

THE BEECH TREE

The Beech Tree is a deciduous, very large species and although there several different varieties, the three that we see in this country are the standard with green leaves, a variant which is weeping (seen in Church Litten, Newport) and the Copper Beech which we have to the left as you enter Northwood Cemetery at its main entrance. It can also be grown as a hedge.

Here is our very own Beech tree just to the left of the Cemetery entrance:



It was a late entrant to British soil, having arrived after the last glaciations, and interestingly it is native to Southern England but not to Northern England; it is also native to temperate Europe, Asia and North America. Although not native in Ireland it has been widely planted there.

It grows to an impressive height of 28 metres, flowers in May and fruits in September / October.

It is an excellent park tree, which is probably why it was planted in cemeteries - and is regarded as a good and useful tree for birds and small mammals.

Richard Day

Nature Conservation Leader

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EDITORIAL

There is a lot to cram in this quarter, so let's start with the work now taking place on the mortuary.

At the beginning of April, and contracted by the Isle of Wight Council, **Imphouse Limited** (an Island firm) started the process of stabilising the mortuary building by dismantling the 'lean-to' element on its east elevation. Their objective is to make the building safe and immune from further subsidence; the timescale is completion in August 2010. Alas, there is no provision to rebuild the 'lean-to', the funding for which the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** is expected to find.

This leaves us with a dilemma; it had always been our intention to focus on *this* building as its need for attention was so evident for all to see. But, we are now considering diverting our attention to the east chapel building which is in less need of repair. The thinking is *let's stop the chapel building from going the same way - before it is too late!* We are carrying out a structural survey of this easterly building and are indebted to **Alan Gentry**, a Friend of Northwood Cemetery, who has the skills and experience to conduct this work. We'd like to consult all Friends as this does represent a major shift in our thinking; if you have a view, could you please let it be known to any Trustee by the end of May?



In April we held our AGM and here are the highlights:

- Because of family commitments **Marie Gladdis** stood down as Treasurer and **Jon Matthews** was appointed in her place;
- **Angela McMurtry** was appointed to succeed Marie as a member of the Board of Trustees, taking on the roles of Membership Secretary from Jon and Publicity from **Paul Fuller**;
- Jon Matthews reported that Income in the year to 31st March 2010 was **£3,554** and Expenditure was **£3,132**, making an Excess of Income over Expenditure of **£422**; the bank account balance as at 31st March was **£2,194**;
- The number of Friends paying subscriptions in 2009/2010 was exactly **250**;
- An individual **Life membership** category was established at a one-off £100 subscription; and
- It was agreed that **Friend's House** was a more appropriate name for our store/office than the "Dead House" (which we had adopted from old 19th Century plans of the Cemetery).

Talking of the Friend's House, thanks to **Carol Flux** we have secured a grant that will enable electricity to be installed in it; the work is scheduled to take place *before the end of May 2010!*

Other funding is also coming our way; the Southern Co-op Community card scheme is currently standing at £8,000 - half of which will be donated to us at the end of the year; please keep using the Co-op in Cowes - and your green Community Support card which can be obtained at no charge!

And www.easyfundraising.org.uk is up and running for you. This may be a bit of an unknown to you. If you do *any* on-line shopping (eg: your groceries from Tesco) or use 'catalogue' companies (eg: Argos), you could be raising funds for the Friends of Northwood Cemetery! There are hundreds of other suppliers from whom you can purchase goods, helping the Friends of Northwood Cemetery in the process; if you haven't used this facility already, **ask any Trustee how it works!**

2010/2011 subscriptions are now due (our fiscal year runs from 1st April) so if your sub is outstanding, please help us by paying it to any Trustee. Thanks!

NEW MEMBERS

The following 16 new 'Friends' have joined since the publication of the last Newsletter, to whom we extend a warm welcome; they are all from Cowes unless otherwise stated:

Allan & Jill Blackburn, Dennis & Caroline Bradbury, Godfrey & Shirley Butchers, David Clarke (Newport), Esther Cooper (Ashford, Kent), Barry Jones, Peter McMurtry, Brenda Pearson-Woodd (Eastbourne), Lady Sally Pigot (Bembridge), Jim & Miki Reed, Rob Wilson (Ventnor) and Valerie Wilson.

Jon Matthews
Editor

John Watling (1946-2010)



In January of this year John and Stella Watling became Friends of Northwood Cemetery. As relatively recent migrants to Cowes (from Chorleywood, Hertfordshire - and previously Portsmouth) they came to appreciate the beauty of the Cemetery and its wildlife. They had visited it for the first time a few days earlier on the sombre occasion of the burial of their elder son Jonathan, aged just 32.

Sadly, in March, John (pictured here) died suddenly too. His wife Stella asked that any donations in his, and Jonathan's, memory should be made to the Friends of Northwood Cemetery and, through the medium of this Newsletter, the Trustees would like to thank Stella

for her kindness at a time of great sadness for her. The amount donated so far is over £900.

We only met John once and he mentioned that he would like to make a contribution towards the restoration of the stained glass window in the east wall of the Chapel building. His many friends and relations have done that for him and we are extremely grateful to them all.

As yet we do not have a timescale for this work but the Watling family can be assured that the names of their loved ones will be perpetuated when the window is eventually restored.

BUTTERFLIES IN THE CEMETERY

Year 2010 is the **International Year of Biodiversity** and butterflies have become greatly important - being recognised as key indicators of changes in the environment.

It is not generally realised that many types of butterflies are grassland species. They are totally dependent upon grasses, especially in their egg and caterpillar stages, for the successful completion of their complex yet fascinating life cycles.

Whereas areas of mown grass can be devoid of butterflies, areas of long grass, in contrast, can be butterfly havens. This can be observed in a number of different places, including Northwood Cemetery.

I visited Northwood Cemetery in July 2009 and was immediately struck by the impressive number of *Skipper* and *Marbled White* butterflies and *Burnet* moths flitting around amongst the long grass.

I also saw a large butterfly which could have been a *Silver-Washed Fritillary*, and a second visit later in the month resulted in seeing a good number of *Purple Hairstreak* butterflies.

Northwood Cemetery has a diverse range of butterflies and a species list needs to be compiled in order to properly establish this..



A Silver Washed Fritillary

During the winter, it was decided to start up a new Isle of Wight butterfly group. Formed by members of Butterfly Conservation, the group has now organised a programme of events for the summer of 2010.



A Purple Hairstreak

One of the events is to be held in **Northwood Cemetery on Wednesday 21st July**, and is open to all (meet at 12 noon at the entrance to the Cemetery).

Our target species will be the *Purple Hairstreak* - but we'll also be looking for other butterfly and moth species.

Butterfly Conservation is a national charitable organisation - please consider becoming a member. For more information visit:

www.butterfly-conservation.org

Rob Wilson
Lepidoptera Consultant

NATURE CONSERVATION REPORT

So far this year we have nearly completed the work we started in Plot 1 (to the left of the chapel) - but have also 'cherry picked' some other tasks that needed to be carried out before the bird nesting season started in mid-March.

We have reduced the right hand hedge to the same height as the left hand hedge thus letting in a quite considerable amount of light to this area of the Cemetery. We have also cleared the area behind this hedge in similar mode to the other hedge. We have also cut down the scrubby Yew in front of James Cribb's grave (this was the first burial in the cemetery in 1856)

It is anticipated that a survey of the future work in Plots 2, 3, 7 & 8 (to the right as you walk in from the main entrance) will be carried out during May so that the Board of Trustees can discuss and agree activities to undertake after the nesting season has finished.

On average we get five/six volunteers each Saturday morning - although in some weeks we have had a dozen or more. This is keeping to the attendance since the start of working parties in January 2009.

Richard Day

Nature Conservation Leader

MEET THE TRUSTEES - Angela McMurtry

Angela was elected to the Board of Trustees at the AGM in April. Although from a Cowes family, she lived the first xx years (*about 29 - Ed!*) of her life in Australia where, for many years, she was a very active member of the Isle of Wight Family History Society.

She and her husband Pete made the bold move to Cowes last September (she had only been here twice before on holiday) and they have settled in and already rolled their sleeves up. Angela is taking on the Membership Secretary's and Publicity roles and Pete is accurately plotting the graves (starting in Plot 1).

As a result of a car accident in 1986, Angela is confined to a wheelchair but this does not stop her from playing an active part - as demonstrated by the leading role she took in our **Walk the Wight Festival** participation (see below).

WALK THE WIGHT

On Sunday 16th May Angela took part in the Walk the Wight Festival - with her husband **Pete** and Friends of Northwood Cemetery, **Jill** and **Newman Smith**.

Unfortunately there were a number of last minute cancellations, which was a bit disappointing, but her enthusiasm was not to be dampened (even when the skies turned grey!). The Flat Walk was eight miles and took them 2½ hours, taking in some lovely countryside views between Shanklin and Shide which included a herd of highland cows and lammas - and the bird life was truly amazing.

The first half of the walk was the hardest but once they got the momentum going there was no stopping them. After the walk Angela was interviewed live on Isle of Wight Radio and used the opportunity to promote the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery**. It was a great opportunity to put something back into the community and Angela, Pete, Jill and Newman were very glad they took part.



CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Hello to all **Friends of Northwood Cemetery!**

It's been a while since I, as Chairman, have written a small piece, but need's must and I really would like **YOUR** thoughts.

I came up with the idea to have a '**Celebration of Life**' event at the Cemetery. It will be to bring together the many diverse families and friends all who have one thing in common: loved ones in the Cemetery. The event will be open to any member of the public and we have selected **Sunday 12th September**; the day's programme will run from 11am to 4pm.

The Trustees will be on site to explain what they have been doing and the plans for the future - and to provide refreshments, cakes and biscuits - using our new **Friends' House** electricity!

We would like to have a local stonemason in, who can explain the best way to clean and tidy memorial stones; a local florist with flowers to sell; a Funeral Director; the Manager of Bereavement Services at the IW Council (who has responsibility for the management of the Cemetery); and, of course, our Archivist **Barry Sowerby** to help you find lost graves; it will also be an opportunity to join the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** for which there is a £10 annual subscription.

So, what are **YOUR** thoughts? Can you add to the list of exhibits and activities (bearing in mind that the grounds are, first and foremost, a cemetery - a very peaceful place).

Please can you ring, e-mail or write to me with your thoughts: telephone on 01983 247177; e-mail to lora@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk or write (or call in) to me at my home at 149 Newport Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7PT (right opposite the main entrance to the Cemetery).

We want this to be a day to remember in the history of Northwood Cemetery so please give us your ideas for making it a memorable day - and make a note of the date in your diary!

Lora Peacey-Wilcox

Chairman

MAN AT WORK!

A *very big thank you* goes to **Tony Hayman**, a local builder and **Friend of Northwood Cemetery**, for all his efforts in arranging the contracts to enable our electricity providers to connect a supply to the local grid network.

As you can see, he has also dug the trench required and, as we go to press, he is taking out all the stumps in front of the **Friends' House** ready for us to landscape the area and seed a garden full of wild flowers.

By the time this Newsletter reaches you, he will have also dug up the stumps on the other side of the main drive between the buildings. The Trustees are still discussing how to utilise this area; any comments would be welcome!



THE KERNOT GRAVE

The time and hard work volunteers spent clearing plot 1 (immediately inside the cemetery on the left) opened to view many of the earliest graves in Northwood Cemetery. Amongst these is the Kernot Memorial (pictured).



Its top is missing and parts of the base are crumbling, however the inscriptions on all four sides are intact and make interesting reading.

Three people are interred here: Dr Charles Middleton Kernot who died in 1876, his wife Ann who died 17 years before him in 1859 and William Pearce Kernot who died aged 86 in 1927 in Worthing and his ashes placed here in August 1928.

Also remembered by inscriptions are Charles Noyce Kernot (Charles Middleton Kernot's son); his wife Adeline who was buried in Brighton; William's wife Jane Veronica; and Charles Middleton's daughter Jane Ann Muzio who was buried in Locksbrook, near Bath.

The south face of the memorial is in memory of Henry Middleton Kernot, the eldest son of Charles Middleton Kernot, who died in Paris on 30th January 1873, aged 42 years - and whose remains were removed from France by sanction of the French Government and deposited here.

Kernot's Pier

In 1857 a Petition to the local Board of Health called on them to consider the necessity of at once carrying about the clause empowering them to erect a pier a Feathers Slip (now Waterside Inn). The reason for this was that Fountain Quay (the only pier at the time) was owned by the Ward Family who controlled it, imposing tolls much to the chagrin of local inhabitants and businessmen.

In 1861, under the General Pier and Harbour Act, the West Cowes Pier Company received authorisation to build a pier. The Company was owned by Dr Charles Noyce Kernot, and the pier was locally known as Kernot's Pier. It was built behind Gloucester House, 72 High St, which was owned by Dr. Kernot. Today the Waterside public house stands on this site. Large limestone blocks can still be seen beneath the present building; these are all that remains of Kernot's Pier.

The pier was 250 feet long (permission had been given for a 350ft long structure) with a 60-foot landing stage, a pagoda, a refreshment bar and a stage from which the Cowes Regatta could be watched. The pier was extremely popular, and was the ideal promenade pier, immediately raising the status of Cowes as a town.

The 1871 Hampshire and Isle of Wight Directory described it as "The Royal Promenade and Steam Packet Pier". The one drawback of the pier was that it was not accessible to steamships at the lowest tides - perhaps surprising given its length

Sadly, on 28th September 1876, a tornado struck the town, destroying boats, houses, two seafront hotels and the Pier. Charles Middleton Kernot, the co-owner, had died on 2nd September 1876 aged 70 - just 26 days earlier. It was never rebuilt and was eventually demolished. In 1880 struts that remained from Kernot's Pier that obstructed Market Slipway were removed.

Kernot's early enterprises

This advertisement, placed in the Vectis Directory of 1839, demonstrates a wide range of medical skills: surgeon, accoucheur (male midwife); cupper; dentist; pharmaceutical chemist; retailer; and museum owner. He could also perform medicinal electricity and galvanism.

The sale of human anatomy seems rather macabre today. This was a different age when medicine and pharmacy were in their infancy. Many, what we would describe as quack remedies gave hope to a population where suffering, disease and early death was a fact of life.

In 1862 Dr Kernot wanted to add manufacturer to his accomplishments when he sought permission to make soap at Gloucester House but the Local Board (Cowes Council) objected, considering it to be injurious to the health of the inhabitants of the town.

David Jones

Sources: *Piers of the Isle of Wight*, Marion Lane
West Cowes & Northwood, Rosetta Brading

GLOUCESTER HOUSE,
HIGH STREET, WEST COWES.

C. M. KERNOT, M.D.

SURGEON, ACCOUCHEUR, CUPPER, DENTIST, &c.
Late House Pupil to Mr. G. D. DERMOT, Lecturer on ANATOMY,
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C. M. KERNOT,

PRACTICAL PHARMACEUTICAL CHEMIST, &c.
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