

Colourful Kaleidoscope

Scarcely have the children gone back to school, than the shorter days and dark evenings are upon us. The weather becomes noticeably changeable and it can be hard to decide whether to stick with the summer dress, add a layer or two ... or make sure that you are wearing something substantial to keep the wind and rain out. Then it's time to put the central heating on and the clocks back. Yes, it's that time of year again!

But the way in which nature responds to these changes can make the Cemetery a glorious place to explore. We sometimes think of autumn as a time when leaves on trees turn from green to yellow and, often, to orange, red, purple or brown, before falling to the ground. Perhaps this conjures up an image similar to that below, of a tree in Section E. Or maybe you enjoy kicking through a carpet of fallen leaves, like those in the adjacent picture.



However, trees respond to autumn in quite diverse ways. Some retain their leaves until quite late, while others shed them very early. The rowan and hybrid birch trees in Section Y, which are shown in the following picture taken at the end of October, demonstrate this contrast.



Even within the same species, markedly different behaviour can be observed. Some ash trees follow convention, with leaves turning yellow and then dropping off, while others barely develop any tint to their leaves, but shed them while still green. With the majority of them being the result of self-seeding, you might have expected their DNA to have been quite similar.

If you observe the change in a mature beech tree, you will see that tinting of the leaves takes place from the top downwards and the falling leaves follow the same progression. It is not unusual to see a tree with bare upper branches, while the lower foliage is still quite green.

Other trees change colour non-uniformly, presenting a mottled and/or patchy appearance with wildly varying colours present at the same time. The tulip tree in Section L provided a good example of this this year.



Tulip tree in autumn dress

Friends TOPICAL

There was an abundance of male, pollen producing, cones on the cedar of Lebanon behind the chapels, in September. But they were easier to identify some six weeks later, when the spent cones fell to the ground, dusting the tarmac yellow. At this stage, the female flowers are clustered into an infant cone shape which, assuming effective fertilisation, will grow into much larger seed cones, over a period of about two years.



Cedar of Lebanon, male cones and pollen dusted tarmac

While we are by the Cedar of Lebanon, it is noteworthy that a sweet bay tree has appeared in its shade. The bay is almost as prolific as the ash, in terms of the facility with which it self-seeds. If you want one for your garden, don't spend £10 at a garden centre (or a lot more if you go for a fancy one), as it would not be difficult to find an unwanted one in the Cemetery. But, be prepared for something that will grow rapidly and could reach 8-10 metres in height, like the one in Section J. Identification of the bay is easy - just scrunch up a leaf and test for the characteristic fragrance.



Bay trees: young one by cedar of Lebanon: mature one in Section J

And one self-seeder leads us to another, which also features in our workday clearances, but is particularly appropriate to this time of year. It is, of course, holly, which is well berried again this year, as shown below.



Our last issue featured the "sky high" roses in Section S. Despite being untended and in an exposed situation, they have thrived well into the autumn. As the picture below shows, this stubborn plant has continued to provide pretty blooms, while the flowers seen in our last issue have been replaced by hips.



As always, we look out for flowers that may be new or that have not been noticed before. The candidates for this issue are a lone cornflower, spotted in Section R, and a patch of hardy dwarf cyclamen, competing well with ground ivy and autumn leaves in Section RA. These are both pictured on the next page.



Cornflower and cyclamen

Just in case all this talk of autumn only leads readers' thoughts on to a gloomier, colder season, some reassurance may be taken from the early flowering of primroses again. Those shown below were photographed on 5th December, indicating that winter is being skipped and we are moving straight into spring (but please note that this is not an official Met Office forecast!).



Primroses

Autumn Miscellany

We are pleased that the information hut has been given a fresh coat of paint and is open for business again ... but only when events are taking place, because of the risk of vandalism when the Cemetery is quiet. The contents of the hut are now aligned to the Friends interests, featuring more information about the Cemetery, providing copies of the events programme, latest newsletters and Friends' leaflets (including membership application form), and acting as a sales point for books and booklets.

While the Nonconformist chapel continues to be a popular venue for weddings, its use for funerary services has been disappointing. It appears that, while the demand for the

ambience of a Victorian setting remains, 21C audio enhancements are also needed. It is hoped to address this aspect before too long.

As has become the tradition, Remembrance Day was commemorated in the New Cemetery, on the nearest Tuesday to 11th November. But, it had to be moved to the afternoon, so couldn't be incorporated into the weekly health walk. However, several of the walkers attended the service, assisting with the reading of the roll of honour and the placing of small crosses at the graves by local school children. The service was conducted by Rev. Lionel Fanthorpe and several wreaths were laid, including ones by the Lord Mayor, Royal Regiment of Wales and the Friends.

Autumn signals the arrival of a new batch of journalism students and we were again pleased that at least one was quick to recognise the Cemetery as a good source of material for a piece of project work. He chose the theme of severed legs and John Farnhill assisted him at the Cemetery. The result can be seen at:

<http://www.jomec.co.uk/altcardiff/logo/cemetery-discovers-new-severed-legs>

In March, we reported on the planting of hedging plants to screen the air-conditioning units outside the chapels. The Lonicera Nitida Baggensen's Gold plants have thrived, as can be seen in the picture below. The horticultural advice is not to trim the hedges in their first growing season, so they look a bit straggly at the moment, but the colour effect can now be appreciated.



The new booklets which we introduced a year ago have proved popular, especially the "Murders" one. We are not sure what conclusion should be drawn from this, but we have now produced three further titles in the series, including a second batch of "Murders". The full list of titles is given on the last page of this newsletter.

A Sporting Life Cut Short

Close to the site of the former Catholic Chapel, you can find a number of graves of the Turnbull family, noted Cardiff shipowners. In 1882, Philip and Lewis Turnbull, sons of Thomas Turnbull of Whitby, set up the company, Turnbull Brothers Ltd, in Cardiff, to export coal to the Black Sea, returning with grain. Their fleet expanded rapidly and, at the outbreak of the First World War, the company owned seven ships. But six were lost to enemy action and the owners retired in 1920, at which time, the sons of Lewis, Cyril and Bertrand, set up the Turnbull Coal & Shipping Company. This firm withdrew from shipowning in the depression of the 1930s, although the brothers remained in business as shipbrokers until 1943.



But our interest is the grave (pictured opposite) of Philip Bernard and his wife, Marie, who died in 1930 and 1942, respectively. Philip represented Wales at hockey and won a bronze medal at the 1908 Summer Olympics, held in London. His nephew, Bertrand was also in the team. While generally there was a single Great Britain team, the four home nations competed individually in the hockey, seemingly in order to provide sufficient teams for a viable knockout tournament.

At the foot of the memorial is an inscription, which is now difficult to read. This tells us that also remembered here is their son, Maurice Joseph, a major in the First Battalion of the Welsh Guards. A German counter-attack following the D-Day landings in Normandy led to intense fighting for the French village of Montchamp. On 5th August 1944, Major Turnbull was leading a small group of men when he was hit by a sniper's bullet and killed instantly. He is buried in the Bayeux Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery.

Maurice Turnbull was born in Cardiff on 16 March 1906, the third of Philip and Marie's six children. He was educated at Downside School and Cambridge University. He married Elizabeth Brooke, from Scunthorpe, in 1939 and they had three children, Sara, Simon and Georgina.

Downside School, in Somerset, has a strong sporting tradition and this clearly suited Maurice. He not only participated, but excelled in rugby, cricket, hockey and squash. The school has produced many famous sportsmen, but Maurice is especially remembered there by the bar for sixth formers that bears his name.

He first played cricket for Glamorgan, in 1924, as an 18 year old schoolboy, scoring 40 runs in the first innings, which contributed significantly to the team's victory over Lancashire. He captained the Cambridge University team in his final year of college, 1929, scoring over 1000 runs. He then went on to captain Glamorgan County Cricket Club from

1930 until 1939.

It has been said that Maurice's batting was a gay adventure. He was a right-hander who made runs when they were needed. A natural on-side player, he developed all the recognised strokes ... and added some of his own! He was a fine short-leg fielder and an inspirational captain. In his first season, he scored 1,665 runs, including his maiden first-class century, an unbeaten 106, against Worcestershire at the Cardiff Arms Park. He passed 1000 runs in a season ten times and three times hit double-centuries, the highest being 233 against Worcestershire at Swansea in 1937, a season in which Glamorgan finished higher than ever before. Much credit for this was attributed to his leadership and example. One of his double centuries was against Nottinghamshire, whose team included the fearsome 'bodyline' bowlers, Harold Larwood and Bill Voce.

Maurice had excellent management and organisational skills and agreed to serve as county secretary, a post that he held, in parallel with his captaincy, for ten years. Together with his friend, J. C. Clay, during the 1932-3 winter, he successfully fought to secure sufficient funds to ensure the survival of the county team. In 1934, his initiative resulted in the amalgamation of Glamorgan with Monmouthshire, thereby extending the club's catchment area.

He was selected for the MCC tour to Australia and New Zealand, in 1929-30, and made his test debut against New Zealand in January 1930, thereby becoming Glamorgan's first test cricketer born in the county. He played a total of nine test matches, including all five Tests against South Africa in 1930-31. He was co-author with M. J. C. Allom (another Maurice) of light-hearted accounts of his MCC tours. The two volumes were entitled "The Book of the Two Maurices" (1930) and "The Two Maurices Again" (1931). At home he represented England (as the MCC was commonly, but erroneously, referred to) against West Indies and India; and

he was a selector in 1938 and 1939.

In addition to cricket, Turnbull also represented Downside School at rugby and was a member of the Cambridge University Rugby Club. One of the earliest local rugby clubs he represented was St. Peters, where he joined his elder brother, Bernard, who had already represented Wales by this time. During the 1931-32 season, Maurice played his first senior game for Cardiff, playing at scrum-half, and, by 1932, he was representing Glamorgan.

Maurice was selected, as one of seven new caps, to play for Wales in the opening match of the 1933 Home Nations Championship, played away to England. The game ended in a 7-3 win for Wales, laying to rest the 'Twickenham bogey' (a phrase not unfamiliar today!), ten defeats in ten visits. Another all-rounder who played in this match was Wilfred Wooller, who went on to captain Glamorgan at cricket for 14 years in the post war period. The Welsh selectors responded to the victory at Twickenham by selecting all 15 players to play the second game of the tournament against Scotland, but several late withdrawals, including Turnbull because of injury, forced last minute changes. Wales were easily beaten. For the final game of the Championship, Turnbull was declared fit and returned to the squad. The build-up to the game was over-shadowed by poor player conduct on the boat to Belfast. The captain's ill-judged reshuffling of some player positions during the game didn't help and the Irish won 10-5. The WRU reacted by discarding eleven of the team for the next season, including Turnbull who was never to play international rugby for Wales again.

Turnbull also played hockey and squash for Wales and, one of the founders of the Cardiff Squash Rackets Club, won the squash rackets championship of South Wales.

Friends EVENTS

Had his sporting career not been tragically curtailed in the war, it is likely that Maurice Turnbull would be far better known today. If you want to know more about him, another former Glamorgan cricketer, Andrew Hignell, has written an excellent book "Turnbull: A Welsh Sporting Hero" (2001). Alternatively, visit the cricketing museum in the Swalec Stadium, where Maurice features prominently.

Recent Events

Walks

On **Sunday September 17th**, as a contribution to **Open Doors**, **Ivor Lippett** led a Friends' **Guided Walk in the New Cemetery**. In keeping with the centenary of the First World War, the underlying theme for the tour reflected this. On a fine afternoon, it was pleasing to welcome more than 40 people, including many new faces.

On **Sunday October 22nd**, **Roger Swan** of **Bereavement Services** led the new format autumn walk, titled "**A Brief History of the Victorian Cemetery**". 27 people enjoyed the informative commentary delivered both in the chapels and around the Cemetery. Roger has started keeping bees, to compliment the biodiversity of the Cemetery, and offered his first season's produce to the visitors, selling 27 jars. The wealth of flowers in the Cemetery are clearly to the bees' liking.



Roger Swan talking about memorial symbolism

Talks

On **Tuesday September 12th**, **Dr Ian Beech** gave an excellent illustrated talk, to nearly 40 people, on "**Whitchurch Hospital's Role in WWI**". Cardiff City Mental Hospital had been opened in 1908 at a cost £350,000. It had separate male and female wings, the latter staffed with career nurses who had to leave if they married. The outbreak of war was seen as a major inconvenience, with staff leaving to join up and, in the case of one German, being removed to the Isle of Man for internment.

Planning for casualties was based on Boer War statistics, where most injuries were due to small arms fire and evacuation home was rare. But the total casualties in the Boer War were equivalent to one day on the Somme, where a third of the casualties were the result of artillery fire. The field medical service could not cope and the 5,000 beds provided in the UK proved woefully insufficient. By early 1915, an extra 50,000 beds had been provided and the Board of Control requested the freeing up 15,000 asylum beds. This was achieved by emptying one asylum and distributing the inmates over eight others. The Cardiff hospital was one of those freed up and became the **Welsh Metropolitan War Hospital**. £4,600 (equivalent to about £5 million today) was spent on improvements, including a new annex, improved verandas, upgraded operating theatres and a new X-ray department.

Most of the injuries were head wounds (initially, soldiers wore caps: tin helmets were introduced in 1915), while most arm injuries were caused by shrapnel. Those with torso wounds (about 12%) usually died and there were many leg amputations. Trenchfoot and infection were common. Casualties would be taken by stretcher to an Aid post for clearing, then in an ambulance/hospital train to a base hospital. It would take 24 hours for the transfer to the UK, where the injured were met at the port by a train which would take them to Coryton Halt. Casualties often arrived at the hospital with uniforms still caked in mud. No account was

taken of where a soldier's home was, but a series of postcards was issued to help them keep in touch with loved ones. They were allowed to walk to the village of Whitchurch, but had to wear 'hospital blues'.

What happened to the asylum patients? 605 were shipped out of Cardiff to other asylums as far away as Hereford and Gloucester. However, 45 mental patients stayed behind to run the farm, which had a massive piggery of 1000 pigs, as well as poultry, cattle, wheat and orchards. Because of the pressure on space, the average period of stay in hospital for mental patients was more than halved and admissions dropped by a third.

The War Office finally returned the hospital in October 1920, with the equipment it had put in ... and a number of patients reclassified as "Service". Some 500 service men who did not survive their injuries are buried in Cathays Cemetery.

The Bill Mosley Memorial Lecture took place on **Tuesday November 15th**. "**Views from an Antique Land: Egypt and Palestine in First World War Photographs**" was the work of **Steve Mills, Paul Nicholson and Hilary Rees** and the joint lecture with the School of History, Archaeology and Religion was given by the first two of these.

With the help of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, a project to find, copy, reference and digitally archive pictures from the Middle East theatre of the First World War had been undertaken. While there is a wealth of imagery from the European battle front, the photographic record from Egypt and Palestine was sparse. At a series of roadshows around England and Wales, people brought in family photographs, postcards and diaries, which were scanned for the new archive and returned to their owners. Images were 'cleaned up' and associated text transcribed and linked to the related images in the archive.

The digital archive is held at the Centre for Digital Archaeology in California and available to all. In thanking the presenters, John Farnhill noted that one soldier, Capt. Thomas Glynn Llewellyn Phillips, killed in the First Battle of Gaza in March 1917, is remembered on a memorial in Section I.

Our Regular Events

We have had three diverse workdays since our last issue, clearing vegetation from around notable graves, keeping the lawns around the chapels tidy and planting bulbs in them. One of the graves cleared was that of Marie Dahl in Section E and a Facebook posting about this by John Farnhill got more than 300 likes. We are optimistic that the bulbs will enhance the appearance of the chapels - anyone wanting a Spring wedding?

Our workdays are sociable occasions, tools and gloves are provided and you can work at your own pace. **We meet by the chapels at 10am** and work until noon, with a break for elevenses. If you feel like some gentle exercise, put the last Saturday of the month in your diary - but not at the end of December, when everyone is too busy indulging in festive activities, or on 27th January, when the AGM will take precedence. So the next dates are **23rd February, 30th March and 27th April**.

Weekly Health Walks

All are welcome on these sociable and leisurely walks and afterwards, when we adjourn to a local hostelry for a chat over tea or coffee. Our walks last for about an hour and we meet just inside the **gates adjacent to Cathays Library at 10.30am every Tuesday morning**. The walks take place regardless of the weather although, on the rare occasions that it is really foul, we may get to our tea or coffee a little earlier! Our walks are punctuated by anecdotes about the Cemetery - our amblers are often the first to hear about new research discoveries. New walkers are always welcome.

Friends EVENTS

Future Events

AGM

The **Friends Annual General Meeting** will be held in the **Cathays Cemetery Chapels** on **27th January** at **10.00am**. This is your opportunity to raise any issues and have a say in the direction which the Friends take in the future. We look forward to seeing you there.

Talks

On **Tuesday 20th March** at **7:00 pm**, **Gordon Hindess** will talk about the "**Ladies of Cathays Cemetery**". The Victorian era was a far cry from today's sexual equality, so men tend to dominate the history of the period. But they didn't have it all to themselves and, using examples from the Cemetery, this illustrated talk, covering the period from the opening of the Cemetery to relatively modern times, will aim to show that women were also newsworthy.

On **Tuesday 17th April** at **7:00 pm**, **Peter Finch** will present "**Real Cardiff the Flourishing City**". Perhaps best known for his declamatory poetry readings, based on Cardiff, his native city, Peter is a full-time poet, critic, author, rock fan and literary entrepreneur. He is the author of a trilogy of "Real Cardiff" books, while one of his most recent works is "The Roots of Rock from Cardiff to Mississippi and Back Again". You won't want to miss his knowledgeable and lively talk.

The venue for both of these talks will be **Room 2.03** in the **John Percival Building, Cardiff University**, in **Colum Drive** (behind Colum Road). The talks are free to members of the Friends and students, but there will be an entry fee to **non members** of **£2**

Publications

Books (about 100 pages, full colour):

Cathays Cemetery on its 150th Anniversary - £5
Hidden Histories: Tales from Cathays Cemetery - £10

Themed guides (12 - 20 pages, black and white, unless indicated otherwise):

Another Batch of Murders - £1.00
Cardiff Blitz - £1.00
Memorial symbolism - £1.00
Murders - £1.00
Railway Connection - £1.00
Shipowners - £1.00
Tree Tale Trail (colour) - £2.00

The books are also available by post, with an additional shipping cost of £3: in the UK, by sending your name & address and a cheque payable to "Friends of Cathays Cemetery" for the book price plus postage and packing to:-

Friends of Cathays Cemetery
c/o Bereavement Services
Thornhill Cemetery
Cardiff CF14 9UA

For orders from outside the UK please email us for a costing.

There are also several free publications which can be downloaded from our website in pdf format.

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