

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS AT NORTHWOOD HOUSE: 10 & 11 SEPTEMBER 2011

This year the Trustees decided to join in this nationwide event – organised by English Heritage – to welcome everyone interested in seeing this rather special House.

Nearly two hundred people visited, both Islanders and visitors. Some had worked out a schedule of free visits to participating locations for a day out, others were just pleased to have the opportunity to visit, look and chat. Some brought memories of past visits to the House, perhaps to pay their rates, perhaps to marry, perhaps to dine and dance. There was talk of tunnels, nuns, fabulous parties with the crowned heads of Europe, even ghosts.



Visitors admired the decorative details and scale of the public rooms and most joined one of the guided tours which explained some of the history of the house and the Ward family and also enabled them to take a peep into the areas not currently in public use. They were impressed by the former and from the latter gained an understanding of the challenges being faced by the Trustees.

Also on display was an exhibition of interesting images of the history of the House, courtesy of Cowes Heritage society, who are currently preparing a book on Northwood House and the Ward family. The Friends of Northwood House & Park were there to assist and tell people about their next fund-raising event, a Salsa evening on 21st October. The in-house caterer and event organiser, All About Catering, had a themed table set up ready for the Christmas parties which will be on offer at the House. Groups of various sizes will be able to reserve tables for a special dinner, which will include a DJ who knows how to ensure everyone enjoys some music to dance to. For more information, visit www.allaboutcatering.co.uk. For the Trustees, the event offered the opportunity to explain the purpose of the Trust and its aims for the future as well as listen to advice and comments.

Over a cup of tea, visitors offered a range of support for the work being done to bring Northwood House back to life and to care for the Park. Many made donations as well as offers of help, and the Trustees are very grateful for this practical way of showing support.

It was an excellent opportunity for people to understand and see for themselves how a group of dedicated people, supported by determined volunteers, can progress with such a mammoth task.

Chair of the Trust Ann Thwaites said 'It was a very worthwhile two-day event and I want to thank those colleagues and supporters who worked and visited to make it the success it clearly was.'