A photograph of a cemetery. In the foreground, there are lush green ferns and other plants. In the middle ground, there are several large, weathered stone monuments. One monument in the center is a tall, rectangular column with a decorative top. To its right is another monument with a circular emblem on its face. In the background, there are more trees and a person standing near a monument, partially obscured by shadows. The overall scene is dappled with sunlight and shadows, suggesting a forested or shaded cemetery.

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NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Number 15  
April 2016

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**Registered Office**

Highgate Cemetery

Swains Lane, London N6 6PJ

**Telephone** 020 8340 1834

**Web** [www.highgatecemetery.org](http://www.highgatecemetery.org)

**Company Number** 3157806

**Charity Number** 1058392

**Highgate Cemetery****Newsletter****Volume 2 Number 15**

**April 2016**

*Editor: Lizzie Wells*

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# CHAIRMAN'S NOTE



**W**elcome to the first issue of the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Newsletter for 2016, freshly redesigned by Lizzie Wells to take advantage of the cheaper postage rates for A5 size publications. I am sad to report though that, as Lizzie has decided to step down after an impressive 15 issues, this is also her last. Remarkably, she has been editor, designer and chief correspondent, combining her deep knowledge of the Cemetery and those buried in it with a great nose for a good story and the ability to tell it well. We have been the fortunate beneficiaries of her efforts and we hope that she will continue to write for us in the future. Many thanks, Lizzie!

The challenge is now to fill her shoes, so if you have ideas, please let us know. We are keen that the Newsletter should continue to reflect the diversity of interests of our members and volunteers, whether they be history, biography, ecology, commemoration or burial.

As you will read elsewhere in this issue, much has been going on at Highgate Cemetery. Principally, focusing on the East Cemetery, we have been improving paths and maintaining walls - as many visitors and grave owners have noted approvingly. We are now working on plans to provide regular access through the Chester Road gate, a proposal well-received by those who entered this way when we held our Neighbour Day at the end of February. We have more ideas about how to improve access to the cemetery which we will feature in future issues of the Newsletter. For this we rely on the continuing support of staff, volunteers and members, for which we sincerely thank you.

With best wishes

Ian Kelly



*IMAGES top above and page 5: a female Nathusius' pipistrelle; above left: installing bat boxes in 2013; above right: Ian Holt lowering the bat box. Photos by Hugh Warwick and Pennie Dixie*

# BATS

## Nathusius' pipistrelle found at Highgate Cemetery

Report by Huma Pearce,  
Consultant Ecologist



The collaboration between Highgate Cemetery and the London Bat Group began nearly four years ago with a habitat survey. It was found that although the secondary woodland offered only limited roosting opportunities, the catacombs were suitable hibernation roosts. Static detector surveys recorded no fewer than nine species on the site with the common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) being recorded most often as well as frequent soprano pipistrelles (*P. pygmaeus*) and Daubenton's bats (*Myotis daubentonii*). Nathusius' pipistrelles (*P. nathusii*) were noted in low numbers during the months of April, June and August.

LBG and the Friends of Highgate Cemetery agreed to fund a bat box scheme and, in May 2013, ten groups of five boxes were installed. Eight are in the West Cemetery and two in the East. The purpose of the boxes was two-fold: to enhance the roosting opportunities on the site and to provide a means of monitoring the bat community. In order to avoid disturbing breeding or hibernating bats, the boxes would be inspected only during the Spring and Autumn.

Bats were first recorded in September 2014, when five soprano pipistrelles were discovered. So far none have been found during the Spring checks.

The most recent box check was carried out in September 2015 and provided an unexpected discovery. A single female Nathusius' pipistrelle was found roosting within one of the boxes. (We also found five more female soprano pipistrelles). This discovery was exciting because Nathusius' pipistrelle was first recorded in Great Britain in the Shetland Isles in 1940 and until recently, since most records correlated with the spring and autumn, it was considered to be a migrant winter visitor. Moreover, migration typically occurs along river systems, with feeding activity focused on large water bodies associated with the river catchments. The discovery of a female in so urbanised a site as Highgate Cemetery, at a distance from any significant water courses, came as a great surprise.

Results from the Spring 2016 box checks will be of great interest to the Friends of Highgate Cemetery as well as to the London Bat Group.

William Friese-Greene is world famous as a pioneer of cinematography.  
Sir Edwin Lutyens is world famous as an architect.  
Did Lutyens design Friese-Greene's monument?

## THE LUTYENS FRIESE-GREENE MYSTERY

*By Ian Dungavell, Chief Executive*

Nothing can prepare you for the sight of the memorial in Highgate Cemetery East to William Friese-Greene (1855-1921). He was a pioneer of cinematography and the design of his monument is often attributed to the greatest British architect since Wren, Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Lutyens was an expert in memorials, his best known being the Cenotaph in Whitehall and the massive arch at Thiepval on the Somme, but he also did a number of gravestones for private individuals.

So it is astonishing to find that Friese-Greene's memorial looks nothing like the rest of Lutyens's work. An expert would fail to pick it out in a line-up. Did Lutyens actually design it? On visual evidence alone, the answer is not just 'No', but that it is inconceivable. Yet many sources, including even the Pevsner architectural guide, attribute it to him. Nevertheless, you won't find mention of it in any book on Lutyens.

Felix Barker in our own book, *Highgate Cemetery: Victorian Valhalla*, was rightly circumspect: 'Lutyens is credited with designing his monument, a Gothic

pinnacle that seems neither typical of his work nor particularly appropriate to the pioneer of the cinema'. It is curiously old-fashioned in style, and would have been more at home in the 1880s.

The origin of the story is probably the laudatory and rather unreliable biography, *Friese-Greene: Close-up of an inventor*. Written by Ray Allister (the pseudonym of Muriel Forth), it was published in 1948 and has a photograph of the memorial captioned 'Monument by Sir Edwin Lutyens in Highgate Cemetery'. If we delve back a little further in time we can see how this mistake came about.

In a 1926 biographical article in *The Photographic Journal*, Will Day wrote that Friese-Greene's 'mortal remains were laid to rest in a grave, the site of which was selected by Sir Edwin Lutyens ... and a fitting monument, erected by subscriptions raised entirely from the motion picture industry, has been erected on the spot.' Note that Day credits Lutyens with selecting the spot, but not with having designed the memorial. A careless reader could easily elide the two.

Day was a reliable source. A supplier of film equipment with premises in Soho, he was one of the best known figures in the early days of the British film industry. He bankrolled Friese-Greene during the latter's lifetime and was the organiser of the industry appeal to look after his widow and two sons and which paid for his grave and monument.

But why was Lutyens involved? He was a household name, a member of the Royal Academy, knighted in 1918 and awarded the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture in 1921. Royal Academicians were often asked to advise on design matters, but how could Lutyens's co-operation have been secured so quickly between Friese-Greene's death on 5 May and his funeral on 13 May? Perhaps Lutyens was an admirer, although there is no record of that.

More likely it was a family connection: Day's full name was Wilfred Ernest Lytton Day, and Lutyens's wife, Emily, was a Lytton. Day would have been confident that Friese-Greene's fame would mean that donations in his memory would flow but, in the end, there was not enough money in the Friese-Greene Memorial Fund for a Lutyens monument.

Lutyens was not a cheap architect and Will Day himself was not wealthy, at least by the time of his death in 1936. His own grave is right next to Friese-Greene's and is a much more humble thing.



# THE WARNE-POTTER CONNECTION

## THE TALE OF TWO GOOD WOMEN

LOUISA JANE WARNE  
AND  
BEATRIX POTTER HEELIS

BY  
LIZZIE WELLS

This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Beatrix Potter. Although she is not buried in Highgate, we can commemorate her strong association with the cemetery.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Frederick Warne & Co was one of this country's leading publishers of children's picture books. His family vault lies at the top right-hand side of the short path facing the Morgan mausoleum. The stone and its leaded inscriptions are well preserved and calculations around the relevant dates of the family members commemorated there add up to a very sad story.

In 1902 Warnes undertook the publication of Beatrix Potter's first children's picture book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. The task of editing 'the bunny book', as it was irreverently known among the staff, was given to Norman, the youngest of the three Warne sons. *Peter Rabbit* turned out to be an unimaginable success and three years later, having worked ever more closely together to produce four more titles, 37-year-old Norman Warne became engaged to be married to 39-year-old Beatrix Potter.



As well as being an experienced publisher, Norman was a skilled amateur carpenter and he had made a splendid dolls' house for his niece, Winifred. Since Beatrix drew and painted only places and things which were known to her, they decided to use the dolls' house as the setting for the next book, *The Tale of Two Bad Mice*.

While working on the book, much of Beatrix's time was passed in Wales, on holiday with her parents. She received an excited letter from Norman telling her that he had been to Harrods to buy dolls' house food. The parcel would be sent direct to her so that she could make some drawings. The unusual humour in the book – the two mice are squatters in the dolls' house and are driven to fury by the discovery that an apparently delicious ham is made of plaster, the fish is glued to its dish and the lead cutlery crumples up on use – suggests that author and publisher were enjoying an ever-closer relationship with each other and perhaps seeing in the dolls' house a pre-figuring of their own future domestic happiness.

They were engaged for less than a month before Norman died of leukaemia. Beatrix came to London to the funeral and continued to visit the grave and to take an interest in its maintenance for several years. The superb Potter biography by Linda Lear tells how, with her subsequent marriage to a Lake District solicitor and the purchase of Hill Top Farm, she would become recognised as one of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century's most accomplished, independent and forceful women. Beatrix Potter Heelis died childless at the age of 77 and, after a private cremation – 'no mourning, no flowers, and no letters, please' – her ashes were scattered on a hillside near her home.

By contrast, little is known of Frederick Warne's widow, Louisa Jane, who so nearly became Beatrix's mother-in-law. After Norman's death she remained alone with her unmarried daughter in the family house in Bedford Square awaiting her own demise. The family headstone records that when she died at the age of 83, she had been pre-deceased by four of her six sons.

#### IMAGES

*Facing page: The Warne memorial. The name of the eldest son, Frederick William, who died at the age of 17 in Hanover, is on a separate plaque at the base of the stone.*

*Right: the title page of one of Warne's most popular series, *The Baby's Books*, illustrated by Walter Crane.*



# NURSED BY A LILLY

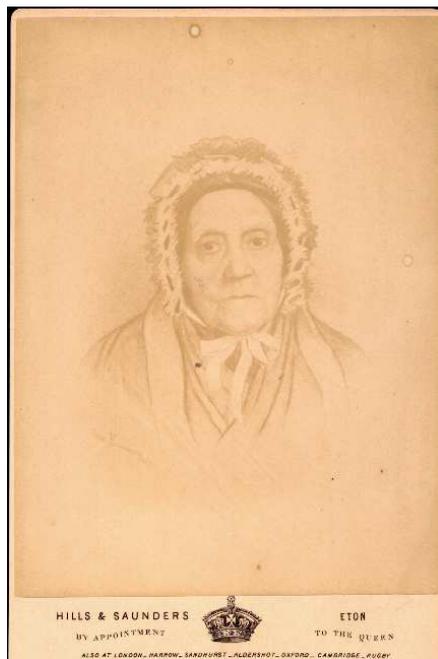
The Story of Queen Victoria's  
Monthly Nurse

by Stephen Sowerby

Within a month of her wedding to Prince Albert in 1840, Queen Victoria was expecting her first child. Her personal physician, Dr Sir James Clark, called upon a specialist obstetrician, Dr Charles Locock, to deliver the child. Mrs Mary Dixon Lilly was chosen as the midwife to assist at the birth. She was also to be the monthly nurse for the following 'lying in' stage.

Midwifery did not become a recognised profession in the UK until 1936 and the commonly held image of practitioners was embodied by Dickens's Sarah Gamp - idle, drunken and dishonest. Mrs Lilly was made of different stuff. She is mentioned several times in the Queen's journal: *'took leave of good Mrs Lilly today, who really is an excellent woman, so attentive, kind and discreet'...* and again *'Mrs Lilly, my monthly nurse, ... is a really excellent, sensible woman, & an admirable nurse, possessing great qualities, such as quietness, presence of mind & self possession, which are invaluable for a person...'*

Mrs Lilly was already 50, with two grown-up children, when first employed by the Queen. Her strong Christian faith would have appealed to Her Majesty and is attested by two items still in the



*The 90th Birthday Portrait*

family's possession: her certificate of baptism, and her commonplace book in which between 1820 and 1862, she filled the pages with religious musings and prayers.

The success of the first royal birth set the precedent for the subsequent eight with Dr Locock presiding alongside Mrs Lilly. Hers was the ceremonial duty of presenting the royal baby to the assembled officers of state in the adjoining rooms. Her royal duties reflected a significant change in the history of childbirth. By the time the Queen came to her eighth pregnancy she had made the controversial decision to accept the offer of chloroform to ease her pain. Queen Victoria later noted in her journal that the experience had been *'soothing, quieting and delightful beyond measure'* and she used it again for her final birth in 1857.



*The English Rose and Bud*

The population at large kept a close eye on Mrs Lilly's activities; it was always known that a royal birth was imminent when she appeared alongside the Queen. Her attendance at the first royal birth was commemorated in a cartoon captioned '*The English Rose and Bud Nursed by a Lily on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1840*'.

Mrs Lilly was well paid, her professional payments varying between £100 to £300 for each attendance. She also received various small gifts including a lock of hair from each royal baby, a signet ring engraved with a lily and other jewellery items and artworks.

Mrs Lilly was born Mary Dixon Gunning in the parish of St Giles in the Fields on 12 August 1790. She married James Lilly at the English Church in Dundee at the age of 23 and soon after the births of their two children, the couple moved to 44 Upper John Street, Westminster. At that time James was appointed Doorkeeper 3<sup>rd</sup> Class at the House of Lords.

The family eventually settled at 12 Orchard Place, Camberwell New Road, Lambeth, where they were able to retain the services of their own live-in servant.



*A gift to commemorate the Investiture of the Prince of Wales*

It was from this address that a royal carriage would collect Mrs Lilly and convey her to the Palace. As a further sign of the family's social standing their son, John Henry, obtained a post as an Inspector with Her Majesty's Customs.

Mrs Lilly's husband died in May 1862 at the age of 70, having risen from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Doorkeeper at the House of Lords. On his father's death, John Henry Lilly purchased two adjacent plots at Highgate Cemetery. The interconnected neo-gothic headstones are located towards the bottom left-hand side, facing north, of the Dickens path.

The final years of Mrs Lilly's life were spent living with her son, including a period residing in Lancashire where he had been posted as Inspector General of the Liverpool Customs Establishment in 1864. The family then moved back to London in 1876 after John Lilly was promoted to Surveyor General of the London Customs Establishment. John's promotion enabled the family to move into a grand suburban home at Elderslie Villa, Thurlow Park Road, Lower Norwood, where they maintained a cook and a housekeeper.



*The Grave Lease*



*The Headstone of the Lilley Family Grave\**

It is gratifying to see that the Queen did not forget her midwife after her services were no longer required and continued, largely through her dresser Mrs Annie McDonald, to correspond with Mrs Lilly and later with John, after his mother grew too infirm to write. The Queen provided Mrs Lilly with regular updates on the royal children including photographs of them at formative ages. The written evidence suggests that Mrs Lilly rarely saw the Queen in person after the birth of Princess Beatrice. Their final meeting, which appears to have taken place in March 1877, was nostalgically recorded by Victoria in her journal after presenting Mrs Lilly with an inscribed set of books on *The Life of the Prince Consort*. She wrote: *'Saw my dear good old Mrs Lilly, who is now 87. Her face is unaltered & she really does not look more than 60, but her eyesight is not very good & she walks rather lame with a stick. She is as pleasant & sensible as ever. To see her at Buckingham Palace brings back happy days!'*

The Queen sent Mrs Lilly the occasional handmade gift, such as a shawl "to keep her warm", and requested an official photographic portrait of her on the occasion of her 90<sup>th</sup>

birthday. She also received a telegram which read: *'Telegram from The Queen, Princess Beatrice, Prince Leopold to Mrs Lilly: Our united best wishes for this day'*.

Mary Dixon Lilly finally died in her 92<sup>nd</sup> year on 26 April 1882. Six days later she was interred at Highgate Cemetery with her husband in a discreetly elaborate funeral consisting of three mourning carriages and a funeral car on 2 May 1882.

The funeral cortège travelled from Lower Norwood to Highgate where it was met at the cemetery gates by two of the Queen's pages, Messrs Fleming and Machin, who laid a wreath on behalf of the Monarch with a hand-written card bearing a simple inscription: *'A mark of affection and gratitude from Queen Victoria'*.

*The author wishes to acknowledge the unstinting help and assistance of Mrs Lilly's third great grandson, Mr Roger Lilley, in preparing this article.*

*\* The spelling 'Lilly' was used during Mrs Lilly's lifetime. Her son inserted the 'e' on the memorial stone.*

# VOLUNTEERS

DAVID DRAKE, a cemetery volunteer and guide since 2009, graduated in French and Politics from Reading University in 1970. He lived and worked in Paris and London as an academic, writer and teacher, and has travelled widely lecturing on his special interest - the works of French intellectuals, especially Jean-Paul Sartre. In 2005, he was created *Chevalier dans l'ordre de palmes académiques* by the French state in recognition of his contribution to the promotion of French culture.

His latest work, *Paris At War 1939-1944*, details the lives of ordinary Parisians during the 1940s as they recorded it themselves in diaries, letters, memoirs, scraps of conversation and fragments of memory. It is an absorbing, thought-provoking and evocative account.



*Paris At War 1939-1944 is published by Harvard University Press at £25*

## RICHARD TEWKESBURY HIGHGATE CEMETERY VOLUNTEER DIED 2015

Richard was not widely known among the volunteers as he lived in Switzerland. During his visits to London he would sometimes turn up as a guide on the West Cemetery. More significantly, as an enthusiastic expert on the subject of military history, he would also take specialist evening tours of the cemetery's military graves.

To the left-hand side of the steps up to the north end of the terrace is this striking memorial to Frederick Sayer. A captain in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, he was injured at Alma during the Crimean War and died at the age of 36 in Alexandria. For a visitor to the West Cemetery, standing on the steps on a balmy summer's evening while listening to Richard's account of the soldier's career and death, was an unforgettable experience. Rest In Peace, Richard.



# NEWS

## Goldhammer Sepulchre

Work on our first new mausoleum for almost 85 years continues apace. It is being built adjacent to the South Lodge in the West Cemetery. The foundations having been completed, the walls are rising rapidly, formed of huge blocks of solid stone which are cut off site and

delivered ready for assembly. There was a slight delay as some blocks came in slightly too large ... by half a millimetre! It may not sound much, but when the joints are only 2mm wide, there is no room for error.

## Neighbour Day

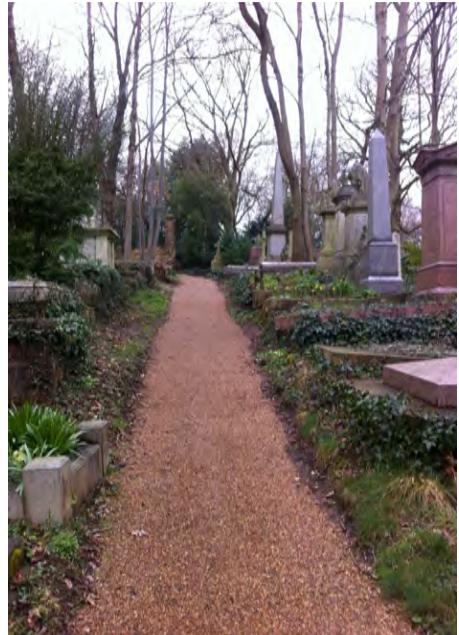
On Sunday 28 February we welcomed all our neighbours in N6, N19 and NW5 for a free visit to Highgate Cemetery East. It was a great success as many people came along who had not visited for years, and some of these have since returned to go on West Cemetery tours.

Some even bumped into old friends they had not seen for a while. Altogether 679 people visited in addition to the regular paying visitors, and 47 of them asked for information about becoming a volunteer.

## Trees and Paths

Eagle-eyed visitors will have spotted that much work has been done to smooth out the gravel paths, particularly in the East Cemetery. We have also relaid the gravel on the Egyptian Avenue to create an even gradient and to reinstate original ground levels by the entrances to the vaults.

A lot of maintenance work to trees has been undertaken following last year's tree survey. Again the focus has been the East Cemetery, particularly trees along the paths. Dangerous trees have been felled, canopies reduced, and much dead wood removed. We will shortly begin re-pollarding some trees which have not been touched for many years, thereby improving their health and longevity.



## Bruce Russell

We have received news of the death of Bruce Russell, a former Trustee. A tribute will appear in the next Newsletter.

### Staff changes

In December we welcomed a new member of staff, Dawn Kemp, in a new position of Projects Manager. Her role is to take forward various projects such as a new integrated web ticketing system and membership database, improved access to the East Cemetery via the Chester Road Gate and a new visitor information display in Strathcona Mausoleum at the entrance to the East Cemetery.

In January we bade farewell to Melanie Wynyard after almost four years as Visitor and Volunteer Coordinator. We thank her for her dedication to her work and wish her all the best for the future. We took the opportunity to reorganise roles so that we now have two 'Visitor Experience Managers' who work alternate weekends. Kevin Bourne will now have particular responsibility for volunteers and Nick Powell, our new recruit, will take charge of events.



### Nunhead open day

Our sister cemetery at Nunhead is having its annual open day on Saturday 21 May, from 11am to 5pm.

The Friends of Nunhead Cemetery are offering free tours, and there will be music and stalls, including home made refreshments. This is a great opportunity to visit. Rail: Nunhead. Bus: P12. [www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk).

### Performance at Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

There will be haunting sights and sounds and unexpected encounters when *Depart* comes to Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park as part of the Lift theatre festival in June.

The publicity promises an ethereal collaboration bringing together circus artists, choral singers, designers and musicians for a summer night full of surprises.

See [www.liftfestival.com/events/depart](http://www.liftfestival.com/events/depart).

**Jeremy the Coffee Man** has recently hung out his sign at the northern corner of the cemetery forecourt. His service provides far more than a simple flat white.

You can contact him on 07956297853 or [apemanandthebean@gmail.com](mailto:apemanandthebean@gmail.com)



IN MEMORY OF  
MARY ANN  
ONLY CHILD OF WALTER AND  
WILLIAM BANKS SICK,  
AND ONE OF SEVEN CHILDREN  
BORN TO THEM IN THE  
CITY OF NEW YORK  
WHO DIED FEBRUARY 1871  
AGED 10