

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CEMETERY FRIENDS

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Editor: Ann Wilkinson

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World War 1 Memorial reinstated at Nunhead Cemetery

Carol Stevenson, Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, SE London



The fourth of November 2012 saw well over 150 people attend the rededication of Nunhead Cemetery's reinstated World War 1 Memorial. The memorial in Square 89 of Nunhead Cemetery, marks the burial place of 265 British service men (and one Belgian), most of whom had been evacuated from the fighting in France and Belgium to South London hospitals but had died of their wounds.

The original monument had a magnificent Cross of Sacrifice and all the men's names inscribed on plaques on the screen wall. During the 1970s the monument suffered repeated vandalism and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission removed it, replacing it with

The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the NCF.
All material by the Editor unless otherwise attributed.

a tri-part memorial wall by the Limesford Road end of the cemetery. All that was left at the soldiers' burial place was an anonymous earth bank.



A campaign by the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery and by a vociferous individual led to the decision by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to replace the memorial. The screen wall has been reinstated and bears a simple inscription, although the decision was taken not to move the casualties' names back from the South Gate memorial. Lines of Himalayan Birches, their white trunks reminiscent of lines of headstones, have been planted on the top of the bank, with the rear and side boundaries marked by ivy hedges. This restoration project was the most

expensive undertaken by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in peacetime, at £85,000.

The rededication service was a magnificent event, with senior military representatives from all the services (including some Commonwealth), a cadet band, Royal British Legion and several Chelsea pensioners, as well as politicians, family members, cemetery friends, press and well-wishers. A piper led the procession up the Main Avenue to the Anglican chapel for a service and speeches from Southwark Mayor Althea Smith, Jeff Hart for the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery and Simon Hughes MP. They then moved round to the World War 1 Memorial where the rededication was led by Deputy Chaplain General Rev Dr David Coulter QHC, followed by the laying of more than 60 wreaths.

The Friends of Nunhead Cemetery then served hot drinks, cakes and biscuits. Although the rain held off for the actual rededication, it was a very cold day and the refreshments were clearly very welcome! The Friends of Nunhead Cemetery would like to thank everybody who made this restoration possible.

Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery celebrates its 150th Anniversary [1863-2013]

John Vaughan, Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery

There will be celebrations at Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery on Saturday 11th May 2013. As a result of local churchyards in the Worthing area becoming full in the early 1860s a new public cemetery was planned on glebe land owned by the local clergy, which was acquired in 1861 by a newly constituted Burials Board. The total cost including the construction of twin chapels was £2,200. The first two burials took place in May 1863, 150 years ago. The cemetery was extended in 1884 and again in 1906. There are approximately 25,000 graves within the cemetery, which although nearly full by the end of the 1920s remains in use today, mainly for burials in long established family graves.

In 2008, against a background of limited maintenance, vandalism and crumbling infrastructure, the Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery was formed, which has now grown to 90 members. They have since transformed the cemetery. To celebrate the 150th anniversary the Friends have organised this special Open Day on Saturday 11th May starting at 10.00 hours. Cemetery tours will be conducted at 11.00 and 14.00; there will be various stalls, plot location assistance, cemetery friends publications on sale and a tree planting dedication at 10.30. Refreshments and other 'facilities' will be available. The Salvation Army Band will be playing and hopefully a horse-drawn hearse will attend. Please come along and support us. Everybody is welcome, admission is free, at the South Farm Road entrance in Worthing (see FBWC website: www.fbwc.co.uk).

NFCF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Hosted by

The Friends of York Cemetery Trust

Saturday, 8 June 2013

Any members who have not received details

please contact the NFCF secretary

gwyneth1@btinternet.com

West Norwood Cemetery to repeat 'Curious' art trail

Colin Fenn reports that the hugely successful 'Curious' art trail will be repeated this summer at West Norwood Cemetery, SE London. Two dozen artists are creating pieces to be placed across the cemetery, reflecting the biographies and stories attached to this historic site. This event is free and will open on the 22nd June for five weeks.

Caring for God's Acre starts national plan in Wales

Following the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to the Hereford-based charity Caring for God's Acre to extend its churchyard work nationally, they have been busy recruiting staff, changing address and website and preparing their programme.

They plan 15 conferences across England and Wales over the four years, and these will be followed by skills training and case studies. They are also running a telephone helpline on Mondays, are rewriting their Action Pack and planning an education pack.

The first conference - The Beautiful Burial Ground: Simple ways to create a haven for wildlife, for heritage, for people – will take place on Tuesday, 23rd April at the National Botanic Garden of Wales, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire, and Tuesday, 21st May at Snowdonia National Park Centre. The fee is £10 including lunch and refreshments (see website).

As the NCF was a Supporting Organisation for the HLF bid it hopes to give all help possible to the project. Caring for God's Acre offer articles for newsletters and would be pleased for members to attend conferences, send displays or work together in any way.

Caring for God's Acre, 11 Drover House, The Auction Yard, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 9BZ.

Tel: 01588 673041

info@cfga.org.uk

www.caringforgodsacre.org

Heritage crime and security in cemeteries

The NFCF's seminar on heritage crime and security in cemeteries announced in the autumn 2012 Newsletter has been postponed. It is anticipated that this will take place in October or November 2013. Please contact the NFCF secretary (gwyneth1@btinternet.com) for further details.

Crime Stoppers launches rural campaign in Sussex

The first Crimestoppers campaign to focus on the historic environment was launched in Haywards Heath in March when the chairman of the West Sussex group the Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery, Debra Hillman, also represented the NFCF.

There were presentations from the Sussex Crimestoppers, the National Farmers Union, English Heritage's ARCH and the Sussex Police on the types and extent of rural crime and how it affects the various communities and the importance of reporting incidents even when they seem minor.

NFCF introduces newsletter exchange between members

The Sheffield General Cemetery Trust asked the NFCF if they could distribute their newsletter to all our members and after looking in to the pros and cons we are now introducing an entirely voluntary exchange scheme.

A group wishing to distribute to other members sends a sample copy to the NFCF secretary who forwards it to those with email addresses. Those wishing to receive it send their address to the distributing group. Those not wishing to receive it do nothing. The distributing group keeps the list on the strict understanding this is used for their newsletter only, is not passed on to anyone and that the opportunity to unsubscribe is always available.

This is an opportunity to read about other people's events, fund raising efforts and practical work which may be of use to you. If you have not already sent your newsletter and would like to, please contact gwyneth1@btinternet.com

War memorials online

The War Memorials Trust has launched the website War Memorials Online, a project they have developed with a grant from English Heritage. It aims to bring together for the first time information on the UK's war memorials. The public is invited to upload images and log concerns over conservation of war memorials and they hope it will be an important tool in involving greater public engagement. www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk

Adopt a war grave

Following the item in the autumn newsletter Peter Shields adds his contribution



I adopted the War Graves in Thurnscoe Cemetery, Barnsley, in 2003 also in Bolton-on-Dearne Cemetery. I had all the war graves renovated with block paving and white chippings around the base; this protects the headstone from grass cutting machines and can be kept clean and tidy. Wombwell Cemetery, Darton and Elsecar Cemeteries have been done the same way by volunteers. This work has been accepted by the CWGC, but the paving blocks must be set at grass height to prevent tripping.

Left: After renovation

Graveyards officer for Edinburgh

Edinburgh World Heritage is appointing a graveyards officer on a two-year part time basis. The officer will address recommendations of a recent report pointing out the poor state of some of Edinburgh's graveyards, including the Old and New Calton Burial Grounds. The post is funded by English World Heritage and the Pilgrim Trust.

Parks for People grants for cemeteries: a reminder

The NCF Chairman attended a meeting in London earlier this year where the Heritage Lottery Fund were encouraging cemeteries to apply for grants in their revised Parks for People scheme. Full details and application form on their website

www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/ParksforPeople.aspx

The next closing date for applications is 31st August 2013 for a decision in December.

HLF launches Sharing Heritage

Following the success of last year's one off HLF grant scheme 'All Our Stories' (which was four times oversubscribed), the HLF have launched a new funding programme 'Sharing Heritage'. With a commitment from the HLF of £3m each year, grants between £3,000 and £10,000 will be available to help groups across the UK with projects to explore, conserve and share all aspects of the history and character of their local area. This is rolling programme which means you can apply anytime.

For further information and how to apply:

www.hlf.org.uk/news/Pages/SharingHeritage.aspx

www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/SharingHeritage.aspx

Rare spiders find homes in historic cemeteries

A rare species of orb weaver spider was discovered in **Highgate Cemetery's** Egyptian Avenue during a Wildlife Trust survey. *Meta bourneti*, commonly known as the cave spider, is over 30mm and it is thought there could be nearly 100. Although found elsewhere this is the first record of the species in London.

Glasgow Metropolis, however, with the discovery last year of a rare form of the black widow spider –*Rugathodes sexpunctatu*– were told it was the first in Britain. Mainly found in North America it was seen among the ivy and, despite its common name, is perfectly harmless.

Planning decision in favour of Bunhill Fields

In the winter edition of Mausolus, the newsletter of the Mausolea and Monuments Trust (MMT), a contributor draws attention to a significant appeal decision on heritage affecting the historic Bunhill Fields Burial Ground. This first decision under the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) concerned an appeal lodged by Southern Housing Group against the refusal by the London Borough of Islington, the site owners, to allow a proposed development adjacent to the burial ground. The development included a five- and seven-storey building and three-storey houses which Islington argued the height and the closeness would result in an overbearing sense of enclosure and detract from the burial ground's openness and intimacy. The NPPF agreed: Inspector Christine Thorby concluding that the development would threaten the sense of seclusion and tranquillity; heritage assets made a considerable contribution to society and in this case the proposed benefits would not outweigh the harm.

For MMT news see their impressive new website which features a gazetteer of 460 entries, many with full details, photographs and location maps: www.mmtrust.org.uk

Brief report from the Burial and Cremation Advisory Group (BCAG) meeting

Geoff Seamark attended the November 2012 meeting of BCAG on behalf of the NCF. Papers presented included English Heritage seeking clarification on the position of human remains found within offshore merchant marine wrecks, memorial safety - explanation of BSI required standards for testing gravestone anchors, Muslim burials – rites and rituals involved with Muslim bereavement, the use of green / environmental coffins and grave re-use in the City of London. A question in parliament regarding current government thinking on graver e-use (nationally) was put to Helen Grant, the Under Secretary of State, who responded by stating the situation is under review but considered adequate at present and did not warrant any change

ASCE NEWS

Reduced membership fee agreed for cemetery friends

The Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCE) was formed in 2001 for co-operative promotion and exchange of information across the continent. Though the majority of members are owners of cemeteries the voluntary groups (a mainly UK practice) were invited to join without a fee and about 12 accepted.

Last year's increase from zero to E50 therefore was regarded as unacceptable by most members (including the NFCF) and after consultations the UK steering committee member John Moffat (Friends of Flaybrick) was able to negotiate a more reasonable E25. This updates some of the information in the following article.

NFCF members who go to the annual conferences do so at their own expense and Emer and Geoffrey Seamark are among the regular and enthusiastic attendees. Emer Seamark has written the following report on last year's AGM.

Promotion theme at ASCE conference

Last year the conference and AGM of the Association of Significant Cemeteries of Europe was held in Maribor in Slovenia which was also the 2012 European Capital of Culture. On the edge of the Alps this beautiful and historic baroque centre is delightfully situated on the banks of the river Drava.

Sixty delegates attended and the theme was the promotion of cemeteries and surrounding territories.

Under the chairmanship of a newly elected president, Lidija Plibersek, it was immediately apparent that a dynamic hand is at the helm and with some new faces on the steering committee a quiet revolution is taking place; the goal is to place the organisation on a sound financial footing and to create a technologically compatible and interactive source of shared, pertinent and related material.

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The clarion call was for more members to make use of the much improved website in order to gather, store and disseminate relevant information.

There was some debate about the interpretation of the word 'significant' in relation to cemeteries applying for membership; at present there is no precise definition and each application is judged on its merits by the steering committee, More clarification was called for.

Progress has been made on reducing the financial debt incurred as a result of past economic naiveté, the imposition of a new fee structure should guarantee solvency in the future although it has met with resistance particularly in the UK. Assurances were given that in future all projects will be carefully monitored in order to ensure value for money.

Presentations ranged from dark tourism to concerts in chapels as means of re-establishing the cemetery as a personal and public place within the community. Particularly heartening was the school project within the host cemetery and Duzan Vrban's talk on technological possibilities which was both fascinating and informative; a report and all presentations from the AGM are currently available on the website and well worth looking at.

Doubts have been expressed in the UK regarding fees and also about the relevance of the ASCE to cemetery friends in the UK, but we can only speak for ourselves in stressing how important we feel membership of this association is for access to a vast pool of knowledge, experience and information and urge Friends to visit the website. www.significantcemeteries.org

The 2013 AGM is being held in Westerveld, near Amsterdam, on 19th to 21st September.

MEMBER CHANGES

From the Secretary

Welcome to new members...

The Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust has funding to co-ordinate local organisations for a project to clear monuments and select 15 for conservation in Great Yarmouth cemeteries. One of the prime aims of the project is to support the initiation of an independent **Friends of Great Yarmouth Cemeteries** to work in partnership on the project then continue care and maintenance of the site on its completion. See details and the Friends newsletter on:

www.greatyarmouthpreservationtrust.org

Contact: Bridget Heriz-Smith, b.herizsmith@btinternet.com

A welcome addition from the north-east is the **Friends of Loftus Cemetery, Saltburn-on-Sea**. They are looking after the five-acre site owned by Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council.

Contact: Marshall Best, marshall.best@btinternet.com

There is renewed activity in Edinburgh as concern over the poor state of Warriston Cemetery has brought together interested individuals, including genealogist/researcher Caroline Gerrard and American photographer Robert Reinhardt to set the wheels in motion. Edinburgh City Council has agreed to give its support and Caroline has joined as an associate member while seeking enough members to set up a cemetery friends group by the summer and start practical work in the cemetery.

Contact: caroline.gerard@btinternet.com

At the other end of the UK, three Jersey residents, impressed by the NCF website, are looking for ways to promote Channel Island cemeteries. Anna Baghiani writes 'We are all from Jersey and admire the work of the Federation very much, so much so, we plan to be more involved, and a publication called "Who's buried where in Jersey" is something we plan to write.' Meanwhile they have joined as associate members as the **Jersey Cemeteries Group**.

Contact: anna.baghiani@societe-jersiaie.org

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...and a sad goodbye to the old

Without support from the local authority a group can eventually see no path for their future. This is the unfortunate case with the **Friends of Masbrough Chapel and Walker Mausoleum, Rotherham**, who have struggled for 10 years without co-operation from the local council. The group was formed by the council with the intention of using their name to bid for funding to secure the future of the site but Friend Eileen Hyland says 'when it became clear this was not going to happen we became a thorn in their sides.' She sets out a catalogue of their thwarted attempts to improve and maintain the site in a press release (available from hyland5900@btinternet.com or gwyneth1@btinternet.com). 'The final straw was selling the site for £25,000 at an auction and then allowing the owner to neglect it until a fire badly damaged the chapel last year.' The group have taken the reluctant decision to disband.

The same decision has been taken by the **Friends of Hebron Burial Ground, Bedminster, Bristol**, but for happier reasons in that they feel they have achieved their goals. Mike Meechem writes:

'The winding up follows 10 years of successful campaigning to save the site from development, and the rebuilding of the surrounding walls on Hebron Road and Melville Terrace along with the provision of a gate giving access from Melville Terrace. The members also agreed that the remaining funds of approximately £1,000 be given to Bristol City Council (now the owner) to provide and fix two benches in the burial ground with a small plaque on each stating that they were donated by the Friends.'

The enormous success of their campaigning to save and restore another Bristol cemetery could also be said to have led to the decision of the **Friends of Arnos Vale Cemetery** to wind up that group and restructure within the Arnos Vale Trust. A new Friends Working Group has been formed who will work closely with the Trust's chief executive Juliette Randall, maintaining the Friends membership database which will now include all volunteers at the cemetery, fundraising for specific Friends cemetery projects and controlling the Friends Fund. The decision was made following a ballot in which an overwhelming majority who responded were in favour.

MEMBERS NEWS

A selection of news and events from Members newsletters and websites

Brompton Cemetery, London

The memorial of the Polish Chess Grandmaster, Johannes Herman Zukertort (1842–1888) was rededicated on the 26th June 2012. The original stone marking the grave of this nineteenth century chess professional remained hidden beneath the grass for many years until uncovered by former British Chess Champion, Stuart Conquest in 2011.

Recent Grade II listings include the Golding family Mausoleum built in a Neoclassical / Early Christian style from Portland stone, the classical aedicule (temple or box-like structure) also in Portland stone marking the Fitch family vault and the two-metre high column of grey granite with a Carrara marble inset erected above the grave of auctioneer, antiquary and author, Samuel Sotheby.

Glasgow Necropolis

The Friends have launched Phase I of their Public Appeal to raise funds for the restoration of the Monteath Mausoleum. The target is to have reached £20,000 by September 2014 followed by Phase II to have reached £40,000 by September 2015. This will enable restoration work to be commenced on the Mausoleum, the full cost of which is estimated at £80,000.

Houghton Hillside Cemetery, Co Durham

The Friends are now being assisted in the security of the cemetery by regular security patrols undertaken by Secure Risks. This will hopefully reduce the amount of vandalism etc.

2013 marks the 10th Anniversary of the group which will be celebrated with an Open Day in June.

Hyde Park Cemetery, Doncaster

With funding kindly provided by Wilkinson Stores, the Friends have purchased three new notice cases which have been installed next to the cemetery entrances.

Park Cemetery, Ilkeston

During an Open Day on the 23rd March, planned originally to showcase the new daffodil beds in front of the cemetery chapels (planted up by local schoolchildren last autumn), the restored cemetery 'Closing Time' clock was unveiled. A well known feature of the cemetery, the clock was removed some years ago due to its unsafe condition. The restoration was supported by a generous donation from family and friends of June and Danny Shiels, who are buried in the cemetery. Family members came along to see the unveiling and were sincerely thanked by Friends Chairman Paul Miller for donating the money towards the clock's restoration

Raikes Road Burial Ground, Skipton

The Friends have been awarded a grant of £1,100 from the Craven District Council Localism Fund which is a start on the sum of £10,000 they want to raise to carry out the work of tidying the Ground, making the stones safe, tree work, as well as putting a path in, providing interpretative boards and undertaking archaeological work on the sites of the old Chapel and Mortuary.

Sheffield General Cemetery Trust (SGCT)

A Project Development team comprising members from SGCT and the South Yorkshire Buildings Preservation Trust with support from a member of Sheffield City Council have finalised an application to the Architectural Heritage Fund's 'Challenge Fund' for a grant to repair and fit out the Grade II* listed Non Conformist Chapel.

Surrey Cemeteries

Following the completion of their site visits and research last year in Surrey cemeteries, the notes have been edited into publishable form. Cemetery maps have been scanned into Word documents to give visitors and other researchers a clearer picture of each cemetery. This gazetteer will be donated to the Surrey History Centre with copies sent to the West Sussex and East Sussex Family History Societies.

Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, London

On Saturday, 6th October, The Friends held a day of nature-led activities in the cemetery park to celebrate winning a Green Flag Community Award. The highlight of the day was the raising of the flag by the Mayor of Tower Hamlets. The award which was given earlier in July is a national standard in the UK and is a mark of excellence in the quality of provision for parks and open spaces. The Friends received one of the highest scores of 75 -79.

West Norwood, London

The Friends are working with Lambeth Council on preparing an HLF bid and have supplied a list of repairs and renovations, including the Anglican catacombs and construction of a new water-tight building above them. Lambeth officer changes have put other matters in abeyance.

Woodgrange Park, London

Progress is slower than hoped on improvements to the cemetery agreed by the Trust 15 months ago, but the Friends are pleased to report that two additional soak-ways have been created, the gates have been upgraded, the flat above the office is now let, lighting installed around the car park area and the CCTV covers the gate area.

York Cemetery

The restoration of the Grade II* listed Chapel has benefited from the installation of under floor heating which will be maintained at a constant low temperature all year round to help protect the fabric of the building as well as making it quickly comfortable for use for chapel events. The under floor heating also complements the beautiful marble and granite flooring of the Chapel.

Let us know

Please keep sending the newsletter editor and the webmaster your news stories and events (contact details for both of us are on the back page). You get publicity for your events, a place to trumpet your successes, and a chance to air your woes. We get the articles to fill and update our pages.

NFCF contact details

A list of members is available from the Secretary

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<http://cemeteryfriends.org.uk>

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