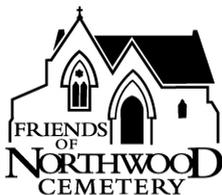


NEWSLETTER NUMBER 50

August 2020



Officers:

Peter Almond	Chairman
Tony Butt	Secretary
Richard Day	Treasurer

Other Trustees:

Roger Williams	Vice Chairman
Jon Matthews	John Pullen
Barry Sowerby	Stella Watling

Registered Charity no: 1180926

Please address all enquiries to:

The Secretary, Friends of Northwood Cemetery, 16 Church Road,
Gurnard, Isle of Wight PO31 8JP; **Tel:** (01983) 295807

Email: secretary@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk

Website: www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk

Chairman's Report

With the coronavirus pandemic curtailing all activities at the Cemetery in the past three months (except burials which are managed by the IW Council's **Bereavement Services**), now is as good a time as any to pause and reflect on our past – as there's not much that can be 'inked in' by way of future activities at the moment. The **Annual General Meeting** is the only exception to the rule (see page 5).



This is our 50th Edition.

I have just read the very first newsletter - which was published in May 2008; I must say that the quality of this publication has been maintained ever since; this first edition can still be viewed at:

www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk/assets/NewsLetter-1-May-2008.pdf.

Since then a new newsletter has appeared every quarter - chronicling the achievements of a small group of enthusiastic volunteers and featuring articles deemed to be of interest to the ever-growing band of "Friends" of Northwood Cemetery. All 50 editions are available to browse on the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery's** website at:

www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk/news-events/newsletters.

After being 'the man behind the scenes' of these newsletters, by cajoling contributions from many "Friends", Trustees and Vice-Presidents, as well as distributing them to all parts of the world, 50 editions down the track **Jon Matthews** is stepping aside from this task.

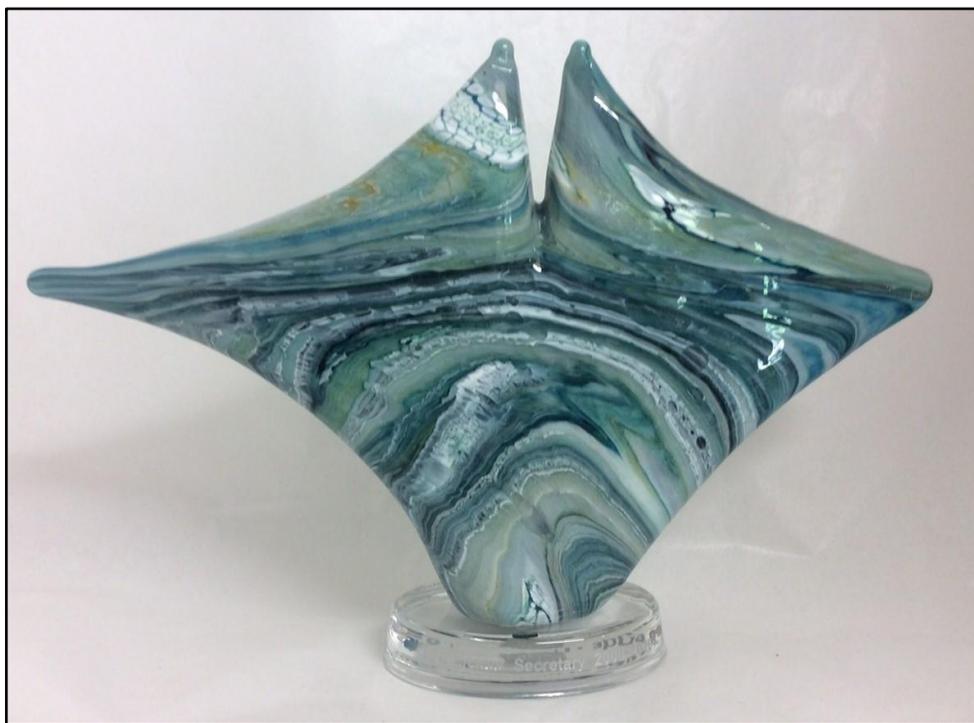
President: **Jon Matthews**

Vice Presidents: **Geoff Banks, BEM David Jones Graham Lloyd Lora Peacey-Wilcox**

We are very fortunate to have **Jo Mckinnie** who is happy to continue in the role of Editor but, to everyone, please keep the contributions coming in; Jo's focus is (i) to ensure they conform to newsletter standards; (ii) to check spelling and grammar; and (iii) to optimise the aesthetics of every newsletter. So, if you have any contributions, please do send them to her at: editor@friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk.

The group has come a very long way in 12 years - and now looks forward to fuelling the next 50 editions! In these 12 years we've had just three chairpersons: **Lora Peacey-Wilcox**, **Jon Matthews** and myself. At the **Annual General Meeting** this month there will be a fourth as I am stepping down having served my 3 years - a limitation now written into our Constitution (see page 3).

Also, **David Jones** retired as Secretary on 1st June; the Board was delighted to present David (socially distanced, of course) with a memento – a glass sculpture of the Isle of Wight on an engraved plinth (below) - to mark his long tenure of this most important office.

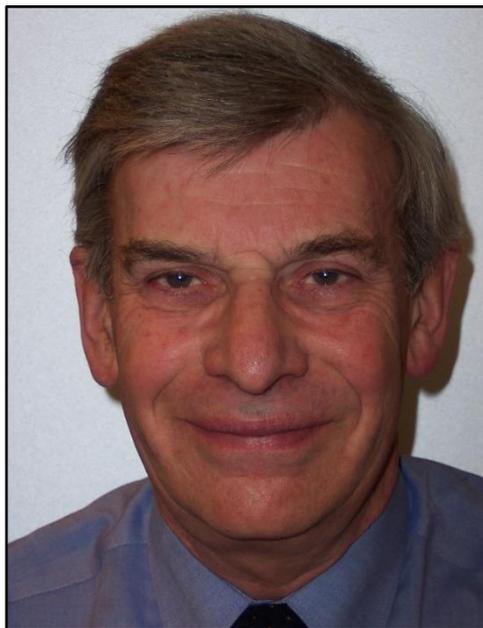
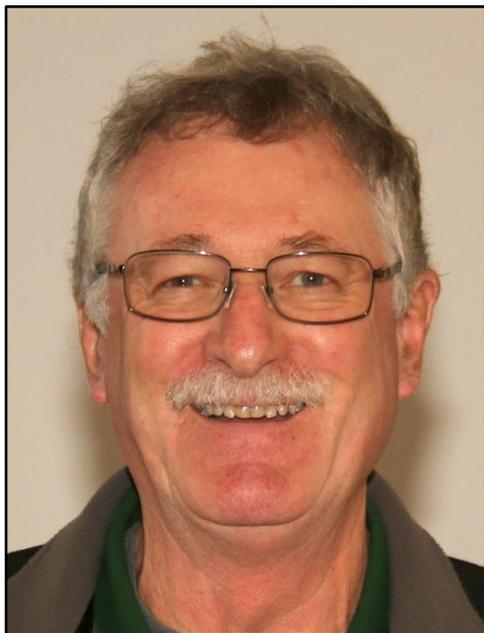


Finally it has been a pleasure to serve as Chairman for these past 3 years and I wish my successor every success – and as much fun as I have had. The support I have received from my colleagues has been exemplary and I thank them for that. I plan to carry on as a conservation volunteer and have made myself available to continue as a trustee.

Peter Almond
Chairman

Changing of the Guard at the Helm

The **Annual General Meeting** (see pages 4 & 5) will see a changing of the guard with two of the Officers not available for re-election: the **Chairman** (Peter Almond, below left); and our long serving **Secretary** (David Jones, below right) who retired on 1st June.



The Chairman's tenure is governed by the Constitution in so far as it is limited to a maximum period of three years (unless there is no one prepared to step into the role as a successor). **Peter** will have served those three years having been elected at the AGM in 2017; **Roger Williams** has indicated his willingness to succeed him.

David Jones was appointed Secretary at the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery's** inaugural meeting on 31st March 2008 so he has been an 'ever present' in that post for over 12 years. In those years he has been a calming influence in times of stress and his clear and well-reasoned views have always been respected by his colleagues on the Board. Special thanks go to David for the massive part he has played in our achievements over those 12 years.

David is also standing down as a Trustee and I'm delighted to announce that he has been elected by the Board as a **Vice President** on his retirement in recognition of his outstanding and exemplary service, during which time he also served as Mayor of Cowes for two years.

Happy retirement, David!

Jon Matthews

President

Notice of the 2020 Annual General Meeting

Please accept this as the required notice of the **2020 Annual General Meeting** which will take place **31st August 2020**. Because of the coronavirus pandemic this will be a virtual meeting **not** a physical meeting (see opposite).

The agenda is:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting
3. Approval of the Chairman's Report and Statement of Accounts
4. Election of the Officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer)
5. Election of other Trustees to serve on the Board
6. Close

Our New Secretary



Our new secretary is **Tony Butt**, a true Islander who lives in Gurnard with his wife Sharon and their cat Basil.

Born in Wootton 67 years ago, Tony spent thirty-five years in the Banking industry before taking early retirement in 2006.

He has local connections as his father was bombed out in the Cowes blitz of 1942, whilst the **Marvin** family of boat building fame are also related. They were asked to supply **Queen Victoria's** coffin following her death in 1901. They received the Royal Warrant and looked after the King's yacht *Britannia*.

A lifelong supporter of *Southampton Football Club* his current activities include voluntary work at the local **Mountbatten Hospice** and the **Isle of Wight Steam Railway** at Havenstreet.

Tony also plays golf, these days at Cowes, though he was Treasurer of **Ryde Golf Club** for 25 years. He was also Club Captain at Ryde in the late 1970s.

So, on behalf of all the Trustees, **welcome aboard Tony!**

Peter Almond

Chairman

Annual General Meeting

Before **Lockdown**, the “**R value**” and **Social Distancing** came into our vocabularies, it was the Board’s intent to hold the 2020 **Annual General Meeting** on Monday 22nd June. Alas, the coronavirus pandemic put pay to that – as well as all of our other events.

However, we are required by the **Charity Commission** (and, indeed, our Constitution) to hold an **Annual General Meeting** within 15 months of the previous AGM, which took place on 9th September 2019 - so we could delay until December.

Notwithstanding this (and it’s not certain we could do so even then – though we all hope that won’t be the case!), the Board has decided to hold a **virtual** AGM this month.

This will invite those members for whom we have an email address to cast their votes **online**; if you don’t have an email address, fear not; the papers should have been distributed in paper form with this newsletter and we ask that these members return their completed ‘ballot papers’ to me (see the Front Page for my address) by **31st August 2020**.

But for those who do have Internet access, all you need to do is go to:

www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk/agm-vote

where you can log in and participate. Apart from your name you’ll need your Membership number (at the top of the email which advised you of the availability of this newsletter) and your email address. If you hold Joint membership, both of you may, of course, vote – using your Forename as the differentiator.

The voting window will be from **1st August to 28th August** -so you have four weeks to find the few moments to participate.

We ask that you read the **Minutes of last year’s AGM**, the **Chairman’s Report** and **Statement of Accounts** and vote as to whether you approve them; then vote to elect (or re-elect) each Officer (the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) and each member of the Board. After the statutory three years **Peter Almond** steps down as Chairman and **David Jones** retired on 1st June as Secretary (see page 3) - so there will be some changes.

This **virtual** AGM is ‘a first’ for the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** and will be the prototype for those who cannot physically attend future AGMs - yet still wish to take part.

I do hope you will avail yourself of this opportunity to participate.

Tony Butt
Secretary

Glanville Fritillary (*Melitaea cinxia*)



It was with great delight that, on a visit during late May, I stumbled on what I believe to be the first ever sighting in the Cemetery of a scarce (in the UK) butterfly, the **Glanville Fritillary**.

This species is named after lepidopterist, **Lady Eleanor Glanville**, who was the first to discover it in Britain during the 17th Century.

Native to most of Europe (and somewhat beyond) this beautiful orange and brown chequered butterfly is, according to reference books, only found in the UK along the southern coast of the Isle of Wight (mainland specimens are not unknown, although they are usually believed to have been introduced).

They are particularly attracted to coastal landslips and chines, both of which are features of the Island. In this 'specialist' habitat they lay eggs on the underside of **Ribwort Plantain** (*Plantago lanceolata*) leaves and ultimately emerge to feed on some of their favoured nectar plants: **Sea Thrift** (*Armeria maritima*) and **Common Birds-foot Trefoil** (*Lotus corniculatus*).

Sea Thrift, a coastal/saltmarsh plant does not grow in Northwood Cemetery - but **Birds-foot Trefoil** does in sporadic patches at the southern end, especially in the vacant burial plots (Plots 43, 44 and 45). These are currently set-aside for nature and only cut once a year (during the autumn).

I did get a glimpse of the underside of this specimen, although it evaded my camera, but I believe it to be a female. It is generally considered that climate change is the reason why, in recent years, many species of wildlife are often found north of their expected range, which is probably why we were blessed with this little beauty.

Barry Sowerby
Historian

A Lockdown Tale

As one of the 2.5 million or so who has been shielding since March, there was a need to divert my attentions from a variety of Cemetery duties to other pastimes.

To begin with I put my efforts into supporting our Treasurer, **Richard Day**, in finalising the Annual Accounts ready for scrutiny by the Auditor and, as the software was on the computer in the **Heritage Resource Centre**, even took the computer home to complete the task.

Earlier in the year I had sown seeds, taken cuttings and split roots in preparation for the June Coffee Morning Plant sale. I was initially pleased to see my efforts rewarded with an abundance of plants in pots; but then came the realisation that I had to move them on and I was delighted to be able to give many away. I will try again next year and will probably need to put out an appeal for more flowerpots - so plenty of notice for you all!

I have been a regular Wednesday evening attendee of the **Cowes Ale House** quiz, the proceeds of which, every other week, are donated to the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** but, following lockdown, I have missed the friendly banter and camaraderie that is part and parcel of the evenings there.

Probably like many others, family members decided it would be a good idea to hold a weekly quiz online. Before lockdown **Zoom** was a word I had associated with adverts in the motor trade - little did I know it was a great way to keep in touch with friends and family; you're never too old to learn.

During the early weeks of the lockdown we were lucky to have had such good weather, and living on the edge of Northwood village I was able to get out in the evening for some quiet daily exercise in the countryside. However, it didn't take long for many others to appreciate that this was an ideal route for social distancing exercise and we were blessed with a steady stream of joggers, walkers, cyclists and family groups; thankfully now things seem to be a little quieter.

What really struck me was the silence; no aircraft or traffic noise, just the sights and sounds of nature, the birdsong, the wind in the trees, leaf bud and spring flowers appearing, noticing the ever changing seasons all of which I had enjoyed whilst in the Cemetery, but perhaps not fully appreciated.

Sadly, back at the Cemetery and along with many of the other activities that we regarded as 'routine' we have not been able to recommence transcribing yet this year.

However, when the situation improves, we would dearly like to see some new faces join the team. So, if you have a couple of hours to spare now and again, please get in touch with any member of the Board and we will be pleased to discuss any volunteering options with you – either inside (and at home) or outside (in the Cemetery).

As in the Cemetery we are fortunate to have Red Squirrels that visit the garden and I have spent too long watching them grab food from the bird feeders - then bury it in hanging baskets, flowerpots and anywhere in the garden that seems to suit!



Perhaps, after the end of this month, things will have improved and I am looking forward to getting back to a 'new normal' - volunteering whilst, of course, keeping socially distanced!

Please keep looking at our website or go to our **Facebook** page for news and updates.

Roger Williams
Vice Chairman

Membership Report

For the third year in a row the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** has attained over **300** members– having been 'stuck' at circa 250 members for five years on the trot. As at 30th July the total stood at **314** – with a few more 'promised' from last year's members.

An important note to add is that access to participate in the **Annual General Meeting** (see pages 4 and 5) will only be available to members **who have paid their 2020-2021 subscription** (and Life members, of course). So, one last plea to the few who have yet to find the time for this little piece of admin; it's **£10** single or **£15** for joint membership.

If you have access to the Internet, the simplest and easiest way to do it is by a trip to:

www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk/about-us/become-a-friend/subscriptions-renewals

However, if you don't 'do' the Internet, you can send a cheque to me at:

Glencoe, 8 Beckford Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7SE

Jon Matthews
Membership Secretary

Jo Mckinnie
Editor

FoNC is a member of the
National Federation of
CEMETERY FRIENDS