

R.A.W. Bookkeeping & Accounts

Bookkeeping, VAT returns, Accounts and Tax Returns

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Thanks go to **Rosie Wersby** from the Trustees for scrutinising our 2008 - 2009 Accounts

THE OAK TREE

INTERESTING FACTS AND FIGURES

There are a number of different types of Oak in Britain today but in Northwood Cemetery we only have two types: the deciduous **Common Oak** and the evergreen **Holme Oak** (deciduous is the term used for trees that lose their leaves in winter).

Oak trees are part of the Beech Family and start producing acorns when they are about 20 years old. The number of acorns produced is small when they are young but eventually they produce thousands; at around 100 years old they start slowing their acorn production.

Only one in about 10,000 acorns will survive to produce a new tree; some go rotten and 90% are used by the weevil to plant their young in; a few are eaten.

It seems that 2009 has been a very good year for acorn production - but this will be countered with at least one of the next three years being weak producer.

Squirrels do hide acorns but frequently lose track of them when they are either covered in leaves or are eaten by other species.

The Oak tree is a robust tree and much admired in Northwood Cemetery. Here is the Holme Oak just by the corner of the left-hand Chapel near the entrance.



NEWSLETTER NUMBER 7

NOVEMBER 2009

TRUSTEES



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

An Extra-Ordinary General Meeting was called on 12th October to consider a new Constitution. In short, the main changes proposed were:

- The use of the terminology **Board of Trustees** rather than **Committee** to describe our managing members (in preparation for a potential move for the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** to become a **Registered Charity** or a **Building Preservation Trust** but such a move could only be actioned at an AGM or EGM);
- An increase to **Nine Trustees** to be appointed at AGMs (rather than six); and
- The option of a **Life Membership** to be introduced (the subscription will be determined at AGMs, starting with the next AGM to be held in Spring 2010).

Twenty-seven **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** attended the EGM; a minimum of 23 (10% of the members) were required to make the meeting quorate. The new Constitution was adopted unanimously and it is now available to browse on our web-site.

If you've visited the Cemetery in the last three months will have seen that 'Plot 1' now has **light** and a lot more visible headstones and vaults! More of that inside this Newsletter but a word of thanks should go here to the infatigable **Richard Day** and his merry band of volunteers who assemble on most Saturday mornings to do the work.

In September we were visited by Dale Ingram, representing the Victorian Society; she is collecting data on behalf of the Society regarding the state of cemeteries up and down the land; she certainly had her eyes opened on her visit here! She has subsequently produced a 26 page report on Northwood Cemetery and there's no doubt that the Victorian Society will now be 'on our case' for restoration funds.

Talking of which (as if I thought you wouldn't ask!), Getting funds for restoration has been painfully slow; we are **still** in dialogue with the IW Council on the short-term works on the Mortuary. The bottom line is that they do not have sufficient funds to do the job that we contend should be done to shore up the building. Consequently, a temporary solution has been put forward which does not help our long-term aspirations. Watch this space.

But the real good news is that we now have **Carol Flux** as our 'bid writer' and she has already steered us towards better 'pots of gold' (though perhaps I should say in these austere times: 'pots of bronze').

As we go to press we have just seen that our efforts to get a CCTV camera installed at the Cemetery's entrance have at last borne fruit so we hope this will korb some of the antics, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights, in which the local youth seem to indulge. Time will tell.

Finally, have any of you got photographs of the Cemetery tucked away somewhere that you could share with us? We are very keen to get as many angles on its history as we can - and I'll bet some of you will have some real treasures; we are looking to take *copies* - not to take the photographs themselves, so please shout if you have some.

Jon Matthews
Editor

CHRISTMAS IS AROUND THE CORNER!

And that perennial question arises: "What can I buy him/her for Christmas?"

Well you can buy a magnificent mounted (£15) or mounted and framed (£30) picture of the Cemetery in 1869 for a start! This has pride of place on many a mantelpiece.

Perhaps a Coffee Mug (£5) or a Mouse Mat (£3) may appeal; or, for stocking fillers, you can choose from ball point pens (£1), label badges (50p) or key rings (50p) all depicting our Logo.

Please remember that the Friends of Northwood Cemetery make a penny or two from sales of these items, so solving your Christmas present problems is also helping us! It's a "win-win" situation!!!

And if you are on the Island, we'll personally deliver to you!

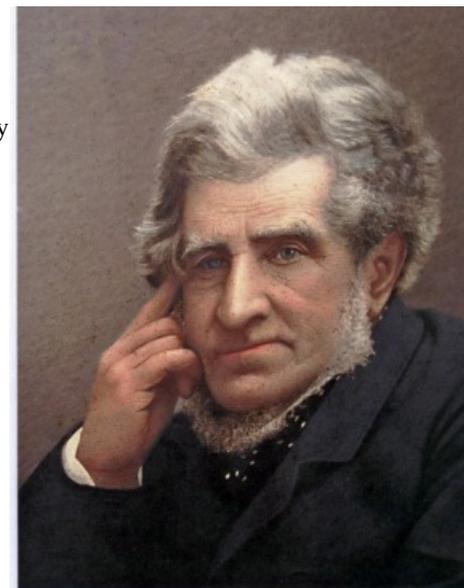
So, you can either go to our on-line shop at our web-site to order any of these items - or (and preferably) you can call 01983 247498 and leave a message.



Maurice Dear (1807 - 1887)

Maurice Dear was born in 1807, the third of six sons and two daughters of a prosperous farmer in Laverstock, Hampshire. An obituary confirms that, as he grew up, he was a strong adherent of the Church of England, like his father.

Maurice appears to have been an astute business man. The firm of Dear and Morgan, wholesale and provisions merchants, at 90-91 High Street, Cowes was the largest of its kind on the Isle of Wight and had its own wharf on the Medina where barges from the mainland were unloaded. However, Maurice appears to have devoted his time to public service. He was a firm supporter of William Gladstone's Liberal party and a newspaper report of a public meeting describes him as "that out and out Radical Reformer in Church and State". He was heavily involved in local government, being one of the first Town Commissioners and, later, Chairman of the Local Board. He was a founder member of the Burial Board in 1855 and was still acting as Chairman six months before his death in 1887.



He was also a strong supporter of the Ancient Order of Foresters, the Juvenile Foresters and a founder of the Compassionate Fund charity, as well as a guardian of the parish of Northwood. However, his primary concern seems to have been the Congregation Church. It seems that he was admitted to the Sun Hill Congregational Church in Cowes at the age of 21 and he was a devoted adherent and benefactor for the rest of his long life. He also helped to found the Congregational Church at Porchfield where an obituary reports that he "was virtually the pastor of the village church" for fifty years.

Maurice married Ann Hollis, an Isle of Wight girl, in Wickham, a parish in Hampshire in 1832. They had no children of their own although they appear to have acted as surrogate parents to at least one nephew, Samuel Fowler, who was apprenticed by Maurice to a Mr Groves, a draper in Newport. Samuel went on to found Fowler's Store, a well known drapery and furnishings house at Union Street, Ryde.

On Maurice's 77th birthday his portrait was presented to him "by his friends and fellow townsmen as a slight recognition of his services to the town of West Cowes".

Maurice died in 1887, just three days short of his eightieth birthday. In an obituary headed "An Exemplary Life" the correspondent described "the whole town in mourning". Despite "a snowstorm driven by a fierce northeaster" Northwood cemetery was filled with a "dense crowd" which included "a number of children from the Isle of Wight Workhouse who, by the death of Mr Maurice Dear, had lost one of their best and truest friends". He was buried next to Ann, his wife, who had died of typhoid in 1860.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The following 25 people have become **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** since the publication of the August Newsletter (unless otherwise stated, they all live in the local PO31 Postcode area of Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood):

Sue Coombes (Gosport, Hants), **Liz Downer**, **Noreen Early** (Auckland, New Zealand), **Charles Hallifax**, **Reginald Hippolite** (Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland), **Paul Hudson** (Leeds, Yorkshire), **Dale Ingram** (London SW17), **Carmen Millwood**, **Pam Murton**, **Diana Netherway**, **Gary Peacey**, **Jacquie Pearce**, **Jon Shackleton** (Newport, Isle of Wight), **Paul & Vanessa Slade**, **Henry Slater**, **Peter Spencer** (Salisbury, Wiltshire), **Peter Taylor**, **Pat Tetlow**, **Lynn Vardakis** (New York, USA), **Ruth Waller**, **Tony Westmore**, **Derek & Gabrielle Whitewood** and **Margaret Williams** (Llandudno Junction, Wales).

Welcome aboard - and thanks to everybody for *all* for your support; we now have **238** Friends of Northwood Cemetery!

Jon Matthews

Membership Secretary

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Due to popular demand, another **Quiz Night** will be held at the **Kingston Arms** at 7:00pm on **Friday 22nd January 2010**

MEET THE TRUSTEES (formerly COMMITTEE!) PAUL FULLER

Paul's family has lived in and around the Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood area for many generations. He is married to Karen and has two children, Caelan and Zara, and returned to live in Northwood from Ryde in 1999.

Before joining the Friends of Northwood Cemetery, Paul had a background in campaigning for environmental causes, forming community groups and fundraising for local projects.

He served for six years as an Independent Isle of Wight Councillor and was elected this year as IW Councillor for *Cowes West and Gurnard*.

Paul also has a strong background as a Town and Parish Councillor serving terms of office on all three local councils since 2001. Paul has served as a School Governor since 1995, a Community Partnership Member and in 2001 became a Justice of the Peace. Paul also co-ordinated Northwood's Parish Plan which was launched in 2007 and this year devised Northwood's Village Trail.

Within the Friends of Northwood Cemetery, Paul has been Press and Publicity Officer - but now 'volunteers' to take on those administrative jobs nobody else wants to do!



NATURE CONSERVATION REPORT

This last quarter's activity has seen a real outstanding upsurge in the amount of work that we have managed to get done in the Cemetery.

We have attracted a lot more volunteers on Saturday mornings, including Gary Peacey, who because of his pick-up truck has greatly assisted in our transportation of brash to be burnt. On several occasions we have had 9, 10, even 11 volunteers working and brash disposal days are now every two or three weeks. It had been expected that the work round Plot 1 (to the left as you enter the main entrance -across the front of the 'Dead House') was not going to be completed until early 2010 - but it now might well be this year. We do endeavour to leave the Cemetery tidy each week but in between burnings there have sometimes been large piles of brash.

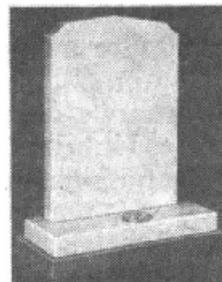
As we have reported before we do have discussions on what to cut down or prune and we are committed to, by and large, leaving all the originally planted shrubs and trees *in situ* in Plot 1 and around the adjacent margins. The original trees and shrubs include two Morinda Spruces, three Common Yews, five Oaks, a Holly, a Bay and a Weeping Beech. While these will all be left where they are we are still likely to prune them as necessary. So far we have drastically reduced six Yews and one overgrown Bay to the ground - but these will all re-grow. We will continue working our way through Plot 1 in the next few weeks culminating in cutting back the large hedge at the main entrance side of the plot and the removal of the very large Yew just inside the gates.

We expect to have the Yew and Bay tree stumps reduced near to ground level in the near future so that we can manage the re-growth sympathetically.

Richard Day

Nature Conservation Leader

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ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

Walk in through the main gates of Northwood Cemetery and immediately turn left past the 'Dead House' and you will be walking along the northern boundary of 'Plot One'.

The total number interred in this plot is 358 and many familiar and notable names of Cowes are in evidence; **Atkey, Ratsey, Ward, Woodyear, Hoffmeister, Kernot, Netten, Bird, Hewett, Lallow, Marvin, Redfern and Wheeler** to name a few. George Wheeler was the Builder responsible for the construction of the Twin Chapels that so dominate this beautiful cemetery.

After the recent clear out of some self seeded trees and scrub from Plot One, we are able to see the tombstones within that area in all their glory. Some of them had been completely covered in undergrowth and not seen the light of day for decades.

One of the recently exposed graves, a brick capped vault is that of the Morgan family. The head of the family would appear from the records to be Mr Morris Morgan described as *"a Yeoman and Gentleman of Horsebridge Hill"*.



You may remember from earlier writings that the first burial in the cemetery was James Cribb on 8th November 1856. James, a 32 year old Shoemaker is buried in Grave 2600 on the Western side of the main path, in Plot Seven. Northwood Cemetery had been in use for 10 months before the first burial in Plot One. It was John Newell, a local brewer of just 38 years of age. John is buried in Grave 2726 which is near to the corner close to the Eastern Chapel.



Since being appointed as Archivist, I have puzzled over the fact that the first ever burial in Northwood Cemetery should be 2600. Even more intriguing is the fact that the first burial in Plot One was Number 2726. So, who does claim the 'honour' of being interred in Plot One, Grave One? This goes to a little girl, Evander Roome. Eva, as her tombstone is inscribed, was the four year old daughter of Doctor Henry Roome of Cowes and Marion Charlotte his wife. Eva was buried on 3rd September 1864, eight years after the Cemetery was first opened

On the Eastern side of Plot One is the memorial obelisk of the Bird family. James Binfield Bird was a local Land Agent to the Ward family, who was buried on 9th February 1892. This impressive memorial is most fitting for a man of his calibre and

naturally bears his name alongside his relatives. However, the official register records that he is buried over on the opposite side of Plot One, some 50 yards away, in Grave 2781!



On the Northern edge of Plot One is an obelisk, much larger than the Bird monument. This is a memorial to Augustus Frederick Hamilton who was born in Calcutta in 1787 and died at Ryde in 1871. He is not buried in Northwood, but interred in Binstead Cemetery under a similar obelisk. The inscription on the monument is difficult to read and nothing is known (by me) of why he has a 'second' monument erected in Northwood Cemetery

Yet another mystery relates to the chest tomb of the Fellows family. It is elaborately embellished with ornate carvings and a Latin inscription to the memory of Harriet, the daughter of a Knight from Oaklands in Hertford. It is believed that she was the daughter of Sir Charles Fellows who was an eminent archaeologist and explorer. He lived in Cowes and Fellows Road is named after him. There is no record in the register of anyone by the name of Fellows in Plot One, or indeed in the grave that the tomb is erected on.



If any budding cemetery detectives are able to explain these mysteries or would like to engage in some research, I will be very pleased to hear from you.

Barry Sowerby
Archivist