



# Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries

[www.foncc.org.uk](http://www.foncc.org.uk)



*Volunteers helping to care for the cemeteries and record the lives of those resting there*

[facebook.com/groups/4318199401618337](https://www.facebook.com/groups/4318199401618337)

## Newsletter No. 22, November 2022

Welcome to newsletter number 22 of the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries. This is being circulated to all those who have expressed an interest in the Friends and others who we think may be interested. Feel free to circulate this to others who you feel may be interested in the Cemeteries.

Receiving this newsletter does not cost you anything nor commit you to anything, but we are always looking for volunteers— see further down this newsletter how you could help us and others interested in the local cemeteries. If you don't wish to receive future newsletters, feel free to unsubscribe (just email [newsletter@foncc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@foncc.org.uk)) - we won't take offence.

Past newsletters can be found on the website at:

[https://www.foncc.org.uk/the\\_group/newsletters.php](https://www.foncc.org.uk/the_group/newsletters.php)



*Sunset from Mount Joy (Philip Ledicott)*

### Where are we? (Tony Barton)

We've continued to clear graves in both Newport and Carisbrooke cemeteries as well as transcribing headstone inscriptions, and newspaper cutting etc. with the usual volunteers.

When we started producing these newsletters, the late Brian Greening was always ready with a story to contribute, as I mention below, Rob Cain is now stepping back so of the three original main contributors, I'm the only one left to provide all the content and compile it. Over the period we've produced these newsletters, we have broadened the topics covered to include historical topics related to Newport and Carisbrooke, not just items about the cemeteries; and although we've asked for contributions, we've received very little.

To keep the newsletters going will require people to contribute items to include, so please send in contributions for future newsletters; whether that's old pictures, stories about people or places in the area; all contributions will be welcome, just send an email or message through our Facebook Group.

Also welcome would be any ideas on how you can help and contribute to the group. Just email your comments/suggestions [chair.foncc@gmail.com](mailto:chair.foncc@gmail.com)

### **The volunteers:**

Sadly Lynn Scott died in October after a long illness. Lynn had volunteered for the group for sometime. A 'local girl', she found her grandparents grave in Newport Cemetery overwhelmed by shrubs which we cleared. She had a great sense of humour and will be sadly missed.

Rob Cain, one of the attendees at the original meeting and who has volunteered for clearing sessions and contributed to the group in other ways has decided to stand down. Our thanks go to Rob for his contributions and wish him well for his future.

### **New Island on-line resources.**

A couple of recent additional island resources for the Family Historian are now available on-line:

A Facebook group has been established for the Friends of Ventnor Cemetery - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/452391526149287>

and

A fantastic new website for the Friends of East Cowes which covers what they have achieved around the town plus a database for those buried at East Cowes/Kingston Cemetery - <https://www.friendsofeastcowes.co.uk/>

A more comprehensive list of on-line resources is on our website - <https://www.foncc.org.uk/links.php>

### **Grave clearance:**

At Newport cemetery, what appeared to initially to be just a small headstone covered in ivy, revealed more as we progressed. First we uncovered the small headstone of young (9 years) Leonard George Howard, then we revealed another grave marker on the grave for his 27 year old brother, Gilbert Frank.

Finally we noticed a memorial on the kerb to their brother Austin William who was killed in France in 1916 aged 25.

All were sons of Arthur Frank Howard, a Mill Hand, and his wife Sarah Maria (nee Guy) who are buried nearby in Section H non-consecrated



*Grave and memorial for the Howard brothers - before (left) and after clearing*

### **Memorial transcriptions:**

The volunteers transcribing memorial inscriptions at Newport Cemetery should be congratulated on having now completed Section D, Consecrated. This now means that all memorials in this section have been photographed and images added to the website together with the inscriptions.

The volunteers are now preparing to tackle another section – it is slow progress and other volunteers would be welcome – think of it as a good excuse to get out in the open air during fine spells of weather. Just email if you are interested [chair.foncc@gmail.com](mailto:chair.foncc@gmail.com) .

### **The Website:**

The small, dedicated, team of volunteers are continuing to transcribe newspaper reports of the lives, deaths and funerals of those buried in the cemeteries. These ‘research notes’, now numbering some 1600, are attached to individual records and also listed alphabetically - see website [BURIALS/Research Notes](#). Smaller reports have been added to the individual records themselves.

### **Buried here: (Tony Barton)**

#### **John Curtis Millgate (and his brother, William Henry).**

John Curtis Millgate (1867-1956) was the younger son of William (c1816-1873) and Christabella (c1824-1887) Millgate; William Henry was their older son (1859-1936).

William, the father, was an artilleryman who served in the Crimea War and later moved his family to the island from Canterbury, Kent when he joined the staff of the island militia. The family home was 89 Castle Road, a large house which was given the name of ‘Canterbury’; later the house was the home of John and remained in the family until at least 1977.

## **John Curtis Millgate:**

In 1896 John married Grace Outridge Yelf (1869-1903) and they had three children, John William (1896-1977), Christabella Harriet (1899-1974) and Grace Bessie(1903-1988). Sadly, shortly after giving birth to her daughter Grace, John's wife died in 1903 aged just 34.

## **John the architect:**

After attending Portland House Academy in Newport, John Curtis Millgate trained as an architect and became a partner with William Tucker Stratton (c1825-1899) to form the local architect's partnership Messrs. Stratton and Millgate. William Stratton died in 1899 but the business name continued with John Millgate as the main partner.

Stratton and Millgate were responsible for the design of many of the chief business premises in Newport in the first half of the twentieth century.

John was for many years the architect responsible for the various restoration schemes carried out to the stonework of Newport Parish Church and restorations carried out at St. Mary's Church, Carisbrooke. For some years early in the twentieth century he was diocesan surveyor.

A notable example of his work obvious to anyone walking through St Thomas's Square today is the Grade II war memorial erected in 1922, its design called for careful consideration in view of the varied nature of the surrounding buildings.

The Stratton and Millgate partnership were also responsible for the 1922 design of the Wyndham Cottle Almshouses in Warlands Lane, Ningwood, and for the layout of the 1935 extension to Carisbrooke Cemetery.



## **John in local government:**

John Millgate commenced his career in local government in 1906 when he was returned as representative for the south ward of the old borough.

Such were his qualities that his fellow councillors elected him Mayor of Newport in 1911; as he was a widower, he took as his Mayoress his twelve-year-old daughter Christabell<sup>1</sup>. He

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<sup>1</sup> Christabella Harriet Millgate is recognised as one of the Island's Hidden Heroes - <https://iwhiddenheroes.org.uk/christabella-harriet-millgate-1899-1974/> , and is one of the local characters depicted along Cockram's Yard, Newport.

would later, 1915 and 1925, again be elected as Mayor of Newport and Christabell served alongside him on those occasions as well.

In 1920, John Millgate was elected as an alderman, a further honour was given to him in 1949 when he became the first Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Newport, an honour given for over forty years continuous service on the council.

While serving on the Council, John Millgate played a large part in securing for the borough the Seaclose Recreation Ground, originally intended only as a playing field, but later provided with a swimming pool, tennis courts and pavilion when public subscriptions were raised during the depression following the first world war to employ out-of-work men on projects of benefit to the neighbourhood. Today the swimming pool has long gone and Council Offices have been built in their place.

### **John the preserver of heritage:**

In 1926 the Borough of Newport acquired the near derelict God Providence building, on the south side of St. Thomas's Square for £800. Finding the expense of repair too much, the Council considered demolishing the building. John objected to this proposal and co-operated privately with Percy G. Stone, F.S.A., a fellow local architect, and purchased the property from the Council for £850; it was then scheduled by the Ministry of Works as an ancient monument. John paid for the repairs and later sold the property. Today the God Providence house is Grade II\* listed.

Also in 1926 the Roman Villa in Cypress Road had been discovered and was being excavated under the guidance of Percy Stone; John Millgate suggested that the Borough accept the site and build a shelter to protect the villa. The Council declined the suggestion so John Millgate himself purchased the land and built the required shelter. The 1937/38 Ward Lock guide to the island records that during summer months the villa was open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and admission was 6d (about £2.05 2022). After John's death in 1956, the ownership of the site passed to his daughter Grace. In 1960 Grace Millgate offered the site to Newport Council; this offer was declined but after the involvement of the Ministry of Works, the IW County Council agreed to accept the gift and the deeds were handed over in April 1961. A plaque in the Roman Villa records John and Grace Millgate's involvement.



*The plaque inside Newport Roman Villa<sup>2</sup>*

The Roman Villa is now Grade I listed.

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<sup>2</sup> reproduced here, Courtesy IW Council

## **William Henry Millgate, the brother:**

William Henry Millgate was born in Lymington before his parents arrived in the Island, he married his cousin, Harriet Elizabeth Millgate (1865-1936) and they had seven children. One son, William John Curtis Millgate (1888-1918), died serving during WWI; another son, Stanley (1895-1941), survived in WWI and died in May 1941 as the result of injuries received during seven nights of bombing of Liverpool.

William Henry was a mariner who served an apprenticeship in the tea clipper, the James Shepherd, trading to China. He gained his mates certificate in the days of sail and sailed the China Seas and rounded Cape Horn. When William retired from the sea he settled with his family a few doors from his brother in Castle Road.

His obituary includes the story that the James Shepard had once been blown off course during a hurricane and ran aground on a coral reef called Lord North Island, inhabited by one-time cannibals. The natives swarmed aboard the clipper, seizing the men and rubbed their noses along their arms; this action was interpreted by the crew as a bad sign, that they were being sniffed before being eaten. It seemed imperative that the native Chief should be appeased, so William Millgate was sent ashore with a bottle of rum and a bucket of ship's biscuits. The natives followed him along the coral, and between the trees, stopping when he stopped and refusing to go in front, until he was in a thoroughly nervous state. This however, turned to anger, when he realised that they were merely stealing his biscuits which, by the time he reached the Chief, were considerably depleted. However, William's walk was obviously not in vain.

### ***Those mentioned:***

John Curtis, Grace Millgate and their children are all buried and remembered on a double plot in Newport Cemetery.

William and Christabella Millgate (the parents) are buried in the top part of the original Carisbrooke Cemetery with a grave marker.

Son William Henry and his wife Harriet Millgate, are buried near his parents without a memorial. Sidney, son of William and Harriet, is buried elsewhere in Carisbrooke Cemetery

William Tucker Stratton is buried in Carisbrooke Cemetery without a memorial.



## Old newspapers:

**Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle, 26 October 1861**

### **NEWPORT**

*In making the excavations necessary for a common sewer in Bedford-place, the workman have just come across a number of huge elm trees in tolerable preservation, bored and laid down as long ago as 1623 by a Mr. James, for the purpose of bringing the Carisbrooke water into Newport. Either, however, through a defect in the principle or a failure in the funds, the experiment never succeeded, and it remained to the present generation to carry into effect this highly necessary and beneficial improvement.*

And while we are on the topic of Newport water supply of yester-year, there are these two 'NCWW VALVE' plates (presumably, Newport Corporation Water Works) in the town, one on the corner of High Street and East Street, the other on the corner of High Street and Lower St. James Street – there may be others around the area.



## Future events:

Clearing sessions in the cemeteries will continue as possible with the regular volunteers and new volunteers would be welcome to join us – check out the website or our Facebook group for details.

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FoNCC, c/o 138 Worsley Road, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5JB United Kingdom

