



WAVERLEY
CEMETERIES



Friends of Waverley Cemeteries (Volunteers)



DECEMBER
2022

George Ellsworth y 'Roy' Redgrave 1873 to 1922

- 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



There is a quiet spot in the South Head General Cemetery in which is located a simple grassed allotment, with a small polished stone marker.



It is the grave of the patriarch of the Redgrave acting dynasty. The estranged father of Sir Michael Redgrave, grandfather of Lady Lynn, Vanessa and Corin Redgrave and great grandfather of Natasha and Joeley Richardson.

Redgrave is something of an enigmatic figure. In many ways his resting place was lost to history for over fifty years, being buried in an unmarked grave at South Head, that was only rediscovered and marked by his granddaughter, Dame Lyn Redgrave, on a visit to Sydney. The exact date of its location cannot be easily established but as she was able to ask Sir Michael Redgrave, her father, what should be inscribed as it was before Sir Michael's death

in 1985.

He suggested simply:

"Roy Redgrave, Actor"

Roy Redgrave left his son Michael when the child was just six months old to pursue his acting career in Australia. The young Michael Redgrave was 14 when his father died.

The Sydney Morning Herald, on 14 March 2005 reported that:

"He came to Sydney in 1909, one year after the illegitimate birth of his son, Michael, who became one of Britain's most acclaimed Shakespearean actors and a noted screen artist in such movies as Alfred Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes*, *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, *The Dam Busters*, *The Quiet American* and *The Go-Between*."

Sir Michael and his wife, the late actor Rachel Kempson, had three children who have all become famous in the theatre, the cinema and television - Oscar-winning Vanessa, Lynn and Corin, who guest starred in the recent ABC TV series *Foyle's War*.

In a tender biography of his late father Corin Redgrave researched the life of Roy Redgrave, who once appeared at Sadler's Wells Theatre, topping the bill in a show famously titled *Roy Redgrave - Dramatic Cock O' The North*.



"Roy acted for applause," wrote his grandson Corin. "The more, and the louder, the better."

In his Australian career, Roy Redgrave played in so-called "bush dramas" with a memorable performance as Dave Goulburn in a play called *The Man From The Outback* and in silent films, one of which 'The Christian' was filmed at Tamarama's Wonderland City.

Redgrave remained in Australia until his death sometime in the 1920s, but exactly where he lived and when he died remained a mystery to his family in Britain until his granddaughter Lynn Redgrave visited Sydney with her then husband John Clark, and vowed to find him. Their search ended at the Sydney Opera House library, where, as she recounts in her play *Shakespeare for My Father*, they came up with Redgrave's obituary, learning that he had died on 25 May 1922, and was buried at South Head Cemetery.

Why not join the Friends of Waverley Cemeteries?

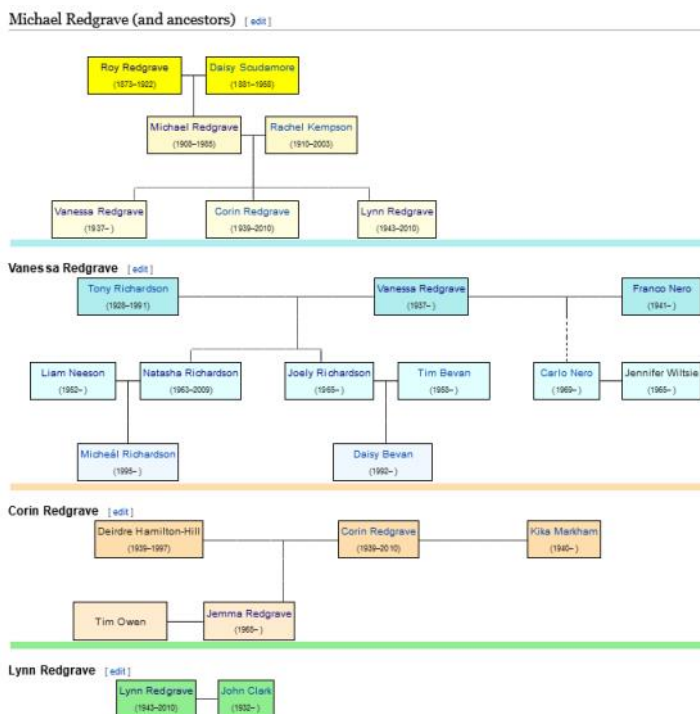
Roy Redgrave died penniless in the Sacred Heart Hospice, Darlinghurst, but not before writing his own obituary and sending it to The Sydney Morning Herald for publication.

Written in verse, the final lines read:

*No relatives near and no assets at all,
Quite lonely, I fear, when he answered the call.
One of the best. Held his own while he could.
Died like the rest, just when life seemed so good.*

The Herald's own obituary, published on May 27, 1922, described him as "an actor of brilliant powers" and remarked: "Redgrave, with his tall and graceful figure, was also excellent as Mercutio [Romeo And Juliet], but the greater part of his career was in melodrama."

For genealogists, here is a diagram of his descendants and their partners and children.



Take a tour

General History Tours A, B, C & D are held on Saturdays

03 Dec 09:00am A (Doug)

10 Dec 10:00am B (Maggie)

(Which is also the date of the next meeting of the Friends.)

17 Dec 09:00am C (David)

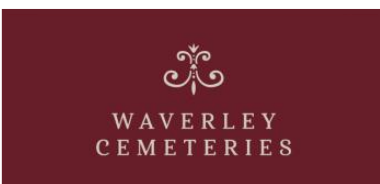
24 Dec 09:00am D (Andrew)

31 Dec 09:00am A (Maggie)

Bookings for tours are essential.

Book through Eventbrite for Waverley Cemetery's Saturday Tours

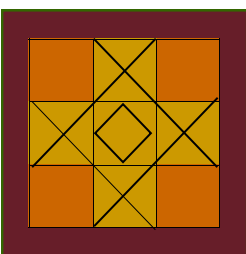
<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/waverley-cemetery-tours-tickets-35366776982>



Friends of Waverley Cemeteries

If you would like to become a Friend you are encouraged to contact the group through its email which is friendsofwaverleycemetery@gmail.com

To visit the FoWC Face Book Page which is updated every few days, go to <https://www.facebook.com/FoWCBronteNSW2024>



If you are interested in taking a midweek tour please email and we will attempt to accommodate your request.

Doug Richards President/Secretary
01 December 2022

