

Spring gets there in the end

It could be a description of what happens when you get older - slow to get going, but getting there in the end. Spring carried on where Winter left off, with an absence of warmth or sustained sunshine. The result was that natural events ran about 2-3 weeks behind the timetable that, in recent years, seemed to have become the custom. But eventually some warmer, sunnier spells saw things catching up although, at the time of writing, flowers and blossoms are still appearing about a week late.

But this is not all bad news. There has still been a glorious succession of blooms and most flowers have enjoyed a prolonged life. For example, primroses have been enchanting us through five successive months. It has been nice to see that these flowers have been quick to colonise more recently cleared areas. Or perhaps they have just been dormant or unseen in the undergrowth. Whatever the reason, anyone who has walked around the Cemetery regularly has been well rewarded. One of the best areas to see all this is the eastern end of Section K, around the end of April, where wood anemones and primroses carpet the ground.



*Primroses and anemones in Section H and
primula/primrose clump in Section R*

Primula, the hybrid relative of the primrose, has long been a popular plant used for adorning the graves of the deceased. These have both spread and further hybridised with the native wild flowers, with pleasing effect.

As usual, there has been a succession of blossoms to enjoy. As an example, the picture below shows a magnolia in Section S, close to the Whitchurch Road boundary.



The exception to the blooming success of the season was the foxglove trees. The older tree has had the least blossom in memory, while its child had none at all. The flower buds form in the autumn and are then dormant through the winter, but it is a characteristic of the tree that, if the temperature drops below 5C for too long, no flowers will develop in spring. While the winter was generally mild, the 'Beast from the East' in March seems to have left a legacy that only became apparent in May.

At the end of last year, many bulbs were planted in the area just inside the main entrance. Some of the planting was done by the Friends during a workday, while other bulbs were put in by young people as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award programme. The pictures below show off the results - hyacinths in the border beside the lodge (easily missed unless you know when and where to look!) and tulips around the memorial to those who 'bequeathed themselves to medical science'.



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During a recent workday, much of the effort was devoted to clearing the untidy mass of shoots and branches which had developed all around the bottom metre or so of the trunk of the large tree, in the most westerly corner of Section N. It came as some surprise just a few days later to find a twin of the tree in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, with an information board in front of it, describing it as a hairy lime. Had we inadvertently vandalised a rare tree? Subsequent research found no references to the hairy lime, though plenty of suggestions that we really meant the character played by Orson Wells in "The Third Man". It appears that the charity which runs the park is not above having a joke at the expense of visitors.

We are pretty confident that our tree is a common lime, one of several in the Cemetery. If you look at the row alongside Allensbank Road, you can see that the sprouting of shoots around the bottom of the trunk is a characteristic of this tree, though usually to a more modest extent. Known as epicormic growth, buds under the bark sprout through, forming new shoots. These are not, of course, the fruit bearing limes of Mediterranean climes. The leaves are loved by aphids, which feed on the sap, but ooze a sticky fluid. Lime is an old word for sticky. If you have ever parked your car under a lime tree in summer, you will know just how sticky the aphid ooze is.

Six years ago, we reported a pair of ducks courting in the Cemetery. They have been spotted once or twice since and appeared again this year. While we can't be certain, it seems likely that it is the same faithful pair, who clearly prefer the quiet of the Cemetery to the bustle and crowd of Roath Park.



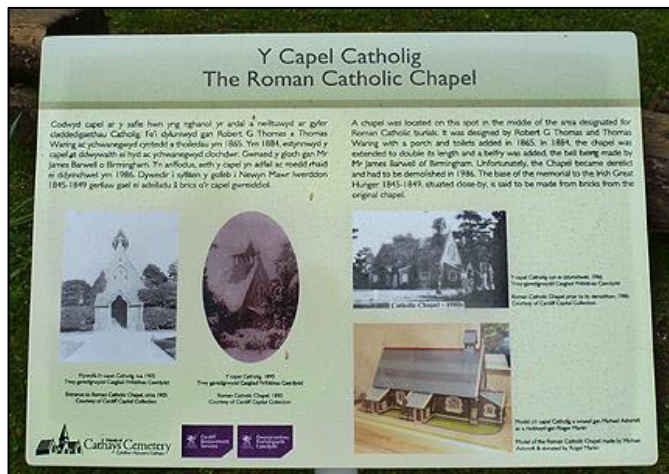
Perhaps the ducks were looking for a nice juicy meal, like the one pictured below. On a humid morning, this rather pretty slug (well, in the world of slugs, it is more attractive than most!) was seen in the Cemetery and had us searching the internet. It is a Leopard Slug and its scientific name, *Limax maximus*, tells us that it is one of the biggest. The one we saw wasn't very big, but they can reach more than 6" long.. It is most commonly associated with broad-leaved woodland, parks and gardens and it feeds mainly on fungi and dead plant and animal matter, so is not considered a pest by most gardeners.



Autumn Miscellany

We reported in our last issue that some new interpretation boards were on order, following a successful bid for a grant from the Community

Foundation in Wales. We are pleased to say that the boards are now in place. That at the site of the former Catholic Chapel is pictured below.



Street Fayre stall

The Cemetery has just undergone its inspection to determine if it can fly its Green Flag for another year. We are optimistic that the application will be successful as the circumstances relating to maintenance and other criteria remain much the same as previously.

Last year, the Cathays Cemetery Geocache celebrated its tenth anniversary. It now has about 200 logged finds, which represents something in the order of 300 visitors. The following is a selection of snippets from logs during the past year: 'brilliantly conceived cache and a great walk': 'a definite vote for quality over quantity of caches here': 'really nice stroll around the cemetery': 'what a lovely cemetery'. What's a geocache? You can read all about it in Chapter 4 of our 150th Anniversary Book.

In April, our stand at the Cathays Street Fayre attracted much attention. With fantastic weather, visitors and volunteers manning the stall thoroughly enjoyed themselves and there was strong demand for our publications. We are very grateful to our volunteers, Ivor, Jean, John, Michael and Paul, for making this so successful.

Each year we lookout for new signs of Japanese knotweed and, sure enough, new threats have been identified. Readers may have seen somewhat sensationalised reports in the press about research carried out by Swansea University. Reading the newspaper reports might give the impression that there was no point in bothering to treat it. Nothing could be further from the truth: that would just lead to even faster spread than is occurring now. The real message from the research is that there are cowboys peddling expensive treatments that won't work and promising quick cures that just can't be guaranteed. At the moment there is one known effective chemical treatment, using glyphosate-based weed-killer, which has to be applied in the right way, at the right time of year. Even then, it may take three or more years of treatment to clear it and there is still a small risk that a dormant rhizome fragment will re-start the infestation.

What mustn't be done is cut off the stems carelessly or fail to follow stringent transport and disposal requirements. Unfortunately, this can occur by accident and, sadly, this has been witnessed in the Cemetery, as a result of new shoots not being spotted during strimming.

The following snippet was picked up from the National Federation of Cemetery Friends' newsletter. The National Health Service is reluctant to take back cardiac pacemakers when

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someone dies, resulting in a growing number being left on the premises of Funeral Directors, who have no means of disposing of them. One suggested potential outlet is that reconditioned pacemakers could be sent for use in the developing world.

When Cathays Cemetery first opened, the final journey, for those that could afford it, would have been made in a horse-drawn hearse. Today there are more transport options available. Readers local to Cardiff may have seen in the news a report of the funeral of a builder, taken to the church in Llanharan on the flat bed of a 1957 FG Foden lorry. The vintage vehicle had only just been restored from a wreck by an enthusiast, and the possibility of its use at funerals came about from a chance encounter with a funeral director, when the lorry was on display at the Malvern Show. The lorry is now being offered for other funerals through the "Classic Foden Lorry Funerals" service. Of course, if the funeral was using the chapel in Cathays Cemetery there might be a problem manoeuvring through the porte-cochère.

You will be aware that the new General Data Protection Regulations came into force from 25th May 2018. All members should have received a communication setting out what this means for the Friends and its members. If you need to refresh your memory, a copy of the policy is now on the Friends' website. If you did not receive this communication or are at all concerned, please contact the Membership Secretary by e-mail or by post.

Quetta – Where's That?

We pick up on the theme started in our last edition – an unusual word on a headstone that catches your eye. In this case, it was two words – Quetta Earthquake – and Ivor Lippett's eye. The inscription on the unassuming headstone in Section T, close to its south eastern side, records the death of Hugh and Barbara Francis and their son John in the earthquake on 31st May 1935.



But where is Quetta? Initial guesses took us around the world, but it was only an internet search that found the right location – in Balochistan. At an altitude of around 5500 feet, it is Pakistan's only high altitude city, with a population today of over a million. It is on the Bolan Pass route into Afghanistan, giving it historic strategic importance. The nearest city to it is Kandahar, in Afghanistan – a name that might be more familiar. It is in the most active seismic region in Pakistan, sitting on two major faults. The 7.7 magnitude quake in the early hours of the morning, on that fateful day in 1935, lasted for three minutes, with continuous aftershocks. With somewhere between 30000 and 60000 people killed, this ranks as one of the deadliest earthquakes to hit South Asia.

This story has something else in common with the unusual place tale in our last issue – it brings back memories of Empire, when this was part of British India and an important military base. So we are lucky that the Regimental Journal for the 1st Battalion of the Queen's Royal Regiment, based in Quetta, graphically described the impact of the earthquake. The city was razed to the ground, with corpses lying everywhere in the hot sun. Companies were given areas in which to clear the dead and injured. But this had hardly commenced when they were called upon to supply fifty men (later increased to a hundred) to dig graves in the cemetery. Europeans and Anglo-Indians were buried in the British Cemetery: all other bodies were cremated. On the third day after the

quake, the Battalion was still working in the city, but were recovering few live people. The soldiers had to work with medicated pads over their mouths and noses, due to the danger of disease from dead bodies. The main task was moving the survivors from the city. A big refugee camp was opened up on the racecourse, tentage was supplied and water and food provided. Families were put into lorries, whether they liked it or not, and taken to the racecourse. The following day, the city was sealed. A cordon of soldiers surrounded the area, and for the next two days patrols were sent through the city clearing out anyone seen (to protect against looting and the spread of disease) and shooting stray animals.

At the time of the quake, 1st Queen's were returning from a night operation, marching along a main road. When the earthquake struck, most of the troops either sat or fell down. One officer described how, as he was lying prostrate, a large chasm opened in the earth within reach of his hand, and then slowly closed again. Within a minute, however, the battalion had recovered and resumed their march. No one realised the seriousness of the situation until after they had reached barracks at about 6.30 am and dismissed for breakfast and bed. Their barracks were more or less intact, but more damage was done in the RAF area, where buildings were destroyed and only six out of twenty-seven aircraft were left serviceable.



Relief effort underway

Today, Quetta has a very different claim to fame. Have you ever wondered what happens to old copies of Qur'an (Koran) that have been damaged or torn? Muslims must not burn or tear Qur'an. In Pakistan (and from further afield), they make their way to Jabal-Noor-ul-Quran, a hill located in the Mountains of Chiltern, in Quetta. The hill has been tunnelled to create a series of caves, to store old, worn out, and damaged copies of Qur'an. On arrival, the scriptures are placed in bags or cases, depending on their condition, and stored safely to prevent further damage or accidental destruction.

Count de Lucovich

We had known for some time that we had a clutch of baronets in the Cemetery, but it was a surprise when a member of the European nobility was discovered. The memorial, close to the most northerly corner of Section R, even bears the family coat of arms.

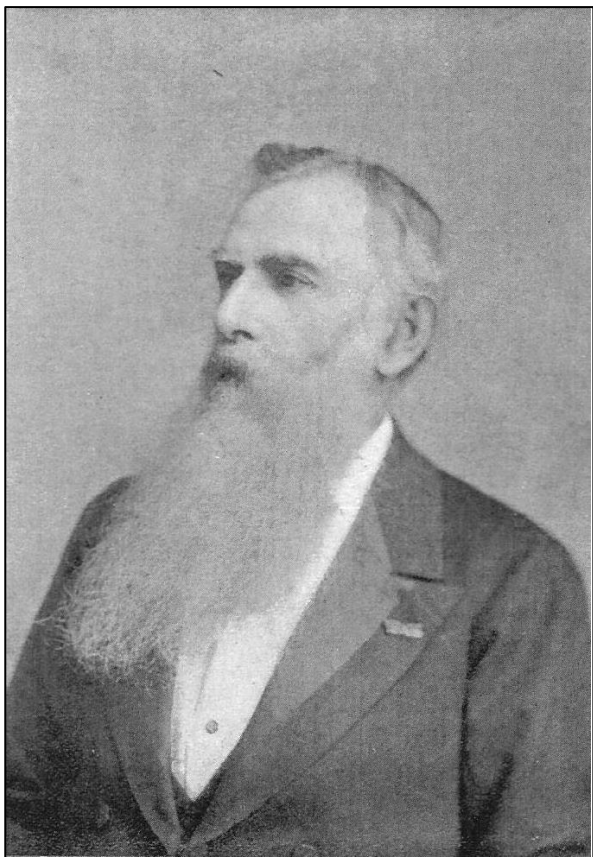


de Lucovich memorial and enlargement of coat of arms

Antonio Leonardo Trifone, Count de Lucovich, was a Knight of the Order of the Iron Crown, a Knight of the Order of Franz Joseph the First and an Admiral of the Noble Corps of the Bocchese Marines. The family was ennobled for distinguished service to the Venetian Republic in 1757 (most probably Antonio's grandfather) by presenting a tract of land for a Naval Station. The Order of the Iron Crown was first instigated by Napoleon, but continued to be recognised by the Hapsburgs, of whom Francis Joseph 1 was longest serving (1830 - 1916),

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enjoying the titles Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary, Croatia and Bohemia: the time span of his reign suggests that this knighthood may have been bestowed directly on our count. The Bocchese Marine relates specifically to the maritime prowess of Dalmatia, the part of the Adriatic coast which is now Montenegro. A maritime base would have been particularly valuable to a largely land-locked Austro-Hungarian Empire.



Count Antonio

Antonio was born in 1832, in Kotor, at the end of the southernmost fjord in Europe. He was the son of a renowned barrister, but, instead of attending Padua University and following in his father's footsteps, Antonio decided to leave his country in 1848 to pursue a commercial profession in Cardiff. He established a coal and metal exporting business in partnership with his brother, Marco, who remained in Dalmatia and organized the other end of the business, with offices in Trieste, Venice and other European ports. The business expanded to include the ownership of mines and Antonio was a prominent

member of associated trade organisations. In 1909, he left the business to one of his sons but the business was later bankrupted, when one of the partners absconded with all the company money.

Antonio married Isabella Maude Dawkin in Cardiff in 1876 and they lived at The Rise, Llandaff, having at least 4 children. On the memorial, Isabella is described as "of Kilvrough", the estate near Parkend, on Gower. The Dawkin family, owners of the estate, traced their descent from Sir William de Langton, lord of the manors of Langrove and Henllys in the Gower. Rowland Dawkin built the first house at Kilvrough in 1585. The last male Dawkin to own Kilvrough and builder of the present Manor House was William Dawkin. His heir was his daughter Mary who married the French Marquis de Choiseul, but they had no children and Mary sold the mansion and estate to Thomas Penrice, owner of the adjacent estate, in 1820. So, by the time Isabella was born, the family mansion and estate had gone, though she was undoubtedly part of the wider Dawkin family.

Antonio died in 1911, to be buried in Cathays Cemetery. One of his sons was named after his brother Marco, while we know that another, Ignio, had a daughter Anne, born in 1922, who ended up in Texas. The title was handed down to another Antonio (probably Anne's brother) who was born in 1926. Around 1960, he married Molly and they lived at an isolated farm between Lisvane and Cardiff Gate. At least two members of the Friends recall happy acquaintanceships with Antonio and Molly. When we stopped by the family grave to recount the story, one of our Tuesday walkers was delighted to be able to tell us that she knew 'Count Tony'. Indeed, only last year, the same walker told us of a chance meeting with Molly, who was clearly well and active, though well into her nineties. Count Tony is reported to have ridden regularly with the Tredegar Hunt and died around 2000. They didn't have any children, so

the ennobled name may have died out.

It is thought that there are no longer any de Lucovich family members in Kotor but, when you go on your Adriatic cruise, make sure that it is one that calls there. The fiord scenery is magnificent and Kotor is a World Heritage Site. The Naval Museum there has extensive information about the family, which includes a professor and an engineer who worked on the Suez canal, and holds a family tree. Also, if you climb the 1350 steps up to St John's Fort, you pass a church about half way which has a memorial tablet (with fleur-de-lys on it) to a member of the de Lucovich family.

Kotor cathedral is dedicated to St. Tryphon (Trifone - is this where Antonio's name came from?), which holds the relics of the saint, which were stolen from Constantinople in 809. The anniversary of the arrival of the relics is celebrated on February 3 each year. It is also said that our Antonio's family, in later years, had a château in the area.



de Lucovich memorial tablet

Recent Events

Talks

On **Tuesday 20 March**, **Gordon Hindess** presented some **"Ladies of Cathays Cemetery"** to one of the largest audiences (40) seen at one of our talks. With the history of the Victorian era tending to be dominated by men, it was appropriate, in the centenary year of women's suffrage, to redress the balance (even if the commemorative timing was more by chance than design!). The illustrated talk started with the unusual circumstances surrounding our first interment, Maria Dolores de Pico, then covered some of the better known residents of the Cemetery, like Frances Batty Shand and the Balloon Girl, in the latter case, highlighting some of the less well known aspects of the sad story.



Gordon talking about Maggie Jones-Morewood, the classical soprano

Gordon then talked about a couple of our severed legs and the religious orders that are well represented in the Cemetery and a few less well known, but meritorious, ladies, although one of these, Minnie McGuire, may have been flattered by inclusion under this heading. The talk concluded with an Empress - arguably one of the most spectacular and visible residents of the Cemetery. but more commonly known as the foxglove tree.

On **Tuesday 17th April**, **Peter Finch** talked about **"Real Cardiff the Flourishing City"**, based on the most recent book in his Real Cardiff series. He noted how many gems of historic Cardiff had been wiped out by

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repeated redevelopment and, particularly up to about fifty years ago, without anyone apparently batting an eyelid. Examples of this were, the cursing stone at St Mary's Church, Bute West Dock and the canal (as opposed to the dock feeder) south of Whitchurch. Wales 'came to cities late', so Cardiff was largely Victorian and associated with its industrial advance, so little was visible that was older than 150 years, although several castles could be traced, representing at least 2000 years of history. Peter recalled the dismantling of the Industrial and Maritime Museum in Butetown and the promise that all the exhibits would be put into store and be found a new home in the future. However, peeping through the screening around the demolition site, he had witnessed a large exhibit being cut up for scrap. He had found minimal authentic heathland remaining from the Great Heath, which stretched north from the junction of Albany Road and City Road to the foot of Caerphilly Mountain. The aforementioned junction, being at the edge of the town, had been the last public gallows site for Cardiff, remembered now by "Death Junction" beer, which had also been recognised by one of his poems, which he recited.

Peter noted that over 150 years Cardiff had gone from a place where everyone new everyone else's business to a place where you could have an affair ... and get away with it! After some speculation about where Cardiff might be in another 150 years (including the removal of the ridge between the city and Caerphilly!), Peter closed the talk with another of his well-crafted poems. The lecture was well received by the audience of 25.

On **Tuesday 15th May**, **Professor Bill Jones** told us about "**Ballarat and the 19th century Australian Gold Rushes**". Bill, emeritus professor in modern Welsh history at Cardiff University, has research interests that include 19th and early 20th century Welsh migration and Welsh communities in Australia. His lively talk was well illustrated with contemporary paintings and drawings, newspaper articles, adverts and

books. Using both Welsh and English sources (and delivering part of his lecture in Welsh), Bill painted a vivid picture of Ballarat in the early 1850s, from a mob culture to the blousy owner of the United States Hotel. The audience of 31 was transported to the picturesque creek, an aboriginal hunting ground, that was devastated, as the population grew to 23,000 in three years, thanks to massive immigration, fuelled by stories of fortunes to be made.

Cardiff man, David Jones, was an early arrival in Australia, spending time in Melbourne (where wages were high because of the exodus of people to the gold fields), tried his hand at digging for gold, but found it easier to make money by becoming a merchant for mining supplies. However, he returned to Wales in 1856 and became a successful business man. He is credited with building Cardiff's first sewerage system and the initial reservoirs on the Taff Fawr, supplying clean water to the town. Both of these made a major contribution to improving public health. He was mayor in 1888 and his memorial can be found in Section M of the Cemetery.

After the early easy finds, mining progressed into deeper alluvial deposits and then into the bedrock of the basalt ridge from which the earlier gold had been eroded. The business required specialist miners, many recruited from Wales, to the extent that, at one time, there was a significant Welsh speaking population. Of course, the cost of mining gold became greater and, by the early years of 20C, the golden years were over. Ballarat has since reinvented itself to trade on its heritage and become a very pleasant city.

Walk

On **Sunday 27th April**, **Roger Swan of Bereavement Services** led the **Heritage Walk**. Encouraged by the continuing fine weather, an exceptional attendance (33) enjoyed this excellent introduction to the Cemetery.

Our Regular Events

Monthly Workdays

We have tackled a variety of jobs over three workdays, since our last issue. As mentioned on Page 2, much of one day was devoted to clearing the untidy growth around the trunk of one "hairy lime" in Section N. With half an eye on the impending Green Flag inspection, another day was spent clearing naturally accumulated tree litter (surprisingly, enough to fill the small tipper truck) around the chapels and mowing the lawns in the same area. On the third workday, a concerted effort was made to expose some memorials, close to the main drive in Section S, that had disappeared under spreading trees and shrubs, as well as self-seeded shoots and brambles. If success is measured by the size of the loppings piles at the end, this was a good session. And there was even time to record a few more memorial inscriptions.

If you fancy some gentle exercise in sociable company, why not join us? We experimented with an earlier start, during the Spring, but it caused some confusion and wasn't universally popular, so we have now reverted to the 'traditional' arrangements - **we meet by the chapels at 10 am** and work until noon, with a break for elevenses. Tools and gloves are provided and you can work at your own pace. Put the **last Saturday of the month** in your diary, but remember that we don't meet in the peak holiday month of August. That means that our next workdays are on **30th June, 28th July and 29th September**.

Weekly Health Walks

All are welcome on our weekly walks and afterwards, when we adjourn to a local hostelry for a chat over tea or coffee. Our leisurely walks take place regardless of the weather and last for about an hour. They are intended to be social occasions, exercising body and mind, with anecdotes about the Cemetery and discussion of the natural history. The changing seasons mean that there is always something new to see

and talk about. We meet just inside the **gates adjacent to Cathays Library at 10.30 am every Tuesday morning**.



Stepping out on a Tuesday morning

For a change, the sowing of seeds in the wild flower garden (beside the Fair Oak Road boundary, in section U) was undertaken as a diversion during a Tuesday walk. Will our efforts be up to the standard of the school children? The next few months will show us.

Funding to councils for Walking for Health from the Welsh Assembly Government has been reduced successively over the last few years and ended completely in March 2018. Cardiff Council will no longer have a Project Co-ordinator or provide training for leaders and first aid. Instead, Welsh Government have made a grant to Ramblers Cymru for a Let's Walk Cymru National Co-ordinator post, to assist existing local authority groups with administration. It remains to be seen how effective one coordinator for the whole of Wales, as opposed to one part time coordinator in every council, will be. Leader insurance has been covered until March next year but, thereafter, it is not resolved how this will be funded, other than by becoming affiliated to Ramblers, with an appropriate fee. Ramblers have also appointed a Let's Walk Cymru project funding officer to source additional funding to support local schemes. It remains to be seen if this will be successful in bridging the funding gap.

At the moment, we are not optimistic that a happy solution will be forthcoming. At a time when so much attention is being paid to health

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and welfare funding and the importance of an active and social lifestyle, to minimise the demand for NHS and social support, this move seems to be counter-productive. In national budget terms, Walking for Health, relying predominantly on volunteers, is very cheap. Do our political leaders understand what they are doing? Hopefully, things will become clearer over the next six months, but the Friends are determined that these successful and popular walks should continue, even if it has to be on a go-it-alone basis.

Future Events

Walks

With the **exception of the September walk**, all **start from the chapels**, just inside the main entrance in Fair Oak Road.

On **Tuesday June 5th at 7pm**, **Gordon Hindess** will lead a **Midsummer Walk** for the Friends. As usual, this walk aims focus on more recent discoveries relating to the Cemetery and visit graves that have not previously featured on guided walks.

Once again, the University of South Wales will be joining with Bereavement Services for evening performances of **"Trails and Tales"**. To support the production costs of the dramatised elements, there is a small charge. **Tickets are £5.00 and can be bought at the gate**. The performances are on **Wednesdays 13th and 20th June at 7pm** and run for about two hours. Students and staff of the University will interpret the lives of some of those buried in the Cemetery, though the medium of readings and drama.

On **Sunday September 16th at 2.30pm**, as a contribution to **Open Doors**, the Friends will lead a **Guided Walk in the New Cemetery**. Please **note especially** that the **starting point** for this walk is just inside the **entrance off Allensbank Road**, north of **Eastern Avenue** and almost opposite the back entrance to the University of Cardiff Hospital.

On **Sunday October 21st at 11am**, **Roger Swan**

of Bereavement Services will present **A Brief History of the Victorian Cemetery**. Please note especially that this new format event is in the morning.

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