



Monthly News from the Cemetery Friends of Spital Cemetery (FoSC) July 2018

June review

AGM of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends, Jesmond Old Cemetery, Newcastle, Sat 9th June

This was the first AGM of the National Foundation of Cemetery Friends we have sent a representative to although we have been members for several years. It is very useful to be part of an organisation with other Cemetery Friends who share advice and celebrate each others achievements. I have to admit it was around the corner from my oldest school friend and a stone's throw from the fabulous Northumberland coast so I didn't need any encouragement to go. Jesmond Old Cemetery hosted the event and their guided tour was excellent with just the right amount of information about a few selected graves and as we wandered around we were entertained by a community choir, a couple of wandering minstrels and a brass band. It was much as any AGM and business went smoothly but the real pleasure was to see the results of the hard work by the Friends of Jesmond and to share knowledge and experience with the other representatives from all over the country. I learnt about the history of Norwood Cemetery in London and the hard work of their Friends in saving it from severe neglect and mismanagement. We may well be visited by one of their key members whose great grandfather is buried in Spital.

Right, the grave of Muriel Evelyn Robb winner of the Wimbledon ladies' singles title in 1902.



General monthly walks continue to be taken by Margaret and this month were honoured with very special participant, 93 year old Midge Thompson. Midge used to come and stay with her grandfather, Richard Holmes, who was the cemetery curator (aka superintendent) who resided in the Lodge in the 1930s. He was married to Susie Miles, one of the Miles family who were prominent in Spital and her brother Charlie Miles DCM is among our WW1 War Graves.

Flowers in the island beds

It was good to see the island beds were planted up with summer bedding by CBC. Visitors, many walking their dogs or coming to visit the graves of friends or family often comment how good it is to see the flowers and that the cemetery is looking good. It makes for happy cemetery bees too!



Exciting news from the Chapels

We have established contact with the new owner of the chapels and look forward to having a good relationship with our latest live residents in the cemetery. John Thompson's plans sound wonderful and the Friends wish him and his family well with this big undertaking.

Liz's Recommendation

Park Life at the Chesterfield Museum 19th May - 15th September

The museum is open Mondays and Thursday to Saturday 10am to 4pm

Although we are strictly not a park, I believe we do in many ways serve a similar function and celebrating our trees and green space may help secure a happy and healthy future for the cemetery. There will come a day not so far off when there is no income from burials and the council may be forced to look seriously at what it is spending there on upkeep and risk assessment. We need to consider how we can ensure it is seen as a valuable community asset.

Dates for your July diary

15th General monthly tour 1-2pm. Meet at the bottom gates

21st Cemetery Task Team meeting. 10am - 12.30pm. Meet at the chapels.

24th Medieval Market in the Market Square, Chesterfield. This is always well attended and we are sure our oldest cemetery resident (the leper priest from late 12th early 13th century) would be pleased that we have a stall to raise awareness of the cemetery, get new members and raise some much needed money to help us further our work. Please come along and say hello.

19th August. And finally advanced notice for your diary in August. Birthdays come every year, even for cemeteries and so we are planning walks and refreshments in August to celebrate when Spital Cemetery opened for business 161 years ago; please come and join us. Further details in our next newsletter.



Friends of Spital Cemetery seek to promote Spital Cemetery as a haven for wildlife, and a place of remembrance, heritage and learning for the community.

<http://friendsofspitalcemetery.co.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofSpitalCemetery>

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