

Hardwick Road Cemetery Newsletter

Scottish Fishing Fleet Disaster Memorial

November 2025, marked the 150th anniversary of the Scottish Fishing Fleet Disaster. On the 19th November 1875, a great gale blew up along the Eastern Coast when the Fifies of Scotland were returning home in their fishing smacks from Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Five boats from Cellardyke and St. Monans were caught up in the gale off the North Norfolk coast and did not make it home. The bodies of eight men were found and brought into King's Lynn, and were then interred in the Hardwick Road Cemetery, with funds being raised by the Temperance Movement and the town's folk of Lynn to make a special monument in the form of the Beautiful Star monument from St. Monans.

The monument remains the only one to mark the event and for the anniversary a special event was arranged with representatives of St. Monans and Cellardyke attending, as well as The Mayor of King's Lynn, Chair of Norfolk Country Council, The Chairman of True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum, a representative from the fishing community and our own representative from the FoHRC. Following a service led by Canon Mark Diamond at St. Nicholas' Chapel, Rev. Dr. Mary Henderson led a beautiful ceremony at the Beautiful Star monument in the cemetery, including the laying of wreaths on what thankfully was a bright, sunny day. It was a privilege for the FoHRC to be able to join representatives of the Fife communities to remember those lost in the gale as well as the many others lost at sea, and we look forward to maintaining links with them in future.

An exhibition featuring the story of the gale and its impact on the communities of King's Lynn and St. Monans was being shown at True's Yard. This year it will be transported up to be on display at the Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther as well as local venues in the St. Monan's community, which has its own fishing heritage centre.



Beautiful Star monument after wreath laying , December 3 , 2025



Tracee Findlater showing Hardwick Road Cemetery's wreath , December 3 , 2025



A moment from the FisherFolk Memorial Tour , October 26, 2025

FisherFolk Memorial Tour

To raise funds towards a new memorial garden in St. Monans, Pat Fysh, expert local town and North End guide, led an intriguing tour through the cemetery in October based on the some of the better known fisherfolk and seafarers of the town. Pat was able to research the history a substantial amount of information through the family history archives held at the Pat Midgley Research Centre at True's Yard and garnered some fascinating information about some of these legendary residents of the cemetery.

A new season of occasional tours is being planned for the coming summer – keep your eyes peeled for future announcements!

Award of Funds

We were very lucky to have been nominated by Chris Black, Crematorium and Cemeteries, Manager King's Lynn Borough Council, for an ICCM grant, and are pleased to announce that the Friends of Hardwick Road Cemetery were awarded £10,000. The funds are to be used for sustaining the work that the group does, and we hope to be able to develop educational assets based on the cemetery, including topics such as its history, the environment and events in the town. We are also developing ideas around creating an arboretum and living chapel to provide a calm, environmentally friendly focus as a place for supporting anyone who has suffered a bereavement or just needs quiet time in the fresh air. We are very grateful to Chris for his continued support of the FOHRC.



From left: Cllr Paul Bland, Alex Bird (Assistant Manager at Mintlyn Crematorium), Mayor Andy Bullen, Chris Black (Cemeteries and Crematorium Manager), Gaynor Western (chairlady of the Friends of Hardwick Cemetery group), Tracee Findlater, Judith Simmonds and Keziah Bailey
October 8, 2025

Art Workshop for Beginners

In August, we held an art workshop for beginners in collaboration with True's Yard, with an invitation for anyone to come along and join local artists for the morning for a bit of arty rest and relaxation! The session was well attended, and we were lucky with the weather, meaning that a few of the local fauna also joined in!

Hopefully we will be able to arrange another art workshop this year – if anyone is interested in supporting or attending, please let us know! Everyone is welcome.

Hardwick Road Cemetery

2026 EVENTS

WORKING WEEKENDS

(11-3pm)

14/15 March

11/12 April

Including litter pick 10:30-11:45 on Saturday

9/10 May

13/14 June

Hardwick Road Cemetery Open Weekend
- TBC

11/12 July

8/9 August

12/13 September

Including litter pick 10:30-11:45 on Saturday

HERITAGE OPEN DAY - TBC

10/11 October

Current Maintenance Plans

Our next season of working weekends have started recently– anyone who wants to come along and enjoy some fresh air while helping to tidy up the cemetery is very welcome to come along! Our sessions are on the full Second weekend of every month from March to October. Bring Tea and biscuits (of your choice). A natter is always on offer alongside a bit of light weeding or cleaning! We start at 11 am and finish at 3 pm, so if you can spare an hour or two, please do pop along.

Malcolm, long term FoHRC caretaker of the cemetery, has secured three new benches for the cemetery, and the council are hoping to have these installed for the summer.