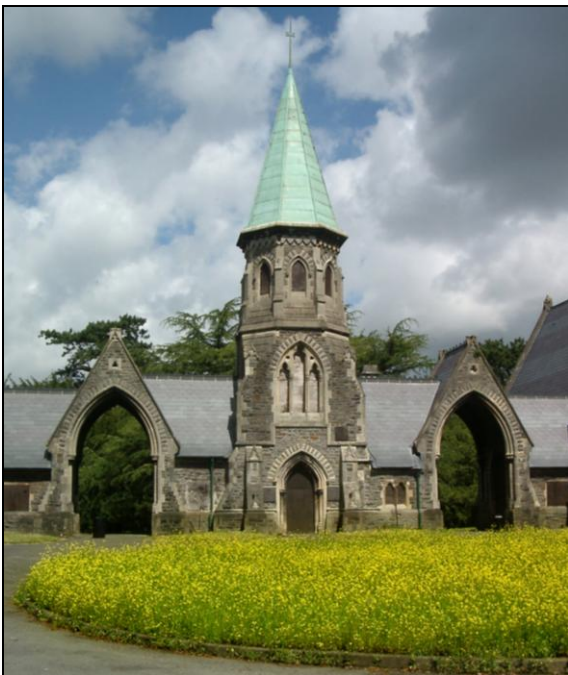




Here Comes Summer?

As this is written, the exceptionally wet weather of June is continuing into July. This has had a noticeable effect on the cemetery, by providing optimum conditions for the growth of vegetation, particularly in the Conservation Areas, where grass and other 'small' plants have shot up to chest height, hiding the smaller memorials.

Before the wild flower garden could be sown, it became clear that a significant amount of self-seeding had taken place, so it was decided to see what this would bring. New seeding was confined to a small patch of the roundabout that was still looking bare. The initial result was a very early display of gold (compensating for the shortage of sun), as **oilseed rape** flowered profusely.



This is now turning to seed, while a range of multi-coloured flowers is beginning to appear.

If you follow **Fishlock's Wales**, you will have seen him disappearing into the undergrowth to find the previously unmarked grave of **Harriett Hamer**. Although only a few steps from a maintained path, he would never have reached it

without some preparatory clearance work by Bereavement Services. The grave has now been marked by a simple wooden cross with a brass plate.



Harriet Hamer's grave

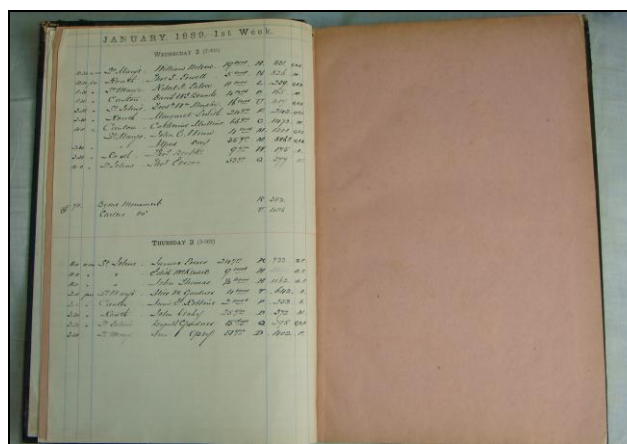
Unearthing Old Records

It has been over 20 years since I signed up at Cardiff High School for evening classes in Calligraphy. After many arduous lessons mastering the many hands of Medieval Gothic Blackletter I remember I invested in a special fountain pen to write in a text called Copperplate. Little did I know that the time invested in learning the various flourishes and strokes would come in very handy in a project I was to complete for the Friends of Cathays many years later.

Copperplate for the uninitiated is the script where broad strokes are used on the downward stroke and fine strokes on the joins between the letters. This script is particularly familiar

to many of us who had the luxury of handwriting lessons at school before the introduction of the Biro and was the mainstay of Victorian and early 20th century writing in formal documentation.

Our friend Nicholas Davey decided that, in order to save the late 19th century Burial Records of Cathays Cemetery, the deteriorating books should be transcribed to various computer files in such a way that Bereavement Services and students of Family History would be able to access them for future reference and analysis.



Initially Nick took photographs of every page of the 1889 yearbook. He did this so that we could enlarge the pages on our computers in order to look closer at any hand-written words giving us a problem. The text was then input into a computer spreadsheet. Separate columns were used for the details, such as Name, Parish, Age and Plot Numbers.

Nick had already spent many hours of intense study of the books to produce a draft, which I was then lucky enough to see and review for any omissions, corrections or comments. I was then to mark my findings on a printed copy and resubmit to Nick for his final adjustment. It would be all so simple and completed in a short period. How wrong can you be?

Our initial problem was that, in Copperplate handwriting, it is notoriously difficult to differentiate between certain letters. The "i" is very similar to "t" or "j". Did the tail on an "o" actually represent an "a"?

Secondly, abbreviation of Christian names are clear when they were still currently in use, such

as "Thos" for "Thomas", but what about "Ion" or "Jon"? Was this really an abbreviation of Jonathan? I await Nick's judgement on any amendments on these points.

Finally as I went through the many pages of text and figures, I couldn't help noticing certain aspects of the statistics and got a tantalising glimpse of Victorian Britain. Although I only had a small sample to deal with, and any generalisation may be of limited value, it was interesting to note that almost a half of the burials were children under 12 months old. Even if you survived childhood, the average age expectancy was only 40, with men outliving women by on average 5 years. Apart from this a small number of people still lived to over 100. A reminder of a perilous age in British history.

Recent Events

15th May "Memorials" Lecture: David Hughes, assisted by Tony Powell, talked to an audience of 25 people about the War Memorials Trust - what it is, how it functions and its national and local significance.

The Trust maintains the national inventory of war memorials at the Imperial War Museum, a database that now holds more than 62,000 records. While the establishment of the central facilities for the Trust were funded by voluntary, mainly corporate, donations, all of its local field work is done by volunteers and it operates as a charity, relying on financial gifts for ongoing running expenses.

People are aware of memorials of national significance, like the Cenotaph in Whitehall and the Welsh National Memorial in Alexandra Gardens, and those for individual towns and villages. Many of the latter are in need of repair or renovation, but with no clear body having the responsibility or money to do this. At greater risk are the multitude of memorials in churches, schools, public buildings and workplaces. These include memorials and plaques, in stone, wood and bronze, illuminated scrolls and stained glass windows. Many of these have disappeared during redevelopment

and the theft of bronze plates has been a particular problem recently.

The oldest memorial in the database relates to the defeat of the Danes by Alfred the Great, while the more unusual memorials include a hand-carved one in Changi Jail and a plaque recording "The Man Who Never Was" in Aberbargoed.

14th June Chapel Renovation Presentation:

Tony Whyman explained the project, which his 2010-11 year students had undertaken on the restoration of the chapels at Cathays Cemetery, to a small group of Friends. He outlined the steps which the students would have gone through, the controlling bodies involved and relevant legislation.

Of importance to the students (and of great interest to those present) was research into what had been done elsewhere, in comparable circumstances.

It was interesting to hear that the small size of the chapels would probably be a significant restraint on what might be achieved. For example increasing floor space with the introduction of a mezzanine could lose at least as much floor area in the stairwell. This problem also explained why extensions had been considered in a number of proposals. Less obvious was the fact that a completely different modern style of extension might be considered more favourably by approving bodies than an attempt to replicate the original architectural style ... and radically altering the inherent characteristics of the buildings.

The alternative uses considered included multi-purpose hall for community use, visitor centre with exhibitions and education facilities, art gallery, tea shop, art/craft studios for rent, cemetery/burial record archive and reading room.

The audience left with plenty of food for thought and, if they didn't have it already, an appreciation that finding a sustainable future use for the chapels would not be an easy task. If you have any bright ideas, please don't keep them to yourself.

Midsummer Heritage Walk on 19 June - A New Route led by The Friends of Cathays Cemetery

Thanks to continuing research by a number of Friends, we were able to arrange an additional heritage walk around the Cemetery. A quite amazing amount of information had to be pared down to create a 90 minute stroll led and entertainingly presented by Gordon Hindess.

A dry warm night in June attracted 40-plus people who were to be intrigued by the stories to be revealed behind the memorials.

Monuments had been found belonging to both, famous Cardiffians, such as **Claude Hailey**, donor of the Hailey Park in Llandaff North, and to the more obscure, like Wladislaw **Spiridion** Kliszczewski, who as a Polish immigrant and trained jeweller, designed the Lady Mayoress of Cardiff's Chain and went on to become a close friend of Joseph Conrad, the celebrated Polish novelist.

Included in the tour was another significant figure, who has since become well-known with his statue constantly being adorned with traffic cones in the Hayes. **John Batchelor** was a leading politician of the mid-1880s, indeed taking on the role of Mayor in 1884.

Exotic figures like **Joseph Henry Fish**, a missionary on Robben Island with a leper colony for 41 years who worked there alongside his wife, originated from Grangetown.

The First World War was represented by the heroic tale of the Zeebrugge Raid of April 1918 where a young stoker by the name **John Cleal** died of wounds received. His monument, supporting a spectacular rendition of a battleship, had been erected by private subscription at the time.

We were reminded of the access to Northern Part of Cemetery via a bridge across what now is Wedal Road, and sadly no longer existing, which greeted the visitor with an imposing view of the **First World War Memorial** and its rows of bright clean headstones strikingly contrasted by the deep red rose bushes

interspersed amongst them.



The war theme continued through **John Abercrombie Knox**, son of Major J S Knox VC, awarded one of the Army's first Victoria Crosses at the Battle of Alma in Crimean War in September 1854. He later went on to become Governor of Cardiff Gaol from 1872 until 1886.

A rather grand monument topped with a covered urn, commemorates a local figure 'Joe the Crwys': **Joseph Butler Jones**. He took up horse-racing and won many races at the racecourse at the Heath and at Ely, where he won the Cardiff Steeplechase, later to become the Welsh Grand National, on his horse 'Cabin Boy'.

Someone even more local to the cemetery than Joseph Butler Jones was **William Henry Timms**. He was the first cemetery manager and lived in the Lodge. It seems, from the records, that his £1 a week wage which included the Lodge & coals also covered the labour of his wife in the Cemetery as well.

The tour included many other individuals, too numerous to mention here, and covered such events as the building of a **Railway Halt** at the Cemetery by the Rhymney Railway. It was also noted that the Cemetery now caters for the needs of our extensive wildlife by provision of designated Conservation areas.

Workdays: (last Saturday of the month, but note that there is a summer break, so the next one is in **September**). Further progress has been made in Section L, but the wet weather has encouraged regenerative growth, so a lot of effort has been devoted to going over old

ground for the second, or third, time.

As a diversion, an excursion was made into Section K, where a glimpse of a long lost obelisk prompted some clearance to satisfy curiosity. The images illustrate the improvement, although an oblique approach was necessary, so as not to destroy a huge wild rose, which would have been missed both for its display of colour and for the shelter and food it provides for birds.



Obelisk hidden



and revealed

“Balloon Girl” relatives visit her grave

In June John Farnhill received an email from a Stephanie Williams of Bristol. She wrote:-

*“My sister and I, prompted by stories that our late grandfather told to our older sister when she was a little girl, have discovered that Louisa Maud Evans was our **great-aunt**. Louisa’s mother, Mary Ann Evans, was our great-grandmother. We have a photograph of Mary Ann with her second husband, our great-grandfather Stephen Baker, born in Newport in 1865. His mother was Mary Crinks, who apparently adopted Louisa. Mary was married twice – to our great-great-grandfather, Albert Baker (born in 1844) and then in 1880 to William Crinks.*

“We then set about finding other members of our extended family through the letters column of the Bristol Evening Post, and were able to meet up with descendants of Mary Crinks’ sister, Caroline. It seems we have connections with circus performers and travelling show people in the 1800s and 1900s.

"Our late grandfather Albert Stephen Baker (born in Bristol in 1884) told our older sister that he was very, very upset when his 'young sister' was killed in a ballooning accident, but it is only recently that we have been able to trace her and to be able to connect her with our family."

On **July 4th** a few representatives of the Friends and Bereavement Services arranged to meet Stephanie, her son David, her sister Lynda Channing and another relative, Frances Tripp, by the chapels. The party also included a reporter and photographer from the South Wales Echo. The family were taken to Louisa's grave, where they laid some flowers, and were pleased to learn that Cardiff people had been so moved by Louisa's tragic story that they had raised the money to purchase the headstone. Despite the rain the family were happy to chat and to have their photo taken by the grave. The reporter was able to interview Stephanie afterwards in the Lodge and has written a nice feature, including a photograph by the grave and a short video interview with Stephanie. It can be viewed on the Wales Online website - <http://yourcardiff.walesonline.co.uk/2012/07/04/family-visit-grave-of-tragic-victorian-ballooningist/>

The visit ended with us taking the family for coffee to Café Aroma where we were able to view their photographs, including some of Louisa's mother with their great-grandfather and also some of their grandfather.

Heulwen Pritchard

Henry James Paine and the Hamadryad Hospital Ship

In the May Newsletter [Issue #10] we talked about Dr Paine's family. We now look at his involvement with the **Hamadryad Hospital**.

HMS Hamadryad was the third ship of that name: the first was a 36-gun Spanish frigate, the *Ninfa*, which was acquired as a prize after grounding near Cape Trafalgar, purchased by the Admiralty for use as an armed transport but eventually sank close to Algiers. The second was another captured Spanish frigate, the *Matilda*, which remained in active service until 1813, when she was sold for £2610.

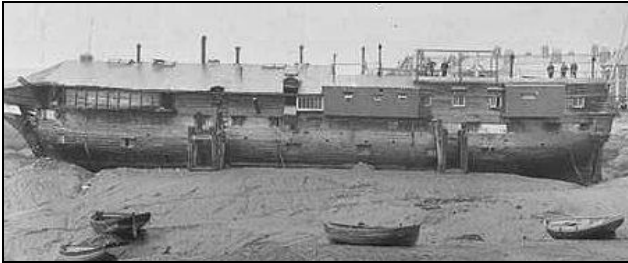
The third *Hamadryad* was a 46-gun man-of-war, built at Pembroke Dock between 1819 and 1823 for £24 683, but **never saw active service**. It was laid up at Devonport until 1866, when orders were given for it to be broken up. Two other redundant warships had been brought to Cardiff in 1860, one to become the 'Ragged School' for homeless children, the other being used as a church for the Missions to Seamen. It has been suggested that this gave the idea of a **Hospital Ship** to Henry James Paine, who was the local Medical Officer of Health.

In February 1866, the Mayor of Cardiff convened a meeting to discuss an extension to the Glamorgan & Monmouth Infirmary and Dispensary to accommodate new wards for patients with infectious diseases and ill seamen. It came as a surprise to the meeting to hear that Dr Paine had already negotiated the loan of *HMS Hamadryad* from the Admiralty. Dr Paine believed the most suitable accommodation for seamen who were unwell was a ship.

The scheme was not universally supported. The Cardiff Times feared that the plan would fail ... but urged that the "very doubtful experiment" be implemented quickly, so that it would be fairly tested to enable a decision on the extension to the Infirmary, which had been postponed, to be made as soon as possible. The paper was less than complimentary about Dr Paine's judgement and commitment to the medical needs. The Cardiff & Merthyr Guardian was more supportive, being particularly concerned that the diseases of the world were not dragged through the streets of the town and allowed to fester in the middle of it. It also thought that there would *"be more chances of an old or young salt's cure, floating in this hollow oak, with old mess mates about him, and the Union Jack wavering o'er him, than there would be in the most perfectly fitted ward in any infirmary."*

In the event, Dr Paine's proposal was accepted and, only a month after the order to break up the ship, arrangements were in place for its conversion into a seamen's hospital ship for use in the Port of Cardiff. It was fitted out at a

cost of £1414 to receive between 60 and 65 inpatients, with facilities for a doctor, his medical staff, a matron and her nursing staff. On arrival in Cardiff, the ship was grounded on wasteland known as Rat Island, the area that subsequently grew into **Tiger Bay**.



The hospital ship moored in Cardiff - courtesy of Cardiff Central Library Local Studies Section

Over 30 years, **173 000 patients** from all over the world were treated on the ship. This included 1285 with fractures or dislocations, 1384 with wounds, and 2098 with chest infections. Of the 1182 fever cases, many came from the town itself. It was one of only two hospitals devoted to the free treatment of seamen of all nations, the other being the Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital, in Greenwich.

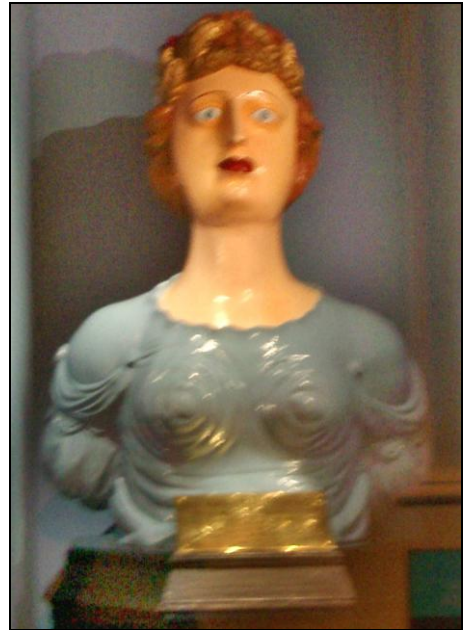


One of the hospital ship wards- courtesy of Cardiff Central Library Local Studies Section

At a meeting to discuss the best means of celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria it was suggested that a permanent seamen's hospital should be built. This was opened on 29 June 1905 and as the **Royal Hamadryad Seamen's Hospital** continued to provide free medical treatment for seamen until 1948, when it was incorporated into the National Health Service.

On becoming redundant, the hospital ship was taken to Bideford and broken up, although the ship's bell and figurehead were preserved and kept initially in the new hospital. Today, the

figurehead is one of the largest exhibits in the Cardiff Story Museum.



The ship's figurehead in the Cardiff Museum

There is still more to the story of Henry Paine, so we will return to him in a future newsletter.

Notice Board

Talks

Tuesday 11th September: Rosie James on 'The Pettigrews, the family who landscaped Cardiff' (they are buried in Cathays Cemetery) at 7pm in the Humanities Building, Colum Drive (behind Colum Road).

Guided Walks

Cemetery Walk: Sunday September 23rd @ 2 pm led by the Friends group. This is your chance to discover the history of the "New" extension to Cathays Cemetery. This walk is an excellent opportunity to learn more about famous residents and events from Cardiff's past. It will include the World War 1 memorial and war graves section [pictured on page 4].

The walk starts at the main gates in Allensbank Road and parking is available on the main driveway inside.

On the same day, as part of the **Open Doors Programme for 2012** in Wales, the **Chapels** by the Fair oak Road gates will be open from **11 am to 2 pm**. This is a rare opportunity to see the

roof restoration work undertaken 3 years ago ... and to gain an understanding of what remains to be done.

The following story was inspired after passing a sorry looking man taking his liquid lunch on a seat in the cemetery. Soon after, the editorial committee of this newsletter discussed a rather gory short story, but decided that it didn't quite fit the newsletter. The following day, this story was formulated on a long solitary walk in the countryside: quite how it was found in my subconscious mind remains a mystery.

The accompanying image is of the seat which is the subject of the story, but was taken at a later date when it had a different occupant, which might also inspire a story - but maybe that has already been written, by Weston and Lee, in 1940 ... Brahn Boots, I ask yer!

Salad Days

Dai sat on the seat by the site of the former catholic chapel, weighing up the trickle of passers by. He could pick out those most likely to respond positively to his "Couple of quid for a coffee?" Even after this selective process, most ignored him and only a few gave him money, despite understanding the inherent lie in his request. But he knew here wouldn't be as productive as his usual haunts around the city centre, where more people meant quicker success. This wasn't the only downside: it took him about an hour each way to walk it, with his stooped shuffle and carrying his worldly possessions in a recycled - well recovered from a rubbish bin amounts to the same thing - rucksack and a couple of plastic carrier bags. However, on a fine warm day, sitting on his seat in Cathays Cemetery was one of the few things that he could still count as a pleasure.

There had been slim pickings today. The small change he had received did not yet total his requested 'two quid'. But there had been an unusual donation - a cheese salad in a supermarket's plastic box. From the donor's viewpoint, this would surely be more beneficial than money that would be used to satisfy a

thirst for alcohol. While Dai was not exactly of the same mind, a more practical recess of his brain would not allow him to waste it, even if he wasn't particularly fond of cheese salad.

Dai burrowed in his rucksack for a fork, a rather grubby one at that, and opened up the salad. When he glanced up, he was surprised to find a girl standing a few feet away and he couldn't understand how he hadn't seen her approaching. She could only have been about 10 and her parents would surely have told her not to talk to strange men - especially if they looked scruffy and unwashed! So Dai was even more surprised when she asked, "Can I sit on your seat?" He nodded assent and started to pick at the salad.

"Cheese salad is my favourite," the girl said. Then, a minute or so later, added, "But I haven't had one for a long time."

After one look into her pleading eyes, Dai placed the salad box on the seat between them and said, "Help yourself." And the little girl did: Dai only had a couple more mouthfuls himself.

Dai sat back and looked up into the sky, wondering what to say. "Somebody must be missing her," he thought, "And what would they think if they found her here with me?" He should tell her to go home: yes, that was it. But he was too late, the girl had already gone or, rather, disappeared just as suddenly as she had arrived.

But his attention was caught by an old lady, who was approaching slowly along the drive. The flowers and practical bag she was carrying said that she was here with a purpose and not someone to ask for a donation. As she neared the seat, she paused then picked her way to a grave a few yards off the drive and busied herself, changing the flowers, wiping down the headstone and generally tidying up the plot. Dai didn't mean to stare, but he could see tears in her eyes, as she returned to the drive, close by the seat. And she must have read the unasked question on his face. "My daughter, Nell." she said. "She's been gone near 40 years. It's not

right to lose a child before her life has really begun. She was only eleven. One thing I'll never forget is that she loved cheese salad."

"I'm sorry to hear that," said Dai, "But, by some strange coincidence, I had a cheese salad for lunch, which I shared with a little girl. In fact, you must have passed her as you came in, as she only left just before you arrived."

Not another word passed between them, but they exchanged a look that spoke of a common understanding ... and each knew that his life had changed.

Dai was never seen in the Cemetery again, but the old lady visited more often for a couple of years, invariably sitting on Dai's seat, sharing a cheese salad with a girl, who everyone assumed was her grand-daughter.

None of his colleagues in the office knew why David always took the first Friday of the month off. Come to think of it, they knew how good he was at his job, how diligent and reliable - but they knew nothing of the private life of this lean, erect and immaculately tailored man, apart from the suspicion of a hard past that was etched in the lines of his face. In fact, on those first Fridays, regardless of the weather, David visited Cathays Cemetery, looking just as if he were going to the office, in a dark suit and carrying his large briefcase. The only difference was that he carried a bunch of fresh flowers.

At the grave, his briefcase would reveal a sheet of polythene that he spread on the ground by the grave, a garden kneeler, a pair of small shears, a trowel, a bottle of water, a brush and a cloth. He would remove the old flowers and any litter, brush off the headstone and wipe it over with a dampened cloth. Then, he would do any necessary gardening before, finally, putting water and the new flowers in the vase, to leave the grave looking immaculate. A tearful glance at the inscription, reminded him of two people whom he had met but once - Nell, who had died in 1949, aged 11 and her mother, Grace, who had died in 1993, aged 74. Those meetings had

changed his life. But for them, he would surely not have been here now.

He made his way back to the drive, wiped the dew and dirt from his shoes then, as he had for almost 20 years now, David sat quietly on the nearby seat and ate his lunch, a cheese salad. It had been a BOGOF offer at the supermarket today, so he still had an identical lunch box in his briefcase. He smiled to himself: he had grown to like this lunch, but not enough to want to eat two. But it wouldn't be wasted. He knew where he would find someone, whose body might crave liquid sustenance but would, nevertheless, appreciate the food.



Gordon Hindess



Membership Renewal

If you haven't renewed by now your membership has now lapsed according to our Constitution, as your subscription is 6 months overdue. If you want to continue as a member [and we hope you do] please complete a renewal form and send it in as soon as possible.



Don't forget to let us have your bits of news or other items for future issues!
Contact the editorial team on 2062 7848
or email <doricwales@o2.co.uk>