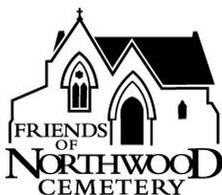


NEWSLETTER NUMBER 35



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Treasurer Richard Day

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John Pullen Barry Sowerby
Stella Watling Roger Williams

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Chairman's Report



The exposed beams and some of new stonework at the bottom of the south (rear) elevation of the West Chapel

The latest news of the chapels is that the West Chapel (*on the left*) is now resting on a grid of what will become 'below-ground' steel beams - encased within reinforced concrete. These beams are supported on no less than 16 pairs of concrete piles (some of which are 15 metres deep!) that, during the summer, were cast into the ground. Consequently the Chapel is no longer dependent on its frail 160 year old foundations that gave cause to the subsidence issues of the past but it is now securely supported on this new piled system.

The operation to install these new foundations was not without its challenges; during the excavation procedures unwanted pockets of clay, gravel and water were discovered which necessitated a slightly revised engineering solution - and added to the workload and timescales. But the plan is that the groundwork on the West Chapel will be completed by the end of the year and 'above-ground' stonework can take place.

The ramifications of these unexpected ground conditions have resulted in the construction phase now being behind schedule - but the contractors are juggling with workloads to mitigate any delay in their efforts to hit the scheduled completion date next summer.

The East Chapel is subject to the same work and the ground conditions – with the added complexity that reinforced concrete foundations were inserted (probably just after the war) and these have been delicately removed to enable the new scheme to be installed.

But focus for the next three months remains predominantly on the West Chapel as we need to utilise this building to deliver some of the activities we said we would to secure the **Heritage Lottery Fund's** grant.

We have been thrilled by the enthusiasm with which the off-site training workshops (see the August newsletter) delivered thus far have been received and our grateful thanks go to **Richard Smout** (the Island's Heritage Services Manager) and members of the **Ryde Social Heritage Group** for their massive contributions. The web site gives the schedule of those workshops that are still outstanding.

Mention must be made of the successful picnic held on 4th October for Year 2 children at **Lanesend Primary School**. With a wartime theme it featured such delights as spam and fish paste sandwiches – and buttered tea loaf! The feedback from the school has been amazing and we know the children thoroughly enjoyed this educational experience with a difference!

Thanks must also go to the stonemasons at **Wight Stonemasonry** who are well on the way of restoring ten of the most significant headstones in the Cemetery (the **Civilian War Memorial** amongst them). All these will be featured in 90 minute guided walks that are scheduled on **Sunday 20th November** and **Sunday 1st January 2017** (hangovers permitting!) starting at 11:00am at the Cemetery gates; ***all are welcome – just turn up!***

The conservation volunteers have been their usual busy selves these past three months with many bags of wood chippings being produced from overgrowth in and around Plots 14 to 18 (that's the swathe across the Cemetery on the incline just past the first roundabout). These are being used to cover the soft paths that have proved very difficult, in some cases impossible, to walk on in the winter months. Time will tell.

Our fund raising activities continue to be fruitful – thanks to the efforts of **Stella Watling**. A Yard Sale at her house on 24th September contributed to over £500 being raised in September - and we hope to emulate that figure at the choral concert we are holding on **Friday 25th November** (*please see the back page of this newsletter*). There will be **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** Christmas Cards, 2017 Isle of Wight Calendars, Christmas wreathes and many Christmas gifts on offer; yes, Christmas is just around the corner and once again I'm going to mention ***easyfundraising***...

This is a wonderful way of getting something for nothing; most of you have heard it all before **but** if you purchase goods (such as televisions, furniture, etc) or services (such as car insurance, air flights and holidays) **online** then a small percent of your spend **can** flow to our bank account at no cost to you! A visit to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk> will reveal all.

Last, but not least, I am really delighted to welcome **Roger Williams** to the Board of Trustees. Roger was born opposite Northwood Cemetery's main gates in what was then a nursing home. He has lived all his life in either Cowes or Northwood and spent his entire working life in the Finance departments of either *J Samuel White's*, *British Hovercraft Corporation* or *GKN* before retiring in 2014. A chance meeting with **Barry Sowerby** at a *J S White's* reunion earlier this year culminated in Roger becoming a regular volunteer in working parties in the Cemetery and, subsequently, a Life member. Roger's interest is in family history and he has teamed up with Barry and **David Jones** to research the people buried there - as well as produce documentation on the monuments and natural history of Northwood Cemetery; a very warm welcome aboard Roger!



Jon Matthews
Chairman

Membership Report

We are very pleased to welcome the following as new "Friends" of Northwood Cemetery (all resident in the PO31 Postcode area unless stated otherwise):

Clive Arnold (Fareham, Hants), **Sam Biles** (Calbourne), **Maureen Burnip**, **Val Cranmore**, **Mark Dawson** (Newport, Isle of Wight), **Brian Gibbs**, **David Green**, **David Hutchings** (Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire), **James MacDonald**, **Peter Miles** (Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire), **Ellie Moore**, **Breeda O'Sullivan**, **John Riddell** (Fair Oak, Hampshire), **John & Ann Seeney**, **Derek Weaver** (East Cowes), **Sam & Zöe Wells** and **Roger Williams**.

However, we are very saddened to report the passing of three loyal "Friends" during the past few months. **Mark Budden**, **Godfrey Butchers** and **Mary Chessell** were all residents of Cowes and our condolences go to their families. Mary Chessell (née Matthews) was laid to rest in Northwood Cemetery on Friday 4th November in Plot 18 - alongside her parents, Charles James and Emily Kate Matthews, and her husband Ron.

Steve Callar
Membership Secretary

Butterfly Walk in Northwood Cemetery

On Sunday 17th July seven conservationists met at the Cowes Medical Centre car park at 10.30am. The morning was initially overcast but at least it was a warm day after some poor summer weather - and there was to be some sunshine later. The group initially headed over to Plot 9 where **Purple Hairstreaks** have been seen in the past - but the lack of sunshine meant that they were sitting tight on the oak leaves and not visible.

Purple Hairstreaks feed on aphid honeydew in the tree tops and are generally difficult to spot unless in flight or basking in the sun on leaves lower down on the tree. We moved on to the 'set-aside' Nature Area - and this was full of butterflies! Later in the morning, the sun came out and a few of the group managed to see three **Purple Hairstreaks** bouncing around the upper leaves of an oak tree in Plot 27.

There were excellent numbers of **Ringlets** in the long grass and also **Marbled Whites** and **Small Skippers**. These three species breed in long grass and so this Nature Area is ideal for them. The flowers of the large Bramble bushes were attracting nectaring butterflies of many different species, including **Comma**, **Gatekeeper** and, a species we were really hoping to see, the stunning **Silver-washed Fritillary**.

This large orange and black butterfly (*pictured here*) breeds in woodland and those seen in the Cemetery probably come from the adjoining Shamblers Copse. We saw the brightly coloured male fed briefly on the Bramble flowers and then sped around the bushes in search of a female to mate with. Two females spent longer nectaring on the Bramble and so we had better views of these stunning insects.



Besides the butterflies it was wonderful to see all the wildflowers growing in the Cemetery, especially in the Nature Area and southern meadow - and even on some of the graves. On one gravel-covered grave was a profusion of the sweetly scented **Pale Toadflax**, a small pale lilac-coloured plant, and bees and butterflies were observed coming down to nectar on the flowers.

In the southern meadow, we saw the rare **Grass Vetchling** with its small cerise pink flowers, a member of the pea family which, apart from its flowers, looks very much like a grass. It was also in this meadow that we saw a newly emerged male **Common Blue** and more **Small Skippers**. A **Black-tailed Skimmer** dragonfly was basking in the sun on an area of bare ground in a same area.

It was most encouraging to meet two young children out with their parents searching for butterflies and taking photos of them on their iPads. They were really enjoying finding and photographing the different species and for a time joined our group.

In total we identified 12 species of butterfly and we all thoroughly enjoyed our trip to see the wildlife of the Cemetery. There are not many locations now in the UK where butterflies can live in long natural flower-rich grassland throughout the length of a summer, as much of it is cut back far too early. Leaving the cutting of wildflower meadows until the end of the summer/early autumn also allows wildflowers to set seed for the following year.

Many thanks go to Barry Sowerby for giving up his time on Sunday morning and to guide us around the Cemetery (and on his birthday!).

The Butterfly and Moth Species recorded were:

Small Skipper	10+
Small White	Many
Holly Blue	2
Comma	1
Gatekeeper	20+
Ringlet	50+

Purple Hairstreak	3 seen on oak tree
Common Blue	1 fresh male
Red Admiral	1 sat on gravestone
Silver-washed Fritillary	3 (1 male, 2 females)
Meadow Brown	50+
Six-spot Burnet	Many

Caroline Dudley

Butterfly Conservation UK
Isle of Wight Branch

Red Squirrel Monitoring (October 2016)

The spring session earlier this year had produced some good results; also volunteers working at the cemetery during the summer had reported many squirrel sightings.

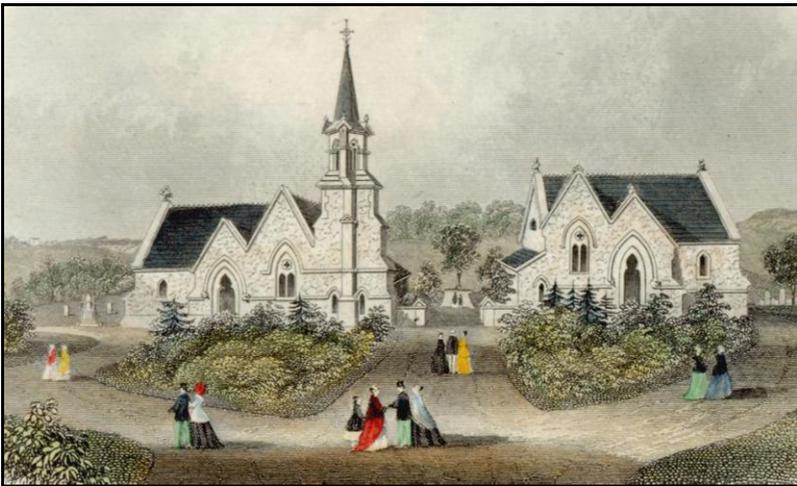
So it was somewhat disappointing, on my first monitoring visit on a misty morning in mid-October, to spend one-and-a-half hours lurking under trees and behind bushes and not see even one red squirrel; they must have had enough sense to stay in bed that morning!

I did wonder if the building work on the two chapels had scared the squirrels away but happily, when I returned six days later for my second visit, I spotted two squirrels. However, on my final visit I experienced my best observation to date with no fewer than **eight** sightings; these included watching four red squirrels playing “chase-me-charlie” amongst the branches and around the trunks of the towering **Cedars of Lebanon** trees that stand behind the chapels.

Thankfully, despite all the activity in Northwood Cemetery this summer (not just the building works but also undergrowth clearance and tree thinning by volunteers) our red squirrels have decided to ignore it all and carry on living there; hopefully they will continue to go from strength-to-strength and increase in number over the years ahead.

Alison Parker

Squirrel Monitor



Cemetery Fees in 1857

I am indebted to local historian Brian Greening for bringing to my attention this article from the May 1857 edition of the *Hampshire Advertiser*. Northwood Cemetery had only been open for seven months at the time of the publication, the number of interred being just fifteen. The cost of burial has risen somewhat since.

At the meeting of the Burial Board on Tuesday, the following table of fees payable to the Vicar of Carisbrooke, in the Parish of Northwood, was read, as payable on interments in the Northwood Burial Ground, to which must be added the fees payable to the Burial Board.

Burial Fees:

Ministers: For breaking ground for a funeral, extra parochial 6s 8d. Morning Funeral with silk; extra or parochial £1 1s. Morning Funeral without silk 10s 6d. Registering each funeral 1s. For a common slab grave-stone flat on the ground £1 1s; for a table slab grave-stone £2 2s. For a headstone single 10s 6d; headstone double £1 1s. For a brick grave made for one, or if more than one £1 1s each and for arching over £1 1s. Opening a vault or brick grave 10s 6d. For a grave-stone coffin shaped with headstone and foot stone £2 2s. For a large square tomb without rails £5 5s. For rails in every case £5 5s. Marble tablet inside or outside of the church in each case £5 5s.

Sextons: For a morning funeral 2s 6d. Digging common grave 3s 6d; digging brick grave 10s 6d. For rails put up around each tomb 5s. For Parish funeral, adult 2s; for child 1s.

For three knells on the bell 3s.

Clerks: For morning funeral 5s. For every funeral not parish 1s.

Barry Sowerby

Historian

Frank William Beken (1880–1970)



Frank Beken arrived on the Isle of Wight in 1888 at eight years of age, when his family moved to Cowes from Canterbury, Kent. His father, Alfred Edward Beken had purchased an existing pharmacy situated in the town.

Cowes was already famous for its international Sailing Regatta and young Frank was captivated by the sight of the magnificent yachts that he could watch from his bedroom window.

He was so inspired by them that photography soon became a passion.

Unfortunately cameras of the time just did not reach Frank's expectations so he designed and constructed his own. Innovative at the time, his large format wooden box camera was the forerunner of the later developed twin-lens reflex camera.

Frank, alone in an open boat, operated the camera by holding it in both hands and firing the shutter with a rubber bulb 'air' release in his mouth. He also constructed an enlarger in his bedroom that obtained its light source from the window. This enabled him to produce fine large prints from his negatives that were then sold in his father's Pharmacy, alongside the medicines, toiletries and perfumes.

Frank was one of the finest photographers of all time and his lasting legacy is the Beken Marine Photography Archive. Even today, very large prints of his classic yacht photographs are still produced and much revered.

I feel very privileged to have known 'Mr Beken' as, with a fellow photography pal in our teenage years, we used to purchase our 35mm film from the Beken Chemist shop in Birmingham Road. On odd occasions, he would look around the shop to check that no other staff were looking, pluck an extra film from the shelf and say "there you are lads, have one on me"!

Barry Sowerby

Historian



LOTTERY FUNDED

A pre-Christmas Musical Evening of Fun and Fund Raising

featuring **The Slipshod Singers**

- an Island based group of male singers
who will include some sing-along favourites

Friday 25th November at 7:00pm

St Andrew's Hall, St Andrews Street, Cowes PO31 7DF
(close to the floating bridge)

All welcome – entry is Free

with opportunities to purchase gifts such as Christmas
wreaths and decorations, Isle of Wight calendars,
Christmas cards, a Tombola and more.

Tea, coffee, wine and light refreshments available.

Ample car parking available in Brunswick Road car park.

Jo McKinnie

Editor