

Always Something New to Enjoy



White roses

Sometimes the immediate aftermath of clearing an area looks a bit stark, but nature responds quite quickly, possibly with plants that have been choked previously and have been given the opportunity to bounce back. This has been well demonstrated in section K where, following clearance by Bereavement Services, a wall of white rambling rose has appeared and that pioneer of newly cleared places, rosebay willowherb, produced a sea of pink. Of course, both of these have the potential to spread rapidly and become next year's problem!



Rosebay willowherb

Another flower that seems increasingly at home

in the Cemetery, though generally in small discrete clumps, is red valerian.



Red valerian

Easier to miss are two small members of the rose family, potentilla reptans and potentilla erecta. The former, better known as creeping cinquefoil, has a small yellow five petalled flower ... and is not welcomed by gardeners if it appears in their lawns. The second plant, common name tormentil, is smaller and favours acid heath or moorland habitat. It is much harder to find in the Cemetery, but looks very similar to the cinquefoil, except that its flowers have only four yellow petals (unusual in members of the rose family).

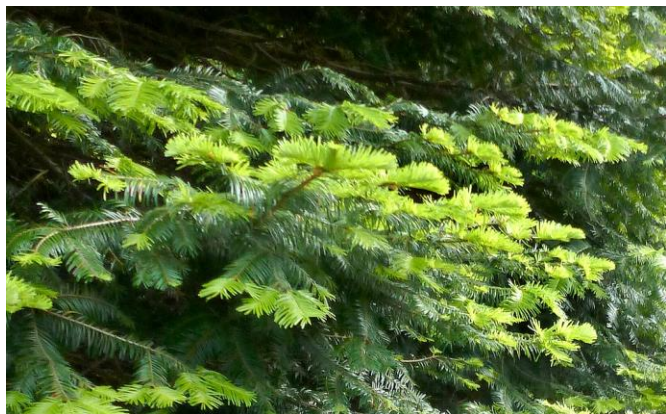


Creeping cinquefoil

We sometimes take our wealth of fir trees for granted, but they can exhibit seasonal changes

Friends TOPICAL

that, for a short period, brighten their normal monotone appearance. If you catch these transitory effects in the right light conditions, then so much the better, as the picture below hopefully shows.



Fir with contrasting greens

We previously advised that the wild flower garden was being moved to two beds alongside the Fair Oak Road boundary. The seeding was undertaken by local schoolchildren and we are happy to report a successful outcome, as witnessed by the riot of colour in the following image.



Wild flower garden

The Yucca which first bloomed last year has surpassed itself this year, as the picture opposite shows.



Yucca in bloom

Summer Miscellany

It is a sad fact that the unchecked growth of trees in the past has resulted in damage to memorials. We are pleased that Bereavement Services, with the encouragement of the Friends, have restored two of these recently. One is the memorial to members of the North family (who we may feature in a future edition), in Section L. The offending tree has been cut back and the conical top section of the obelisk has been expertly reset - only a thin line of fresh mortar gives a hint to the work that has been done. In the middle of section I, a substantial tree had displaced a statue so much that it was barely in contact with its pedestal and only remained upright due to the unreliable support of the same tree that had caused the damage. For safety reasons, it had been surrounded by an unsightly barrier. The memorial marks the grave of James Nicholas and his family, who owned a Cardiff hotel at the beginning of the 19C. The statue, one of the better examples in the Cemetery, has been released from the tree and restored it to its pedestal. Both of these memorials were heavy enough to require lifting equipment to do anything with.



Nicholas & North memorials

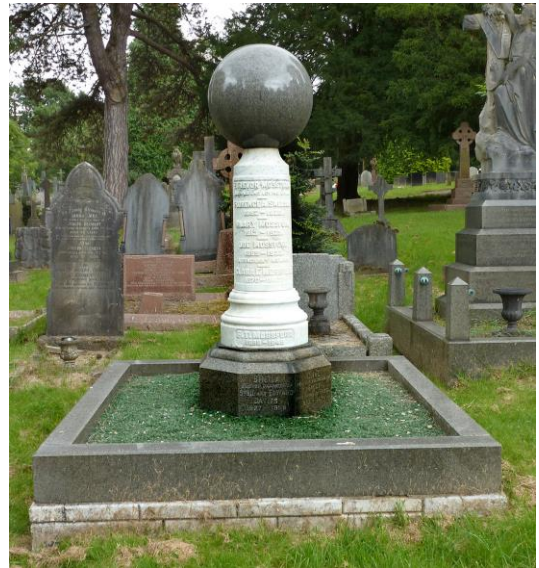
Of course, the Nicholas memorial is not the only finely sculptured one in the Cemetery, although some seem doomed to spend most of their lives in gloomy shade. The fine Celtic pattern, on a memorial in section L, in the picture below only has the sun across it at the end of a long summer day.



Celtic patterned memorial

While on the subject of restored memorials, we were pleased to see the restoration of the Mossford memorial close to the main drive in Section J. As befits a memorial mason, this is a fine example of the craft, not overly ostentatious, but demonstrating the mason's

skills perfectly. The memorial has been given a complete make-over, with the crowning sphere (which had been pushed off some time ago) restored.



Mossford memorial

Inevitably, progress on the chapels depends on the necessary funding being in place. We should consider ourselves lucky that money has been found to enable the progress that has been achieved so far, but the austerity state of local government finances has now caught up with us. While the will to continue with the restoration work remains, progress will now be dependent upon the success of new fundraising initiatives. The following are examples of ideas that are being considered

- Approaching local businesses for donations in return for recognition packages.
- Utilising the Council's crowd funding website - if you didn't know there was one, look here
<https://spacehive.com/initiatives/makethediff>
- Donation boxes in the chapels and asking for donations from groups who request guided walks or talks, which are not usually charged for.
- Fund-raising events to be held in the chapels.

Friends

TOPICAL

Bereavement Services hope to launch the fundraising campaign with an event in the chapels, on Saturday 19th September, to which businesses, as well as the public, will be invited. This will give everyone the chance to see why the money is needed and how it will be spent.

Despite these problems, the prioritised programme sees the Nonconformist chapel brought back into use for funerals as soon as possible. The walls need quite a lot of work, removing plaster and raking out mortar, before re-pointing and re-plastering. This chapel will receive an oak flooring, the windows will be treated and, of course, it will have to be furnished to suit its intended use.

The Episcopalian chapel already has its oak flooring and is being used, when the opportunity arises, but it is intended to develop this for multiple purposes including, hopefully, a manned information centre. If you haven't visited the chapels recently, as well as the Council's fundraising campaign launch on 19th September, there is also the Open Doors event on the following day (see details in Future Events on page 10)

If the above challenging work can be completed, the plan then is to tackle the central link building and its spire and the Friends are keen that restoration work then turns to the bier house which, because of its rarity in the relevant historical context, may be more deserving of protected status.

We were pleased to see a TV company undertaking a recce of the Cemetery, so are hopeful that it will again be used as a filming location. We have also had a mention on the radio - Professor Richard Hand was interviewed by Eleri Sion on BBC Radio Wales, talking about the Arts and Humanities Research Council grant related to their collaboration with Bereavement Services in putting on the Dramatised Heritage Walks (see report on page 8).

We would also congratulate Roger Swan on the

excellent presentation which he made about the Cemetery on our local television channel, Made in Cardiff. He appeared on the magazine programme, What's Occurin', on 4th September, guiding the programme presenter around the Cemetery. No doubt a lot of our readers will not have found this channel yet, but if you are quick, you may still catch the programme on the station's Iplayer.

The recent series of Ripper Street featured a train crash involving a Necropolis train. This gives a rather tenuous link to Cathays! Provision was made on the Rhymney Railway for trains to stop at our Cemetery, although there is no evidence that it was used. However, the use of the railway for transport for coffins and mourners, was successfully adopted by the London Necropolis and National Mausoleum Company when they opened their cemetery at Brookwood, near Woking. For most of the 23 miles between London and the cemetery, trains used the tracks of the London and South Western Railway, but the Company maintained their own station in London and two within the cemetery. Funeral trains operated until 1941, when the London station was badly damaged by bombs. Brookwood is the largest UK cemetery, but has been neglected in recent years due largely to an ownership dispute. This has recently been resolved, with the local council becoming a major shareholder, and it is hoped that the Friends of Brookwood Cemetery will now be able to engage constructively in improving conditions there.

Sadly, there continue to be acts of vandalism in Cathays Cemetery and there are occasional cases of homeless people bedding down overnight inside. It was only recently that we reported on an incident of serious fly-tipping, so we were dismayed to find a near identical repetition at the end of August. When we are increasingly concerned about funding restoration work, it is disappointing that Bereavement Services resources have to be

diverted to clear up after this sort of mindless act. But it is not all bad news - there is also evidence of activity such as removing litter and clearing unwanted vegetation by unidentified well-wishers.

Venue for Scout Badge Work

In the evening of Monday 8th June, we welcomed 15 members of the 49th Cardiff Scouts, who undertook exercises at the Cemetery aimed directly towards their Scout badges. Using the Chapels as a base, their programme included map reading, finding monuments on the mayors trail and learning about these prominent people from Cardiff's history, the development of the Cemetery and examples of British history associated with it. We hope that we have encouraged these youngsters to visit our Cemetery more frequently and that this will be a stimulus for similar visits from other youth groups.



Bridgwater Comes to Cardiff

On Saturday 20th June we were pleased to entertain approximately 10 members of the Friends of Wembdon Road Cemetery, Bridgwater. A group with very similar interests and aims to ourselves, they have recently successfully restored and re-dedicated the monument of John Board, a local pioneer in the production of reinforced concrete. There are many 19C links between Cardiff and Bridgwater, which was a major supply route for coal to the



West Country. The group enjoyed the planned morning visit to the Old Cemetery so much that they stayed for an additional afternoon walk exploring the New Cemetery. They had not expected Cathays to be so much bigger than their own cemetery and were amazed at the variety of our standing monuments. The occasion proved a wonderful opportunity to exchange experiences with like minded people.

Frederick Barter VC

Frederick Barter was born on 17th January 1891 at 60 Daniel Street, Cathays. He was educated at the Crwys Road Board School and worked briefly at the Cardiff Wagon Works, as a collier, as a porter for the Great Western Railway and then as a stove repairer, with the Cardiff Gas Light and Coke Company.

Fred was only 5ft 6ins tall and was initially rejected by the army because of his slight build. However, he succeeded in enlisting in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, in December 1908. After his service he was transferred automatically to the regiment's Special Reserve, to be re-mobilised at the outbreak of World War 1, with the rank of Company Sergeant Major, and was soon serving in France.

At the Battle of Festubert on 16th May 1915, he was sent forward to make a bombing attack on an enemy trench. To avoid any confusion, it is noted that attacking by throwing hand grenades

Friends FEATURES

was commonly known, at this early stage of their use, as bombing. On reaching the first line of German trenches, CSM Barter called for volunteers to enable him to extend the line. With the eight men who responded, he attacked the German position with grenades and came across three German officers, who they captured. Barter ordered them to tell their men to surrender. To their surprise, over 100 men came out of the trench, their hands held up in surrender. In addition to this astonishing feat, they took 500 yards of enemy trenches. Barter himself then discovered and cut 11 mine leads, which would have been used to blow up the trench if it had been occupied by British troops. It was for his conspicuous bravery during this action that he was recommended for the Victoria Cross. By the end of that day, Barter's battalion had suffered hundreds of casualties: of 831 men, only 253 were left.

There was a strange codicil to this incident. One of the volunteers, a Private Thomas Hardy was badly wounded in the right shoulder, just before they reached the German trench. Barter ordered him back but Hardy said: "It's all right - I'm left handed!" and continued forward, hurling grenades at the enemy. He died from a shot in the head 20 yards further on.

Prior to this, Barter had become suspicious of Hardy's military prowess and quizzed him on his background. Hardy revealed that he was actually Captain Hugh Sale Smart, who had absented himself from his regiment in India, after he had made three applications (all of which were turned down) to rejoin his old regiment in Britain. It appears that Barter had agreed to keep his secret on the understanding that he would inform the authorities in the event of Smart's death.

The full story soon emerged. Hugh, the son of a colonel in the Royal Engineers had been born in India and was well educated, but his absence had resulted in "his removal from service" being announced in the London Gazette. It appears

that, desperate to see action, Hugh had travelled back to England and enlisted as a private in the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, under the alias Thomas Hardy. In May 1915 the 2nd Queen's were in the same brigade as the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers, to whom 'Private Hardy' was attached for training in bomb throwing.

Following his death he was recommended for a posthumous Victoria Cross, notwithstanding the fact that he made a false answer on attestation. However, the Field Marshall Commander in Chief did not concur and said that, had Private Hardy lived, he would have been granted the Distinguished Conduct Medal. One has to wonder if this decision was coloured by the preceding events. The one positive outcome was a further notice in the London Gazette, cancelling the removal from the service of Captain Smart. Smart's body was never recovered and he is commemorated on Le Touret memorial. He also has two entries on the CWGC database, one in his correct name and one under his alias!

But we must get back to the real subject of our story.



CSM Frederick Barter

Barter was granted a brief period of rest and recuperation (not forgetting that his appearance back at home would be a boost for army recruitment). When the hero returned to Cardiff on 5th July 1915, he was met at the station by a crowd of several thousand, cheering, waving and singing patriotic songs. One over enthusiastic young lady threw a box of chocolates in his direction, hitting him in the face and leaving him bruised and with a black eye. He was particularly well received at his old Crwys Road School.

He was decorated with the VC by King George V, at Buckingham Palace, on 12th July 1915. A month later, he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, Royal Welch Fusiliers. For much of 1916, he was employed at Western Command Bombing School, with the rank of Temporary Lieutenant. Again, to avoid any confusion, bombing is used in the sense of throwing hand grenades, an attacking tactic of huge significance in World War 1 - hence the need to provide special training for it. After a further brief period in France, he was seconded to the Indian Army, serving with Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles on the North-West Frontier. With the Gurkha Rifles, he saw out the end of the war in Palestine with the rank of Acting Captain.

While in Palestine, at El Kefr, he was also awarded a Military Cross for, in the words of the citation, "conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when ordered to make a flank attack. He led his two platoons up a precipitous hill, and turned the enemy's flank. Then, placing one platoon with two Lewis guns to command the enemy's line of retreat, he gallantly led an attack with the other platoon from the rear and flank, killing or capturing practically the whole garrison." In this action, he played a key part in the award of another Victoria Cross - his life was saved by Rifleman Karanbahadur Rana who received the award for his gallantry in doing so.

In 1918, Barter relinquished his commission in

the Royal Welch Fusiliers to take on a permanent commission in the Indian Army. He kept in touch with his friends in Cardiff by sending letters to Cathays Liberal Club. We learn from one of these that, at the end of the war, he saw his future in India. But this was not to be. In January 1919, he was invalided back to the UK with severe fever. He was never to return and retired as Captain in 1922.

In 1925, he married a divorcee, Catherine Mary Theresa Maclaren, who was the proprietress of the Heathfield Hotel, Waldron, Sussex. They had no children and she died in 1944.

After retiring from the army he tried one or two private ventures before, in 1928, joining the vehicle manufacturer AEC at Southall, where he was employed as a labour manager until his death. During World War 2, he was the major commanding 14/7 Company, 4th Middlesex Home Guard. According to one report, he suffered a heart attack while visiting Bournemouth and died in St. Ann's Nursing Home, Canford Cliffs, on 15th May, 1953. He was cremated at Bournemouth Crematorium, and his ashes scattered in the Rose Garden of Remembrance there.

How is Frederick Barter remembered? His name was carved on a block of stone set into the wall of Crwys Road School but, unfortunately, this memorial was lost when the old school was pulled down to make way for a supermarket. His name has been given to Barter Road and Barter Court, in Wrexham (the spiritual home of the Welch Fusiliers), and his Victoria Cross (along with his seven other medals) is displayed at the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum at Caernarfon Castle. He also featured in a set of cigarette cards, "The Great War - Victoria Cross Heroes" (there is one set, at least, in the New York Public Library and there may be other copies of the particular card in other collections ... or in boxes in dusty draws or attics!).

You will have guessed that he does not have a

Friends EVENTS

grave in Cathays Cemetery, so what is there in Cardiff to commemorate this brave man? Nothing! But this omission is to be addressed. As part of the remembrance commemorations this year, a memorial to Frederick Barter VC is to be unveiled in Cathays Cemetery. Diary details for this are given in Future Events, on page 10.

Recent Events

Guided Walks

On **Tuesday 9th** and **Thursday 18th June**, a collaboration between the **University of South Wales, Cardiff School of Creative Industries, and Bereavement Services** presented a **Dramatised Heritage Walk**. A number of contemporary characters were met around the Cemetery, bringing the history associated with several of the deceased to life. These characters included the daughter of a Senghenydd miner, a friend of Paulo Radmilovic, someone who had experienced the Irish Famine and a witness to Earnest Willow's exploits.



Walk amongst the graves of the catholic section

There was a sketch which compared the Barry Island of the White family with that of Gavin and Stacey, while there was a lot of innuendo about fixing horse races, when the young reporter interviewed Lord Glanely. This splendidly acted and innovative version of the heritage walk was enjoyed by almost 100 people over the two performances and was a very welcome addition to the programme of events in the Cemetery.

The Friends' **Midsummer Walk on Tuesday 23rd June** was led by **Gordon Hindess**. On a lovely evening, about 30 people enjoyed the exploration of the south-western quadrant of the Old Cemetery, visiting the graves of three members of the "other" Cory family, of people whose influence on Cardiff can still be seen today and a number of communal graves. Anecdotes included a major earthquake in Pakistan, a count who forsook his title and became a successful business man, a reference to Shirley Bassey before she became famous, a link to the story of Philomena and a couple who chose to be buried apart.

The weather was not on the side of **Rachel Protheroe** of Bereavement Services, when she led the **Heritage Walk on Sunday 12th July**. Despite this, there was an excellent turn out and the majority of people declined the opportunity to curtail the walk and retire early to the shelter of the chapels. It is a testament to the interesting historical content and the quality of presentation that this walk continues to be popular, even in adverse circumstances.

Talk

On **Tuesday 8th September**, **Geoff Brookes** gave an illustrated talk, as part of our contribution to Open Doors, entitled "**Stories in Stone**". Geoff, a retired teacher, is a Swansea based author with several published works dedicated to local history. These include "Stories in Welsh Stone - The Secrets Beneath 15 Welsh Graves", "Bloody Welsh History - Swansea ", "Swansea Then and Now", "Swansea Murders" and "Welsh History Strange but True". His books derive from his passion for researching and recording inscriptions on gravestones, which he regards as the physical representation (often the only remaining one) of a story. Because of this he and the Friends have very complementary interests.

His talk was a selection of tales from his archive, which included the story surrounding a stone in a churchyard at Cadoxton that has the

word MURDER inscribed on it. The stone is laid flat in a path but is angled, it is said, to point at the home of the murderer. Another stone near Swansea, records the deaths of the eleven children of Richard and Hannah Rees, who all failed to reach adulthood, while an Anglesey lighthouse keeper's grave is marked by a memorial expertly carved to look like a lighthouse. Another tale was associated with a rogues gallery from Swansea police station more than a century ago and research that led to a murder and hanging. Geoff had also traced the memorial to the first recipient of the Albert Medal for bravery on land, a Rhondda mine owner, who lost his life while leading a rescue effort underground.

The fascinating and humorous talk was enjoyed by the audience, which was perhaps disappointingly small for the occasion. This was the second time that Geoff has talked to the Friends, but he clearly has many more interesting stories to tell, so we hope that he will come back again.

Exhibition

The Exhibition showcasing the Cemetery, in The Cardiff Story, the museum in the Old Library, attracted many visitors throughout the peak summer period. We hope all our readers who were able got to see it but, if you didn't ... well, sorry, you are too late! The exhibition included nine especially prepared display posters, artefacts (like burial diaries) and images showing the many facets of the Cemetery and the role of the Friends. During the exhibition, a very successful evening reception for invited guests was held. This brought the Cemetery and the work of the Friends to an influential audience and, from the comments made, confirmed the quality of the display and the value of the Cemetery as a resource to be enjoyed.

Concert

A near capacity audience enjoyed the **Evening of Elizabethan Music**, in the Episcopalian Chapel on **Thursday 16th July**. A varied

programme of lute music was performed by **Alison Dite and Richard Kingslake-Jones** and the evening was rounded off with wine and light snacks. The charity concert was supported by James Summers Funeral Directors, Tesco and Bereavement Services.

Alison broke her leg in a freak riding accident two years ago, underwent two separate operations and needed to learn to walk again after both. Cathays Cemetery played a central role in her rehabilitation, providing an ideal environment, close to her home, for daily walks. The concert was a way for husband and wife, Jeremy and Alison, to thank all concerned in maintaining and restoring the Cemetery. Their "thank you" raised about £450 for the Friends, for which we are very grateful.

If you missed the concert, you may be able to catch them again at a CADW, English Heritage or National Trust property, where they often play. They are also available for weddings.

Our Regular Events

Monthly Workdays

The final workday before the summer recess targeted specific problems in and around Section C, an area not previously tackled by the Friends. While the immediate objective was achieved, the experience served to emphasize the importance of trying to keep on top of the continuing challenge provided by nature.

If you have felt under-employed during the summer, we are now back to the monthly schedule of the last Saturday of the month. So our next workdays are on **Saturdays 26th September, 31st October and 28th November**. As usual, there will not be a workday in the middle of the festive season at the end of December. We **meet by the chapels at 10 am**, tools and gloves are provided and we even have a half time refreshment break. If you can spare a couple of hours, please join us for some undemanding exercise and good company.

Friends EVENTS

Weekly Health Walks

These walks last between 40 minutes and an hour and are taken at a leisurely pace, with an emphasis on sociability. We meet just inside the **gates adjacent to Cathays Library at 10.30 am every Tuesday morning**, regardless of the weather. The one exception to this rule is the Tuesday immediately following Christmas Day. You don't need to book or come regularly - all you have to do is turn up. Everyone is welcome both on the walk and afterwards, when we adjourn to a cosy local café for a chat over tea or coffee. Our health walks have been going for six years now and, with participants having the advantage of being the first to hear about the results of recent research, continue to be well attended.

The walk on 10th November, being the nearest to Remembrance Day will include a commemoration ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves plot in the New Cemetery. As has now become the custom, this ceremony will include the reading of names on the memorials but, there will also be the unveiling of the special memorial to Frederick Barter VC (see feature on page 5). The ceremony by the war graves will be attended by the Lord Mayor and other dignitaries, pupils from at least two schools and a ceremonial bugler. To manage numbers, attendance at the ceremony itself will be by invitation only.

Future Events

Talks

On **Tuesday 17th November at 7 pm**, **Chris Williams** will present the **Bill Mosley Memorial Lecture**, entitled "**Cartooning in World War I**". Chris is Professor of History and Head of School at Cardiff University, with interests as diverse as Richard Burton and alpinism, mountaineering and rock-climbing. In the particular context of this talk, his research interests also include political cartooning in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain. Chris comes with an exceptional pedigree, both in his academic field and as a lecturer, so this

will be an opportunity not to be missed. The venue for this talk is, again, **Room 0.31, John Percival Building**. There will be a **£5 entry charge** for members of the public.

Guided Walks

On **Sunday 20th September at 2.30pm**, in conjunction with Open Doors, there will be a **Friends' Guided Walk** in the **New Cemetery** led by Ivor Lippett. Meet just **inside the Allensbank Road entrance**, which is more or less opposite the entrance to University College Hospital. Note that this walk follows on from the viewing period for the chapels on the same day.

On **Sunday 25th October at 2.00pm**, there will be an **Insignia Walk** led by Bereavement Services, starting from the chapels, just inside the **main entrance in Fairoak Road**. This walk will look at a wide range of military insignia and relate stories of some of the servicemen buried in the graves and their regiments.

Open Doors

On **Sunday 20th September 11am** - the main event for Open Doors, the Chapels will be open **until 2pm**. Note that this allows time to get to the guided walk in the New Cemetery in the afternoon. You will see from the news item on pages 3 and 4, that there will be many changes to see this year. Members of the Friends will be on hand to help with any queries.

And finally...

Don't forget to let us have your bits of news or other items for future issues!

*Contact the editorial team on 2061 2164
or email <gordon.hindess@uwclub.net>*

You can find past Newsletters, the latest news of events and lots of other information about the Cemetery on our website at www.friendsofcathayscemetery.co.uk