

Another Mild Winter

The Met Office tells us that we have had the warmest (and wettest) winter for many years. In many respects, nature has responded much as it did last year - the first primroses appeared well before Christmas and celandines and crocuses were in bloom in January. Despite the early start, the best is still to come: for example, the primroses have yet to reach their peak and we can look to an extended flowering period of around five months.



Early in February, one of the prunus genus hybrids burst into blossom, although it suffered in subsequent high winds and one of the few frosts we have had. But it is still uplifting to see nature's colour and brightness through the winter.



Regular readers will recall reports of the growing of a Foxglove Tree from seed. After four years of growth, it was getting to big for its garden home and had to go. The Cemetery's Foxglove Tree has been looking increasingly fragile over the last few years and its demise is anticipated. There was a logical answer to these two problems and, just before Christmas, Bereavement Services moved the young tree to the Cemetery, in Section W, about 15 metres from its mother. Our fingers are crossed for a happy outcome.



Many Cemetery visitors are passing through and in a hurry but, for those taking time to enjoy the detail, there are always little surprises. For example, goldcrest and redwing have been spotted in the last few months.

Friends TOPICAL

Winter Miscellany

Much of our news is covered in the report on the AGM on page 7, but we can bring some of this up to date. The Friends have been busy giving a facelift to the pews. Minor damage to the wood has been repaired, for which the Friends are very grateful to two friends of Ivor Lippett, Eddie Newman and Michael Fairclough. At the time of writing, the pews have been cleaned down and painting is in progress.

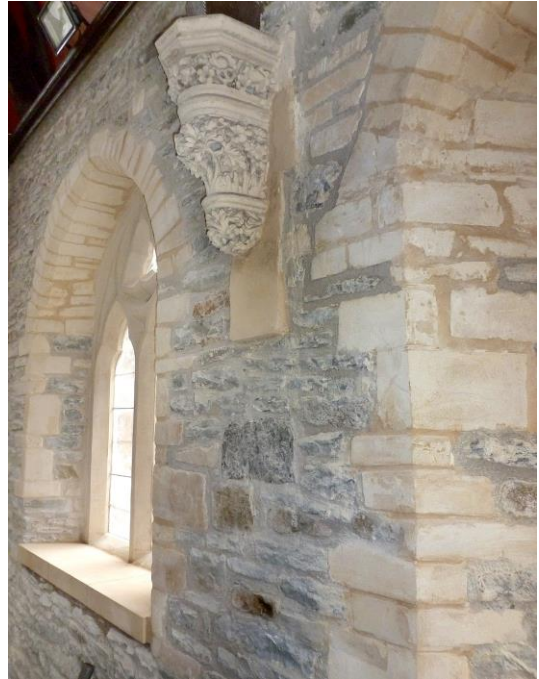


The masonry restoration in the Nonconformist Chapel has been completed and fitting of the new floor is imminent. Of course this activity is leading to this becoming a fully functional chapel and we look forward to reporting on the first wedding and funeral service in our next newsletter. When one considers the derelict state of the chapels seven years ago, this is heartening progress.



The Friends' cheque towards the chapel restoration is handed over to Councillor Bob Derbyshire by Paul Nicholson.

Once work is finished on the first chapel, attention will turn to the Episcopalian one, where the aim is for this to become a manned office and information centre before the September Open Doors event.



Restored stonework

A few months ago, we reported the re-appearance of gloves on Jim Driscoll's grave. Sadly, they have gone again.

There were no candidates for the post of Treasurer at the AGM, but we would very much like to fill this post. By the end of this year, we will also need to find an auditor for the accounts. If you are interested in either of these roles, or know of someone who might be willing to take them on, please let us know.

They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships

It is widely known that in the heyday of the docks with the shipping of coal from Cardiff, people from many other countries went through the port and some made their homes and raised families here.

It was during the course of my own research into my mother's Jersey family that I became aware of how many Channel Islanders actually settled in South Wales, and ended their days here, their final resting places being in cemeteries in Cardiff. So far, I have identified over fifty graves of Channel Islanders and their descendants in Cardiff, most of them being in Cathays Cemetery but others also in Adamsdown, Pantmawr, Western and Thornhill Cemeteries.

Of my mother's family, her father Capt. Frederick George Billot, although lost at sea in World War I (Merchant Navy), is remembered on the memorial of Grave No. E-H 2923, as also is her brother, Edward, lost at sea in World War II. Capt. Billot had been a partner in a small shipping company - The Channel Shipping Co. (Cardiff) Ltd. - together with fellow Jerseyman John George Le Gros and Edward Care, John Emlyn-Jones and Emlyn Williams. After a few years the company was taken over by one of the larger concerns, and became part of the Emlyn Line.

THE COMPANIES' ACTS, 1908 AND 1913.

COMPANY LIMITED BY SHARES.

Articles of Association

OF

The Channel Shipping Co. (Cardiff),

LIMITED.

Another of my mother's brothers, Arthur Billot (buried in Grave No. O 2141), after giving up the sea, and on marriage, becoming a convert to the Roman Catholic Church and working as a school caretaker, resided with his wife in the cottage at the rear of Sherwood House in Newport Road, where she did cooking and housekeeping duties for the De La Salle Brothers, a Roman Catholic teaching order. The photograph of Sherwood House, which appeared on Page 5 of

Newsletter No. 20 (September 2014) in the article about Archibald Hood, brought back one of my earliest memories, as a tiny girl visiting with my mother, shortly before my uncle's death in 1950. I recall going past the garden, where there was an aviary at the rear of the property, to reach the cottage.

Of the many Channel Islanders who came here, most were seafarers or worked in associated trades and businesses, such as ships' chandlers, marine insurance, marine engineering, and in clerical positions in shipping offices. However, a few had other occupations such as blacksmiths, painters, carpenters, and one I discovered was a fish and chip shop proprietor - but, who knows, his family could have been fishermen before they came to Cardiff.

Of the fifty-plus graves I have found so far, most are of Jersey families but there are also several from Guernsey. However I wish to stress that this is an ongoing project - the search continues. The family surnames I have found so far are listed here:

GUERNSEY

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Maillard (Wesleyan Minister) | (Cathays) |
| Marquand | (Cathays 6 graves) |

JERSEY

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Billot / Le Gresley | (Cathays 4 graves) |
| Bisson | (Cathays) |
| Bliault | (Cathays) |
| Briard | (Cathays) |
| Carrel | (Adamsdown, Cathays & Thornhill) |
| Ennis / Benest / Noel | (Cathays) |
| Esnouf | ((Cathays) |
| Haffron / Hafron / Esnouf | (Cathays) |
| Hacquoil | (Cathays) |
| Hacquoil / Poingdestre | (Cathays) |
| Hamon / Le Feuvre | (Cathays) |

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Herault	(Cathays)
Herault / Malzard	(Cathays)
Le Feuvre	(Cathays)
Le Feuvre / Hacquoil	(Cathays)
Le Boulanger	(Cathays)
Le Grand	(Cathays)
Le Gros / Gunney	(Cathays)
Le Sauteur	(Cathays 3 graves, Western 2 graves)
Malzard	(Cathays & Thornhill)
Mallet / Carrel	(Pantmawr)
Morel	(Cathays 3 graves)
Noel	(Cathays 7 graves, Western 1 grave)
Renouf	(Cathays)
Yalot	(Cathays)
Wood ('of Gorey, Jersey': possibly not Jersey stock)	(Cathays)

Additionally, a few names are of families which had been in the U.K. for several generations and had moved to Cardiff from other locations - these include Lempriere, Le Vesconte and Fiott, although, in this latter, Fiott was the middle name (but for some reason altered, in later records and on the memorial on Grave No. L 1184 in Cathays Cemetery, to Lafayette) - regrettably, therefore, obscuring the earlier family connection. One school of thought on this is that a female ancestor of Charles Fiott (Lafayette) Hunter was part of the Marquis de Lafayette family.

There will undoubtedly be others of Channel Islands origin who are not easily identifiable, due mainly to the fact that if daughters marry into non Channel Island families their background will not be obvious. Unfortunately, the Channel Islands tradition of married women continuing to be identified by their own family surnames (with the addition of 'wife or widow of...') largely lapsed once families settled

elsewhere, although family links can be seen in the trend of using forebears' surnames as middle 'given' names. This of course happens in many families generally.

Numerous 'cousin marriages' took place among Channel Islands families, and descendants continued to inter-marry, thereby resulting in people being related to each other over and over again, via different permutations, and there are instances of this among the families listed. It does happen to some extent in rural communities elsewhere. All this inbreeding was probably not very healthy, and it does make one wonder whether many people nowadays would wish to marry their relatives!

It is worth noting that although many families settled here permanently, some also returned, as can be seen from studying census returns between 1841 and 1911.



Philip Morel Memorial

Descendants of John Morel (the eldest of the three Morel brothers who came to Cardiff, through their involvement in the potato trade and subsequently shipping) returned to Jersey,

and there is a Methodist Home for the Aged on the site of one residence - a trend which was established here also. The three Morel brothers - John, Philip and Thomas - are buried in Cathays in Grave Nos, M 1017, M 937/937A and M 942, respectively.

Another interesting example is the Le Moignan family - relatives of the Morel brothers - who after their return to Jersey were living in the aptly named 'Cardiff House' - the name is still clearly visible on the property which is tucked away in a quiet backwater in Coin Varin, St. Peter. I have not found any of this family in Cathays Cemetery, but this doesn't rule out the possibility of there being graves elsewhere. However, wherever they ended their days, one can safely say that Cardiff must have made an impression on them ~ 'Cardiff House', Jersey - a home from home?

Margaret Smith

Farmer's Boy to Master Builder

When one looks at the astronomic growth of Cardiff in the 19C, it is not hard to find those who were already wealthy and took the opportunity for profitable investment, the entrepreneurs who had the vision and perseverance to create their own fortunes and the professional men (architects and engineers) who could provide the designs for and oversee the implementation of the works and buildings required. But the builders and contractors who undertook the work often go unnoticed. So, today, we will look at one of these.

James Allan was born in Fochabers, Morayshire, in April, 1841. His father, Robert, was a farmholder and young James had his early education at the Mills' School Institute, Fochabers. On leaving school, he became an apprentice to a stone mason at Elgin. On completion of his apprenticeship, he came to Cardiff working for Euston Gibbs, a contractor for the Rhymney Railway, and remained with him for nearly twenty years, until Gibbs retired. He then started his own business.

He delivered quality work, so his business thrived and his reputation grew. He was a long-standing member of the Cardiff Master Builders' Association, and much respected by both his professional peers and his employees. We can still see the results of his work today.

He carried out a number of the largest contracts let by the Cardiff Corporation. These included the erection the new Cardiff Market, from plans prepared by the Borough Engineer, William Harpur, as we saw in our March 2015 issue. He also carried out the construction of Roath Park Lake, the associated building work and the enclosure of the Park. When this work was completed, in 1894, he was formally commended "for finishing 6 months early and to a higher standard than specified." The following year, he undertook an extension to the landing stage.



"Western Mail" Offices, St. Mary-street, Cardiff.

Courtesy of Cardiff Central Library

Dockside warehouses and major construction works of almost every description were built by him, including a wagon shed, workshop and offices at Eastmoors. His mason's skills enabled him to achieve the highest standard of work to meet the Victorian passion for classical and ornate stone buildings. One example of this was the Western Mail Offices in St. Mary Street, built in 1895 after the original ones (in the

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same street) were destroyed by fire. At the time, the building was considered "the most complete and extensive of any works of a similar nature in the country". Sadly, this building has made way for a more modern office development.

But we can, at least, see the façade of the offices which he built for the Cardiff Gaslight and Coke Company. From the south end of Mary Ann Street, look across Bute Terrace and there it is. The offices were rebuilt in 1895 on a site which then included the gas plant and characteristic gasometer. The building housed New College School from 1980 until 2002, when the leaseholder sold the land to developers forcing the school to relocate. It had fallen into a poor state of repair and modifications had been made over the years (such as a driveway leading through to the rear buildings).



Gaslight and Coke Company offices

But don't look up! The Victorian façade now fronts Altolusso (meaning height of luxury), a 23 storey apartment building. When it was built in 2005 it was the highest residential building in Wales and it is still one of Wales' tallest buildings. Extensive renovation and reconstruction of the façade was carried out using stone blocks from some of the rear buildings that were demolished. The façade forms part of the three-storey main foyer with a glass atrium roof. The building was not listed, but the façade was retained at the request of the Council when the planning application was processed. Opinion is divided as to whether the worthy intentions have achieved their aim ... or created a monstrosity!

The quality of James Allan's work was appreciated by many of the principal residents of Cardiff, so a lot of their private houses were built by him. While they can still be seen today, it is not so easy to link them individually to Allan.

Allan also secured the contract for building St Alban's Church, Splott, which Bishop Hedley opened on Sunday July 16th, 1911. It was designed by F R Bates, of Newport, in a pure perpendicular style to seat 600. Externally, the walls are of dressed blue pennant sandstone, with Bath stone dressings, and the roof is of green Llantilo slates. There is a tower sitting centrally over the east end containing eight tubular bells and a smaller octagonal tower (which looks slightly at odds with the rest of the building) at the south-west corner.



St Alban's Church

While the outward appearance, amongst streets of terraced houses, may not encourage lingering, it is worthy of closer inspection. There are statues at the Chancel Arch of Our Lady of Lourdes and of St. Alban in Roman uniform, which were the gift Father Fennell, the priest in charge at the time, to the parish in exchange for the "Iron Church" which the new church was built to replace. (The Iron Church was removed to the Heath and became the new St. Joseph's.) The High Altar, the gift of Lord Ninian Crichton-Stuart, is of Bath stone, panelled with green Cippolino marble. The pulpit was presented by the blast furnace workers of the Cardiff Dowlais Works, while the Lady Altar is a valuable piece of work by

Pugin, and came from St. Marie's, Rugby.

You can find the Allan grave in Section W of Cathays Cemetery, close to the drive, a short way up the west side from the southernmost corner. This is in the area where lawn conversion took place in the 1960s, so the original red granite memorial and kerbs, which occupied three grave plots, are no longer there. We know this from the information recorded at the time of the conversion, which was deposited in the National Archives. This also tells us the full inscription, as follows:

In affectionate remembrance of
Margaret the beloved wife of James Allan J.P.
who died at "Tullock", Cardiff, May 28th 1912 aged
61 yrs.

"To live in hearts one leaves behind is not to die".

Also of the above James Allan
who died on 13th July 1917 aged 75 yrs.

In loving memory of James Leonard
eldest son of James and Margaret Allan.

Died at "Tullock", Park Place, April 22nd 1902 aged
27 yrs.

Also of Davina Helen
who died at Barden Moor July 14th 1879 aged 5 wks.
"Interred at Bolton Abbey, Yorks."

Also in loving memory of Robert Alexander (Bob)
their second son who died Sept. 21st 1905 in his
25th year.

"At Rest".



We were expecting to find a standard austere concrete replacement headstone, with the only

inscription the family surname and the years of the four interments, so it was a surprise to find that the headstone that marks the grave is of red granite and carries most of the information that was on the original.

This is so unusual in the context of Cathays Cemetery that it prompts the question "Why?" One explanation could be that the public notices of the proposed changes from the lawn conversion, unusually, resulted in a response in this case. The follow up to this may have been a negotiation, leading to an agreement on the style and details of the replacement memorial. But it would be nice to have confirmation of this or, alternatively, to be advised of what did happen.

The memorial mentions the family home, Tullock, Park Place. Burial records confirm that this is number 69, a large house at the Corbett Road crossroads, which can still be seen today.



Annual General Meeting

The Friends' AGM was held on Saturday 30th January, in the offices of Bereavement Services at Thornhill Cemetery. Twenty members were in attendance, including committee members.

After the Chairman's welcome and recording apologies for absence, the minutes of last year's meeting were confirmed. There were few matters arising from these minutes not covered by subsequent items on the agenda.

Friends AGM

The Chairman began his report by congratulating Bereavement Services on the success of their venture into crowd funding, which had enabled the work on the Nonconformist chapel, which is currently underway, to take place. He noted, too, the Friends' contribution to this and, also, the purchase of the pews from Pentyrch which, while remaining a Friends' asset, Bereavement Services will have free use of.

He was pleased to record the contributions of the committee members to another successful year, which included the first public event in the chapels, the lute concert, the expanded website, which was now a major and frequently used resource thanks to Paul Jones, and the first class newsletter, thanks to the editorial team. The major exhibition in the Cardiff Story museum had done much to raise awareness of the Cemetery and the work of the Friends.

The weekly Walking for Health continued to be well supported, as were Workdays, which complimented the work of Bereavement Services in managing the diverse environment of the Cemetery and helped to maintain its Green Flag status. Members of the Friends had led guided walks (Ivor Lippett and Gordon Hindess), contributed to the talks programme (Gordon Hindess) and, in conjunction with Bereavement Services, enabled the special Remembrance Day Service, incorporating the unveiling of a memorial to Frederick Barter, to take place. The Friends had also facilitated visits by Scouts and another Friends group from Bridgwater.

The chairman thanked Summers, Mossfords, Morgan Consult, Tesco, Bereavement Services and particularly, the committee for their support through the year, which had all helped to make his role manageable.

The Treasurer presented the audited accounts for 2015, highlighting a doubling of income (thanks to some one-off items), which was more than offset by the highest ever expenditure by the Friends, notably the contribution to the work on the chapels, the pew purchase and

exceptional event expenditure. It was emphasized that this was all entirely in keeping with the objectives of the Friends. Despite the high outgoings, the Friends ended the year with a healthy balance of £5447.

Paul Jones was elected as Chairman, while the remaining existing officers and committee members were unanimously re-elected. In a diversion from the published agenda, Paul Jones briefly assumed the chair to thank Paul Nicholson for picking up the reins again on the death of Bill Mosley and to propose that he should be enrolled as the first Honorary President. The proposal was unanimously accepted.

The meeting was very pleased to have Martin Birch and Carmel Thomas of Bereavement Services to provide an update on future plans. The current phase of restoration on the Nonconformist chapel is expected to be complete by the end of February, after which it will start to produce an income, from funeral services, weddings (two are already booked) and other events. Any income from the use of the chapels will be used for associated running costs, with the surplus being held in a reserve fund for further restoration work. This further work will be directed initially towards the Episcopalian Chapel and putting windows in the bell tower, so that the whole building has a presentable external appearance. The bell tower, which was previously used for officiates at funerals, has a small room, fire and toilet and also contains the spiral steps up the tower. In reality the usable space is small. Following discussion about how this might be used, it was agreed that arrangements would be made for a visit by members of the Friends. With regard to heating arrangements in the chapels, this was still to be finalised, but one possibility would be gas central heating using traditional cast iron radiators.

Restoration of the bier house remains a longer term objective, which is hampered by a lack of detailed records of its construction. A plea was made for any photographs which people might

have of the building and one possible source was suggested.

It was intended to try to maintain the Cemetery's Green Flag status and build on existing involvement in the community. Following successful collaboration with the RSPB in 2015, it was intended to have a "Bug Life" event this year and plots for wildflowers and poppies would be continued.

In the Question and Discussion session, it was confirmed that the planting of shrubs in the entrance roundabout was still being pursued, but that soil tests were needed to determine suitability of plants. It was noted that a Cardiff Heritage Group was expected to be formed this year, which should be an umbrella forum for like minded organisations. 2016 is the tenth anniversary of the formation of the Friends and it was intended to celebrate this, probably in conjunction with the Open Doors event. Work had also commenced on a second book, with the aim of publication before the end of the year. It was proposed that the site of the former Catholic Chapel would benefit from a display panel and Bereavement Services agreed to look into this.

There was some discussion about the relationship between the Friends and the Council and it was clarified that they were independent entities, which collaborated to mutual advantage. The Cemetery is owned by the Council, for whom Bereavement Services are the operational managers, who recognise the importance of the Cemetery for heritage, ecology and community enjoyment. The complementary role of the Friends is set out in its charitable objectives, which include promoting the conservation and protection of the infrastructure, monuments, buildings and flora & fauna, and use of the Cemetery as an educational resource. It is also an aim to advance the education of the public in the history and heritage of the Cemetery. Both parties were appreciative of the assistance of the other and feel that cooperation is better

than confrontation.

Recent Events

Winter is a quite period for events, with only the AGM appearing on our calendar. This is reported above.

Our Regular Events

Monthly Workdays

With the festive season and the AGM getting in the way in two months, we have only one to report on, on this occasion. The February workday was a little different, being undertaken indoors - not a bad idea in the winter! The reason for this is that the ten diligent volunteers busied themselves getting rid of dust from the Episcopalian Chapel, cleaning the pews in readiness for re-painting and making a start on the cleaning and freshening up of the pew runners.

While there may be a little indoor work left for the next workday, we anticipate that it will mainly be back to the staple diet of clearing unwanted vegetation from now on. If you want to give us a hand, we **meet by the chapels at 10 am** and work for a couple of hours. Tools and gloves are provided and we even have a half time refreshment break. Our workdays are on the last Saturday of the month, so the next ones are on **26th March, 30th April, 28th May and 25th June.**

Weekly Health Walks

Our very friendly group of health walkers meet just inside the **gates adjacent to Cathays Library at 10.30 am every Tuesday morning**, regardless of the weather. The walks last between 40 minutes and an hour and are taken at a leisurely pace, with pauses to provide anecdotes about the Cemetery, including the results of recent research. 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.

Friends EVENTS



As in previous years, our walks will be incorporated in the programme of the Cardiff Walking Festival, which takes place throughout May.

Future Events

Talks

On **Tuesday 22nd March at 7 pm**, **Gordon Hindess** will give an illustrated talk entitled "**Cathays Cemetery - European Tour**". Europe was not included in Gordon's World Tour, last year, so this talk will address the omission. You may be surprised at the places that the memorials in Cathays Cemetery can lead to.

On **Tuesday 17th May at 7 pm**, **Gary Williams** of the Western Front Association will regale us with some "**Somme Stories**". Following a successful Bill Mosley Memorial Lecture in 2014, it is good to have Gary back with what will be a well researched talk, illustrated with his own excellent images.

The venue for both of these talks will be the **John Percival Building, Cardiff University, in Colum Drive** (behind Colum Road).

Please also note that these talks are free to members of the Friends, but there will be an entry fee to **non members of £2**.

Walks

All of these walks start from the chapels, just inside the main entrance in Fair oak Road.

On **Sunday 10th April at 2 pm**, Bereavement Services will lead their ever popular **Heritage Walk**. This is an opportunity to learn about the history of the Cemetery and some of its residents.

On **Tuesday 21st June at 7 pm**, the Friends will lead a **Midsummer Walk**, visiting a variety of graves that prompt interesting tales, some of which will be a result of our most recent research.

On **Sunday 10th July at 2 pm**, there will be a second chance to catch the **Heritage Walk**, led by Bereavement Services.

Can You Help?

We are trying to find information about the Bier House to assist in planning for its restoration. Photographs of the building when it was still in use or original drawings of the building would be ideal, but even if you can only remember what it looked like, this would be helpful.

Another area of interest is the bridge that used to link Old and New Cemeteries. This bridge, which was originally an access over the Taff Vale Railway to Wedal Farm before the New Cemetery was opened, was demolished when Eastern Avenue was constructed. A photograph of the bridge would be appreciated.

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