



WAVERLEY  
CEMETERIES



## Friends of Waverley Cemeteries (Volunteers)

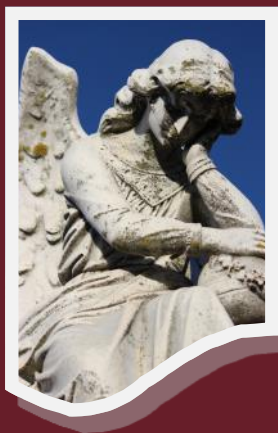


R.I.P.orter

JANUARY  
2025

# Musical Semibreves

- Cemetery searches detailing the location of a grave of those interred in Waverley Cemetery and South Head General Cemetery can be found on the website.
- Waverley Cemeteries offers a service of grave planting sites with Gazania (prostrate ground cover with silver foliage and yellow flowers, as can be seen in banner). Contact Waverley Cemeteries office if you are interested in this and other services, such as annual maintenance of allotments.
- Waverley Cemeteries office is at the corner of Trafalgar Street and St Thomas Street, BRONTE NSW 2024
- P: (02) 9083 8899  
F: (02) 9665 4785  
Email: cemetery@waverley.nsw.gov.au



The remains of the late **Mr. John George Kelly**, who for over 35 years was a member of the operatic profession, were interred in Section 18 of Waverley Cemetery on 18 July 1907. As a tribute of respect the male members of the Royal Comic Opera Company sang at the graveside. The deceased, who was 54 years of age, was born in South America. He was survived by his wife Nellie and daughter Janet.

To many, the simple announcement published in the Sydney newspapers that **Charles Sweetman**, cornet player, died on October 30, caused little remark, and by more was passed over without attract ng attention. Yet the funeral cavalcade, which left the residence of deceased on Sunday afternoon en route to the pretty 'God's acre' at Waverley, the hearse carrying the dead musician's favourite musical instrument as well as his remains, the mass of floral tributes to one who could no longer perceive their beauties, the long list of professional comrades sorrowfully following in a string of vehicles, told even a casual onlooker that some other than an ordinary man was being carried to his last sleeping place. Charles Sweetman's cornet solos will long be remembered by lovers of classical music in this city, and

it is only fitting that one who contributed so much to our enjoyment should have been attended to his grave by so many friendly mourners. Not his to ask — 'Where the great winds through leafless forests rushing. Like full hearts, break; When the swollen streams, o'er crag and gully rushing. Sad music make; Will there be one, whose heart despair is crushing, Mourn for my sake?' Unostentatious and unpretending in his manner, though complete master of the instrument whose silver clarion tones brought their producer encore after encore, Charles Sweetman was loved by all who came in contact with him. It speaks volumes on his behalf that Mr. Frank Smith, of Sir Joseph Banks Pavilion, Botany, should postpone the usual Sunday afternoon concert at that place in consequence of the sudden death of one who contributed so much to the success of these classical entertainments. The Continental custom of covering the coffin with flowers and immortelles was affectionately followed in this instance, one particularly handsome, offering being dropped into the grave by Miss Bella Sutherland. Over 3000 people filled the cemetery, and it was only, with difficulty that the members of Mr. Frank Smith's Concert Company could reach the grave in order to sing 'The Sweet Bye-and-bye' as the coffin containing the body of their comrade was

lowered into the grave in Section 2 of Waverley Cemetery.

The funeral of the late **Mr. James Edward Sykes** took place at Waverley Cemetery on 29 July 1916, and many old friends of the well-known musician attended. The Church of England burial service was read by the Rev. R. M'Keown. Some beautiful wreaths were laid upon the grave, and these included tributes from Madame Melba, Mademoiselle Dolores, Madame Annie Perry, Miss Carrie Lanceley, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Black, and Palings, Ltd. James Edward Sykes was interred in Section 2.

Largely known throughout Australasia as a serious (classical) singer and as a semi-regular member of the Royal Comic Opera Company for more ten years, **Thomas Ambrose** nevertheless sometimes performed in pantomime and on the variety stage. His name first appears in connection with several Melbourne music society's during the early-to-mid-1880s. He made his debut with Williamson, Garner and Musgrove in 1887 and for several years was a member of the Elite Double Quartette (comprising fellow Royal Comic Opera Co singers). George Rignold then engaged him for several productions – notably during Maggie Moore's Sydney

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season (1893) and for *Jack the Giant Killer* 1893/94). Ambrose also appeared in J.C. Williamson's *Little Red Riding Hood* in 1899. He died in Sydney's St Vincent's Hospital on 30 November 1900 and was interred in Sydney's Waverley Cemetery in Section 7..

### Cemetery facts and figures

- First Cemetery Manager was William Thomas who is interred in Waverley Cemetery.
- Size of Waverley Cemetery 40 acres (or around 16.5 hectares).
- Over 90,000 interments in 50,000 grave sites in Waverley.
- Graves and memorials of international significance including the Irish Memorial, the final resting place of Michael Dwyer, the Wicklow Chief (1798 Rebellion). Amongst those interred in Waverley cemetery are Dorothea Mackellar, Henry Lawson, J.F. Archibald, Victor Trumper, Fanny Durack, Henry Kendall, and J.F. Archibald
- Waverley has over 300 official war graves, 500 WW1 soldiers are memorialised on family headstones and there are 55 which reference Gallipoli, Lone Pine or the Dardanelles.
- We don't know all their stories but would love to be able to add them to the Waverley and South Head Cemeteries' database.

## Take a tour

General History Tours A, B, C & D are held on Saturdays; generally at 9.00am and occasionally at 10.00am.

No tours in January.  
Tours will resume part way through February.

Bookings for tours are essential and while the booking process is currently being evaluated contact the FoWC through its email.



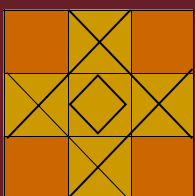
## Friends of Waverley Cemeteries

Work on the restoration of the contemplation shelters scattered through Waverley Cemetery is continuing. It is wonderful to see them being brought back to life and the skill of the stonemasons as they carry out the work

If you would like to become a Friend you are encouraged to contact the group through its email which is [friendsofwaverleycemetery@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofwaverleycemetery@gmail.com)

Members of the Friends' group are involved in leading tours, weeding and/or adopting graves, researching individuals interred in the cemetery or are involved in a major project to photograph every headstone in the cemetery.

Currently we require people who would be interested in leading tours.



To visit the FoWC Face Book Page which is updated every few days, go to

<https://www.facebook.com/FoWCBronteNSW2024>

*Tony Billingsley* Acting President/Secretary

