

1929

NORTHWOOD HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Nearly 90 years ago the Ward family gifted Northwood House and Park to Cowes Urban District Council. With your support it will continue to contribute to the community reflecting the vibrancy and history of the Isle of Wight.



Dear friends and supporters

As we prepare for the various events in the House and Park our extended team all hope Summer sunshine prevails for the community events and private weddings that fill the calendar.

I hope most of you were able to join in the Patron's day festivities on 12th June. There has been great feedback from the Cowes community about the impact of our decoration works in the House, and the fabulous work of our volunteers that make the Park a glorious space to spend time on a Summer's day. We hope the great facilities at Northwood House and Park will be used to host many more events that unite our community.



updates to the main signs on Ward Avenue, and the landscaping by St Mary's entrance has been improved making that aspect of the House much more pleasing to the eye.

The next big dates in the diary are the Island Highland Gathering and Country Fayre on the 24th of July, and of course the pinnacle of our year – Cowes Week from 6th - 14th of August.

Around and about the Estate we are making changes.

You will soon see

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We are very pleased that our application for initial funding to start restoration on Church Lodge has been successful. The initial grant of £10,000 will fund a feasibility study for the restoration and return to use of the John Nash designed lodge that sits on the edge of the estate. The lodge was built in 1816 as part of Nash's major works at St Mary's Church constructing of a family mausoleum and the church tower for the owner of Northwood House, George Ward.

We hope you will all spread the word, that the Park is open to all to enjoy, and everyone is welcome to the events we hold – from the monthly car boot sales, to our social events and annual fairs and festivals. Bring a friend next time you visit.

Janet Allan, Chairman

Weddings at Northwood House

During May and June the House has hosted 12 marriage parties. Each celebration is unique and our team are keen to ensure hosts and guests thoroughly enjoy their time on the Estate. If you have friends, relatives or colleagues planning a special day put them in touch.
events@northwoodhouse.org

Calling all volunteers

We welcome help in the Park and House for the events, whether it is car park marshalling or helping with the refreshments.

Our volunteers meet monthly. For details of the next meeting contact volunteers@northwoodhouse.org and bring a friend to join in!

See Park News on page 6, if you would like to help in the gardens.

Inspired by Wimbledon? Try Tennis in the park.

We have six beautiful tennis courts in the Park, overlooking the sea. As part of the Charity, they are run by a team of volunteers, who maintain them and ensure they are available for everyone. We have recently installed six brand new nets and are now mending the fence. The lines will also be repainted. The courts are completely free to use.

During the Summer we have informal tennis group sessions on Tuesdays at 6 pm, when you can turn up and join in with us. The standard ranges from beginners to experienced players. All are welcome.

Alternatively, why not join Local Tennis Leagues? This is a great way to meet other tennis players for friendly games. The Isle of Wight has just joined - go on line at: 'localtennisleagues.com' and sign up to find local people to play. Northwood House is a registered venue.

Our email is:
tennisinthepark@northwoodhouse.org

RECENT EVENTS



Big Lunch and Patron's Day picnic on 12th June

Our third Big Lunch in the Park and celebrations to mark the Queen's 90th Birthday were a great success and we were delighted that Northwood House was chosen to be the centre of the Cowes community gathering. The stalls charity auction and competitions raised funds for selected Cowes Charities including Sea Cadets, RNLI, and the Ellen Macarthur Trust.



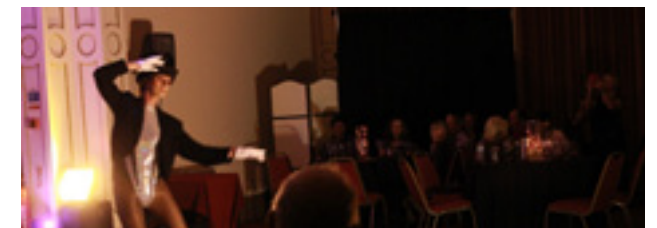
Monthly Giant Car Boot Sales

Continue to attract bargain hunters. Look out for the next ones on 31st July, 4th September and 2nd October.

Refreshments & Toilets are available.
9 am for sellers (£5 car £10 Van) 10 am for buyers (entry free)

Cabaret Evening on 22nd June

Our first cabaret club evening was a great success attracting nearly 70 revellers to the Ball Room. Look out for dates of the next event.



UPDATE ON THE HOUSE & BUILDINGS

The Coastal Revival Fund grant combined with the Charity's own funds, have allowed us to complete all the major structural work in the ceiling, walls and roof around the central bar area.

A voyage of discovery

As we started to open the fabric and peel back the years to look inside the very core of the House; we were surprised, and initially worried by what we found.

We knew that there had been a lot of water in the area and that one of the main beams had dropped due to a rotten wall plate, we also found that a significant number of the main 9" floor joists had rotted. We discovered that the architect and builder who added the new Rotunda wing in 1838 had been somewhat cavalier when he joined the new building

to the old building. Three brick walls were essentially floating in space above the bar.

This together with the weight of the chandelier, the rotten beams and the normal timber creep of a 200 year old building led to an uncomfortable sinking feeling in the corridors above the bar. The 4" drop turned out to be well over 6" as past occupants had already levelled the floor at least once before.



Fixing the dome ceiling

When we started to clean the bar ceiling we also found that the cracks were larger than first thought. It was possible to reach up and shake hands with people on the first floor! We also discovered that the plaster work forming the dome and

its heavy rim were no longer fixed to the original wood frame.

We have inserted over 120 eighteen inch stainless steel pins to fix the dome into a complete new inner wood frame and then inserted over 60 flexible straps (along with the two 7 metre beams, 4 heavy weight cables and 2 smaller steel beams). It is now secure, and not going anywhere for a very long time. Job done.



Repairing the paintwork

Vicky Salter then performed some camouflage magic, repaired all the cracks, some of which ran right across the dome, and 'lost' all the engineering support holes – the bar ceiling now looks fantastic.

Look up at the ceiling in the main corridors you'll see the gilding work that has been done. Take a moment to look up and you will notice that the four cracked, or broken, curved Georgian glass panes, and the 9 double curved domed Georgian domed glass panels, have also been replaced. Several glass manufacturers told us that it was impossible to make these today; how we achieved it is now a trade secret.



Dining Room restoration

We started the restoration of the skirting and panels in the Dining room. Vicky peeled off each original canvas painted panel (the first one was a moment), re-glued and re-fitted to repair them.

The main staircase

The final part of the project was to redecorate the main staircase, repairing the ceiling, (which had suffered from water leaks), and the corner of the staircase towards the Rotunda. When we looked behind the spindles on the faux balustrade we found that the panels were completely rotten and open to the outside. All these had to be removed, the walls rebuilt and then put back.



We also fixed some electrical problems,

upgraded the heaters, added sockets and changed 162 light bulbs from 40 watt to LEDs, saving the House around £2 a day.

You will realise that it was a significant and complicated project to protect and preserve the House. My thanks to the Steve Andrews and team from SJS, Vicky Salter from Historic Restorations, Steve Dunford and his team, John Sutton from Elmstone Design who, while standing on the scaffolding with me in the main bar, refused to panic at any stage. Thanks to Lee Byrne from the IOW Council whose support during the project was most appreciated.

On a building as old, complex as Northwood House, that lacked investment for many years maintenance work and restoration will make a continuous call on the Trust's resources.

One major item that we urgently need to address is the parapet walls above the Rotunda, which must be repaired, sealed and secured. In addition to the restoration of Church Lodge we are working with HLF on refurbishing the servants' quarters and planning is well advanced on the Heritage Visitors Centre.

Tim Wander

PARK NEWS

The Park Team

When the Friends of Northwood House and Park first called for volunteers to work in the Park there were about 20-30 people who met once a month. The Friends group was disbanded and in that Autumn a call went out for volunteers to sweep leaves weekly, on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. There were only 5 or 6 of us then but the scope of work widened and we worked twice every week into the following year. Though our numbers have increased due to the nature of volunteering with some coming for half a session or only once a week while others managing to come now and again the Park Team always welcomes new members.

For some time now people have been complimenting us on how good the Park is looking and what a great job we all do. So let me introduce those who work so hard to maintain, and also, importantly, improve this lovely Park which so enhances Northwood House.

and husband Gordon look after flower beds and strimming; Paul cuts grass and disposes of brashwood with wife Carol, who also does the shrubbery; Nick takes responsibility for the trees, shrubs and hedges aided by his wife Jan; Priscilla, Dave and Cilla maintain the herbaceous border and grow plants in the greenhouse; Shirley creates the displays in the planters; David keeps the paths clear of leaves and weeds.

None of the above would be so effective without the invaluable support of Elspeth, Les, Ruth, Janet 2, Alex, Bill, Gillian, Maralyn, Jim and Matthew. In addition Joy serves up coffee; Maggie brings us sausage rolls; John mends our tools and Sue treats the Team to lunch at the Pier View now and again.

Carol Hope

If you would like to join us, we're in the Park on Wednesday and Saturday mornings or call 01983 293642 for more information.

IMPORTANT NOTE To our dismay, in recent weeks newly planted cosmos and lavender plants have been uprooted and stolen. Please report any suspicious activity around the flower beds to the house office.



Cilla working in the herbaceous border



Maralyn tidying the Rotunda border.



Volunteers selling plants at the car boot sale

THE HOLM OAK – *Quercus ilex*



This tree is native to the Mediterranean region, and is prevalent along the coast from Portugal to Italy. It can be grown in much of maritime North Western Europe but cannot withstand the severe cold of continental winters. It was first introduced to England in the 16th century. The first trees planted from acorns are still to be found growing within the grounds of Mamhead Park in Devon. The oldest trees, which are reputed to be nearly 1000 years old, are found in Malta.

The wood is tough and hard, and has been used for construction since



ancient time. It is also used for charcoal production. The buds are tiny and the end bud has curling whiskers like those of *Quercus cerris*, but less prominent. The flowers are a glorious displays of golden male catkins in early Summer at leaf-fall. The acorns are small with felted cup scales and the toasted acorns are edible, and are an important food for free range pigs reared for iberico ham production. Acorns boiled in water produce a liquid which is a disinfectant for preventing wound infections.

Holm oak grows readily in the maritime regions of southern Britain, taking

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advantage of climate change, so readily that it is officially classed as an alien invader which is damaging biodiversity. It copes outstandingly well with salt spray. Interestingly though it is one of the top three trees for truffle production. These truffles grow in an ectomycorrhizal association with the tree roots.

The tree has finely fissured blackish bark. The leathery dark green evergreen leaves fall to the ground as the new leaves push them off in the following early Summer, creating a second leaf fall.

The roots of the tree are very prominent, and the trunk can twist itself into some interesting shapes.

Paul Taylor

Dates for your Diary

July

Friday 15th – Members BBQ

Sunday 24th – Island Highland Gathering and Country Fayre

The Highland gathering and Country Fayre in its third year provides a feast of entertainment for everyone, while raising money for local charities. Three stage areas have bands and dance troupes scheduled throughout the day. Kilt clad competitions – tossing the caber, battle of the clans, Tug of war, Hurling the Haggis and more will test the brawn of competitors.

<http://www.islandhighlandgathering.com/>

Wednesday 27th - Northwood House Charitable Trust AGM

Sunday 31st - Cowes Car Boot Sale in Northwood Park

August

6th - 14th - Cowes Week (See right hand panel >)

Details of the live entertainment throughout the week:

<http://www.northwoodhouse.org/events/the-lawn-lounge>

September

Sunday 4th – Cowes Car Boot Sale in Northwood Park

October

Sunday 2nd - Cowes Car Boot Sale in Northwood Park

Thursday 13th - Sunday 16th - Isle of Wight Literary Festival

November

Sunday 27th - Northwood House Christmas Fair

NORTHWOOD HOUSE CHARITABLE TRUST COMPANY

A CHARITY WORKING TO PRESERVE
NORTHWOOD HOUSE AND PARK INTO THE
FUTURE

Cowes Week 6th – 13th August

Events and attractions throughout the week should make visits to Northwood House part of your plans!

Every day

The Lawn Lounge Bar	12 noon to late Serving lunches & light refreshments, and hosting the GIN FESTIVAL - a ginspirational collection of premium gins from around the world!
Northwood House Tea Lawn	12 noon to 6 pm - Beverages, homemade sandwiches, cakes & scones provided by Wight Vintage and served on the lawn.
Northwood House Car Park	Car parking is available in the grounds (accessed via Ward Avenue) £6 per car per day, £3 after 3 pm. Additional fees apply for Friday 12th & for larger vehicles. Details from Northwood House Office.
Bond's Fun Fair	12 noon to 6 pm - Traditional Victorian Fun Fair to delight all ages!
Cowes Week in the '30s	10:30 am to 4 pm Classic Boat Museum exhibition of "George V's Britannia and the Big Class". Northwood House Library

Special events

Outdoor Cinema Sunday 7th Wednesday 10th	Sunday 7th - vote for your favourite film Wednesday 10th Ferris Bueller's Day Off Shows start at 7:30 pm, Refreshments available, picnics welcome Tickets & voting at www.travellingfilmshow.co.uk
Quantum Theatre Monday 8th	Peter Rabbit A magical performance for young & old alike going back to the tales of childhood in a show designed to appeal to all the family. Tickets: 020 8317 9000 or office@quantumtheatre.co.uk
Goodleaf Tree Climbing	12 noon to 6 pm Sunday 7th & Friday 12th www.goodleaf.co.uk for details and advance bookings
Falconry Displays	12 noon to 6 pm Saturday 6th – Friday 12th
Classic Cars in the Park	6th August - Jaguar Classic Cars 8th August - IOW MG Owners Club 10th & 12th August - Vectis Classic Cars
Ladies Lunch Thursday 11th	Pre-lunch drinks in the Lawn Lounge from 12 noon, Lunch served at 1 pm in the Ballroom - Tickets from the Northwood House Office
Members' Firework Party Friday 12th	Join us for drinks and canapés to watch the Cowes Fireworks. Northwood House Ballroom 8 pm to 9.30 pm Tickets £12.50 from the Northwood House Office

Northwood House Office

01983 293642

Email: administrator@northwoodhouse.org

Look for more details on www.northwoodhouse.org

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