

The Friends of Northwood Church

and

the Friends of Northwood Cemetery



SPONSORED WALK

on

Saturday 20th June

11:00am to 2:30pm

**(including Refreshments
at the Church)**



START & FINISH POINT
Northwood Cemetery Chapel

Sponsorship money will be shared between these two worthwhile projects and will help towards Restoration

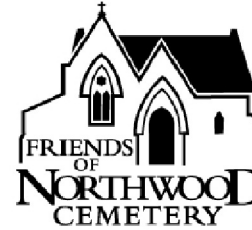
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NEWSLETTER NUMBER 5

MAY 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Chairman	Lora Peacey-Wilcox	Barry Sowerby	Tim Gladdis
Secretary	David Jones	Paul Fuller	Jon Matthews
Treasurer	Marie Gladdis	Graham Lloyd	Richard Day

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EDITORIAL

Another 3 months has sped by and we're able to report some significant progress. Firstly, the Isle of Wight Council are in receipt of tenders to underpin the mortuary building and we await their decision as to whom the contract will be awarded.

Secondly, we've been very fortunate in acquiring the services of two key people: **Carol Flux** to help us with compiling the grant application that will be required to get funding - she 'knows the ropes'; and **Peter Kilby** to co-ordinate the surveying and architectural work that will form the cornerstone of that application. Carol, a **Friend of Northwood Cemetery**, is not available until the Autumn.

Peter has already started working with the Committee. He is a qualified Conservation Architect who lives on the Island and has all the skills and experience we were seeking. Welcome aboard Peter!



And our thanks go to another "Friend", **Geoff Banks** (the current Cowes Town Mayor) who has very kindly offered his firm's services free-of-charge to prepare cost estimates in support of Peter's work.

The report of the AGM on page 6 will tell you of the preferred options we have identified as a result of an on-line 'brainstorming' session listing possible uses for the chapel and mortuary buildings - and the approval they won at that meeting.

The work we've done in creating a clear view of the chapel from the main entrance has already received wide acceptance from Friends and the General Public alike; Richard Day's Nature Conservation report details this - and other short-term plans we have for trees and shrubs.

One disappointment to record is that we have been advised that English Heritage does not grant funding for places of worship that have fallen out of use; we had certainly expected EH to be in the equation. Undaunted, the Committee has recognised that becoming a Registered Charity is now the optimum way forward - as being a charity will open up grant schemes that would otherwise not be available to us.

Inside you'll read of the fun-filled Quiz Night held at the end of February, Our next fund-raising event is another Sponsored Walk on Sunday 20th June; the 'test walk' last October generated over £250 from 20 walkers when we were still 'finding our fee' (excuse the pun!) so we really hope you'll make this a four-figure event in mid-Summer. We are aiming for 50 walkers so PLEASE download a Sponsorship Form and get your sponsors signing up! We want this to be a 'big one' raising over one thousand pounds.

NATURE CONSERVATION REPORT

We've reached May and our conservation progress has been quite spectacular! The hedged area on the left as you enter the Cemetery has now been totally grassed over, awaiting the autumn when it is intended to plant a small box hedge around the perimeter.



The overgrown area as it was

On the other side of the main drive we have freed the holly of the other 3 trees growing in the same place and taken away the roots. We have rebuilt the dry-stone wall and will shortly repair the grass in that area.

Our next task is already starting we have done a survey of Plot 1 (on the left as you enter the cemetery) and have agreed a number of actions relating to the trees and shrubs in the plot.

Firstly, we are intending to remove a number of the lower branches of some of the trees hoping to bring more light in, we are going to remove a couple of small ash trees which are in inconvenient places or are dangerous (not to us but to the graves) and take out scrub and prune the invasive shrubs.



The area in front of the Chapel after turf laying



The Island's MP, **Andrew Turner**, talking to Cowes nonagenarian, and **Friend of Northwood Cemetery, Mollie Elliott** after laying the first turf

The overall aim of these procedures is to let light onto the ground to encourage dormant plants and grass to return and to make the whole area a less gloomy and forbidding place so that relatives of people buried here have a much better chance of being able to see their loved ones last resting place.

For the future it is intended to work our way through the Cemetery plot by plot. No work will be undertaken until a survey is carried out and the actions agreed by the Nature Conservation team.

However, in contrast to this we might from time to time go into other plots in order to do a specific task; for instance, if we are asked to tidy a grave for a relative.

Richard Day

QUIZ NIGHT

When **Jackie Hunt** at the Kingston Arms (just down the road from the Cemetery) asked if we wanted to run a Quiz Night to raise funds for the Friends, we on the Committee all looked a little blank rather like a 'rabbits in the headlights' scenario!

None of us had ever run a Quiz Night but Jackie came to the rescue "I'll provide the questions - you just get the people here". "Right!" said the Chairman. Since we all belong to other local organisations, what a great idea to get all these Cowes groups together while fundraising for a great cause.

So it was that, to our utter disbelief, on Friday 28th February we had over 15 teams ranging from **Cowes Rotary**, the **RNLI**, **Northwood** and **Gurnard Parish Councils**, **Friends of Northwood Church**, **St Faiths Church**, **Bereavement Services** (from the IW Council) and the **Kingston Arms** - not to mention a number of teams from the "Friends" ourselves.



We were packed in like sardines - all very nice and cosy! - and it really was good to see so many people having a really great laugh on a Friday evening. Our thanks go to all those who took part!

We are truly grateful to all those who turned out, and due to its popularity we will be doing another one in October.

David Jones and his team won the main prize (**Friends of Northwood Cemetery** merchandise, of course!) by a single point from a team from the **Kingston Arms**. There was an individual "cemetery" competition with the following questions:

- (1) In what year was the very first burial in Northwood Cemetery?
- (2) What was the name of the little boy who fell into a lime pit and died in 1905?
- (3) How many acres does the cemetery cover?
- (4) What is the groundsman Bernie's surname?
- (5) How many people are buried in the cemetery (to nearest 1,000)?
- (6) What is the most common surname of people buried in the cemetery?
- (7) Which two members of the Committee of the Friends are **known** to be genetically related?
- (8) What year did the Crematorium start operations and the number of burials at Northwood start to wane?
- (9) Which family were curators of the cemetery for over 50 years?
- (10) Sir Phillip Hunloke, King George V's Sailing Master, was buried in the cemetery in 1947; what was the name of the King's yacht of which he was master?

Congratulations to **Carol Flux** who answered eight of these correctly - and won the individual prize!

Lora Peacey-Wilcox

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

25 "Friends" attended the AGM (over 50 had offered their apologies) on 31st March, the first anniversary of our inauguration. Reports from the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, the Archivist and, *in absentia*, the Nature Conversation Officer were given - the contents of these had been broadly covered in earlier Newsletters.

In summary 159 "Friends" subscribed in our first year and £2,482 was collected by way of subscriptions and donations - and from fund raising with a further £785 of our second year subscriptions already banked.

It was agreed to lock the main gates at dusk every night so this practice has now been implemented.

The meeting heard that the Committee had engaged in an 'on-line brainstorm' to determine the best uses for the chapel and mortuary buildings after their restoration. 50 uses had been identified! Interestingly, the seven most favoured uses (Environmental Education Centre, Heritage Centre, Project Office for the Friends, Community Hall, Museum and/or Art Gallery, Interdenominational Chapel and a "Drop in" Centre) may well be able to co-exist - with the chapel building housing the Interdenominational Chapel, Community Hall and Drop in Centre and the mortuary building housing the other uses.

The meeting heard that the Constitution allows for 6 Committee members - and these were unanimously re-elected; during the first year three further members had been co-opted and it was agreed that the Constitution should be updated for these to be elected at the AGM. The option of Life Membership was also suggested and the Committee agreed to review this.

Full (*unsigned*) minutes of the AGM have been posted on the web-site.

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

There was no way of knowing when I was a young lad of nine, that I would be so 'involved' with Northwood Cemetery, but I guess it is no surprise to those that know me well. Many hours of my younger days were spent 'down the cemy' - playing, walking the dog and, of course, bird watching.

Perhaps it is life's way of making me pay something back for the pleasure that those seventeen acres has given me over many years and what better way than to be documenting the 'inhabitants' in order that family historians can access the records relating to their ancestors. It has taken me many hours over the past year of 'burning the midnight oil' to get where we are today. Currently, I am working in the late 1970's - with just thirty more years of records to add to the 'on-line' Burial Register.

It is not possible to remember every detail that I have typed in - but what an interesting experience it has been. Little did I know how useful it would be that I had a paper round as a young teenager as it has been a great help in deciphering some of the 'illegible' house names; and how fascinating it has been to be reminded of the old shipyard trades in some of the descriptions.

As the transcription process nears the present day the task, in one sense, is getting easier as the Registrar is putting less information in - and yet in some instances it is made more difficult due to the format of the entry. As if that is not enough to keep me up most of some nights, one of the Registrars had very small handwriting that is almost illegible. I find it a great shame that the details entered in the register during the 1960's and 1970's were very sketchy. Back in Great Grandma's day they entered everything of interest. It is probably a reflection of modern living that, in recent years, there was just not enough time allowed to fill the Register in.

I have many examples of illegible entries that will soon be featured in the "Archivist Asks" section of our website in order that interested viewers might help in deciphering them. To date, 120 years worth of entries have been transcribed and I hope to complete the full Burial Record transcription before the August Newsletter.

Barry Sowerby

2009 PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Throughout May

Exhibition in Cowes Library, Beckford Road, Cowes

Saturday 20th June - Sponsored Walk

Following the success of the 'test' walk held on 3rd October 2008 (in rather unkind weather), at which over £500 was raised, we are planning a larger event on 20th June (at the height of the summer - hoping the weather will be kinder!); further details will be announced in our May Newsletter but please make a note in your diary now.


Saturday 15th August - Northwood Village Produce Association Annual Fair

We will be participating at this popular event offering plants for sale which will have been very carefully selected from the hundreds growing in the cemetery.

October/November - Cowes Heritage Annual Exhibition

This year the Cowes Heritage organisation are featuring Churches and Chapels in their annual 3-week Exhibition which, in the past, has attracted over 2,000 visitors. Naturally, the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** will have a major presence there.

STOP PRESS! Look out for the June/July edition of Island Life!!!



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CUST Family

In plot 19 of Northwood Cemetery (on the left hand-side 'half-way' to the top roundabout) lie the remains of several members of the CUST family.

Caroline Sophia CUST died aged 75
Ernest Richard CUST died aged 43
Florence Henrietta CUST died aged 54
Emma Augusta Charlotte CUST died aged 69
Alice Marion Porcelli CUST died aged 73



Who was this family with elaborate graves?

The first death recorded is that of Caroline Sophia CUST; she was the wife of the Hon. Charles Henry CUST who was born 1813 in Belton, Lincolnshire. He was the second son of the 1st Earl of Brownlow.

The Hon. Charles Henry CUST was a Member of Parliament for North Shropshire and gained the rank of Captain in the service of the Royal Horse Guards. He married Caroline Sophia MACDONALD, the eldest daughter of Reginald George MacDonald Esq, 18th Chief of the Clan Ranald and his wife Lady Caroline EDGCUMBE. Both families are recorded in Burkes Peerage.

In the 1861 Census the CUST family were living at Arthingworth Hall, Northamptonshire. Charles was recorded as a Landed Proprietor and Justice of the Peace. Living with him was wife Caroline and children: Emma aged 17, Alice aged 15, Theresa aged 13 and Ernest aged 11 - plus 20 servants! There is no record of daughter Theresa after this census.

In the 1871 Census the family are recorded in Christchurch, Hampshire living at Kensington House, Bournemouth. Charles was still recorded as a JP & landowner living with his wife and children Ernest, Emma, Alice, Florence and 13 servants. The Hon. Charles CUST died 1875 in Northampton and he is possibly buried in his family seat at Grantham Lincoln. His death was recorded in the London Illustrated News. It remains a mystery as to why his wife and children would not be buried with him.

Between 1875 and 1881 Charles's widow retired to the Isle of Wight and lived at Castle Rock, (now the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club). She was living at this address on the night of the 1881 census with unmarried children: Emma, Florence and Ernest - who were all listed as being born in London. Her son Ernest is recorded as a Landowner.

Caroline Sophia CUST died on the Isle of Wight in 1887. Her death was followed by that of her son Ernest CUST in 1893 who was only aged 43. In the 1891 census he was recorded living in Grantham, Lincolnshire at Belton House, the home of his cousin Earl Brownlow aged 46 "Peer of the Realm". Ernest was recorded as an unmarried Land Owner.

He also appears in the book "The Great Landowners of Great Britain" as one of the top land owners in the UK in 1872. He died on the Isle of Wight in xxxx. His sister Florence CUST died in 1902 also on the Isle of Wight; she did not marry.

In 1891 census she was with her sister Emma in lodgings at Bath but I have been unable to locate her in the 1901 census. Her sister Emma CUST died 1913 at Cowes; she did not marry and cannot be located in the 1901 Census - although in the 1911 Census she is living in Bath, Somerset.

The burial of Allen Roger CUST in 1897 is a little more interesting. He was born Allan Roger PORCELLI and married Alice Marion CUST in 1876 in Westminster. In 1881 under the surname PORCELLI they were living in Kew, Richmond; Allan's occupation was "Captain M S" born in Switzerland. He was living with wife Alice and two daughters aged nearly 2 and 8 months old. Alice was incorrectly recorded as the same age as her husband when in fact she was 11 years older.

In the 1891 census the family are living in Richmond Surrey. Allan PORCELLI is recorded as a JP and Major in the Infantry. He was living with his wife Alice, three daughters and 7 servants. In 1893 the family surname was changed by Royal License to PORECELLI-CUST (source Burkes Peerage); this may have something to do with the fact that out of her siblings only Alice had children and possible heirs to whatever money had been left over after their mother died. Allen died in 1897 at St George Hanover Square, London.

In 1901 Alice CUST was living at Torquay Devon with an unmarried daughter Adelaide CUST and in the 1911 Census Alice is recorded as living in Newton Abbot Devon.

(Researched by **Angela McMurtry**, a **Friend of Northwood Cemetery** 'down under')

MEET THE COMMITTEE -

Marie Gladdis

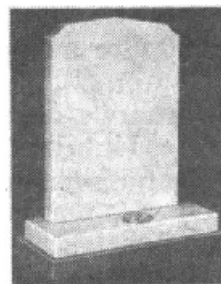
Marie our Treasurer is an Island girl, born and bred, and was a Toogood before she married **Tim Gladdis**, our Webmaster and Newsletter Editor. Tim and Marie have been married for 16 years and have two children who attend local schools.

Marie has been involved in a number of different organisations around Cowes including the **Beavers 2nd St Mary's Scout Group** and is currently the Treasurer of the **Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society**.

In her precious spare time Marie shares Tim's passion for vintage motor cycles and is often seen riding around the Island on her Royal Enfield.



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