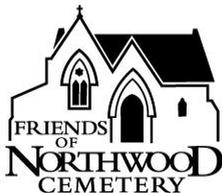


NEWSLETTER NUMBER 33



May 2016

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Chairman Jon Matthews
Secretary David Jones
Treasurer John Pullen

Other Trustees:

Peter Almond Richard Day
Graham Lloyd Barry Sowerby
Stella Watling

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Registered Charity no: 1143917

Chairman's Report

If we were launching a spacecraft, we'd be saying "3-2-1-lift off" now! Contractors have been appointed to restore the chapels (see page 4) and they are already onsite!

In the meantime the activity in the Cemetery these past three months has focused at the southern ('far') end – on the **Natural Burial Ground** and the **Gazebo** which has now been erected.



The Gazebo is to provide a facility to say goodbye to loved ones in both the **Natural Burial Ground** and the **Muslim Burial Ground**; it is also a shelter for educational visits by accompanied school children.

The **Natural Burial Ground** has now been landscaped and a path has been laid so that a 'circular' walk can be enjoyed; it may not be abundant with spring flowers **this** year but **next** year we hope it will be a very different story. Last month 40 children from **Lanesend Primary School** visited the Cemetery to plant the first 1,000 bulbs.



Meanwhile the volunteers have been very busy producing wood chippings from all the brush that has been accumulated and they are in the process of laying chippings on the side paths (close to the Cowes Medical Centre entrance to the Cemetery) that were just not usable without waterproof boots on in the winter months.

Also in that area the **Isle of Wight Council** commissioned tree surgeons to trim the Bay trees that had grown far beyond their intended height; indeed four had come down in gales in recent years, thankfully without any personal injuries being sustained. As a result the Cowes Medical Centre and the buildings in the Somerton Industrial Estate are no longer hidden from view from within the Cemetery; this will take some getting used to – but Health and Safety matters must come first.

Finally, and at long last, the saga of the trees sponsored back in 2013 is (fingers crossed!) over. Several of the trees sponsored then died but now, after a lengthy delay due to the very wet weather, replacements have been planted and memorial plaques re-mounted. Thank you to all the sponsors for your patience.

Jon Matthews
Chairman

**The 2016 Annual General Meeting will take place at the Kingston Arms,
Newport Road, Cowes on Monday 13th June at 7:00pm.**

Please accept this as the required notice of this important annual event.

The Agenda is available on the FoNC website;
a paper copy will also be distributed to those not on the Internet.

Membership Report

I'm happy to report that there was an excellent response to my request for membership renewals in the last newsletter; however there are still quite a number outstanding (if you are not sure, please call me on: 01983 506474). Your ongoing support is very much appreciated, so if you wish to continue as a Friend for 2016/2017, and your subscription is still outstanding, please send a cheque for £10 (single), £15 (joint) or £100 (Life) made payable to the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** to me at: 9 Westwood Close, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7NS; or we are happy to receive an Internet transfer to: Sort code 30-95-99 (Lloyds Bank, Newport), Account number 00041618. You can also use **Paypal** by going to www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk/subscriptions.

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members who have become "Friends" for the first time this quarter (all live in the Postcode PO31 unless stated otherwise): **Geoff Allan** (Ryde), **Alan & Joy Ash**, **Brian & Linda Bates**, **David & Heather Finch**, **Jason Flewin**, **Ray Jolliffe** (Paeroa, New Zealand), **Marian Lamsley-Jones**, **Barbara Rolfe**, **Ross Toogood** (Arreton) and **Paul & Cheryl Vernon**. In addition **Ray Andrews** of Cowes has become our latest Life member.

Lastly, I am saddened to record the passing of Life Member, **Mike Warrior**, grandson of **Walter Henry Warrior** (see Newsletter no:17, May 2012).

Steve Callar

Membership Secretary

Yard Sale

Following the successful Yard Sale at **Stella Watling's** home, **Victoria Cottage**, **64 Park Road, Cowes** on 19th March, another one will take place on **Saturday 18th June from 10:30am to 3:00pm.**

If you have any unwanted antiques or collectables, please let Stella know on 01983 281597. In any event please come along to see what's on offer - and bring a friend or two!

Restoration works contractor appointed

After an extensive tendering process covering interest from contractors across Europe, **G J Banks (IW) Ltd** has been appointed to undertake the restoration of the two Chapels at the Cemetery, the Toilet block and affect repairs to the front boundary wall.

Its work will be overseen by a firm of Architects, the **Radley House Partnership (RHP)**, an established and award-winning practice with a broad portfolio of notable work based in Winchester. RHP has been engaged by the partnership between the **Isle of Wight Council** and the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** which is leading the Project.

Established for 35 years, the Cowes based family run building company has a wealth of experience in restoration and conservation works to heritage properties - not only on the Island but also in Hampshire and West Sussex.

Their large portfolio includes works to historic and Grade 1 and Grade 2 Listed Buildings where they continue to gain awards for their conservation works and the noted skills of their conservation experienced employees.

Of the 62 Anglican Island churches, the company has undertaken works on half of them. Other works on the Island include the refurbishment of Sovereign's Gate Lodge which is the gatehouse to **Osborne House** Estate - and works to Osborne House itself. Other projects include work at the **Royal Yacht Squadron** and **Northwood House** - and an array of privately owned heritage properties.

On the mainland the company has undertaken extensive church restorations and repairs to heritage properties, all funded by the **Heritage Lottery Fund**. Repairs are undertaken using traditional materials and methods under the direction of conservation accredited architects.

Besides specialising in heritage restoration and conservation, the company is also the Island's most experienced contractor in subsidence repairs which has not only taken them to all parts of the Island but also along the south coast. These works have been primarily insurance related and embraces piling and traditional methods of underpinning and stabilisation.

Whether projects are through Architects or direct with clients **G J Banks (IW) Ltd** continue to offer the benefit of their knowledge, experience and skills in all heritage related works.

A contract with **G J Banks (IW) Ltd** was signed on 26th April which will see onsite works on the two Chapels starting this month – with a focus on the **West Chapel** first.

Completion of the underpinning and restoration works on both Chapels is expected to be completed in the early summer of 2017.

David Jones
Secretary

Red Squirrel Monitoring

As the end of a particularly mild February approached, so it was time for the first set of squirrel monitoring sessions for 2016.



Each session was carried out early in the morning, starting at about 7.30am and I am pleased to say that the weather was on my side; all 3 sessions were dry, bright, sunny and fairly windless (if a little chilly).

With the sun shining through the trees, it was the perfect time to see Northwood Cemetery in all its Spring glory – trees and shrubs just coming into bud, carpets of daffodils and crocus studded with primroses, the first bluebells appearing at the final session in March.

There was lots of birdlife too; from the plentiful sparrows, woodpigeons and crows, through to robins, blue tits, great tits, tiny wrens, even a couple of woodpeckers and a flash of the mottled wings of a bird of prey (moving too fast for me to identify it). I also saw rabbits, mice and even a cat!

The subject of my early morning visits was, of course, the **red squirrel**. Good news to report: several sightings of individual squirrels during the course of all 3 sessions but the most exciting was on my second visit, on 23rd February, when I saw 3 squirrels all together, one sitting on the ground feeding whilst the other two were playing, chasing each other up and down tree trunks and along branches. It was a lovely sight to see and one that confirms we do have a red squirrel colony at Northwood Cemetery. More recently, one of the Trustees reported seeing **four** squirrels together - which is even better news.

Hopefully, these rare and endangered little creatures will continue to thrive within the boundaries of Northwood Cemetery.

Alison Parker
Squirrel Monitor

What is Natural Burial?

It is hugely important that the final resting place for someone you love - or indeed for you yourself - is right for you and for your family. Natural Burial is a sustainable alternative to existing funeral practices and is a term used for burials that have a low environmental impact. All materials used must be from natural, biodegradable sources to form an area that is perfect for nature's wildlife. Carefully selected woodland plants and bulbs create a lovely woodland setting and encourage natural flora and fauna to establish.

Non-embalming is a requirement and coffins and remains caskets must be made from proven sources such as willow, bamboo, wicker, reed, seagrass, wood, etc, emphasising the natural element of the burial area. Memorials and memorial markers will also be of a natural construction. The use of glass and pottery, synthetic flowers or ornaments would not be permitted.

Work has nearly finished on Plot 40 and Plot 41 of Northwood Cemetery and it will become the Isle of Wight's first municipally owned **Natural Burial Ground**. This is particularly appropriate as it is a multi faith cemetery - being the only Island municipal site to contain a dedicated Muslim Plot. This new provision widens personal choice, is environmentally friendly and very much in-keeping with the existing woodland setting.

It is envisaged there will be provision for full burials, burials of cremated remains and for the scattering of cremated remains. The land will be seeded and bulbs planted so that the area will become a vision of natural colour with pathways, rustic seating and natural sculptures to create a unique woodland setting.

Funeral services will take place in the **Natural Burial Ground**, either at the graveside or in the new designated open-air Gazebo which provides a place for memorial services or quiet reflection. Families may also make their own arrangements to use other locations for the service, followed by the interment or scattering. There will also be, from next summer, the restored (consecrated) East Chapel that can be used for services.

A permanent grave marker will be placed in the grave to identify its location and, as with any other burial area, statutory records will be kept by the **Isle of Wight Council's Bereavement Services Department**. The community will then have the choice of being buried in a natural and environmentally friendly setting that should ideally only leave an ecological and sustainable footprint for generations to come.

I have used the word "natural" several times and, in essence, that is what it is - returning ourselves to nature in a natural way.

Jo Mckinnie
Editor

Treasurer's Report

With the introduction of funding from the **Heritage Lottery Fund** (HLF) the finances have taken on new complexities as expenditure on the **Northwood Cemetery Heritage Project** is incurred and reclaimed by the Board from the HLF on a quarterly basis.

A separate bank account was opened to deal exclusively with the Project expenses and this is in the process of being independently audited. A summary of the auditor's report will be available for the August newsletter. Suffice to say here is that the Project finances are being very tightly controlled and they continue to perform to budget.

As our contribution to the Project, the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** pledged to the **Heritage Lottery Fund** that it would 'match fund' to the tune of £10,350 in cash. So we have been fund raising to achieve this goal – and we are over half way there already. This is thanks to the efforts of **Stella Watling** and **Val Bennett** who have held a Yard Sale and attended car boot sales – these have already yielded over £500.

Another of Stella's initiatives is the **Loose Change boxes** that can be seen in several Cowes shops and hostelrys (and which some people have in their own homes). In the last 12 months these have accumulated over £1,500. And a collecting box in the **Cowes Ale House** has generated another £1,500, helped by the proceeds of fortnightly Quiz nights there.

Alongside the Project account the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** operates a 'business as usual' account for day-to-day management, highlights of which, for the year ending 31st March 2016, are:

Subscriptions (including new Life members):	£3,305
Donations (including £1,000 from the Isle of Wight Family History Society):	£2,080
Gift Aid (reclaimed from HM Revenue and Customs):	£1,005
Fund Raising: (Loose Change boxes, Quiz nights, Yard sale)	£3,511

Major items on the debit side were:

Administration expenses (stationery, website, insurance etc):	£1,632
Professional fees (Project Management not covered by the Heritage Lottery Fund and bookkeeping):	£4,440
Transfer of 'match funding' to Project account (to date)	£5,150

John Pullen

Treasurer

Phoenix Choir Concert - 21st May 2016 at All Saints' Church, Gurnard



This is a **major fund raising event** in aid of the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery**. The popular **Phoenix Choir** will be performing a varied selection of easy listening songs from musicals, films, traditional compositions and more modern tunes under the banner of 'From Pavarotti to Presley'.

They are a mixed Choir with roots at Wootton Bridge. Choir members come from various parts of the Island and between them they have a wide range of backgrounds and varying levels of choral singing experience.

The Choir's Musical Director is **Robin Burnett**. Born and bred on the Island, Robin learned to play the piano from the age of 5 and has been involved in music ever since. In his younger days, and for more than 20 years, he has played in local groups and bands. He writes all the arrangements for the **Phoenix Choir** and records and plays the accompaniment. He rehearses the Choir and is the Musical Director at their concert performances.

The aim of the Choir is to generate funds for deserving causes and to date they have raised a total of nearly £23,000. They only perform a few times each year and are graciously donating the proceeds of this Concert to the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery**.

Admission is free and ticketless - although there will be a **Retiring Collection** and a **Raffle** of prizes donated by local residents and businesses keen to support this event.

So, we have an opportunity to enjoy some wonderful music and support our Cemetery. Further details of the Choir can be found on their website www.phoenixchoir.org.uk.

Jo Mckinnie
Editor