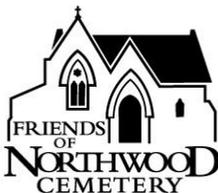


# NEWSLETTER NUMBER 30

August 2015

## Officers:

Chairman Jon Matthews  
Secretary David Jones  
Treasurer John Pullen



## Other Trustees:

Richard Day Paul Fuller  
Graham Lloyd Barry Sowerby

The Secretary, The Friends of Northwood Cemetery,  
194 Newport Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7PU  
Tel: (01983) 298445

Email: [david@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk](mailto:david@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk)

Website: [www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk](http://www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk)

Registered Charity no: 1143917

# LOTTERY SUCCESS!!!



## LOTTERY FUNDED



**Read about some very exciting news in the Chairman's Report overleaf!**

## Editorial

There was a great turn-out at the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June and a big thank you goes to all who attended. The meeting progressed as outlined in the Agenda and draft minutes are available on the website; all the Trustees were re-elected.

It was agreed to include the word **heritage** in the Objects of FoNC and clarify the wording to better describe our purpose; the Objects adopted at the meeting are now:

- to promote the heritage, preservation, restoration and maintenance of Northwood Cemetery including its chapels and other standing structures for the public benefit;
- to promote and maintain the burial records of Northwood Cemetery for the public benefit; and
- to promote the sympathetic preservation of the landscape, arboreta, flora and wildlife of Northwood Cemetery for the public benefit.

**Jo Mckinnie**

Editor

## Chairman's Report

I am delighted to tell you that, at the end of June, the **Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)** announced £34m of grants throughout the British Isles – and **£1,685,100** of that is coming to Northwood Cemetery!!!

You may recall we already had circa £1m 'earmarked' by the HLF - and additional funds were released to us last year to undertake a detailed survey and develop architect's plans for the buildings.

However, when that request was originally considered by the HLF it was not envisaged that the East Chapel would require the same degree of underpinning as that planned for the dilapidated West Chapel. Unfortunately the deterioration in its stonework since then is there for all to see. This alone caused a 60% uplift to the funding needed and this resulted in the HLF re-evaluating our application 'from scratch'. Happily it has confirmed its continued support for our project.

The HLF is particularly excited at the community-led 'model' on which we will be embarking; the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery (FoNC)** will take the lead in a partnership with the **Isle of Wight Council** (the landowners) and the HLF see this partnership as pioneering a new way forward for other community groups now that local authorities are under such pressure with cuts in their central government funding.

So, what we set out to achieve in 2008 is now a reality – it's just taking a bit longer than we thought it would!

The Trustees are very keen to recruit more volunteers to do a variety of tasks (most are non labour intensive) and to raise money for 'match funding'. The HLF never gives 100% of the funds required; the recipient (ie: us) has to demonstrate its intent. In our case FoNC has committed to contribute over £10,000 over the next two years.

So every £1 received through subscriptions, donations, sponsorships and fund raising activities is vital to us to ensure that we get the £1,685,100 set aside by the HLF. If you are in a position to make a contribution, then do please contact one of the Trustees.

First up on the schedule is the landscaping of the proposed Woodland Burial site at the southern end of the Cemetery – giving time for the ground to settle thereafter.

Meanwhile the tendering process to select contractors will take place – but we hope by the spring of 2016 there will be signs of activity on the restoration of the Chapels.

**Jon Matthews**

Chairman

## Membership Report

As we go to press 240 members are 'paid up' for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 – well on track to hit 250 for the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year!

We have welcomed **Claire Budden, Godfrey & Shirley Butchers** and **Geoffrey Fuller** (a new 'Friend' living in Cowes) as Life members in the last quarter. In addition, new members joining have been: **Steve Callar** (Cowes), **Debbie Faulkner** (Cowes), **Kieron Kirkpatrick**, (Cowes), **Chris & Linda Matthews** (West Wellow, Hampshire), **David & Nici Matthews** (Chandlers Ford, Hampshire), **Alison Parker** (Cowes), **John Payton** (Victoria, Australia) and **Bob & Heather Weir** (Western Australia).

As mentioned opposite, subscriptions continue to be a mainstay of our regular income and there are still some renewals outstanding from last year that we'd love to collect. Grateful thanks go to those "Friends" who have also made a donation *in addition* to paying their sub; to each and every one of you, a big 'thank you' from all the Trustees.

Now, some of you have used the **Parish Chest** (an organisation based in Truro, Cornwall, that has specialised in providing online payment facilities to family history societies and heritage groups) to pay your annual subscription. In July its owners announced that they were retiring and so we have moved our online payment facility to **PayPal**. The continuation of online facilities is very important for "Friends" living abroad and who may not have access to a Sterling bank account. Same service, just a different provider.

Finally, the post of Membership Secretary continues to be vacant so please consider whether **you** might be able to help out in this volunteer role. This can be done from home and a computer would be essential.

**Jon Matthews**

(Acting) Membership Secretary

### Quiz nights

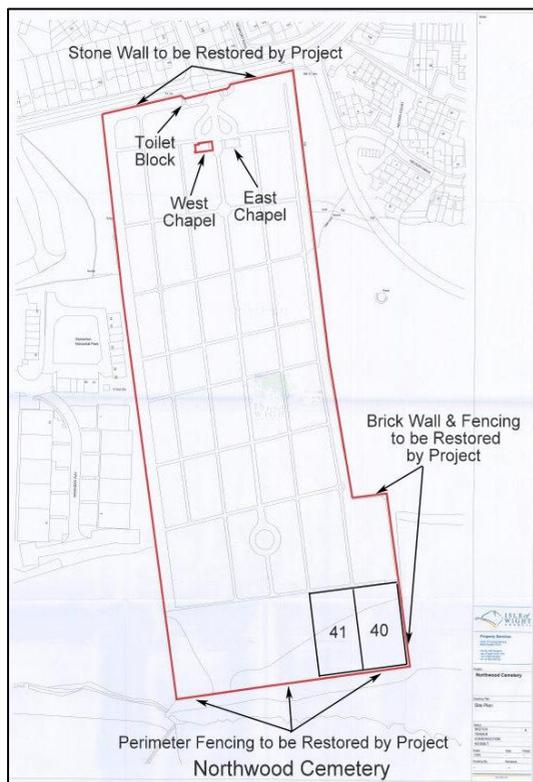
Please set aside the evening of **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September** for our next Quiz Night at the **Kingston Arms**. 7:00pm for 7:30pm with Jackie, 'mine hostess', asking the questions.

Also there are regular quiz nights at the **Cowes Ale House** on alternate Wednesdays; the next three will take place on **26<sup>th</sup> August, 9<sup>th</sup> September** and **23<sup>rd</sup> September**; 8.00pm for 8:30pm with the redoubtable Jeff Leddicott at the helm.

Raffle prizes are available at all these fund raising events.

## Northwood Cemetery Heritage Project

This Project is a partnership initiative between the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** and the **Isle of Wight Council**. As a working cemetery the Council has responsibility for the overall management and maintenance of the site and for the delivery of burial services. FoNC provide considerable 'added value' services undertaking a wide variety of conservation tasks as well as researching its heritage and habitat.



The Project has a number of facets – the most obvious, of course, is the need for major works underpinning and restoring the two Chapels. It is quite alarming how the East Chapel has moved over the past eighteen months and it's a race against time to save it! This has given the Project a great sense of urgency.

The West Chapel was partially stabilised, and its fragile 'lean-to' removed, by the Council in 2010 and is no longer in threat of collapse (though its external condition gives it the appearance of being the poorer of the two; if you were able to see the interior you would certainly notice the neglect to which it has been subjected over the years).

Within the Project is a plan to create the Island's first publicly owned **Woodland Burial Ground**.

Plots 40 and 41, in the south-east corner of the Cemetery, which are overgrown and currently inaccessible, will be cleared (though all mature trees will be retained) and then landscaped. Also, a rustic wooden shelter for mourners will be erected.

A **Heritage Resource Centre**, to welcome and inform visitors, will be housed in the West Chapel. This will contain learning resources with a strong genealogy focus creating a new community resource. We are collaborating with the **Isle of Wight Family History Society**, (who has kindly made a donation to our fund raising efforts) on 'fitting out'.

The 'Lean-to' will be reconstructed to form a kitchenette so that teas, coffees and light refreshments can be offered to visitors – and volunteers!

The consecrated East Chapel will once again be used as a chapel for funeral services. All the sponsorships that were received in 2010-2013 for its windows will carry forward.

A **Heritage and Conservation Trail** will run through the heart of the 17 acre grounds. The Trail's signage will highlight the key memorials and areas of habitat significance.

The toilet block near the main entrance to the Cemetery will be upgraded to become DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant with a ramp for wheelchair users. It will be open for Cemetery users only. Its unimposing looks will also be screened from sight.

Many of the pathways, which are currently in a very poor state of repair with large potholes, will be restored to improve safety around the Cemetery.

## The Red Squirrel



With its familiar bushy tail and tufted ears, the red squirrel is easily recognised, yet sightings are increasingly rare in Britain.

The Island's woodland can provide habitat for around 3,500 although numbers fluctuate annually according to the success, or failure, of the autumn seed crop - and when the young are born.

Reds are fast disappearing from the mainland being replaced by the American grey. This makes the Island an important stronghold as the Solent provides a natural barrier to the Greys - but we must be vigilant. Not only do Greys out compete Reds for food and territory, they carry the deadly squirrelpox virus which is fatal to Reds.

They eat shoots, buds, fungi, leaves, flowers, insects and fruit and, like us, are left or right handed! Northwood Cemetery is a great source of tree seeds that help them survive winter and early spring.

Reds are essentially an arboreal animal and prefer to travel via trees rather than on the ground. This means that 'corridors', or 'squirrel highways' provide good cover. Preferred tree species are hazel, wild cherry, sweet chestnut, walnut, Scots pine, Corsican pine and beech. Hedge laying and overhanging tree branches across woodland paths also give 'high-level corridors' to run from tree to tree.

They produce litters of two to three kittens at a time, nesting in dreys that can be found high up in tree branches close to the trunk. Life expectancy is about six years but only about one in six survives to adulthood.

The Board of the Friends of Northwood Cemetery is keen to collect information about the red squirrel population in the Cemetery for the Wight Squirrel Trust and for this we have a new volunteer, **Alison Parker**, who lives in Cowes.

Back in the 1980s Alison took a degree in Environmental Studies and consequently does have some experience of the monitoring and assessment of fauna and flora. She will be squirrel watching in the Cemetery regularly during each October and February. All data collated will be passed on to the Trust to assist them in their work.

**Jo Mckinnie**

Editor

## **James Cribb – the first person to be interred in Northwood Cemetery**



James Cribb, a 32 year old Shoemaker, died of Typhoid Fever on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1856 and holds the honour of being the first person to be interred in Northwood Cemetery three days later.

On that cold November day James was laid to rest and the funeral party returned to the Cribb house for the wake. His widow, upset by the loss of her beloved Shoemaker, suddenly gasped out a distraught cry, “Oh no, I do believe that we have buried poor James the wrong way round; he faces to the West”! (traditionally Christian burials were made supine east-west - with the head at the western end of the grave).

The family made a plan to return to the Cemetery under cover of darkness to correct this terrible mistake.

However, it needed to be a very cunning plan as they did not want to be accused of grave robbing. Exhuming a body was highly illegal, even in 1856. So after dark some friends and family members armed with shovels made their way to the Cemetery to secretly re-position James.

*How could they turn him through 180 degrees without exhuming his body?*

They dug a large circular hole around the grave to a depth level with the bottom of the coffin. A couple of the men then rotated the coffin through 180 degrees until he faced to the East. They filled the grave in again and after a short prayer the friends and family slipped back to their homes, the rest of the town was none the wiser.

*How do we know about this remarkable event?*

A nonagenarian Cowes lady, who was related to James, was told the story many times by her grandfather. Jon Matthews was very fortunate to meet this lady (in 2008) and learned of the tale. Apparently her grandfather, a 12-year-old boy at the time, was the person who climbed a nearby tree and held a lantern high to illuminate the operation.

A truly amazing story!

**Barry Sowerby**

Historian

## **Ground Preservation Report**



Over the past two years we have attracted sponsors for seven new trees which were subsequently planted at the far end of the Cemetery.

This programme has not been without its challenges as all seven trees have really struggled for survival and four have died.

We made a decision earlier this year to focus our efforts on the three survivors and get them into healthy growth. Happily this focus is bearing fruit – as can be seen with the Hornbeam pictured here.

Naturally we've stayed in contact with all the sponsors regarding the status of 'their' trees and we expect the dead ones will be replaced in November, the optimal time for planting in the calendar year.

The fallen tree by the mini roundabout 'just behind' the Chapels has been cut up and all brash and small branches removed. However, the main trunk is too heavy for volunteers - so that awaits professional removal.

Work is currently taking place on removing the shrubs and bramble which overhang the paths close to the entrance from the Cowes Medical Centre.

**Richard Day**

Grounds Preservation Officer

## Fund Raising - from Cornflakes to Cruises!

Your support in raising funds is vital to our progress with the HLF grant and the key to our ongoing success. The HLF have made their pledge to us and in return we must uphold our promise by contributing 'match funding'. This requirement is **in addition** to the funds needed to run FoNC on a day-to-day basis. So please get your thinking caps on, and if you can get involved, all hands are welcome; the more the merrier!

It's been mentioned several times before but **EasyFundRaising** is a very simple way to raise money with very little effort. If you shop online for anything - from cornflakes to cruises, car insurance to furniture - you can raise money for FoNC.

First, go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and click on "**Support a Good Cause**", then enter **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** as your chosen charity and fill out your registration details. The good news is that you only have to register once.

Then every time before you make a purchase, go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk), browse the list of retailers or type it in, select the retailer you want, then click the "**Go Shopping**" button. You will be taken to your selected shopping website to shop as normal. **You don't have to pay any extra.** *EasyFundRaising* will calculate the donation and send it to us (on a quarterly basis).

Some good news. We were one of the charities selected by "Green Token Community Matters" at Waitrose in East Cowes in July; this raised **£232** for FoNC.

And there are plenty of **Loose Change Boxes** (kindly provided by **Stella Watling**) in shops around Cowes. If you would like one for your home, please contact a Trustee.

## Nesting Boxes in the Cemetery

We have acquired a quantity of Nesting Boxes for small birds and intend to erect these in the near future following discussions with Ornithologists and the IW Council.

With their grandchildren in mind, we already have sponsors for some of these. If anyone is interested, please contact me at [john@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk](mailto:john@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk). Each sponsor will be recognised on a list displayed in the Cemetery - if that person so chooses. We suggest a minimum amount of £5 per box.

Northwood Cemetery provides a safe haven for our feathered friends - in the middle of a built up area - and many people visit to see the birds. A lot of the existing boxes are now in a sad state and need replacing.

**John Pullen**  
Treasurer