dark and lighter reds.

The same reasons surely account for the use of brick patterns on late 1990s blocks of flats in nearby Dollis Hill (figure 5). Here

walls of flint, framed by brick. On closer inspection you can see that the bricks are varied in colour—light and dark greys and reds. Once you start looking for this mottled effect, you find it's very common, even on modern blocks, creating a simple but effective richness to the wall, missing when monochrome brick is used.

On the wall of the right hand cottage you can also see an example of Flemish bond, where headers (short end of brick) and footers (long end) are laid next to each other in a pattern. This not only strengthens the wall but also creates an interesting pattern with brick faces of different length.

Gentle effectiveness, low cost and low maintenance makes brick patterning



fig 5. Brick patterns on small blocks of flats on Dudden Hill Lane, Dollis Hill

the light yellow bricks of the main walls are enhanced by lines of warmer red brick - in various thicknesses, with the bricks often laid vertically to contrast with the usual horizontal lines. The red also complements the colour of the roof tiles and tiles used to decorate the mansard windows. The slight curve over the gentle arch of several windows is also very effective.

I hope this short piece will help you look at brick walls in your own neighbourhood to see how designers and builders have used colour, angle, line, position and Flemish bond to enhance a range of domestic buildings across London and beyond over the last few centuries, often in similar styles which nevertheless enhance their buildings with rhythm and variety. ■

Cemetery Flora: Daisy, *Bellis perennis*

by Roy Vickery, roy@plant-lore.com

The common, or lawn, daisy is widespread throughout Britain and Ireland, and is a wild flower which most, if not all, of us can recognise. Perhaps surprisingly, such a well-known plant has gathered approximately 50 local names, including bairnwort in Yorkshire, golland in Derbyshire, and silver penny in Somerset.

Many people remember making or teaching their grandchildren to make daisy chains, slitting the flower-stalk of a daisy and inserting a second daisy through the slit. Thus in 1985 a Nottingham woman recalled: ‘As children we used to make endless daisy chains to wear round our necks and in our hair.’ In her 1976 *Dictionary of Fairies* the folklorist Katharine Briggs: ‘It is sometime said that....dressing children in daisy chains and coronals comes from a desire to protect them against being carried off by the fairies. Daisies are a sun symbol and therefore protective magic.’ However, it’s unlikely that many present-day folklorists will support such speculations.

Other people will recall pulling the outer white petals off a daisy flower to foretell who, or when, they would marry. According to an Honor Oak woman in 2016: ‘I remember pulling each individual petal from a daisy whilst chanting ‘He loves me, he loves me not’, rather like ‘tinker, tailor, soldier ...’ with cherry stones, or ‘soldier brave, sailor blue, dashing airman’

continued on next page

Between 1903 and 1958 daisies were associated with Empire Day celebrations. On this day, 24th May (Queen Victoria's birthday), in Bridport, Dorset in the 1920s: '[School] lessons were excused and all sang patriotic songs - the Town Mayor and Mayoress and governors came; all the girls wore daisy chains.'

It was said that daisies grew in every country of the empire. Ena Chamberlain in her autobiography, *29 Inman Road*, recalled that in the 1920s Earlsfield children would visit the rich people who lived near Wandsworth Common and ask if they could gather daisies from their lawns. In those days it was thought that: The daisy is a symbol of our greatness. Indeed it was. The golden centre was us - Great Britain; the petals were the colonies, absolutely inseparable and dependent on us.

Similarly in 1996 at North Shields a 77-year-old correspondent recalled: 'My sister and I would rise early to collect dew-fresh "button-hole daisies", feeling proud as we walked to school waving a Union Jack.'

It was widely believed that spring had arrived when a number of daisy flowers could be covered by one foot. However, there appears to be no consensus concerning how many daisies were needed. The first known record of this belief in 1857 suggested that 12 were necessary. Unfortunately this was recorded from an 'old cottager', but unlocalised. Other records suggest that as few as three flowers were needed. The number seems to have varied throughout the country, apparently regardless of local geology and climate.

In 1914 it was recalled that in Dorset a cure for boils was: 'Find a place where you can cover seven or nine daisies with your foot. Then pick and eat them.'

Elsewhere, in Cumbria late in the seventeenth century daisy was valued because 'it helpeth bones to knit together again', and on Colonsay in the Inner Hebrides early in the twentieth century it was 'one of the principal ingredients of healing ointments.' However, by the late twentieth century it seems that uses of daisies in folk medicine are forgotten. ■



Daisy: *Bellis Perennis*
Photo: Roy Vickery:

Desecration still happens

by a FONC member (name withheld)

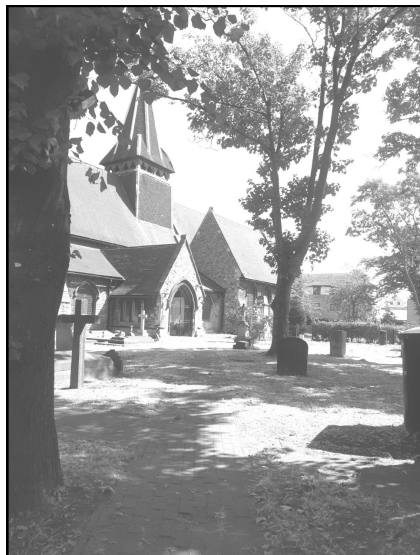
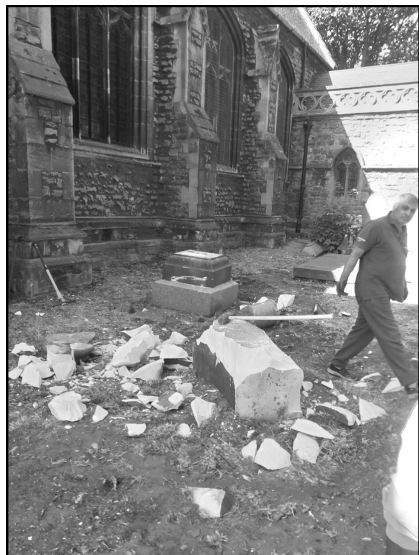
These appalling photographs (see this page and page 24) were taken recently at Emmanuel Church in Forest Gate, East London. The churchyard falls within a conservation area and the church is listed Grade II, yet Newham council not only allowed the desecration to happen, they actually donated £20,000 towards the cost. The beautiful churchyard was widely regarded as being one of the prettiest in East London. When confronted by a local resident the vicar said the gravestones 'made the church look abandoned' and that 'children can run into them'.



Gravestones being broken up in Emmanuel Churchyard, Forest Gate, East London

When attempting to crowd fund (later abandoned through lack of support) an on-line comment records the vicar as dismissing the churchyard merely as 'a place littered with old graves'. When confronted the vicar told the local resident that the graves would be laid flat so that the inscriptions could be preserved, but in fact the gravestones were smashed up, and one hundred and forty years of local and family history went into skips for land-fill. Newham Council planners thought it quite in order not to invite public comments, deferring the decision to the Church of England authorities. That such sanctioned vandalism is still taking place is shocking, and the like of which we all thought ended decades ago. Only one third of the churchyard now remains, the rest

continued on next page



Emmanuel Church, Forest Gate, East London

being what can best be described as a sterile vanity project. We should condemn all of this destruction, and if this information is passed on to friends and other networks it can only help draw attention to this terrible action and hope we shall never see the likes again.

NB. Emmanuel Church, Forest Gate, is a Church of England church. It was built in the Decorated Gothic variant of the neo-Gothic style in 1852 to designs by Sir George Gilbert Scott and a new parish was formed for it from parts of the parishes of All Saints Church, West Ham and St Mary Magdalene's Church, East Ham. A north aisle was added in 1890. It was bomb damaged during the Blitz and later repaired. It was listed Grade II in 1984. *Editor*

FONC POLICIES

Over the years FONC has adopted a number of policy statements. The Trustees would like to remind members that some of these apply to the activities of members on site and when representing FONC. In particular, policies regarding child protection and vulnerable adults have been updated. Please familiarise yourselves with these policies by visiting the FONC website at <https://www.fonc.org.uk/fonc-policies/> If you have any questions regarding these policy statements, do please contact the FONC Co-ordinator.

Reminiscences of a Local Historian (1)

by Ron Woollacott

My love of local history began in 1947 when I went to my new school, a former board school in Southampton Way, Camberwell, called Dovedale Manor. Despite its posh name it was one of the new Secondary Modern Schools created soon after the Second World War.

The schoolmasters at Dovedale Manor were keen on local history, and were proud of the fact that Robert Browning (1812-1889), the English poet, who wrote *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* and *Home Thoughts from Abroad*, had been born at Cottage Green, directly opposite the school gates. When Robert Browning was born, Camberwell was a village in Surrey and Southampton Way was known as Rainbow Lane. The Browning family later removed to a larger house along the street, before relocating to Telegraph Cottage at Hatcham, now known as New Cross. I also learned of other famous local personalities of the past that once had connections with Camberwell, including, Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774), the author of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, who spent some time as an usher at a Peckham school (Peckham was a hamlet in the Ancient Parish of Camberwell); John Ruskin (1819-1900), the art critic and social reformer who lived on Denmark Hill; Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), the statesman who was born in a house in Camberwell Grove; and Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), the composer of *Spring Song*, originally entitled *Camberwell Green*, during his brief sojourn in Camberwell.

I married Maureen, a Nunhead girl, in 1958, and we shared a house with her grandmother in Linden Grove, Nunhead. The Victorian house was almost opposite the main gates to Nunhead Cemetery and just a few doors away from the yards and workshops of Daniels the stonemasons. I immediately began to take an interest in the history of the cemetery and made copious notes about the place and some of the more interesting people buried there.

Of course, I knew of the cemetery before marrying Maureen, because I had attended the funeral of my grandmother there in 1951 and that of my grandfather in 1956. In those days the Anglican chapel, now a historic shell, was still very much in use. During my many visits to the cemetery I came across two Woollacott memorials, but neither family appears to have been connected with mine.

to be continued

Friends of Nunhead Cemetery Tour Programme 2023

All tours start promptly on Sundays at 2.00pm (except Open Day and Open House or as indicated below). *(tbc)* = to be confirmed. Free of charge but donations welcome.

15th January Military connections tour
29th January General tour
12th February Music hall tour
26th February General tour
12th March International Women's Day tour
19th March (1) Woodland trail tour and (2) Crypt/chapel visits
26th March General tour
16th April Cemetery symbols tour
30th April General tour
7th May Second World War tour
20th May (Saturday) 11.00am to 5.00pm Open Day: tours, and crypt/chapel visits
27th May (Saturday) Crypt/chapel visits
28th General tour
11th June Woodland trail tour
18th June Waterloo anniversary event
25th June General tour
9th July Crypt/chapel visits
16th July Military connections tour
23rd July Cemetery symbols tour
30th July General tour
13th August Music hall artistes tour
20th August Nunhead poets tour
27th August (Bank Holiday weekend) General tour
7th September (Thursday) 7.00pm LWT Bat sighting walk (tbc)
9th and 10th September (Saturday and Sunday) 1.00pm to 5.00pm both days Open House and Heritage Open Days: general tours, crypt/chapel visits
17th September Woodland trail tour
24th September General tour
8th October Cemetery symbols tour
15th October Black History Month tour
22nd October LWT fungi tour (tbc)
28th October (Saturday) Month of the Dead tours (pre-bookings only) (tbc)
29th October General tour
12th November First World War walk
26th November General tour
10th December Woodland trail tour
27th December (Wednesday) General tour

~~~~ DIARY DATES ~~~~

GENERAL GUIDED TOURS OF THE CEMETERY *take place on the last Sunday in every month starting at 2.00pm.* Meet near the flint circle just inside the main gates in Linden Grove. Tours take between one and a half to two hours. The publications and information desk will be present, weather and volunteers permitting.

WOODLAND TRAIL TOUR: *Sunday 11th December 2022 at 2.00pm.* Meet your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle just inside the main cemetery gates in Linden Grove.

FONC'S CHRISTMAS SOCIAL: *Thursday 15th December 2022 at 7.00pm.* This will take place at EL VERMUT, 28 Nunhead Green, SE15 3QF - *details on page 7.*

MILITARY CONNECTIONS TOUR: *Sunday 15th January 2023 at 2.00pm.* Meet your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle just inside the main cemetery gates in Linden Grove.

MUSIC HALL ARTISTES TOUR: *Sunday 12th February 2023 at 2.00pm.* Meet your guide for the afternoon at the flint circle just inside the main cemetery gates in Linden Grove.

PRACTICAL WORKDAYS *take place on the first Sunday in the month from 10.00am 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.*

MONUMENT INSCRIPTION RECORDING: Transcribing the inscriptions in Nunhead Cemetery is an important and ongoing task. We meet at the FONC portacabin near the Linden Grove entrance. For further information and timings and how to volunteer please contact Garry Wiles at foncinscriptions@gmail.com or by mobile phone 077 999 71 597. *Appropriate clothing and sturdy footwear is essential.*

Please note: *All tours and events are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. If possible up-to-date information concerning any changes will be announced in FONC News or on our website www.fonc.org.uk and notice boards in Nunhead Cemetery.*

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

or email: editorfonc@hotmail.com

The deadline for letters and articles for the next issue is the 21st January 2023

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

FONC's website address is: www.fonc.org.uk

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