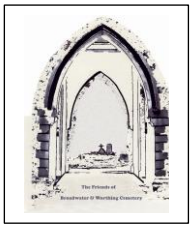
THE FRIENDS OF

BROADWATER AND WORTHING CEMETERY

NEWSLETTER **Issue 45, Spring 2023**



The Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery, http://www.fbwc.co.uk/

Welcome from the Chair

Debra Hillman

It has been more than a year since we sent out our last Broadsheet so I am delighted to welcome you to the first edition of your new Friends' newsletter produced by our new editor Anita Hobbs. I am sure you will support her by sending her items of interest for future issues.

Quite a lot has happened since our last newsletter, some of it quite challenging, some of it very satisfying, so here is a quick round up. We had issues with a lack of grass cutting, various tents (and their associated rubbish) erected in the cemetery and, of course, the fire in the north-east corner. The 2022 tour season, however, was very successful, with some of the highest visitor numbers we have seen. The typhoid tour was also a first for the group with markers placed on all 164 typhoid victims' graves and a video recorded of the event.



Typhoid markers
(Photo courtesy of Mary McKeown)

Paul Robards and his team of helpers worked tirelessly throughout the year to try to keep the ivy and brambles under control, also keeping an eye on the wildlife, monitoring the butterflies and birds, and protecting the pyramidal orchids when they emerged. The research team continued to help a number of visitors locate the final resting places of their relatives – a very rewarding exercise. Membership numbers were good, down a little on the pre-pandemic figures but still at a pleasing level.

This year we mark 160 years since the first burial on the site and 15 years since our Friends group was formed. Preparations for the 2023 tour season will be almost complete by the time you receive this and I look forward to seeing many of you at the cemetery when the tours start in April. Please also remember our monthly Saturday morning sessions for tidying up the cemetery. 'Many hands make light work' as they say and we are always grateful for as much or as little time as you can spare to help us.

Most important of all, enjoy reading your newsletter!

Debra

Inside this issue

My photographic journey of Broadwater Cemetery	P3–8
Living landscape, climate change, and Broadwater burials	P9–11
Meet one of our volunteers	P12–13
Become a volunteer	P13
What work we've done	P14
Can you help?	P14
Paul's corner	P15–16
November's AGM	P17
Become a Friend	P17
The Typhoid Epidemic – A Final Tribute	P18–19
Future Friends' Publication: *Fever! The Year Worthing Died*	P19
Blackboard observations	P20

Other Useful Dates	May 27th	Wildflower planting
		Light clearance
	June 10th	Worthing Festival
		Nature trail
	November	AGM

Tour dates* and themes for 2023

April	Fatal Accidents
May 13th	Untold Stories
June 10th	1863
July	Bricks & Mortar
August	Alter Egos
September	Motoring Matters
October	Tree Tour

* Tours are conducted on the first Saturday of each month (April through to October) unless stated otherwise.



(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)

The hidden details of Broadwater Cemetery: my photographic journey

By R E Barry Chidlow



Little did I know when I moved to Worthing in July of 2016 that I would be living just five minutes' walk from my first ever photographic project: Broadwater Cemetery.

Since moving down here from Melton Mowbray I had lost my photography mojo. This was because I was preoccupied with renovating our new home. Once the bungalow was finished, however, I wanted to rekindle my interest in photography. Thankfully, following a Zoom lecture on project photography during lockdown, this project just came to me out of the blue.

During my discovery of the cemetery – from May 2020 when my project first started – I have taken more than 450 photos. This may seem excessive to some but, trust me, once you start noticing the cemetery's hidden details you can't help but keep capturing them.

So, I would like to share with you some of the images I captured on my observational journey through the cemetery.



Through these photos I hope you can sense the feeling of thoughtfulness and peace and tranquility I experienced during my walks with my camera.

However, before we jump into the first section, I feel it's important to reflect on the first image I took when I walked through the cemetery's gates: the memorial to those who lost their lives in the Worthing typhoid epidemic in 1893. A very thought-provoking image during a world pandemic. ▶



The cemetery's memorial commemorating the Worthing typhoid epidemic of 1893



Shadows

My first section is titled 'Shadows' because on one of my very first walks the sun was just perfect for casting shadows.





I soon began to see them everywhere.







Details

If we take the time to stop and look, we begin to notice details everywhere – and this cemetery has no shortage of them!



The fallen



The angelic



The rusty



The displaced



The eroded





The broken

Once you start looking, you can even see details that perhaps you would miss on another day.



The aged





The craftsmanship





The lost

And the simple words that mean so much…





The small details in Broadwater Cemetery are many and varied. The more I visit the more I see, even some that are not intended to be there.



The misplaced

Tended and cared for

My third and final section in this part of my project is titled 'Tended and cared for'. There are many graves still remembered by loved ones today.





I found it touching to find so many messages, as well as sentimental and personal items of remembrance.



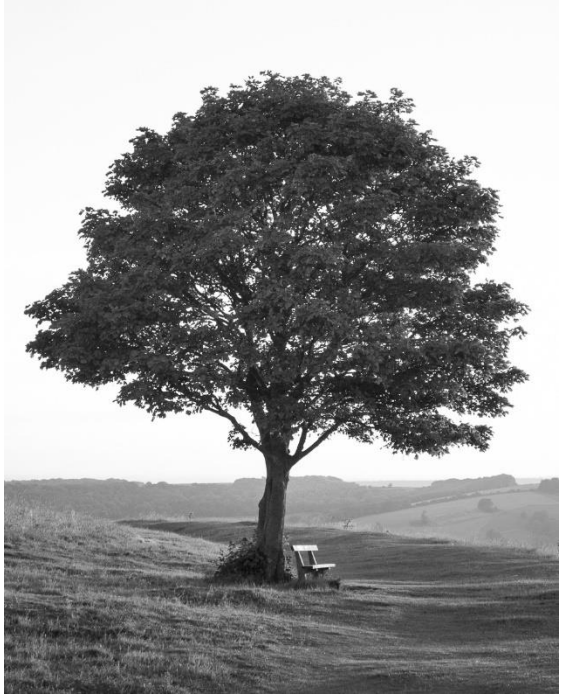
I found this two-year-old boy's grave (below) particularly poignant as the birth date is close to my own (1958).



I met the late toddler's brother and two sisters tending his grave one day. How sad for them to lose him so young. It's wonderful that they still return regularly to place flowers and tokens of love… Never forgotten.

These are just a few photos I've taken on my walks. I hope to share more with you in the next issue.

Living landscape, climate change, and Broadwater burials…



(Photo courtesy of Kevin Hobbs)

By Barbara Pilley Shaw

A watery spring-charged landscape once tumbled from chalk downlands to the Worthing coast via Sompting Brooks and the Teville stream. In ancient times there were broad coastal inlets and much wetland around Worthing. 'Broadwater', now high and dry, was named by Saxons for its proximity to a river or lake. Even in Georgian times, when Princess Amelia and Jane Austen made celebrated visits to Worthing, carriageways were sometimes precarious, often flooded or shrouded in misty vapours – especially in winter. Today the old routes of the Teville stream still flow underground with heavy rain mobilizing subterranean sediments. Water drips below Worthing Station and, flowing west, sometimes creates sink holes (a kind of pothole) and widespread flooding around Tarring.

From Mesolithic times, humankind used flint tools to hunt fish and wildfowl around these areas with many artifacts recovered by Worthing Archaeology Society from the Sompting EPIC project area in 2019. A history of coastal fishing continued to modern times, with many fishermen and other seafarers later buried in Broadwater Cemetery.

Neolithic farmers felled chalk-hill woodland and scrub with stone axes, growing early cereal crops in clearings. They husbanded livestock, often building earth and ditch ramparts, fortifications like Cissbury Ring, as safe retreats from marauding predators and threats from invaders.



A snow-covered Cissbury Ring
(Photo courtesy of Kevin Hobbs)

Grazing sheep on downland continues today, giving rise to wildflower-rich chalk turf of the South Downs National Park with unique butterflies and other wildlife. During September the Findon Sheep Fair takes place annually, and Worthing Museum holds the Barclay Wills' unique collection of shepherds' smocks and memorabilia. The author, William Henry Hudson, who wrote the culturally important book *A Shepherd's Life* (1910), is actually buried in Broadwater Cemetery! ▶

◀ His influence lives on through contemporary Cumbrian sheep farmer and environmental champion James Rebanks, who, inspired by Hudson, wrote the bestselling book *The Shepherd's Life: A Tale of the Lake District* (2015).



Findon Sheep Fair
(Photo courtesy of Barbara Pilley Shaw)

Celts and invading Romans found the rich brickearth soil of the West Sussex coastal strip excellent for farming cereals. From Victorian times to the 1930s, horticultural industries sprang up – many under glass – exploiting the same rich soil, plentiful water supply and the long bright 'Sunny Worthing' daylight. Rail lines and West Worthing station were developed to transport cut flowers, cucumbers, and famed 'Worthing Tomatoes' to Covent Garden. Through the medium of cemetery tours, past life stories of Growers, Nurserymen, Market-Gardeners and those of 'Flower Ladies' are unfolded to us.

During later 19th–21st centuries the Worthing area progressed as a health spa and tourist destination, eventually becoming a continuous suburban sprawl. From 1893 Worthing's popularity declined briefly because of a major typhoid epidemic. This was caused by inadequate leaky sewerage, preceded by a drought, and highlighted an urgent need for a reliable clean safe water supply for an expanding population. In Worthing there were 194 deaths from typhoid; 164 victims were buried in Broadwater Cemetery.

Remembering our ancestors and reflecting the continuity of flow from past to present, grips many of us in a fascination for family roots and social history. Archaeological excavations of constructions and associated artefacts provide physical evidence of past activities and use of resources. Discovery of human remains often demonstrates varied cultural practices used to dispose of the dead. Burials and cremations were, and mostly still are, accompanied by rituals that remember and honour the dead, whilst reinforcing socially the spiritual or humanitarian values that still bind the living.

In the borough of Worthing there are many burial sites, from the Highdown Saxon Cemetery with artifacts in Worthing Museum, to Durrington Cemetery still in operation. The building of St Mary's Church Broadwater began around 1100, after the Norman invasion, and is on the site of a Saxon building mentioned in the Doomsday Book. The building was substantially remodeled, developed, and expanded from medieval through to modern times, with many entombed inside or buried in the adjacent graveyard. In 1805 Jane Austen was a notable visitor attending services whilst visiting Worthing. At that time, Edward Ogle, arguably Worthing's first property developer, lived in the, now demolished, Warwick House nearer the centre of town. Jane Austen's last and unfinished novel ▶

◀ *Sanditon* (1817) – the subject of extended sequels in a historical TV drama set in the Regency Era – was modeled on property developments around Broadwater and Worthing at the time.

'A new Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery'

By the 19th century St Mary's Church graveyard was at capacity. Gatewayed twin-chapels of Portland stone and flint were erected as an entrance to a new municipal Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery in South Farm Road. The first burial was in 1863, with William Lamport Blaker, the architect and builder, himself being interred in 1865. There begins the social and environmental history of Broadwater Cemetery! Concerned with the deteriorating state of the site, a volunteer group – Friends of Broadwater Cemetery – was founded in 2008. Members aim to respect and remember the humanity and social significance of those interred and to protect and preserve historical monuments and gravesides associated with them.

'Mature trees (mostly non-native), shrubs, grasses and wildflowers provide an important haven for wildlife'

Conservationists within the 'Friends' help clear and maintain overgrown graves whilst safeguarding the 14.5 acres of cemetery as an important Green Space, part of Worthing Green Space Partnership (Green Tides), a chain of wildlife corridors within the borough. Landscaped mature trees (mostly non-native), shrubs, grasses and wildflowers provide an important haven for wildlife – mammals, birds, butterflies and bees – at a time when local biodiversity is increasingly threatened by climate and environmental change. In Sussex, warmer wetter winters mean more flooding whilst hotter drier summers cause water shortages and serious droughts. The cemetery itself suffered a wildfire in the summer of 2022.

'Broadwater Cemetery is somewhere to be naturally uplifted and emotionally restored'

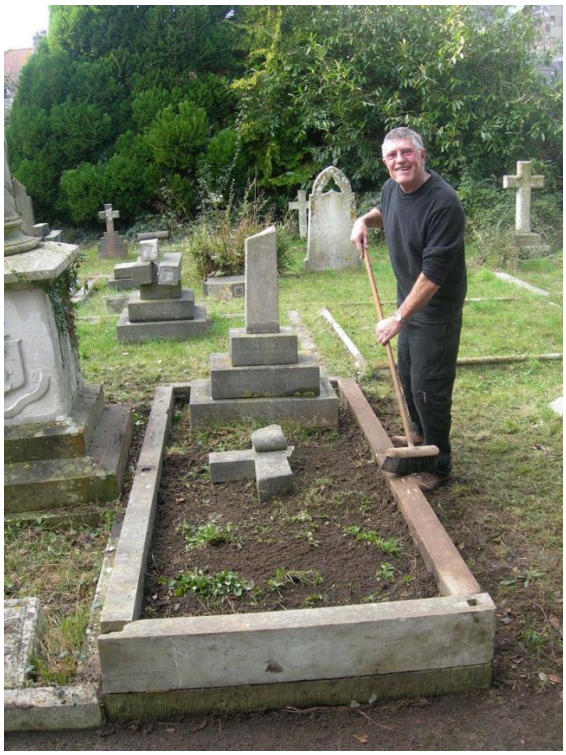
In a fast-moving world of consumer pressures and of increasingly stressful urban lifestyles, our wellbeing is enhanced by a slow, tranquil, and mindful walk in a Green Space like Broadwater Cemetery.



(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)

It is somewhere to be naturally uplifted, emotionally restored and to share the spirit of some ancestors, not least of all Richard Jefferies and William Henry Hudson. These two famous authors and naturalists are buried within its precincts and even have a nature conservation space dedicated to their memories.

Meet one of our volunteers... Paul Robards



Paul Robards
Friend, and Wildlife & Clearance Co-Ordinator

By Paul Robards

I thank the Committee and all the Friends of the Cemetery for giving me the opportunity to be the Wildlife & Clearance Co-ordinator for Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery. I took this post on in 2010 and am still very passionate about the cemetery today.

I can say that I have been interested in and studied wildlife for as long as I can remember. I believe the first person to influence me in the subject was my grandfather on my father's side, George Robards. He lived in Ringmer, in East Sussex, where he worked at a large country house as a gardener. When I was young, he showed me the natural habitat of birds and rabbits opposite their house named 'Paygate Cottage'. I would also go to a local farm and help round up the cows and walk them down a lane to the milking sheds. My parents lived at Hangleton, also in East Sussex. As a youngster I would walk with my friends to many sites of local interest, ranging from the seaside at Hove to the South Downs around Devil's Dyke, including ponds, chalk pits and a nearby golf course.

Since I became a Friend of the cemetery, it has been my intention to record the nature and wildlife observed in the cemetery on a week by week and seasonal basis – whether that be wildlife that lives in it, visits, or grows within this very important site. I include my own personal sightings, as well as sightings made by other Friends and members of the public. By doing this on a regular basis, it helps to keep the interest going and encourages the public to visit the cemetery, thereby hopefully also increasing the number of Friends.

I make records all year round, spring to winter, and upload photos to our very popular Facebook page. I also encourage others to report on any observations that they consider would be of interest.

As Clearance Co-ordinator, I am always looking for help with various projects in the cemetery. If you would like to assist with clearance, we have a regular get together on the last Saturday of the month at 10 am, meeting at the main chapel entrance in South Farm Road. (The photo on page 13 shows our volunteers at the last cemetery clearance of 2022.) ▶



Volunteers for the last clearance day of 2022, 26th November
(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)

◄ We do light clearance of the graves for a couple of hours. (Please bring your own gloves and hand tools – though we do have some to lend out if you do not have any.)

I would also welcome any help with planting wildflower seeds or preparing areas for planting, general maintenance, maintaining the bird boxes, and surveying the nature.



Paul Robards

Please see our Facebook page for ways to contact us if you would like to volunteer.

Join us!

Become a volunteer

We welcome anyone who would like to volunteer with us. There are plenty of ways in which you can help (see opposite), plus we also have some specialised volunteering roles that we're eager to fill:

Volunteer photographer

We're looking for a photographer to take photos of our tour days and then upload the photos onto our Facebook page.

Volunteer researchers

We're seeking researchers to come and join our team who are interested in exploring family and local history, and who have access to online sources.

Volunteer tour guides

We're after tour guides who would like to share our research with others on our tour days.

If you're interested in any of these roles – or would like to help us in some other way – please get in touch via our Facebook page. We'd love to hear from you!

Work that we've done over the last few months...

- Talks given to local groups
- Tour planning and research
- Nature trail preparations
- Monthly grave clearances
- Cutting back of buddleia
- Clearing bramble and ivy
- Tidying of graves in A15
- Cutting down of a fallen tree over the compost bay



Compost bay area
(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)

CAN YOU HELP?

We need various items to carry out our work at the cemetery. If you can donate any of the following, please get in touch via our Facebook page. Thank you!

- Garden secateurs
- Garden shears
- Tree loppers
- Wooden bird boxes

And what work still needs to be done...

- Clearing of compost bay area
- Compost bay central divider
- Replacing of some bat boxes
- Repair or replace signage
- Trim back low-hanging branches
- General clearance

Did you know the cemetery has a song written about it?

If you're interested in hearing the song and watching the video, go to YouTube and search for Greg Harper, The Old Bone Yard.

Paul's corner



By Paul Robards
Wildlife & Clearance Co-Ordinator

I have been observing wildlife and flowers within the cemetery on a weekly basis and recording what I see since 2008 (before I took the post of Wildlife and Clearance Co-ordinator).

As I write this, in November 2022, Fungi and ox-eye daisies can be seen, as well as the last butterfly, the Red Admiral (the latter recorded up to Christmas in some previous years). As this butterfly hibernates as an adult, it is currently stocking up on the last supplies of nectar where and when it can.

By next Spring (2023), flowers such as red dead nettle, snow drops, primroses, celandine, daffodils, groundsel, stonecrop and sandwort will be brightening the cemetery floor on a warm sunny day. By March/April, additional flowers will be out: sweet violets, clover, grape hyacinth, lords and ladies (cuckoo pint) and vetch (from the sweet pea family), glory of the snow (*Chionodoxa*), *Oxalis* (cultivated, with clover leaf), wild cress, garlic mustard and *Linaria*.

By April/May, butterflies such as Speckled Wood, Orange Spot, Small Tortoiseshell, and the more common Cabbage White should be visible, together with birds like the Goldfinch and Tree Sparrow – which will be evident amongst the hedgerow and background of bluebells.


The Orange Spot butterfly
(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)

In May, maybe a Slow-worm will be seen basking in the sunshine in some shallow grass.


Slow-worm
(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)

Friend Mary Pickett observed a Cinnabar Moth on a previous May day. The Cinnabar Moth is widely distributed in the south of the UK but more local to coastal areas. The caterpillar of this moth feeds on the foliage of ragwort and groundsel. Moths are on the wing from May until July but they are nocturnal unless disturbed, whereupon they would seek shelter. In addition, Michaelmas daisies will be out in numbers. ▶

◀ In June, my favourite flower is the pyramidal orchid.



(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)

To see this orchid growing in the cemetery is really exciting as it is normally found on chalk slopes; in the cemetery we have flinty clay soil. The numbers have increased over the years because we have been protecting them as soon as they are spotted (a nearby neighbour keeps an eye out for me when they are walking their dog in the cemetery). I protect the orchids by recording the location, cutting the grass immediately by them and pegging the position. However, as this brings them to the public's attention, I have had a couple picked! I am, therefore, monitoring this method. (I may just record where they are and bring them to the grass strimmer's attention if the timing clashes.)

Other photos of the cemetery taken in November 2022…



(Photo courtesy of Paul Robards)



(Photo courtesy of Mary McKeown)

Reporting on November's AGM

Current financial position

Our final accounts show a healthy bank balance. This will help support the production of a book currently being compiled by Friends Colin Reid and Mary McKeown about Worthing's 1893 typhoid victims (see page 19 for details).

Annual membership

A decision was made to increase the annual membership subscription to £5. This increase will help to cover annual costs, such as insurance and our website domain.

To reduce our bank charges, we will encourage membership fees to be paid via a bank transfer or a Standing Order.

New officers

Election of new officers included Lesley Hember as Secretary, and Anita Hobbs as Newsletter Editor and Publicity Officer.

Ideas welcome for future tours

Do you have an idea for a future tour? If you do, we'd love to hear about it. Please get in contact with us via our Facebook page. All ideas welcome!

Join us!

Become a Friend

As a Friend

You will receive a twice-yearly newsletter.

You can have a say in how we manage the cemetery by attending and voting at our AGM in November.

Membership

Membership costs just £5 per year (and runs from January to December).

Membership fees can be paid via a bank transfer or a Standing Order (HSBC, Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery, sort code 40-47-25, account number 32010801).

Please reference your surname with your payment if you are paying by bank transfer or Standing Order.

Alternatively, cheques to the value of £5 – made payable to 'Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery' – are also welcome.

Membership forms

Membership forms are available from our tables on tour days.

Please give us your feedback

We would love to hear your feedback and any ideas you have for improving the cemetery or this newsletter. Please get in touch with us via our Facebook page to offer your thoughts on what we do.

The Typhoid Epidemic – A Final Tribute

By Colin Reid and Mary McKeown

On Saturday 3rd September 2022, the Friends held a tour in the cemetery entitled 'The Typhoid Epidemic, A Final Tribute'. There had been two earlier tours, one in 2011 and another in 2013 to remember the victims of this terrible time in Worthing's history of 1893. There were 126 people who joined our tour guides Colin Reid and Mary McKeown on Saturday 3rd September 2022.

Prior to the commencement of the tour, members Colin Reid, Mary McKeown, Debra Hillman, Sally Roberts and Paul Robards gathered around the typhoid memorial and each in turn read out the names of the 194 victims of the epidemic including 30 typhoid victims who were not buried in the cemetery.

The graves of 13 victims were visited, and at each the individual story was told. There were 164 beautiful flower and ribbon canes to mark each of the typhoid victim's graves in the cemetery.



(Photo courtesy of Mary McKeown)

This was a very moving sight, especially in area A7 where most of the victims are buried.



Area A7's typhoid victims
(Photo courtesy of Mary McKeown)

Preparation for the tour had begun several weeks beforehand with Debra making the cane markers and Sally helping Mary to identify the many unmarked graves. On the day before the tour, Colin, Paul, and Jeff (Hillman) provided their strength to position each cane in the very hard soil, while Debra, Gill (Heasman), and Mary assisted with the correct positioning of the canes. ▶



From left to right: Jeff Hillman, Paul Robards, and Colin Reid positioning the typhoid markers
(Photo courtesy of Gill Heasman)

◄ Debra had arranged for a drone to fly over the cemetery to film a lasting record of the spread of the victims' graves, and a video recording was made of the tour itself. Thanks to the fantastic effort made by all, the tour was very successful and a wonderful tribute to those who died.

Future Friends' Publication

Fever!

The Year Worthing Died

By Colin Reid and Mary McKeown

This year is the 130th anniversary of the 1893 typhoid epidemic that resulted in the deaths of 194 individuals and severe illness for a further 1,222 inhabitants of Worthing. The purchase of some 394 death certificates by a small group of individuals has made it possible to put a name to all of those who died.

Encouraged by Debra Hillman, Colin Reid (assisted by Mary McKeown) has set about the task of editing a written record of this epidemic. With additional, significant contributions by Chris Hare, Malcolm Linfield, Caroline Nelson and Marion Woolgar, the final product should be the most comprehensive account of this civil disaster thus far.

Most of the material has been gathered for our book titled ***Fever! The Year Worthing Died***, and initial discussions have been entered into with a typesetter. The aim is to publish this book during the anniversary year but, with an increase in the cost of printing of over 40% in one year, the process has stalled temporarily while extra funding is sought.

If those difficulties are overcome, it is hoped this publication – that charts the worst civil disaster in Worthing's history – should emerge as planned.

Blackboard observations

Our blackboard is located through the main entrance gates, and on the inside of the archway on the left.

We welcome anyone spending time in the cemetery to note down their observations and comments. We share a few of them here.

(Observations recorded by Paul Robards.)



Please do keep making observations and comments about what you're seeing in the cemetery.

We really value your support, so please feel free to keep in touch with us via our Facebook page.

Thank you!