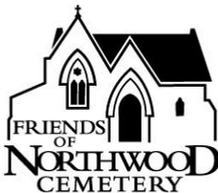


NEWSLETTER NUMBER 31



November 2015

Officers:

Chairman	Jon Matthews
Secretary	David Jones
Treasurer	John Pullen

Other Trustees:

Richard Day	Paul Fuller
Graham Lloyd	Barry Sowerby
Stella Watling	

Please address all enquiries to:

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Email: secretary@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk

Website: www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk

Registered Charity no: 1143917

Chairman's Report

Firstly, I'd like to give a very warm welcome to **Stella Watling** as a new Trustee. Stella was formerly a primary school teacher, born and raised in Portsmouth, and lived a large part of her adult life in Hertfordshire with her late husband John and two sons. They moved to the Island in 2004 and opened the *Wight Elephant* antique shop in East Cowes. Stella brings fund raising experience to us - for which we are very grateful!

Meanwhile, the pace continues to be frenetic to those involved in delivering the **Northwood Cemetery Heritage Project** and the Trustees sincerely hope that more volunteers can be recruited to share the load. Could **you** be one of them?

We are not talking about 'hard labour' (though if that's what you want we can oblige!) but there are desk-based administration jobs that need fulfilling; is there someone able to take on the Membership Secretary role? Or Press Relations / Publicity? Also, **John Pullen**, our Treasurer, is happy to pass over the Treasurer role to focus on Project-related activities - is there any 'Friend' willing and able to take this important role?

The need for more volunteers was highlighted at a **Project Launch Event** which took place at Northwood House on Saturday 7th November (once again we managed to pick an inclement day!). 52 people attended and heard **Richard Smout**, the Island's Heritage Services Manager, present on the theme "*Remembering the Past; Preserving the Future*" (it was the day before Remembrance Day). There were also seven exhibition boards depicting the work planned for the Cemetery and a presentation on our journey since the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** was formed (in 2008) with a description of the main activities planned over the next two years.

High on the agenda is clearing and landscaping what will become the Woodland Burial site at the far end of the Cemetery (pictured overleaf before the work began).



Our conservation volunteers (those who are content to participate in manual labour!) have started the clearing work on this wilderness (see back page) so that contractors can more easily gain access for surveys prior to submitting quotations. The intention is to get this area landscaped, and the soil settling process underway, before any heavy equipment (which will be required to underpin the two chapels) starts to impede access at the Cemetery's entrance in Newport Road next summer.

One little set back is that the upper west elevation of the **East Chapel** (ie: that facing the West Chapel) has cracked so much that the IW Council has felt it necessary to erect temporary safety fencing prior to the underpinning works.

And so to fund raising! We have already stepped up our fund raising activities with both **Stella Watling's Loose Change boxes** and a series of **Quiz Nights** (at the **Cowes Ale House** and at the **Kingston Arms**) having generated over £1,000 each. Thanks must also go to the "Friends" who have made donations or become Life Members.

The **Isle of Wight Family History Society** has also donated £1,000 - and pledged a further £2,000. In return we will collaborate with its Committee in the internal design of the West Chapel so it can fulfil its needs to have a presence 'on the ground', as well as our own – and be a source of volunteers to help during opening hours.

Now, it's that time of the year when presents for family and friends come to mind. Please remember that if you are buying online to consider doing so by accessing your supplier's web-site going **via** www.easyfundraising.org.uk; every such online purchase generates funds for the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** without it costing **you** a penny - and to date this facility has generated over £750 towards our fund raising efforts.

Finally, on **Saturday 5th December at 3:00pm** there'll be a brass ensemble at the Cemetery gates playing Christmas carols for an hour. If you would like to come along and sing some carols we hope we will see you there!

Jon Matthews

Red Squirrel Monitoring

As part of the **Wight Squirrel Project**, we have undertaken to monitor squirrel activity in Northwood Cemetery twice a year.

The Winter 2015 series of monitoring sessions took place during October; these consist of 3 sessions done within a 2 week period, each one taking about 1½ hours and carried out between 7.30am and 9.30am. A predetermined route is followed around the Cemetery with 8 stops of 5 minutes each.

Squirrels were observed during each session - one squirrel in the first visit and two squirrels in each of the next 2 visits. **Helen Butler** of the **Red Squirrel Trust** was very pleased at the news that sightings had been recorded in the Cemetery for the first time.

Alison Parker

Squirrel Monitor

Can you help our Fund Raising efforts?

Do you have any unwanted antiques or collectibles?

Stella Watling has already sold several items at a number of local outlets with all the proceeds going to support the **Northwood Cemetery Heritage Project**.

If you have something suitable to donate please contact Stella on 01983 281597.

Membership Report

I'm delighted to report that, as we go to press, 255 members are 'paid up' for the year to 31st March 2016 – so we have maintained our membership base at over 250 yet again!

This quarter we have welcomed (all the following live in the PO31 Postcode unless stated otherwise): **Peter Almond**, **Valerie Bennett**, **Michelle Grimm** (Newport), **Vix Lowthion** (Freshwater), **Gwen Greenham**, **Jon and Julie Lucas**, **Pauline Martin**, **Joanne Mitchell** (Newport), **Colin Mumford** (Newport), **Roger Phillips** (Godshill), **Helen Squibb** (Blandford Forum, Dorset), **Antony** and **Brenda Warne** (Somerton, Somerset) and **Philip ('Pip') Watling** (who joins as a Life member).

We now offer **PayPal** for paying subscriptions (and making donations). This was implemented for us *gratis* by a Newport based web designer **Antony Barton** to whom we extend our grateful thanks. Within days we received a significant donation via **PayPal** from Life Member **Glenn Lane** in California; thank you very much, Glenn!

Jon Matthews

(Acting) Membership Secretary

Lieutenant-General Charles Baring (1829-1890)



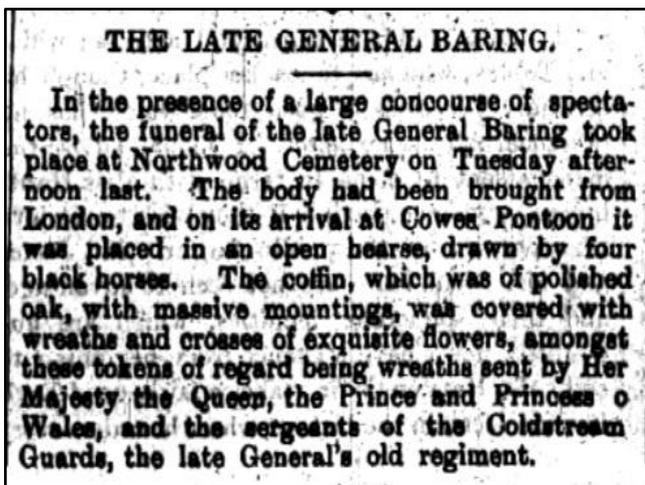
Tucked away in an overgrown area in plot 24 are the graves of Lt-General Charles Baring and his wife Helen, parents of the perhaps better known, Sir Godfrey Baring (*Newsletter no: 6 - August 2009*).

It was a report of his funeral in the County Press 15th February 1890 which caught my eye as it captures a sense of a Victorian funeral of an establishment figure.

The funeral procession was headed by a carriage containing the clergy - including Rev John Bailey, Chaplain to the Royal Yacht Squadron, who conducted the ceremony. The next carriage contained Doctors William and Bernard Hoffmeister followed by ten members of the West Cowes Local Board on foot.

Then came the hearse followed by seven carriages containing family members and prominent members of society.

The Queen was represented by Sir Henry Ponsonby; the Prince and Princess of Wales were represented by Lord Colville of Culross. Sundry Lords, Knights of the Realm and Honourables were scattered through the other carriages - with the Housekeeper and other servants bringing up the rear.



The County Press went on to report: "Throughout the entire route from Cowes Pontoon to Northwood Cemetery the footpaths were crowded and, at the Cemetery, the assemblage was large.

In all parts of the town signs of mourning were seen everywhere evidencing the great esteem in which the late General was held by the inhabitants".



Flags were at half-mast at the Royal Yacht Squadron, the Royal London Yacht Club and the Island Sailing Club - and throughout the town.

Serving in the Crimean War with his regiment, the Coldstream Guards, Charles Baring (pictured) lost his left arm during the Battle of Alma in 1854.

Despite the amputation he returned to active duty and was one of the first Englishmen to enter Sevastopol with the breaking of the siege in 1855.

He was a very prominent member of the Royal Yacht Squadron and a vice-president of the Yacht Racing Association.

His importance to sailing and Cowes is best summed up in this extract from the history of the Island Sailing Club.

"The Club was really planned and owes its being to General Charles Baring, late of Nubia House Cowes, who lost his arm in the Crimea and was the first Commodore.

The General was a member of the Royal Yacht Squadron and saw the need for democratic amateur sailing and racing - and set about to found the Club.

He must have been a very clever prophet of what was wanted in the Solent and he got together all the keen small boat sailors when there were practically no small boats racing in the Cowes area of the Solent.

In those days it was only large and expensive yachts that were catered for in the regattas and the small man did not have a look in at all.

The General set out to see that the small man did count and could have his own Racing and Club facilities for it. The meeting to form the Club was held on the 2nd March 1889 at the Marine Hotel near the present Club House".

An eminent and wealthy Victorian born into the higher levels of society, Charles Baring was at heart a democrat and well respected by all.

David Jones
Secretary

The Lashmar boys' story



Life can sometimes appear to inflict misfortune on some families more unevenly than others. We each have our share of grief throughout our lives but the **Lashmar** family of Cowes, around one hundred years ago, would have felt justified in feeling that they had been unfairly sought out.

Mr and Mrs Lashmar lived in Upper Moor Green Road at Cowes and had ten sons. With the outbreak of the First World War several quite naturally went off to serve their country. Donald lost his life at the Siege of the Kut and Bertram, whom it was reported in 1915 had survived four sea battles, was later to lose his life when the submarine he was serving in was sunk with the loss of all fifty seven crew.

Another brother lost an arm in an accident whilst working in J S Whites shipyard where his father was a foreman. Then there came Ralph and Alan, two fine young men who had a wonderful career in aviation in front of them before fate intervened.

J S White had a fine reputation for building ships and in the four years of the First World War they built twenty destroyers. However the company were to diversify into the building of aircraft, a brave decision at that time. The first aircraft they built was the Wight Twin Seaplane that was designed to carry a Lewis gun, an eighteen inch, long range torpedo and two five hundred pound bombs. Their most successful early venture however was the Wight 840 Seaplane that could be used as a torpedo bomber or a reconnaissance plane but they could not keep up with the numbers demanded by the Government so many were built by other companies using Whites design.

When John Samuel White commenced building aircraft Ralph was aged twenty seven whilst brother Alan was four years younger. When Alan was recruited by Whites in 1914 he signed an agreement that set out his terms of employment. The company would give him every opportunity to study and obtain his pilot's license from the Royal Aero Club. Once obtained the company agreed to employ him for a period of three years as a mechanic and test pilot for which he would be paid £3 per week. In addition he would be paid the sum of £10 for every new aircraft that he put through such tests for the Government.

However both young men lost their lives in a terrible flying accident in Cockleton Lane, Cowes in 1916. It was on a Thursday afternoon in early September 1916 that Ralph and his brother Alan took off on the second flight of a new aircraft that Whites had built. It was said that the plane rose to a height of six thousand feet before the engine was closed off and it glided down to six hundred feet. The pilot then re-started the engine and commenced making another circle in his descent before suddenly the aircraft was seen to make a spiral nose dive and crashed into a field in Cockleton Lane.



William Wyatt, a local dairyman who was passing in his horse drawn cart, rushed to the scene but it was found that both men had been killed instantly.

An inquest was later held at the Congregational schoolroom in Cowes where evidence was given that both men had been flying aircraft for the firm for around twelve months. After all the evidence had been given the jury was asked if they wished to consult in private but they declined the offer and immediately returned a verdict of accidental death.

The funeral was a major event in the Cowes area. The long route of the procession was thronged with local sympathetic mourners and flags were flown at half-mast both on shore and at sea whilst shop premises put up their shutters and houses drew their curtains in solemn respect whilst overhead the hum of an aircraft's engine could be heard paying a fitting final tribute to two brave men.

As with all such deaths the sorting out of the deceased's personal affairs would have been painful for Ralph's wife for she also had two young children to bring up. Initially the firm continued to pay her his £3 a week wages but eventually she was given a settlement of a lump sum of £300, the maximum allowed, plus £65 to cover what was called legal liability and for Ralph's father's dependence upon him. In addition the widow was given a pension of fifteen shillings a week plus an additional five shillings for each of her two children. J S White's made the sum of £65 up to £100 (which meant they added an additional £35) but once the war came to an end her pension would reduce to ten shillings per week. Ralph's son, Ronald, would later be employed by John Samuel Whites as an apprentice and in time became a much respected shipyard manager. He was later awarded the MBE for services to the shipbuilding industry.

Whites had a history of taking on successive generations of families as I found when I was interviewed for my apprenticeship. There were two main questions that I was asked. Firstly, as it was known that I played cricket, would I play for the works team which naturally I agreed to. This was because Managing Director, James Milne, was heavily involved with Hampshire Cricket Club and eventually was successful in bringing their team to the Island to play a series of county cricket matches.

The second question was: did I have any relatives working for Whites and I was delighted to report that I had three uncles working in the lifeboat construction department. Thus it was the same for Ronald Lashmar's two children, both of whom in time would also be employed by the company. Sadly those days are now long gone and, although I once described the working conditions as being "dirty, disgusting and dangerous", there are generations of Island people who have to be grateful for the employment opportunities given them by John Samuel Whites. Equally however many individuals had their lives cut short by a terrible disease known as asbestosis with which the firm became associated.

Brian Greening
Local Historian

Woodland Burial Site

Northwood Cemetery will be home for the first Isle of Wight Council woodland burial, ash interment and scattering site. It will be situated at the far end of the Cemetery (known as Plots 40 and 41) and it is expected it will become available in 2018.

So far we have an overall landscape design produced by our commissioned Landscape Architect which also shows the intended position of the grave spaces.

There are decisions still to be taken, after consultation, on many other aspects - such as the methodologies for burial and ash interments; the practices on how burials will be interred; how burials will be marked and recorded; and what types of memorials and location markers can be used; and, of course, the costs.

Meanwhile **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** volunteers have started light ground



clearing work and it is expected that the heavier ground works will start before year-end; this will clear designated smaller trees (including their entire root systems) as well as ivy and scrub, and creating an entrance and pathway leading into the Woodland Burial site.

The whole area will be landscaped with the larger trees remaining, retaining the natural existing flora and fauna habitat. Planting of wild and spring bulbs, and flowers, has also been planned along with shrubs and planting in the adjacent Muslim Burial plot.

The entrance to the Woodland Burial Site will be at its north-west corner (pictured above). In the plan is wooden seating and Interpretation Boards at the entrance.

There will be a wooden shelter at the top edge of the Muslim Burial area. This will provide a place for receiving coffins prior to interment and further seating for peaceful reflection.

There is still a lot to do on the “*how*” this will work - and the burial practices are still to be agreed. All these questions, once ratified through consultation, will be written into a methodology statement adopted by the Isle of Wight Council’s Bereavement Services department’s and entwined within its operational framework, policies and procedures.

It is the intention of the Project to bring conservation, different faith and wider provision for final resting places together in Northwood Cemetery.

Jo McKinnie

Editor