

# *Compton Cemetery Records Project*

## *Report #003 – November 2024*

A break from Cemetery work was taken during August and September, but has now resumed in earnest. Progress has been steady and the in-depth, per section analysis, recording, researching and diagramming of individual interment plots across Sections D, E, F and G is now complete. It must be said that these initial four areas will perhaps prove to be the least controversial sections within the estate, but has allowed a number of project approaches and policies to be established:

- Unusable parts of the estate, will no longer have interment plots identified on the map. Only usable plots will be shown (occupied, or otherwise).
- Plot numbering will be changed where necessary and/or sensible, to remove anomalies caused by the above, plus past errors, duplication, sectional expansion and new landscaping.
- Sections will be combined and/or split to present a logical layout (separated by current pathing whenever feasible).
- On rare occasions it has been impossible to establish any corroborating evidence of an interment specified on the 1993 Chris Harvey map. In such instances the 1993 specification is used, but lack of evidence is highlighted.
- Every plot will be colour-coded on the new map to indicate its type, namely:
  - Readable Gravestone
  - Unreadable Gravestone
  - Unmarked Plot, Believed Occupied
  - Unmarked Plot, Believed Occupied, but with no Burial Records
  - Empty Plot, Reserved, or Purchased
  - Empty Plot, Available
  - Ashes Plot, Marked
  - Ashes Plot, Unmarked, Believed Occupied
- An individual ‘clickable’ WORD file (ie, one accessed by clicking on the desired plot in the main map), will be created for every plot and will contain the following information:
  - Plot Number in the Format “E.008” - for example.
  - Plot ‘type’ (see colour-coding above).
  - Full Names of any Occupants.
  - Birth and Death dates of all Occupants.
  - Original Section and Plot Number, prior to this computerization activity.
  - Date of the most recent change to the file.
  - An image of the ‘Notice of Burial’ Record
  - A photograph of the Gravestone, or Ashes plaque (if any).
  - A Comments section where all other information can be presented, eg:
    - Family members buried nearby.

- Occupants of particular interest, fame, or celebrity.
- Identification of other Plot Occupants, detailed in a separate File.
- Explanation of any unusual documentation, or circumstances.
- Clickable Links out to other sources of information

The overall intention being that the data from all current documentation (Burial Grants, Grave Registers, Notice of Burials, the Red Book of plot allocations, the Brown Book of Burials by date, etc), are all transferred into the individual Clickable Files, allowing all existing paper documentation to be archived into a library.

- As mentioned in previous reports, the existing documentation contains many errors and the only guaranteed sources of accurate information are the physical gravestones. Unfortunately, however, many interments remain unmarked and this continued uncertainty slows progress and is identified via the colour-coding and in the individual ‘clickable file’.
- The use of the online resource, Ancestry.com, has proved invaluable in filling in missing data and resolving anomalies, errors, spelling and contradictions across sections D, E, F and G. However, the free 14-day trial has now expired and it is hoped that a full licence could be acquired for the remains of the project (£70 per 6-month period).

Supplied electronically along with this report is:

- the current datafile (*cemetery – 14 Nov 24.vsd*) in Visio format, together with the following five images in pdf format:
  - The entire map
  - An example of a ‘clickable’ WORD File for Plot: E.003a
  - The early, unfinished start of Section J
  - A part of section F, highlighting double and triple plots
  - A part of section E (that includes the example E.003a plot)

An estimation of elapsed time for the project and its overall cost, is still some way in the future. However, establishment of the above policies has made progress appreciably smoother. It is hoped and indeed expected that as such progress continues, the extent and scope of what’s needed, together with a fuller understanding of the difficulties and issues to be faced, will facilitate the required estimation, which will be based on sound reasoning and logical conclusions.

David Herbert

November 2024