

# Friends of West Norwood CEMETERY

Newsletter No. 46 - January 2003

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## Chairman's Report

by Bob Flanagan

As reported in September, progress with scrub clearance and monument restoration continues, although the worry over getting projects commissioned and completed within the constraints of financial years seems never ending. Perhaps one day the long-term management plan for the cemetery will be approved and we can then apply for external funds to help ensure long-term budgeting. In this context I'm sorry to report that the planned harmonisation of Lambeth's cemetery regulations with the Diocesan Churchyard Regulations scheduled for 1 October has not proceeded as smoothly as was hoped, the Chancellor having reservations about Lambeth's proposals on the way ahead. Hopefully all will be resolved soon.

More positive news is that major initiatives concerned with improving the drainage of the cemetery grounds and of renewing and enhancing the signs and noticeboards within the cemetery are gaining momentum. The drainage project especially will probably run on for a number of years. The 'signage' project, however, is well under way although progress seems slow. It is envisaged that not only will all the roads and significant paths in the cemetery be named, but also that every effort will be made to ensure that existing grass paths such as the Doulton and Ship paths are maintained properly. Moreover, we will work with Ken Dry, Bereavement Services Manager, to try to reinstate paths where

either the cemetery company or more recently the Council have used roads and paths as burial space. A good example is the proposed 'Beeton' path in front of Mrs Beeton's grave. This was a roadway until 1930 or so, but there is room for a footpath between the old and new graves. More problematic are parts of the 'Sopwith' and 'Rommel' footpaths (squares 90-2/101-2 and 115-119, respectively) that have been used for burials recently effectively destroying the paths.

I will ensure that a map and list of proposed names is available for the May newsletter. In addition to the paths discussed above I have suggested that the path from Ship path (near the Bessemer grave) to Steep Hill (the traditional name for the road along the Southern boundary of the cemetery) be named 'Hodges Path' after the prominent table tomb commemorating Helen Hodges (1824-1888) (grave 22,655, square 87) at the apex of the hill. Another seemingly traditional name is the 'P' path in the Dissenters' section (squares 55/6) - the map will make obvious the derivation of the name!

### The Oil Tank Saga

Thanks to Ken Dry the long-standing eyesore in square 116 (the oil tank and associated container) have now gone, not to be replaced it seems. Perhaps the reduced mechanical activity in the cemetery has at last had an unexpected benefit. We now hope for sensitive management of the site given that it contains hundreds of burials, the headstones having been swept away during the clearances. Next steps perhaps removal of the skips at the top of 'Steep Hill' and of the spoil heap which seems to get ever closer to the recently-restored monument to the Lambeth potter James Stiff (square 24)?

On a sadder note, I have to report admittedly minor damage to the base of the recently restored de Normandy monument. The damage occurred within days of the re-dedication ceremony reported below (page 3), and has all the appearance of having been caused by impact from a motor mower which removed a small lump of marble. Mr Dry has kindly offered to consider getting the monument repaired (which I don't feel is necessary), but has nevertheless taken the view that the damage can't be attributed to Council contractors unless suspected impacts such as that under discussion were witnessed by a third party. I can't see how this latter view is sustainable - we can't have people watching every contractor all the time...

### FOWNC AGM

Thanks to those of you who have renewed your subscriptions. As I always say we could not manage without you! Thanks too to those of you who came along to the AGM or who support us in other ways. Grateful as we are always are to our speakers, however, I'm sorry to report that I found the AGM lecture (see Jill Dudman's report on page ...) quite sad. It was very much the modern cemetery manager's view. The recently-used areas all looked very depressing with acres of uniform headstones. Even worse, destruction of Victorian monuments is planned ('we will keep important

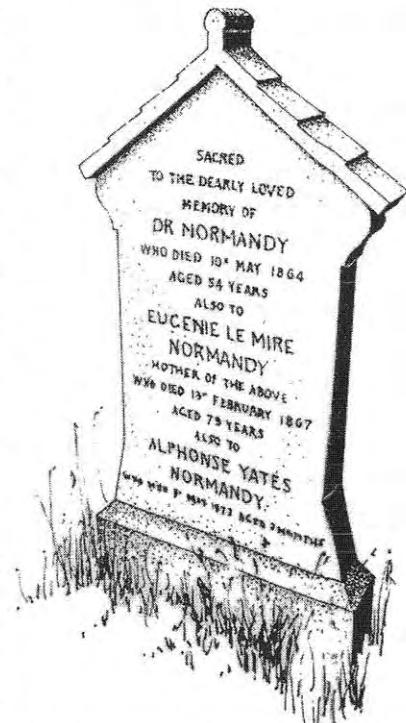
*continued on page 16*

# The Reinstatement of the de Normandy Memorial

by Don Bianco & Paul Graham

On Sunday 18 August about 20 people attended a ceremony in the cemetery to mark the reinstatement of the monument to Dr Alphonse de Normandy. The original was destroyed by Lambeth in August 1990. Our Chairman, Dr Bob Flanagan, recalled the professional achievements of Dr Normandy in his chosen field of chemistry. Dr Normandy's great-grand daughter, Mrs Elizabeth Panourgias-Morrison, then spoke of her researches into the life of her illustrious forebear, the fruit of which are published in this edition of the Newsletter. The esteem with which Dr Normandy's name is still held by those interested in the history of chemistry was demonstrated by the very welcome presence of Dr Jack Betteridge, Chair of the Royal Society of Chemistry Historical Group. Our thanks are extended to all those who assisted in the reinstatement of the monument, and in particular Don Bianco of English Heritage and Council officers including Mike Dickens (Lambeth Legal Services).

Today we are able to see the headstone restored to its original condition. The greatest care has been exercised in ensuring the accuracy of its form and the layout of the inscription. Two photographs of the original headstone served to provide all of the necessary information for the memorial mason. However, the burial registers included other members of the Normandy family who were not recorded on the headstone, so the decision was taken to incorporate these names on a stone tablet which, located at the foot of the grave, forms an integral part of the memorial. Of white Carrara marble with incised leaded characters in the inscription, the memorial is a precise replica of the original in all respects and represents an example of good conservation practice – through the implied logic that 'conservation' suggests that there is something of the material to preserve, we have here conserved the physical memory of Dr Normandy and his family in a manner wholly befitting the historic nature of the Cemetery.



*The reinstated Normandy tombstone  
(line drawing by Don Bianco)*

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# **Dr Normandy (1809-1864)**

by Elizabeth Panourgiás-Morrison

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About 20 years ago, when I was in Athens working in the British Council Library, I often did evening duty in the then quite well-stocked Reference Section. I had the full run of volumes and supplements of The Dictionary of National Biography. When not busy I would spend ages looking up people, including some of my family forebears. At home in London we had a photograph of a rather serious-looking, middle-aged Victorian gentleman, dismissed by one of my great aunts as ‘old uncle Alphonse’, but who was in fact Dr Alphonse René Le Mire de Normandy, the French father of my father’s paternal grandmother, Louise Morrison, née Normandy. I was most surprised to find quite a long entry in the DNB on Dr Normandy, who was born at Rouen in 1809.

This led me to write to the Newham Public Library Archives and Local History Department in East London for information on the site of the factory mentioned in the DNB where Dr Normandy and later his son manufactured the portable water desalination stills he had invented and patented, near Customs House Station and the Royal Victoria Dock. They did quite a lot of research for me into local Tradesmen’s Registers, Census Returns, and the Land Registry, and sent me photocopies confirming that Normandy Terrace, which I had traced in that area in the London Post Office Directory we had in the Athens Reference Library, had been in fact the site of the factory (from the 1850s to 1912). The Newham Public Library thanked me for initiating this enquiry that in turn gave them the explanation for the name ‘Normandy Terrace’.

Some years later in the early 1990s back in London after divorce from my Greek husband and retirement from my job in Greece, I happened to be watching TV one evening and in the news about London after the BBC 6 O’Clock News, I saw Nicholas Reed, the then FOWNC Chair, talking about the demolition of old gravestones at West Norwood by Lambeth Council, and citing the case of Dr Normandy’s grave, there one day and gone the next. Within a few hours of telephoning the BBC, I was speaking to Nicholas who was thrilled to discover a living descendant of Dr Normandy. This led me to visiting the Cemetery where I met Nicholas and other members of the Friends, eventually becoming a member myself. Then followed the now successful efforts by the FOWNC to get Dr Normandy’s headstone reinstated.

I did some years later write to the Archives of Rouen Municipality for information on Dr Le Mire as he was known in France. They had no information about him as a scientist nor of any scientific achievements before he left France, but they sent me photocopies of his birth certificate and of his parents’ marriage certificate from which it seems that he was from a fairly humble artesan family.



*Dr Normandy from a photograph*  
*(Illustrated London News, 23 July 1864, p. 105)*

From entries in the DNB, and from obituaries in the Times (27 May 1864), the Illustrated London News (23 July 1864) and The Lancet, I have compiled the following brief account of Dr Normandy's life and career:

Normandy, Alphonse René Le Mire de, born Rouen, France, 23 October 1809. Educated for the medical profession, he studied chemistry in Germany under Gmelin (see Note 1); patented indelible inks and dyes in 1839; patented a method of hardening soap made from 'soft goods' by the addition of sulphate of soda (sodium sulphate) in 1841, but he was prevented from using the process by the excise, who regarded the use of sodium sulphate as an adulteration. On the abolition of the excise duty on soap in 1855, the Privy Council extended his patent for 3 years. In 1851 he patented an apparatus for distilling sea water to obtain pure water for drinking, largely used on board ship, especially ocean-going steamers, which became a practical necessity for passenger ships, and for which he was awarded a Medal at the Exhibition of 1862. The stills were manufactured by Normandy's Patent Marine Aerated Fresh Water Company

at a factory near the Victoria Dock in London until 1912. It seems that his success lay in allowing air to redissolve in the distilled water thus rendering it palatable.

Dr Normandy resided in England permanently from about 1843, initially at Dalston and subsequently at Judd Street, Brunswick Square. In addition to his manufacturing interests, he was also a consulting analytical chemist. He was known as a practical chemist who contributed his share to the progress of modern science. During chemical experiments he became a close friend of Dr Andrew Ure (see Note 2). He gave evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons on the Adulteration of Food, thus showing up the numerous frauds practised on the public such as the use of alum (a potassium or sodium aluminium sulphate) as a whitening agent in bread. He was the author of several important works, such as *An Introduction to Rose's Chemistry*

(1849), *Guide to the Alkali-metrical Chest* (1849), *The Commercial Hand-book of Chemical Analysis* (1850), *The Chemical Atlas* (1855), and *The Dictionary of the Arts and Manufactures* with Andrew Ure. Dr Normandy was of a practical disposition of mind with singular clearness of perception, being regarded with high confidence by those with whom he became associated. Elected a Fellow of the Chemical Society on 20 May 1854, he left a scientific name long remembered affectionately by many distinguished friends. His final home was Odin Lodge, King's Road, Clapham Park. He died there on 10 May 1864.

Intriguing details (as yet unexplained and probably now never will be, but which could be the basis for a wonderful novel set in the Victorian period) I obtained from Dr Normandy's will (1860) in which he explains that

*Firstly, the three children herein mentioned are my own children by Miss Louise Caroline Taynton, and I wish to recognise them as such. Owing to my ignorance of the formalities . . . the births of the first two, Alphonse Louis Le Mire Normandy (born 1838) and Louise Isabelle Le Mire Normandy (born 1841) were not registered. When I became aware that this formality ought to have been complied with, an application was made by me to the Registrar, I was informed that the delay for doing so had elapsed and the Registration was refused.*



*Odin Lodge, 5 King's Road,  
Clapham Park in 1870*

The last child, Frank Normandy, was registered (1850). I have a copy of his birth certificate. His mother is entered as Louise Caroline Normandy, formerly Taynton, so it seems they were married at some time, and I think Louise Caroline may have died after giving birth to Frank as nothing is mentioned about her or bequeathed to her in the will. The will continues

*I bequeath to these children all I may be possessed of . . . wish them to live together in the said house in peace and harmony with my own mother . . . and I caution my children not to have any dealings or intercourse with any member of the Taynton family, who have been the cause of intense misery to their mother and to me, and I know them to be dangerous persons whose society and company I advise them to shun.*

I wish I knew the story!!

Dr Normandy also had a musical side as he bequeathed in his will

*. . . my two pianos and all my music*

to his daughter Louise, who in later life as Louise Morrison, wrote waltzes and patriotic songs, which were published and are listed in the British Library Catalogue of Music. Louise Morrison's grandson by her son Stuart was my father, Angus Morrison (1902–1989) who was a pianist and long-serving Senior Piano Professor at the Royal College of Music, and close friend of Sir William Walton and Constant Lambert.

I followed up a Normandy, Dr H J Normandy, possibly a grandson, who lived at an address near the Crystal Palace until the late 1920s, but then suddenly the name appeared as Norman, and then was no longer at that address, so possibly the name was changed again, making it more difficult to trace descendants, Norman being a more common name. My father's sister told me her godmother had been an Annie Normandy, but she did not know much about her, and all contact has between the two families seems to have been lost.

The inscriptions on the original gravestone (grave 9,170, square 18), as transcribed while the letters were still legible, refer to Dr Normandy and then list the following names of those who were later buried with him: his mother Eugénie Le Mire Normandy (died 1867, aged 79 years), Alphonse Yates (died 1872, aged 3 months) – possibly a son of Dr Normandy's sister, also mentioned in the Will – and the sister Elvira, or Elvina (died 1901, aged 74 years).

#### *Notes*

1. Leopold Gmelin (1788-1853). German physiological chemist. Professor of medicine and chemistry, Göttingen, 1817-1851. His successor was R.W. Bunsen (1811-1899).
2. Andrew Ure (1778-1857). Scottish consulting chemist and scientific author. Professor of chemistry and natural philosophy, Anderson College, Glasgow. Father of the physiologist Alexander Ure.

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# In Memory of Gideon Mantell (1790-1852): Dinosaur Hunter

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by Ken Woodhams

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Gideon Algernon Mantell LLD, FGS, FLS, FRCS, etc. died on 10 November 1852. A talented surgeon and physician, he was blessed with exceptional physical and intellectual energy and became one of the leading geologists, comparative anatomists, lecturers, writers, and fossil collectors of his era. Although generally remembered as the discoverer of *Iguanodon*, the first dinosaur to be properly described, his contributions to some other aspects of geology were equally important. It is thus wrong to remember him only as a discoverer of dinosaurs, even though as the first dinosaur hunter he was undeniably the most important contributor prior to the North American 'dinosaur rush' that began some twenty years after his death. Moreover, the flowing prose of books such as '*Fossils of the South Downs*' (1822), '*Geology of South East England*' (1827), '*The Wonders of Geology*' (1838), and '*The Medals of Creation*' (1844), promoted public interest in geology and palaeontology.

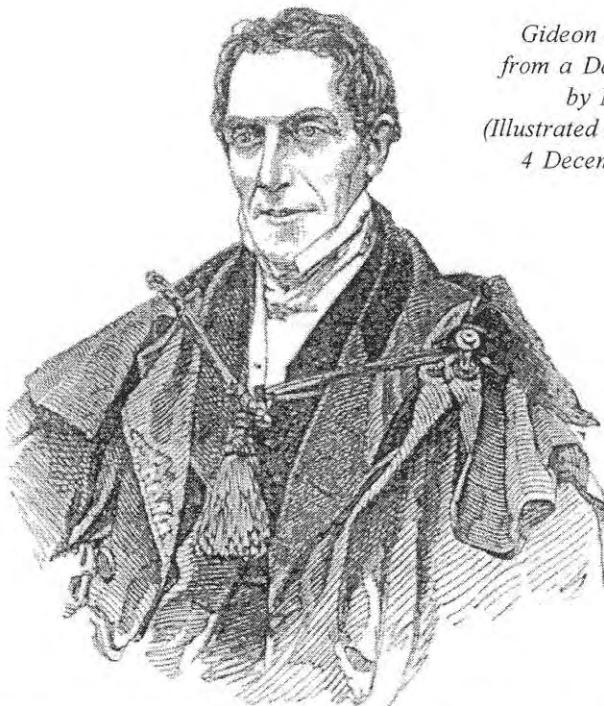
Although an amateur during the period when professional geology came of age, the respect of his contemporaries, whether amateur or professional, was assured by the importance of his contributions. Elected a Fellow of the Geological Society in 1818, he served on its council for many years, was a secretary during 1841-42, Vice President 1848-50, and was awarded the Wollaston Medal and Fund in 1835, the second person to be so honoured after William Smith. He also enjoyed a long association with the Royal Society, being elected a Fellow in 1825 after presenting his paper on *Iguanodon* earlier in the year, and was awarded the Gold Medal in 1849 despite rabid opposition from Richard Owen.

Mantell assembled an unrivalled collection of chalk fossils from southern England, developed a thorough understanding of the Cretaceous period, and was one of the first to recognise the freshwater origins of the Weald. However, his success in collecting, describing and interpreting the remains of several species of dinosaur did most to gain him world-wide recognition.

He was also a respected clinician, credited with one of the first descriptions of greenstick fracture in young children (a fracture in which the bone is not broken all the way through), and admired for his skill as a surgeon, his record in obstetrics, and as a general practitioner. Despite this, his medical career deteriorated progressively after leaving Lewes as he hoped for greater recognition, at first in Brighton, in Clapham, and finally in London itself.

His relatively early death at the age of 62 is frequently associated with a carriage accident in 1841, but Mantell had written of his back problem many years before and as Dr Curwen explained in '*The Journal of Gideon Mantell ...*' the post-mortem showed the accident aggravated a life-long spinal problem and developing

*Gideon A. Mantell*  
from a Daguerreotype  
by Mayall  
(Illustrated London News,  
4 December 1852)



osteoarthritis, which could have gone unnoticed for years. The osteoarthritis worsened, triggered by the carriage accident, causing incontinence, weakness and pain. A blood clot formed at the chronic stage producing intense pain down the leg and controlling it with increasingly severe doses of opium and chloroform resulted in death from narcotic poisoning. If correctly diagnosed, the pain could have been controlled by manipulative treatment and exercises, and a life of such great value to science would not have been sacrificed prematurely.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 heralded the dawn of a new era of British self-confidence and the 'Crystal Palace' was its architectural symbol. Mantell was impressed by both the exhibition and the building, making several visits during its construction and to the exhibition itself. Afterwards, he often walked from his home in Chester Square to view the empty building and was an enthusiastic supporter of the campaign for its preservation that quickly resulted in the formation of the Crystal Palace Company and purchase of a permanent site at Sydenham Hill. Construction of a building 50 % larger than the original in Hyde Park began in early autumn 1852, part of a scheme including extensive grounds with geological islands and full sized models of extinct animals, completed under the direction of Richard Owen in 1856. It has been suggested that Mantell would have been the best qualified to supervise this part of the scheme, particularly the dinosaurs and in fact, the Crystal Palace Company did approach him, but he declined their invitation, on the grounds that their concept was

not educational enough. However, at the time, 18 August 1852, Mantell was a very sick man desperately trying to complete other projects.

The completed geological display included the three species of dinosaur that had formed the 'Dinosuria', created by Owen in 1841: *Megalosaurus*, named by William Buckland, *Iguanodon*, and *Hylaeosaurus*, both discovered and named by Mantell. Perhaps significantly, there are two models of *Iguanodon*, one a great scaly quadrupedal Owenite rhinoceros, the other a crouching, lizard-like animal, possibly intended to represent a Mantellian *Iguanodon*. Disputes over the form of *Iguanodon* had been central to the bitter disagreements between them and the Crystal Palace models may represent another triumph of Owen's manipulative skills with his rhinoceros-like animal dominant over the cowering Mantellian lizard.

Mantell often expressed his liberal beliefs in social justice and concern for the less fortunate and although appalled by the Peterloo Massacre of 1819, for example, was not liberal in all things, retaining strong views against excessive consumption of alcohol and being guilty of occasional illiberal remarks, such as reference to working class visitors to the Crystal Palace as 'vulgar, ignorant country people: many dirty women with their infants were sitting on the seats ... beneath the lovely female figures of the sculptor. Oh! how I wished I had the power to petrify the living and animate the marble ...' An appreciation of attractive ladies was a weakness he retained throughout his life, so maybe the break-up his marriage in 1839 was not simply the result of his single-minded devotion to geology, as so often stated.

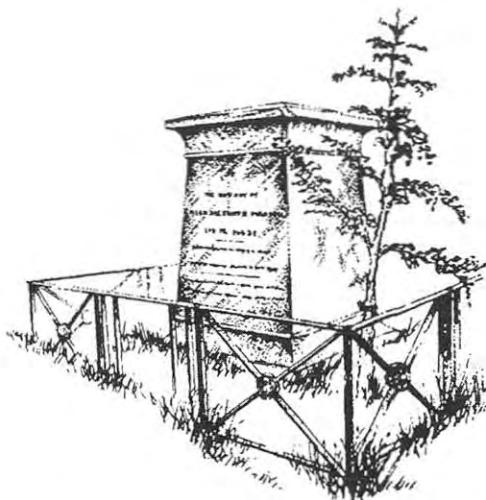
His boundless, restless energy, and insatiable quest for immortality, meant all obstacles were irritating frustrations to be overcome. Yet he was not as arrogant, selfish, and intolerant as often portrayed. Although at times disappointed by his children, particularly Walter and Ellen Maria, his love and devotion for them remained. His emotional expressions of extreme loss on the death of his youngest daughter and the emigration of his sons confirmed this. Even after years of separation from his wife, he regretted their parting and as success seemingly brought him little joy or satisfaction, he continually sought solace from feelings of rejection, bitterness, and disappointment, aggravated by increasing levels of pain and loneliness. Even though blessed with a fine physique, the effects of punishing workloads and four hours sleep a night, meant his health steadily deteriorated during his last thirty years. In his final year, excessive demands were made of his now fragile frame and amongst his papers, his son Reginald found notes and illustrations for several forthcoming lectures and about 400 pages for an almost completely rewritten edition of his '*Medals of Creation*' already in type. Happily, the fully revised edition was completed by Rupert T. Jones and published in 1857.

The obituary to Gideon by William Hopkins, President of the Geological Society, considered he had no rival as a lecturer '... fluent, clear, eloquent and elegantly discursive, he riveted the attention of his audience, and invariably left them imbued with a love for the science he had taught them.' The obituary in the *Proceedings of the*

*Royal Society* added: 'Indeed, although he was naturally fond of his acquisitions, which were of a most remarkable character, he did not hoard them up, but was always ready and willing to allow geologists to use them for scientific purposes.' Yet he became embroiled in a series of infamous and bitter conflicts with Richard Owen and acquired a reputation for jealousy and unfairness. Quite a different impression is presented by the eloquent obituary of his long-time friend and correspondent, Professor Benjamin Silliman: 'Dr Mantell was remarkable for his candour and kindness, and for scientific justice, especially to original discoverers, whether eminent or humble, and no British philosopher excelled him in liberality and courtesy ... The rare combination of exact and thorough scientific knowledge with the enthusiasm of a discoverer and the rich but chastened diction of a poet, were never more remarkably united than in him.'

Mantell's funeral followed the instructions he deposited with his wife's nephew, Alfred Woodhouse, buried 'by the side of my beloved child' in Norwood Cemetery, with the funeral 'as plain as possible, and to take place in the early morning'. The hearse, drawn by four horses, was accompanied by two other coaches, one being his own, presumably driven by his coachman Thomas. His daughter Ellen Maria, sister Mary West, Alfred Woodhouse, his solicitor Mr Williams, Charles Pritchard, Headmaster of Clapham School, Joseph Dinkel, the artist who worked with him for 20 years, and Hannah his cook were at the graveside with the service performed by the Reverend Kemble from Clapham. His wife, probably living in Cambridgeshire at the time, did not attend although Mantell hoped she would. He had drawn the outline of a plain monument to be placed over the graves and the Portland stone tomb subsequently placed there was designed by Amon Henry Wilds, son of Amon Wilds who had remodelled Mantell's home, Castle Place in Lewes. The neat iron railing that surrounded it, may have been based upon his design for his parents' grave in St John's churchyard, Lewes that caused acrimonious exchanges with the vicar Peter Crofts.

Mantell's monument (grave 273, square 99), an altar-form gravestone with a thoroughly Victorian inscription to his daughter contrasting with the simplicity of his own: 'To the memory of Gideon Algernon Mantell LLD, FRS, FGS etc born in Lewes Feby 1790 died in London Nov 10th 1852'. A delicate iron railing with decorated

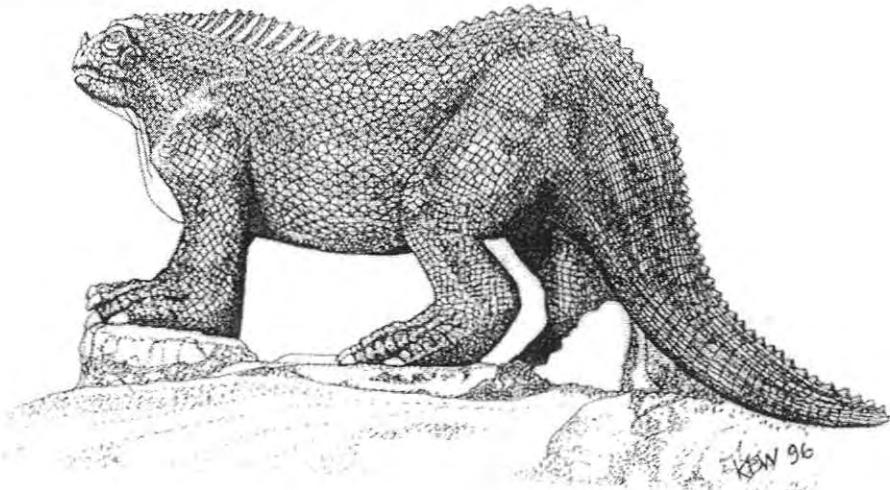


*The reinstated Mantell tombstone  
(line drawing by Don Bianco)*

panels was placed around it. Over the years, movement of the steeply sloped London Clay had tilted the tomb slightly, but fortunately not enough for it to be classified as dangerous, which would have enabled the cemetery owner, Lambeth Council, to remove it, as they had others nearby. In the winter of 1987 it was said that the large swamp cypress growing beside it keeled over, demolishing the monument to reveal its composite structure of stone panels. However, the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery possess a photograph showing the intact tomb and the neatly-sawn stump of the cypress.

The second tomb to be restored at West Norwood under the guidance of the Friends and English Heritage, its Grade II\* listing required the work to be carried out by approved craftsmen with details matching the original, which repeated the error that Hannah died in the XXIIIrd year of her age, when in fact it was the XVIIIth. Sadly a second error was introduced in listing Mantell's qualifications, which although subsequently rectified with a patch, still devalues the finished work. Also, the delicate iron railing is not as delicate as the original. A small gingko tree is a token replacement for the fallen swamp cypress. The restoration costs amounted to some £3,000, of which the Geologists' Association contributed £2,000.

Mantell's homes at Castle Place, Lewes and 20 The Steyne, Brighton both display a plaque recording they had once been the home of the famous geologist. Neither of his London homes, Crescent Lodge, 27 South Side, Clapham Common and 19 Chester Square, Pimlico, where he died, which both survive, display any record of occupation by Gideon Mantell. The 150th anniversary of his death is surely a timely reminder for these omissions to be corrected.



*The Crystal Palace Iguanodon*  
(line drawing by Ken Woodhams)

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## **British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia**

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**BACSA** is a charity set up in 1977 to protect European cemeteries in South Asia. There is no statutory body or government agency with funds to look after these old cemeteries. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission confines its responsibility to the armed services in the periods of World War I and II. Therefore, without the support of individuals, many cemeteries - witness to centuries of European residence in the East - would quickly disappear. Over the years BACSA has done much towards their restoration, maintenance, and the recording of inscriptions in different parts of South Asia.

Cemeteries in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and further East have benefited from BACSA's efforts. Support is given both financially and practically. Members spend weeks - sometimes months - overseas, meticulously recording and photographing inscriptions on gravestones and monuments. This mass of information is housed in a separate archive within the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library and forms the basis of booklets of cemetery records in particular towns - including details of names, inscriptions and biographical notes - which are published from time to time for the benefit of members and family historians at large (a list available on request). There is also an on-going project to record monumental inscriptions in the UK that have a bearing on the British connection with South Asia: a note on churches already researched is available on request.

General meetings open to all members are held twice a year in London when members receive reports on cemeteries visited and the progress on various projects. Talks are given on the theme of the British and the East. A house journal, '*Chowkidar*', is circulated to members every six months - free of charge - and contains a section for queries on any matter relating to family history; the whereabouts or condition of a relative's grave etc, which nearly always brings an answer.

BACSA publishes memoirs and biographies written by its members, offering fresh insight into the social, military, business and administrative life of Europeans in the East. They are priced at approx. £9 each and a book list is available. There is also a twice-yearly list of second-hand books on oriental subjects donated by members for sale to other members.

Every summer an outing is arranged to a place with special oriental connections in different parts of the country to give members who would find it difficult to come to London an opportunity to meet. Anyone may apply to join the Association. BACSA has already attracted a membership of nearly 2,000 reflecting the continuing and wide variety of interest in the sub-continent. Many current members served out East, while others have family connections or are drawn by links historical, literary, genealogical, architectural, etc.

More details from: T. C. Wilkinson, 76½ Chartfield Avenue, London SW15 6HQ. There are interesting links, including details BACSA, on the following web sites:

<http://www.churchmousewebsite.co.uk>

<http://www.savinggraves.com/about/index.htm>



## Recent FOWNC Events

by Jill Dudman

### Open House Day

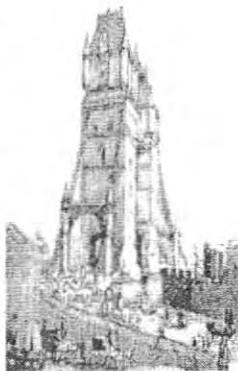
Once again we ran a series of tours with viewing of the Greek Chapel on Sunday 22 September. We were delighted to receive around 120 visitors, considerably more than last year (and without even the special attraction of the catacombs, still out of bounds). Thanks to all who conducted tours, staffed the bookstall, and particularly to Don Bianco for giving the same talk about the Chapel several times over to each tour party!

### AGM

The AGM on 19 October was followed by an illustrated talk on the City of London Cemetery by its Registrar and Systems Manager David McCarthy. This was certainly the most hi-tech presentation we have received at any of our meetings, using a computer-linked projector. Mr McCarthy related the history of the cemetery, the second largest in London, founded in 1856 at Aldersbrook Road, E12 and owned by the City Corporation. He described some of the notable monuments and buildings, and outlined the present day work of the cemetery. It was all very impressive, and one can see why they have won a 'Cemetery of the Year' award recently. We have been given a supply of free copies of their excellent newsletter, full of interesting information and colour pictures - if any member would like a copy, please contact Jill Dudman (details on page 16).

### Sir John Jackson

Patricia Spencer-Silver, a stalwart of FOWNC for many years, has followed her earlier work on George Myers ('Pugin's Builder') with a study of the life and work of Myers' son-in-law, the civil engineer Sir John Jackson, which she presented on 16 November. His first major contract, when only in his twenties, was for a dock in Glasgow. Numerous dock and harbour works around the coasts of Britain followed, and he was one of several contractors employed on Sir Horace Jones' Tower Bridge, his part being the construction of the foundations of the North approach. One of his most important contracts was for the Manchester Ship Canal in 1892, and for this he was knighted. From the turn of the century he began to obtain work from all over the world, notably the British naval harbour at Simonstown, South Africa, and a railway across the Andes. Patricia hopes that her research will soon be published as a book.



*Northern approach to  
Tower Bridge c1894  
sketch courtesy of Local  
History Publications*



## Forthcoming FOWNC Events

### January - April 2003

General tours will be held on the first Sunday of each month (5 January, 2 February, 2 March and 6 April). January to March tours start at 11.00 and the April tour starts at 14.30, at the Cemetery main gate off Norwood Road, and they last for 1-2 hours. There is no formal charge, but we welcome donations of £1 per person (£0.50 concessions) towards conservation projects.

#### Spring Lectures

Talks will be held at Chatsworth Baptist Church, Chatsworth Way (off Norwood Road), SE27 (enter by second door on right in Idmiston Road) as detailed below, starting at 14.30. There is no formal charge, but we welcome donations of £1 per person to help cover the hall hire.



**Saturday 8 February: Lecture  
Alexander Muirhead,  
electrical engineer  
- Patricia Knowlden**  
**(Please note: not the third Saturday.)**

The speaker, from the Bromley Borough Local History Society, has made a study of the life and work of this important engineer, whose electrical products firm was at Elmers End for many years, and whose memorial at Norwood is a fine granite obelisk.

*Andrew Muirhead sketch by Mary Konior  
published in Industry and Enterprise,  
Bromley Borough Local History Publication No. 9*

#### Saturday 15 March: Lecture

**Music hall memorials in London cemeteries - Terry Lomas**

The speaker, from the British Music Hall Society, will illustrate, with the use of two projectors and screens, portraits and memorials of music hall and variety personalities buried in cemeteries in the Greater London area.

#### Other Forthcoming Events

**Saturday 15 March, 10.30-16.30: Day school  
British death customs - Robert Stephenson**

The City Lit, Stukeley Street, Drury Lane, WC2. Fee £19.00 (concessions £9.50) Tel: 020 7831 7831.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** **continued from page 1**

headstones' - we've heard that before somewhere....) to make way for future uniformity. The speaker's knowledge of burial law was also rather shaky. And of course they don't 'need' a Friends group (perhaps one would get in the way?) as they have loads of money from the City Fathers.

Anyway, to a different story. The National Federation of Cemetery Friends AGM for 2003 is being organised by the Friends of Mendip Hospital Cemetery in Wells, Somerset on Saturday 7 June. The NHS inherited a number of cemeteries in 1948, many being associated with poor law institutions or mental hospitals. Recent years have seen a number of these historic sites being sold off for development, but in the case of Mendip Hospital a Friends group has successfully campaigned for the preservation of the Cemetery rather than its destruction. We look forward to hearing more about it all in June.

*Bob Flanagan*

### **Friends of West Norwood Cemetery**

The annual subscription to the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery is £3. For further information please contact the Membership Secretary.

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