



## **Annual General Meeting**

The Kingston Arms, Newport Road, Cowes

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at 7:00pm

### **Minutes**

**Present:**

Nine Trustees and 14 Friends

**1 Apologies for Absence:**

There were no apologies for absence

**2 Chairman's Welcome and Report:**

Lora Peacey-Wilcox welcomed Trustees and Friends to the 2011 AGM. The chairman summarised the achievements of the Trustees during the year; thanking each Trustee for their contribution. She also thanked former trustees and friends for their support, particularly at the Open Day.

**3 Treasurer's Report (attached):**

**4 Archivist's Report (see below):**

**5 Conservation Report (see below):**

**6 Election of Trustees:**

Chairman	<b>Lora Peacey-Wilcox</b>
Secretary	<b>David Jones</b>
Treasurer	<b>Jon Matthews</b>
Six Other Trustees	<b>Richard Day, Paul Fuller, Tim Gladdis, Graham Lloyd, John Pullen and Barry Sowerby</b>

**7** There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.30pm.



## Archivists Report - AGM April 2011

Since the inauguration of the FoNC I have been getting on average, three research enquiries a week, some by email, but many are people I just meet in the cemetery searching for their long lost ancestors.

Some enquiries are from family historians padding out their family tree information, but many from people that are desperate to know the resting place of their relatives.

### Mrs C

One interesting enquiry I had recently was from a lady who lives on the mainland and was about to visit the Island. We arranged to meet in the cemetery in order that I show her the grave of her ancestor. This was a particularly interesting search as her relative just happened to be the very first burial in the cemetery; James Cribb, a local shoemaker, who was buried on 8th November 1856

Some of the most moving enquiries I receive are from Mothers seeking the grave of their stillborn baby from long ago. Usually they have 'never' known where their child has been interred and in some cases unfortunately never will, as until the mid 1950s not all were even documented.

### Mrs D

Is a local lady who gave birth to a stillborn son some years ago and had 'never' known the whereabouts of his grave. After the birth a nurse took the baby from her, saying "don't make a fuss, we don't want all the other expectant mums upset". Recently, another of her sons was researching their family history and stumbled on his brother's name in the FoNC online burial register.... He contacted me by email and I was able to locate the grave for them and re-unite his Mother with her child after some 55 years. This is not an isolated case.....there have been several similar cases over the past three years.

As there appears to be many errors in the cemetery records, I am currently checking that all grave locations have the correct name and number association. A tedious task, it will probably take me until the next AGM to complete.

Nick Boyland has joined our team and is at present researching a way forward in creating a new set of 'interactive' plot maps that will be displayed and on our website.

### Cemetery Maps

Some years ago four large framed maps of the cemetery were found in the East Chapel. The maps, which date from 1906 were in a very dilapidated state. Richard Smout, the County Heritage Services Manager was informed of their existence and on inspecting them made arrangements to have them restored by Heritage Services. To date, one has been completely restored and the others are still very much work in progress. I have no idea exactly what is involved in the restoration, but I do know that it is highly skilled, painstaking work and very expensive. We have Bernie Coleman to thank for having the initiative in the first place to take care of them whilst he was resident groundsman. Without his hoarding instinct, these 105 year old artefacts would have been destroyed long ago. They will probably not return to the cemetery permanently as they need to be stored in a more stable environment, but we do hope to display them on occasions such as a future open day.

Barry Sowerby



## Nature Conservation Report - AGM April 2011

### Saturday morning Task Group

- Volunteer attendance average is running at 4.8 for the last year, more volunteers have appeared and we have 5 or 6 people lately.

### Previous, Ongoing and recently completed work

- Thousands of bulbs have been planted in the area in front of the Dead House.
- Weed pulling, stone removal, preparation for wild flower planting are all ongoing.
- Brash from Yew pruning, removal and reshaping has been burnt; logs left for general public to use.
- The hedge alongside Friends' House has been pruned back severely due to the bad state it was in.
- Removal of dead branches, pruning & reshaping Yews and removal of carefully selected whole trees to open up plot areas and to allow re-growth into smaller, more manageable bush like trees is ongoing.

### Future Tasks

- Plot surveys to agree future work.
- Examination of perimeter & internal hedges to agree future work.
- Any specific pruning that is asked for by relatives of interred people.
- Brash / trunk wood disposal as above.
- Levelling & weed removal from right side will be followed by discussions on plans for the area (both on site and within Trustees meetings).
- Aftercare weeding and debris removal from Plot 1.
- Any work specified for Chapel interior.
- Wildflower seeding – proposed to be complete by the end of April.
- More bulbs will be planted of autumn flowering types later in the summer.
- We have permission from Iain Donald to plant some trees at the bottom of the cemetery along the perimeters of the unused plots. The trees will come from a batch of trees obtained from BTCV under a free offer. (Oak, Ash, Rowan, Silver Birch & Cherry).