

# NEWSLETTER NUMBER 39



November 2017

## Officers:

Chairman Peter Almond  
Secretary David Jones  
Treasurer Richard Day

## Other Trustees:

Graham Lloyd Jon Matthews  
John Pullen Barry Sowerby  
Stella Watling Roger Williams

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Registered Charity no: 1143917

## Editorial

The last three months have seen a frenzy of activity within Northwood Cemetery as over nine and a half years of effort have finally come to fruition; the **Northwood Cemetery Heritage Project** has reached a successful milestone with two 'launch events' held last month to herald in a new era - and a very bright future for the Cemetery.

Thanks to the sterling efforts of the Board, our partners (the **Isle of Wight Council**), the Project Managers and many volunteers and contractors, the first impression one gets entering the Cemetery's main gates has been changed beyond recognition:



As many of you will have read in the August Newsletter, the 2017 Annual General Meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at which **Jon Matthews** reached the constitutional end of his term as Chairman.

During his 4 year term of office the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** formed a partnership with the **Isle of Wight Council** to which the **Heritage Lottery Fund** granted £1.68m for restoration works at the Cemetery.



We are very fortunate to have had **Peter Almond** waiting in the wings as Vice Chairman and he was duly elected Chairman at the AGM. Peter is a former Deputy Head of **Medina High School** and formerly the Chair of Governors of **Lanesend Primary School**; he has brought his wide experience to the Board since his appointment as a Trustee in December 2015 and has been one of the most active and enthusiastic members of the Board ever since.

Peter hails from Liverpool and his career in Education took him all around the UK, eventually bringing him to the Island in 1985.

Married to Sheila with a son and two daughters, he is seen most days walking his Golden Retriever, Maddie, in the Cemetery – picking up any litter they find as they go.

Peter's primary focus will be on implementing the **Management and Maintenance Plan (MMP)**, the development of which has been a key action of the **Northwood Cemetery Heritage Project**.

This plan (which covers a ten year period) details not only the maintenance regimes in the Cemetery, and how they will be funded, but also the management of activities that will be available for the benefit of the general public.

At the October Board meeting **Roger Williams** was elected as Vice-Chairman. Another comparative newcomer to the Board, it is refreshing to see 'new blood' making a mark!

**Jo Mckinnie**  
Editor

## Chairman's Report

As a comparative 'new boy on the block' I'm very excited about the opportunity to shepherd the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** (FoNC) through to its next phase – that of establishing a new maintenance regime to which we committed to the **Heritage Lottery Fund** (HLF) in return for its funding. We all know you never get something for nothing and the HLF are very keen to ensure that its investment provides a legacy to the community to enjoy and is not seen as a 'fly by night' raid on its cash resources!

The last 9½ years have proved to be a huge success for FoNC and thanks must go to all the Trustees who have guided matters - under the leadership of firstly **Lora Peacey-Wilcox** and latterly **Jon Matthews**. I'll strive to emulate the success over which they have presided. It is worthy of note that four of the Trustees (**David Jones, Graham Lloyd, Jon Matthews** and **John Pullen**) were founder members on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 – **Richard Day** and **Barry Sowerby** joined at the very first committee meeting later that month. Like me, **Stella Watling** and **Roger Williams** have joined the Board in more recent years.

The launch events that took place on 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October, attended by over 300 people, were deemed to be outstanding by all and sundry – showcasing the Cemetery as never before. Not only did we have a new **Heritage Resource Centre** and a restored **East Chapel** at which to marvel, we also had 6 new benches, 6 new litter bins, 90 new plot markers, 5 new signage boards located around the Cemetery, 6 sponsored watering cans and resurfaced roads - and our very own "Little Ben" was rung for the first time in living memory!. In the first week of November a new information board at the main entrance and a new FoNC notice board next to the "Friends' House" were also installed.

Now that the restoration phase is behind us the focus is on keeping the Cemetery as it looked at those launch events. To this end FoNC have committed to contribute £3,000 per annum to supplement funding from the Isle of Wight Council for the upkeep of Northwood Cemetery - for at least 5 years. It's my job to make sure this is fulfilled.

However, all of this doesn't 'just happen'; we need new blood and we are always keen to welcome new "**Friends**" of **Northwood Cemetery** and new **volunteers**. Volunteering does not have to be synonymous with hard labour – there are other desk-bound jobs that are in need of addressing by members of the community with a few hours to spare.

Although the 8 Trustees cover most of the bases they are doing their best as amateurs in unfamiliar territory. Is there someone out there who could perform a Press Relations role? What about a lawyer to save having to appoint expensive fee-paying professionals when necessary? Or perhaps a Webmaster; can **you** tackle the maintenance of our website? If any of these roles sound like you, please contact me or one of the Trustees.

**Peter Almond**  
Chairman



The restored **East Chapel** now available once again for Funeral services



The restored **West Chapel**, now the new **Heritage Resource Centre**

## Heritage Resource Centre

The West Chapel is now open for business as a **Heritage Resource Centre** and available for the general community to visit.

The regular opening hours are:

Tuesday	1:00pm to 4:00pm
Wednesday	10:00am to 1.00pm
Thursday	10:00am to 1.00pm
Friday	10:00am to 1.00pm
Saturday	10:00am to 1.00pm

It is closed (unless by prior arrangement) on Sundays and Mondays.

During opening times volunteers will be on hand to help visitors use the resources now made available. There will be an emphasis on family history with Internet access to services such as *FindMyPast*, *Ancestry.com* and the *Isle of Wight County Press* archive – and, of course, aids for locating ancestors buried in Northwood Cemetery.

Other exhibits include a wide ranging library of local history books, Family Trails that can help guide visitors around the Cemetery - and a growing collection of artefacts.

There are also kitchen facilities available for light refreshments.

The **Heritage Resource Centre** is available for hire as a community hall for up to 20 people with a ceiling mounted projector and a full 'surround sound' audio system.

Do come and visit us in the Centre; if the opening hours are not convenient to you, please call me on 07794 794016 to make arrangements – or send me an email at: [hrc@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk](mailto:hrc@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk); there is also a telephone in the **Heritage Resource Centre** (01983 298099) where you can leave a message out of hours.

**John Pullen**

Manager

Heritage Resource Centre

### Guided Walk

The last Guided Walk of 2017 will take place on **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November** commencing in the **Heritage Resource Centre** at 10:30am; all comers are very welcome – it's free!

## Treasurer's Report

The **Friends of Northwood Cemetery's** formal **2016-2017 Statement of Accounts** is available for anyone to view on the **Charity Commission's** website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

In summary the income for the year was **£680,720**, all but **£5,703** of which came from the **Heritage Lottery Fund**. Of this latter figure **£2,138** came from fund raising activities and **£3,575** came from membership subscriptions, Gift Aid and member donations.

We are facing a **Full Audit** of the **2017-2018 Accounts** by Chartered Accountants as the **Charity Commission** requires one when a Charity's income exceeds £1m. This will cost us some £5,000 to £7,000 – and this, along with our commitment of £3,000 to MMP, will have to be raised by FoNC through fund raising.

**Richard Day**

Treasurer

## Tree of Remembrance

During the Christmas season the beautifully restored **East Chapel** will be the perfect place to remember those we have lost.



A Christmas tree will be on display for you to hang a tree decoration, with your own message, in memory of loved ones.

If you are able to attend in person the Chapel will be open on the weekends of **16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> December** and **23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> December** from 10.00am to 4.00pm.

If you are unable to come we can hang a decoration for you; please send a (minimum) donation of £2 and your message to me at: [stella@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk](mailto:stella@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk) or give me a call on 01983 281597. You can even make your donation by **PayPal** at the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** website.

Finally, decorations can also be purchased, in advance, from the **Heritage Resource Centre**.

**Stella Watling**

Fund Raising Officer

## American Civil War Veterans



I am indebted to Michael Hammerson of London (American Civil War Researcher) who recently enquired regarding the location of graves for two veterans of the War.

Mariner **William Thomas Dawkins**, who was late of 47 St Mary's Road in Cowes, was interred at Northwood on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1926, aged 82. The headstone belies the fact that William was a veteran of the American Civil War (1861-1865). He signed on with the Union Navy for one year and during that time crewed on no less than seven vessels, including an aged 'ship of the line' the *USS Vermont* - its cavernous hull being utilised as a store and receiving ship. Regarded as America's bloodiest war, thousands of people died in the conflict including many British volunteers, some having been attracted by the possibility of financial reward. They often used aliases and William was no exception, serving as William Dinnick.

**Henry Middleton Kernot** was the eldest son of Charles Middleton Kernot of Cowes, apothecary to Queen Victoria. Henry resided in London and served under the alias of Henry Eustachia aboard the infamous Confederate ship, the *CSS Alabama*, as a seaman. Alabama served as a very successful commerce raider, attacking Union merchant and naval ships over the course of a two-year career, during which time she burned and sank sixty five Union vessels, mostly merchant ships.



During all of her raiding ventures, captured ships' crews and passengers were never harmed, only detained until they could be placed aboard a neutral ship or put ashore in a neutral port.

The south face of the Kernot memorial at Northwood is to the memory of Henry. He died in Paris in 1873, aged 42 years; his remains being removed by sanction of the French Government and deposited here in Northwood Cemetery on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1873.

**Barry Sowerby**  
Historian

## Membership Secretary Report

At the November Board meeting I agreed to take on the role of Membership Secretary again – and I'm delighted to do so.

The **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** continues to enjoy the financial support of **289** "Friends" (to date) by virtue of having banked their 2017-2018 subscriptions (the subscription year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April). Thus it has exceeded our best ever membership year (2016-2017) when we attracted 284 "Friends".

We have welcomed in the last quarter (all resident, unless otherwise stated, in the PO31 Postcode area): **Martin & Fleur Lumb** (Canberra, Australia), **Pat Bester, Kingsley & Jane Brown, Jane Champion** (Niton), **David & Betty Clarke** and **Alan White** (Calbourne). Jane Champion has joined as a Life member, thus boosting the number of those who have taken out Life membership to a princely 53.

Sadly we lost one of those Life members, **Charlie Taylor**, this year. The Board is able to announce that it has accepted a bequest from Charlie's estate of £1,500 and is considering ways to ensure it is spent to provide a suitable legacy to someone whose knowledge of Cowes was supreme. We hope to make a decision on this matter in December - so if **you** have any ideas on how to keep Charlie's name in perpetuity, please let me know.

**Jon Matthews**

Membership Secretary

## Red Squirrel Monitoring

October saw the final set (of three) Red Squirrel monitoring sessions for 2017. It is worthy to note that, now the restoration works have been completed and the contractors have left, just how lovely Northwood Cemetery looks - a far cry from the overgrown wilderness encountered when I began these monitoring sessions two years ago - and testimony to all the hard work of **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** volunteers.

The sessions were very successful with 3 sightings on the first, 3 on the second **and no fewer than 6 on the third!** On the last stop of my last session a squirrel I spotted in a nearby tree came to rest on a branch a few feet above my head and just stared at me for what seemed like minutes. Although red squirrels are supposedly timid, and easily scared, those living in the Cemetery seem to be a lot more blasé about people and dogs.

They have certainly taken all the upheaval of the chapel restoration, the tree thinning and the undergrowth clearance in their stride - and continue to live very happily in Northwood Cemetery.

**Alison Parker**

Squirrel Monitor