

# NEWSLETTER NUMBER 1    MAY 2008



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Lora Peacey-Wilcox	Paul Fuller	Tim Gladdis
Secretary	David Jones	Graham Lloyd	Jon Matthews
Treasurer	John Pullen		

On Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 fifty-two people gathered in the chapel of Northwood Cemetery, Cowes and formed the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery**. Chaired by the Mayor of Cowes, **Geoff Banks**, the meeting heard that the long-term objective of “the Friends” was to restore the chapel and mortuary buildings at the cemetery's entrance back to their Victorian splendour.

Also present, and representing the IW Council (the owners of Northwood Cemetery), were **Iain Donald** (Manager of Bereavement Services), **Sue Campion** (his deputy), **Nigel Hayton** (Surveyor responsible for, amongst other things, the Island's Cemeteries), **Colin Pope** (IW Council's Ecology Officer) and **Janis Mundell** (project co-ordinator for the Ryde Lottery Heritage funding of Ryde Cemetery restoration).

**Janette Gregson** (Chair of the Ryde Social Heritage Group), **Margaret Prior** and **Peter Lloyd** (Friends of East Cowes Cemetery) were also present as was **Janet Griffin** (Chair of the Isle of Wight Family History Society) and **John Groves** (Chair of Cowes Heritage).

The meeting first heard from **John Avery**, representing the **National Federation of Cemetery Friends**, who had set up the **Friends of Old Southampton Cemetery** some five years ago.

**Jon Matthews** gave a presentation explaining that the damage to the chapel and mortuary buildings has been caused by the huge Cedars of Lebanon behind the buildings. They are a bit too close for comfort as their roots have undermined the buildings' foundations. **Nigel Hayton** described what could be done to arrest this problem and mentioned that he was working on a restoration proposal to be put to IW Council's Planning Department, hopefully by the end of May.

**Colin Pope** spoke of the ecological value of the Cemetery and how it represented a wonderful example, to be cherished, of the flora and fauna on the Island.

Jon listed the aims of the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** and observed that, realistically, restoration of the buildings is a long-term aim; the shorter-term aim is to build a substantial membership that will demonstrate to heritage and conservation organisations (who allocate grants for 'good causes') that Northwood Cemetery is a deserving case with much local, and international, interest in its restoration and its preservation.

The meeting heard that it is hoped that members will also become volunteers and undertake a variety of tasks in the cemetery; its flora, trees and wildlife are plentiful making it ideal for nature surveys and photography. Jon added that there is also the opportunity to document its history (from the first internment in 1856), to transcribe its burial records (and post a look-up service on the web) and to write biographies of interesting people buried there. There are more exacting tasks for energetic volunteers such as tidying graves and cleaning headstones.

Jon concluded by saying that the first objective was to recruit “Friends” - with a target of at least 100 by the end of the year.

Then followed a General Meeting wherein the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** was created, a Constitution adopted and a Committee elected. The Committee members will be subjects of short features in this, and subsequent, editions of this newsletter.

## Editorial

Well, the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** is one month old now and we have our first **88** members who have paid their subscriptions of £10 (single) or £15 (joint). Since the target mentioned at the meeting was 100 members by the end of the year, I think we can say we are well ahead of the game! We are also extremely grateful to those “Friends” who have included a donation with their subscription. Please accept a very big “thank you” from the Committee.

Those of you who attended that inaugural meeting will have heard that the huge Cedars of Lebanon trees have undermined the foundations of the chapel and mortuary and the IW Council are exploring ways of tackling this problem. Plans are being actively discussed and we hope to have specific details on what is going to happen in the next newsletter which we expect to produce in June/July.

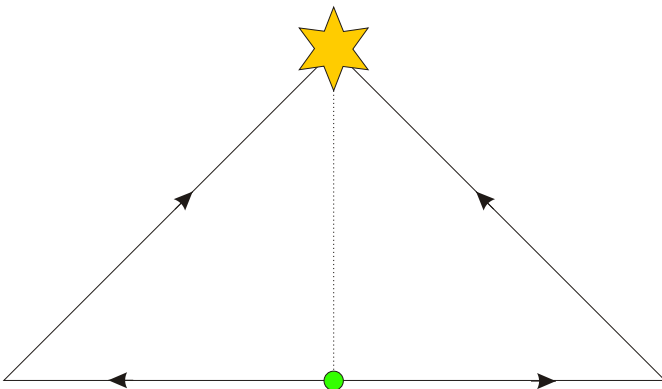


We are indebted to **Iain Donald**, Manager of Bereavement Services - and the Cemetery Manager for all 12 Island Cemeteries (as well as the Crematorium where he is based) and his team for helping us get this far; without their wholehearted support and encouragement we would not be where we are today! We should also mention **Bernie Coleman**, the groundsman, who has been most supportive and encouraging.



We hope you like “the Friends” logo which we have adopted. Our thanks are due to **Pia Simpson**, a graphic designer and “a Friend”, who kindly designed it. We hope it will help to give us a clear identity in the community.

Whilst growing the membership has been a top priority during April, other areas of activity have also kicked off. Whilst you know that the restoration of the chapel and mortuary buildings is our primary goal, the route to achieving this is far from direct.



Imagine a triangle like this: our goal is the gold star at the apex of this triangle and on 31<sup>st</sup> March we were at the green spot at the mid-point of the base line. Whether we like it or not, the route to the top is to spread ourselves along the base line so that the eventual ascent becomes less steep the further we go out. So that's just what we are doing - building ourselves a very broad foundation, ready for the ascent.

It's worth mentioning here that three initiatives are already taking place: Our appointed photographer **Dave Quigley** has taken more than 1,000 photographs of headstones in April and these are available to browse at [www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.co.uk](http://www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.co.uk). These will make a great contribution to the “before and after” shots of headstones that we will clean up over the years to come.



On the ecology side, **Bill Shepard** has agreed to update an existing survey of the trees and flora in the cemetery during the summer and we expect his work will form the basis of a Conservation Management Plan that will provide the backbone to what gets done in the cemetery over the next few years. For those who don't know, Bill has the reputation of being the Island's “Mr Trees” so we are very fortunate to have him as “a Friend”!

And on the records side, **Barry Sowerby** is adding all the information held in the Burial Registers to the Index of Burials which was already in existence when we formed. The Friends of Northwood Cemetery is able to use this index under licence by kind permission of Heritage Digital Archives who own the copyright. As well as the name, age, date of burial and grave number of those buried (already contained in the index), Barry's effort will add items such as the place of death, a description of the deceased (eg: "wife of", "daughter of", "Master Mariner" or whatever is recorded in the register) as well as the deceased's usual address. This information will be of great value to family historians.



So you can see that these activities do not take us up the direct route to the top of our triangle.- just remember they are all means to a well identified end!

### **Picnic**

A "Friends" picnic will take place in front of the Mortuary building at lunchtime (12 noon to 2:00pm) on **Bank Holiday Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> May**. This will be a chance for many of you to meet up and share your interest in the cemetery with others. Seating, tea, coffee and soft drinks will be provided but Friends intending to attend are invited to bring their own picnic. However, please call Jon on 01983 247498 if you are planning to attend so we have some idea of the number of attendees.. Alternatively, you can e-mail him on [jon@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk](mailto:jon@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk); we would like to know how many we are catering for! Children will be very welcome. If the weather is inclement, we can use the chapel building where the inaugural meeting took place.

### **Committee**

At the first committee meeting on 30th April , **Tim Gladdis** was co-opted onto the Committee as Newsletter Editor and Webmaster and **Jon Matthews** took on the role of Membership Secretary. Please keep checking in at the Friends' web-site: [www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk](http://www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk) which is under construction.

### **Members**

At 8th May 2008 we had 88 "Friends" of Northwood Cemetery as follows (in alphabetic order); all Cowes/East Cowes/Gurnard/Northwood except where stated:

Sandra Baguley (Liverpool), Geoff and Kay Banks, Sarah Banks (Winchester), Kathleen Barnard, Vicky Basford, Tony Bishop (Bristol), Neil Brown, Tony Brown (Hassocks, Sussex), Katherine Burhouse (Exmouth), Rob and Louisa Campbell, Tracey Campbell, Barry Cass, Sheila Caws, Wendy Chalmers (Clifton, Bedfordshire), Mary Chessell, Den and Hilda Collinson, John Crawford, Richard Day, Mollie Elliott, Jean Fayers (Oakley, Hampshire), Carol Flux, Jutta Freytag, Val and Betty Fry, Paul Fuller, Wendy Gardiner (Brentwood, Essex), David Gibbons, John and Mary Gilbert, Tim Gladdis, Terry and Kathie Glynn, Patricia Gordon, Karen Graves, John Groves, Di Harding (Carisbrooke), Sheila Hoare (Lymington), Audrey Honey, Mrs B Humphreys (Bournemouth), David and Mary Hunnybun, Robin and Margaet Jessup, David and Win Jones, Elizabeth King, Graham Lloyd, Daniel Lyons, Les Martin, Joan Matthew, Jon Matthews, Angela McMurtry (Queensland, Australia), Pauline Moore, Anthony Norris (California, USA), Sue Ogston, Lora Peacey-Wilcox, Andrew Pellow (Nettlestone), Colin and Jane Phillips, Marguerite Poynton, John Pullen, Dave and June Quigley, Brian and Aquila Read, Ian and Pam Rose, Don and Jill Roe, John Scott (Saskatchewan, Canada), Barbara Shaw, Bill Shepard (Carisbrooke), Angela Sherry (Michigan, USA), Mary Silk, Joni Simpson, Pia Simpson, Barry and Pauline Sowerby, Rosemary Stewart, Jim and Pat Street, Jamie and Judy Vans, John Wilcox and Maxine Yule.

## CONSTITUTION

### NAME

The name of the Organisation shall be the **FRIENDS OF NORTHWOOD CEMETERY** hereafter referred to as 'the **FRIENDS**'.

### AIMS

The Aims of the **FRIENDS** shall be:

The preservation, conservation and sympathetic restoration of Northwood Cemetery including (but not limited to) its monuments, buildings, standing structures and landscape;

and

The creation and safe keeping of records relating to Northwood Cemetery including (but not limited to) its history, geography, burial records, flora and wildlife.

### COMMITTEE

The **FRIENDS** shall be administered and managed in its day-to-day business by a Committee.

The Committee shall consist of six Officers nominated, seconded and elected at a General Meeting who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting. They shall be the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and three Members without Portfolio.

All Committee members shall serve for the term of one year and be eligible for re-election at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The Committee shall meet regularly, at least four times per year, and the quorum shall be four.

Every matter shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the Committee members present, and the presiding Chair shall have a casting vote.

In the event of any vacancy arising between AGMs, the Committee shall have the power to fill that vacancy by appointing another member who shall serve until the next AGM.

The proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalidated by any vacancy amongst their number or by any failure to appoint a member.

The Secretary shall keep written minutes of proceedings at meetings of the Committee.

The Committee shall have the power to co-opt a further three members and may appoint one or more sub-committees.

The Committee shall obtain and pay for such goods and services as are deemed necessary or desirable by the Committee for achieving the Aims of the **FRIENDS**.

The Committee shall reimburse the reasonable expenses of Committee members and any other members properly incurred when acting on behalf of the **FRIENDS**.

The Committee shall prepare an annual report, to include financial statements, for presentation at the AGM.

The Committee shall have the power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the Aims and to exchange information and advice with them.

The Committee shall have the power to appoint, at their sole discretion, an Honorary President and Honorary Vice-Presidents who shall have no voting rights but who would act, in the opinion of the Committee, as good ambassadors to the **FRIENDS** in the local community and beyond. Any such appointments so made shall be declared at the next AGM.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the **FRIENDS** shall be open to any person who wishes to support and promote the Aims of the **FRIENDS** and who pays an annual subscription.

The Membership fee shall be determined by the Committee and recommended by them for approval at an Annual General Meeting. The prevailing Membership fee shall remain in force if not tabled for amendment by the Committee at an AGM or any motion to change it is defeated.

The Membership fee will be due on 1 April of each year. A subscription of a member joining the **FRIENDS** in the first 3 months of a calendar year shall be regarded as covering membership to the **FRIENDS** for the twelve months from 1 April that year.

Membership shall cease if the membership fee is unpaid on 30 September having been due on 1 April in any given year.

Membership may be refused or withdrawn from any person for good and sufficient reason provided that the individual, or his/her representative, shall have the right to be heard by the Committee before a final decision is made.

A member has a right to give notice in writing to the Secretary of his/her resignation.

## **ANNUAL AND EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS (AGMs and EGMs)**

An Annual General Meeting shall be held no later than 14 months after the previous Annual General Meeting at a date, time and place decided by the Committee.

Notice of the AGM shall be given to all paid-up members not less than 28 days prior to the AGM together with a call for nominations to the Committee and motions for discussion at the meeting. The non-receipt of a notice by a member entitled to receive notice shall not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

Every paid-up member shall have one vote. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have a second casting vote.

The Secretary or other person specially appointed by the Committee shall keep a full record of proceedings at every AGM.

A quorum for any AGM shall be ten or one tenth of the paid-up members, whichever is the greater.

In the event of a quorum not being present within half an hour from the appointed time for the meeting, or if during a meeting a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place or to such time and place as the Committee decides. If at that re-convened meeting no quorum is present, those present shall conduct the business of the AGM.

The AGM shall endeavour to appoint a suitably qualified financial inspector for the coming year who may not be a member of the FRIENDS. If no such appointment is made at the AGM, then the onus to appoint shall fall on the Committee and it shall be an agenda item at the first Committee meeting after the AGM.

The Committee may call an EGM at any time. If at least ten members request such a meeting in writing to the Secretary stating the business to be considered then the Secretary shall call such a meeting. At least 21 days notice must be given to all members of an EGM, and the notice must state the business to be discussed. No business may be transacted at such a meeting other than that for which the meeting is called.

## **FINANCE**

The Committee shall have the power to collect Membership fees and raise funds by Appeal, Grant, Donation or other means but excluding Loans.

The Committee shall have the power to open a bank account on behalf of the FRIENDS. Cheques issued on this account shall bear the signatures of two members of the Committee.

The Funds belonging to the FRIENDS shall be applied only in the furthering of its Aims.

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Amendments to this Constitution may be adopted by a motion at the AGM or at an EGM on a simple vote of not less than one half of those present with a quorum of ten members or 10% of the paid-up Members whichever is the greater.

Notice of any proposed amendment to this Constitution setting out the terms of the alteration shall be given in writing to current members not less than 14 days before the meeting.

## **WINDING UP**

The FRIENDS may be dissolved at an AGM or an EGM where the notice of such meeting has stated the intent to dissolve and the terms under which such dissolution is proposed.

In the event that the motion to dissolve is adopted, the Committee shall have the power to realise any assets held by, or on behalf of, the FRIENDS and any assets remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be transferred to one or more charitable institutions having Aims similar to those herein declared and as chosen by the meeting of the FRIENDS at which dissolution is confirmed.

The minutes and other records of the FRIENDS shall be deposited with the Local History section of the Isle of Wight County Library.

## Little Don

Under the trees in Plot 20 (see back page for a plan) is a statue of a little boy with the inscription “**Don**”. He lies in a double grave all by himself. But who was “Little Don”?

**Duncan Lawrence Willoughby MacDonald** died on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 1905, aged 21 months. The IW County Press of Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1905 tells the sad story with the headline:

“INFANT'S SHOCKING DEATH AT COWES”.

The Inquest, held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July at the Granville Inn, Cowes (on the corner of Bridge Road and Bernard Road - now a private residence called Granville Court), heard that at about 7 o'clock the previous evening his mother was “about to take the child out and was dressing”. Whilst she did so “she allowed the little fellow to go next door, where she thought he would be perfectly safe”.

It seems, however, that instead he went with a three-year-old child to a building site “which was some 150 yards away” and fell into a lime pit, “sustaining shocking injuries which ended fatally”.

Little Don lived with his parents, Paul and Rosa (nee Willoughby) MacDonald at 5 (at the bottom of) Stephenson Road, Cowes. His father was an engineer on the steam yacht St George and “was well known in yachting circles in the town”. At the time Tennyson Road in Cowes was being built so perhaps this may have been the building site where Little Don died?

Paul and Rosa had married in Windsor, Berkshire in 1903 and Little Don was their first, and as far as we know, only child. Despite attempts to find out how Paul and Rosa coped with their loss, no details have emerged; they did not have any more children on the Island nor, it would seem, did they remain here. It would have become, no doubt, a place of great sadness for them.



**Nigel Hayton** in the foreground, and **John Groves** standing at the back, both looking very pensive as they listen to **Jon Matthews** at the inaugural meeting on 31st March.

## Meet the Committee

In our first edition we thought we should feature **Jon Matthews** who has been the driving force behind the creation of the Friends of Northwood Cemetery.

He's a caulthead and, in his own words "just been away for 60 years".

His father was born in Newport Road and both sets of his paternal great-grandparents are buried in Northwood Cemetery; his great uncle, a Master Mariner employed by Sir Thomas Lipton, was Chairman of the Burial Board in the late nineteenth century so he has good 'connections' to the cemetery.



Quite why he was born in Ryde is something of a mystery to him as his parents were from Cowes and East Cowes and they left the Island when he was two. Over the next 60 years he lived in Barnstaple, Colchester, Exeter, Bristol (university), Canterbury and, after joining the computer company IBM as a trainee programmer in 1964, London and Buckinghamshire. In the eighties he also had two years in Sydney, Australia. He left IBM in 1992 and has been running his own computer company since then - before 'retiring' last year (Ed ...or so he thought...).



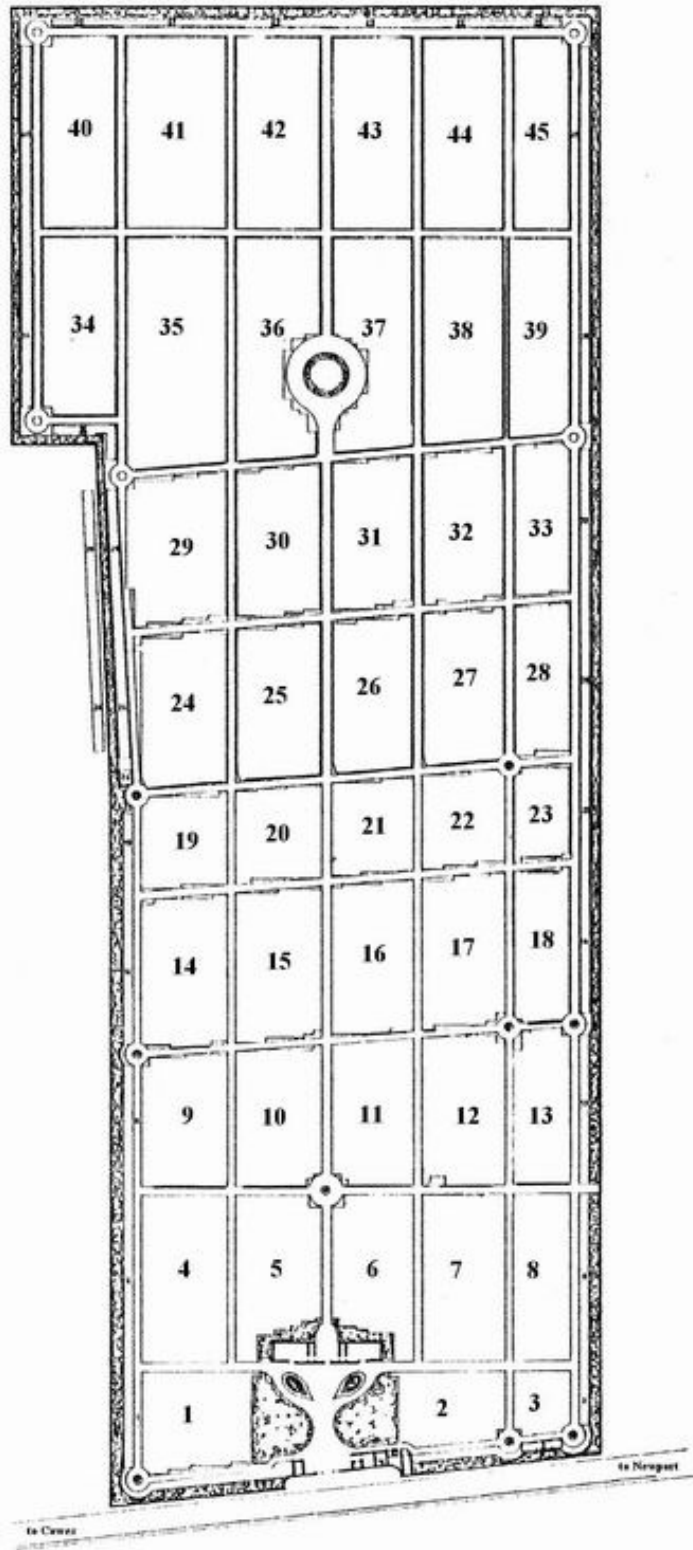
Jon's interest in Northwood Cemetery comes via Family History a hobby he started in the early eighties when an aunt told him there was a "Matthews Island named after an ancestor"; he's still looking for it 25 years later! He is also Membership Secretary of the Isle of Wight Family History Society which has over 1,000 members worldwide. He has assumed the same role for the Friends of Northwood Cemetery.

He has 4 grown up daughters but no sons - so the Matthews name will die out with him; yet he has three grandsons - and no granddaughters; it's strange how these things happen, isn't it?

The beautiful Cedars of Lebanon that have undermined the foundations of the Chapel and Mortuary buildings.

## Bank Account

Those of you who have paid your subscriptions by cheque may be wondering why the cheque hasn't been presented to the bank yet. Well, we couldn't open an account until the Constitution and the Committee had been established and the signatories had identified themselves **in person** at the bank. Immediately after the 31<sup>st</sup> March most of the Committee went on holiday! We are told by the bank that all the formalities are now complete but it will be two further weeks before the account can be used and cheques paid in. Please accept our apologies for the delay though I don't expect there's too much crying going on!



**KEY PLAN OF NORTHWOOD CEMETERY**  
**West Cowes, Isle of Wight**

Address all enquiries to  
 The Secretary  
 The Friends of Northwood Cemetery  
 194 Newport Road  
 Cowes  
 Isle of Wight  
 PO31 7PU

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Subscriptions are £10 per annum for Single membership and £15 per annum for Joint membership