

A Colourful Summer

The mixed bag of weather, otherwise known as summer, hasn't deterred the Cemetery from showing off its array of colours. And the more you visit, the more you notice. For example, have you seen the Weeping Copper Beech in Section Q? The height of this exotic variety (ours is about 2 metres high) is determined by the graft height and it is wide spreading. The coppery spring leaves turn a rich purple-black in summer, then cinnamon brown in autumn.



Weeping Copper Beech

Just a minute away, in the lowest part of Section L, an hydrangea thrives in a poorly drained spot and has produced a magnificent display of flowers this year.



Hydrangea

A few steps further east, but hidden amongst some fir trees, a Philadelphus Mock Orange displays its delicate white four-petalled blossom.



Philadelphus blossom

As usual, the wild flower garden (now alongside the Fair oak Road boundary) has been a blaze of colour. In the mix (and seen in the foreground of the picture below) the pale blue Borage, or Starflower, would have delighted medieval herbalists, with its reputation for tackling many problems from dispelling melancholy to treating rheumatism, colds and bronchitis.



Wild flower garden

Feelings are more mixed about the Ragwort which flourishes in the conservation areas, but we have an ally in trying to keep it under control - the cinnabar moth caterpillar, with a colouring reminiscent of a wasp. There have been some unusually large specimens of the caterpillar about and their effect on some of the ragwort flowerheads has been clear. This appetite for

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Ragwort has led to the Cinnabar being exported to other countries where Ragwort is a problem. But, in nature, there needs to be a balance between predator and prey: if the predator does too good a job, there will be insufficient food source for its own well-being! The evidence from the cemetery is that it is managing this dilemma well.



Cinnabar Caterpillars on Ragwort

The caterpillars overwinter as pupa in a cocoon under the ground. The striking red with black adult moths emerge around mid May and are on the wing up until early August, but they are predominately nocturnal, so may be mistaken for the similarly coloured, but day-flying, Burnet Moth. It is perhaps surprising that the Cinnabar caterpillars feed on poisonous ragwort leaves. The poison is stored in the caterpillar's body and remains even when it becomes an adult moth.

While we are looking at small creatures, damsel flies visit the Cemetery, from their more normal habitat close to water, to feed ... and to do what comes naturally, as the picture in the adjacent column shows.

We have had an indirect report of the sighting of stoat in the Cemetery. It would be nice to be able to corroborate this (with a photograph, if possible). Have any of our readers spotted a stoat amongst the memorials? We wouldn't be

disappointed if it turns out to be a weasel - which, as you know is **weasily** recognised, in contrast to the other creature, which is **stoatally** different.



Mating damsel flies

Somme Summer

The centenary of the Battle of the Somme has been remembered, and rightly so, through the summer (or, at least until the Olympics started), with commemorative events, television and radio programmes and newspaper features. The Cemetery and the friends have contributed to these. Early on the morning of 19th July, as part of a national Living Memory Event coordinated by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, The Last Post was played simultaneously at the graves of victims of the Somme across the country. At Cathays, the solo was performed at the World War I plot in the New Cemetery by Katharine Lane, ahead of a Somme Commemorative event in the Welsh Proms.



Solo bugler

Of course, the vast majority of the war dead are buried close to the battlefield. Far fewer are those who were wounded and brought back to this country, only to die here of their injuries. We have attempted to identify the Somme victims buried in Cathays and, while the research is not yet complete, so far have found five:

H CORDING (age 26) Sergeant Middlesex Regiment

L G DAVIS (17) Private Canadian Infantry

J J LEIPOLD (23) Private Australian Infantry

A LEWIS Lance Corporal Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)

E WOOD (28) Corporal Royal Field Artillery

Note that two of these are from the Commonwealth, so still buried a long way from home, and Lewington George Davis, from Ontario, was only 17. Only one has been identified as from Cardiff - Edgar Wood's parents were John and Jennette, of 37, Marion Street, Splott. The details we have are just the bare bones and not necessarily complete. If any readers can put some flesh on the bones, particularly about Edgar Wood or his family, we would be pleased to hear from them.

Still with the Somme, Paul Jones, Chairman of the Friends, attended the unveiling of a special memorial in St Mellons, by Councillor Monica Walsh, the Lord Mayor, on 1st July.



Unveiling at St Mellons

Paul also represented the Friends at the AGM of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends (NFCF), in Newbury on 11th June. This year's meeting was hosted by the Friends of Newton Road Cemetery and attended by about 100 delegates from more than 15 Friends groups.



NFCF AGM

The Mayor of Newbury, Julian Swift-Hook (on the left in the photo), introduced the day and gave a short talk on the history of the town. Brian Sylvester presented an overview of the Newton Road Cemetery Company and the work of its Friends. The group then made the short walk to the cemetery where three different

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tours were provided: an introduction to the cemetery, Commonwealth War Graves and "Angels, Artists and Authors". Co-operative Funeral Care kindly provided a buffet lunch, after which the AGM business was concluded. Overall, this was a very successful and enjoyable day.

We are pleased to report that the Friends application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was successful, so we are pushing on with the production of another book about the Cemetery and planning the Friends' 10th anniversary event, which will generate publicity for the facilities at the planned visitor centre, as well as the Friends, the Cemetery and the new book. ***With regard to the latter, we are looking for assistance from someone with experience of cover and page design, in printer-ready format. Do you fit the bill for this, or know someone who does?***

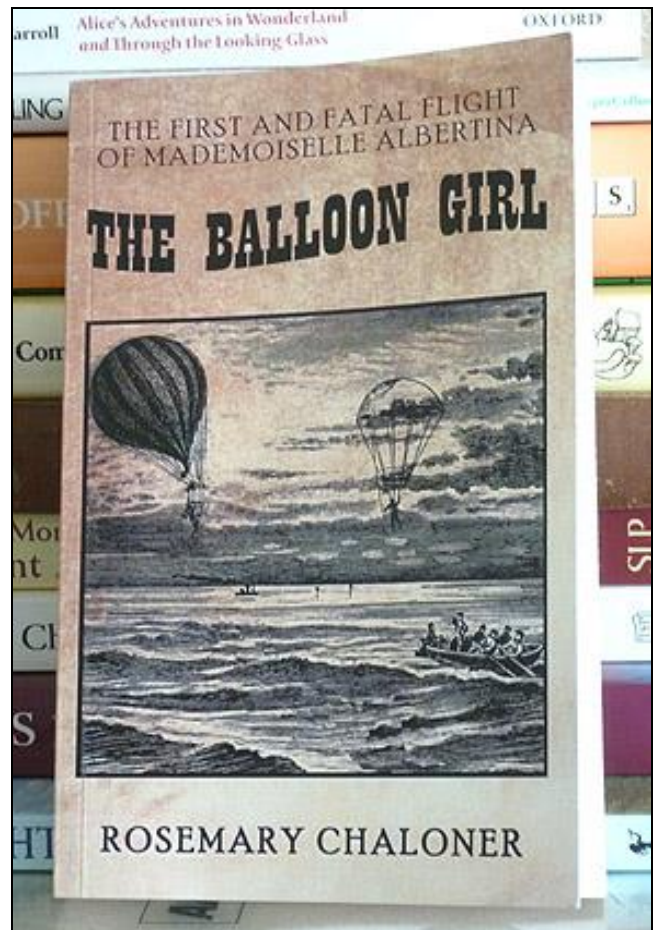
We were pleased to host a visit by a YHA walking group in July and hope that we have converted some more people to the pleasures of the Cemetery.

It was gratifying to be invited to the launch of a new book, "The Balloon Girl" and to have the author tell us about it:

"After four years of research, writing endless drafts and approaching several publishers most of whom were very kind in their negative replies - although several didn't respond at all - "The Balloon Girl" has finally been published. Many things were changed over the four years, the title for one thing - originally called "Reaching for the sky". It took some persuading by friends and relatives for me to agree to change it. It was, of course the right decision.

How did I become so involved with this story? I work at Cardiff Story Museum in the Old Library where we have a small library of books relating to Cardiff and it's history. One of which is entitled "Glamorgan Aviation". Whilst browsing this book I came across a three-page

chapter about Louisa Maud Evans and was so fascinated by this brief story that I determined to research it. And what a fascinating story it has turned out to be. Born in Bristol to an actress and a sailor, the fourteen short years of her life were, perhaps, typical of the times. Victorian society seemed to pay little heed to the well-being of children and Louisa was no exception - passed from pillar to post - as my book says, "a Victorian game of pass the inconvenient parcel". Her life was itinerant, perhaps exciting for one brief week. Her death dramatic but could have been avoided.



One thought that has remained with me after completing my research and the book - had she not drowned in such bizarre circumstances she would have faded into obscurity as did other "performers" of this period. She wanted to be famous - she achieved her ambition, but for all the wrong reasons".

Rosemary Chaloner

The book is priced at £9.99 (plus postage, if required). If you would like a copy, contact Rosemary on 02920 236022.

The 75th anniversary of Major Jacques de Guelis' first mission into France was featured in BBC Wales online news on 6th August, with an article headlined "Unknown WW2 secret agent buried in Cardiff cemetery". It was written by Greg Lewis, who is the co-author of "Shadow Warriors of World War II: The Daring Women of the OSS and the SOE", so naturally links de Guelis to Virginia Hall, a one-legged spy who became the Gestapo's most wanted agent in France. The news article can be found here

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-36954878>
... and adds much to the de Guelis story.

Paul Jones, who has been steadily transcribing old burial diaries, recently found that virtually every other diary page had someone from Cairns Street on it. This warranted further investigation, which discovered that the street was so notorious for drink that it was nicknamed Flagon Alley. This led to protests from local residents, which resulted in the road being renamed Rhymney Street in 1935.

You may have noticed temporary barriers at the pedestrian gates at the Fair oak Road entrance. The original gates were suffering from old age, so have been taken to Penybryn Engineering for the replacement of parts that have gone missing over the years, shot blasting and repainting. The gates are due to be re-fixed about now.

While there has been a delay to the programme for establishing an Information Centre in the chapels, orders have been placed for air conditioning and space heating equipment, which are an essential part of this plan. Also at the chapels, work is expected to continue on the renovation of windows and doors of the central bell tower section, to enhance the overall

external appearance of the chapels, together with some structural renovation internally.

Count de Lucovich



Lucovich memorial

Close to the most northerly corner of section R, you will find an imposing cross, marking the grave of Antonio Leonardo Trifone. The inscription is hard to read, but continues with his title, Count de Lucovich. The inscription at the foot of the cross indicates that his wife Isabella Maude is also buried here.



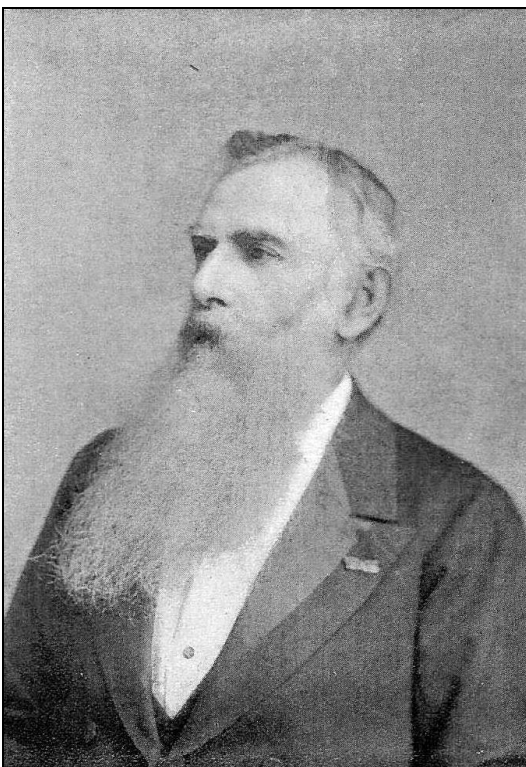
Coat of arms

The count was a Knight of the Order of the Iron Crown, a knight of the Order of Franz

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Joseph the First and an Admiral of the Noble Corps of the Bocchese Marines. He was born in 1832, the son of a renowned barrister. The memorial even bears the family coat of arms (as shown on the previous page) - is this unique in Cathays Cemetery?

The family, most probably in the person of Antonio's grandfather, was ennobled for distinguished service to the Venetian Republic, in 1757, in return for 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 the longest serving (1830 - 1916), 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 centred on the Adriatic coast of what is today Montenegro, and which would have been particularly valuable to a largely land-locked Austro-Hungarian Empire.



Antonio Trifone
image from "Contemporary Portraits 1896"

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 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. Antonio died in 1911. 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 Llan Farm, Graig Llwyn Road, Lisvane. He is reported to have ridden regularly with the Tredegar Hunt and only died around 2000, while Molly was still alive (in her 90s) in 2010. 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 either, but 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. It is also said that our Antonio's family, in later years, had a château in the area.

of course, was towards the end of the Great Famine, so it is unlikely that the family had an easy life. Anyway, 10 years later, some of the family, at least, had sought sanctuary across



Kotor tablet

Kotor may not currently be well known as a holiday destination, but it sits at the end of the southernmost fjord in Europe. The small fortified city is a World Heritage Site, with a cathedral dedicated to St. Tryphon. Anglicised, this would be Trifone - is this where Antonio's name came from? The cathedral 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 3rd each year.

Thomas Edgley

The headstone on Thomas Edgley's grave, close to the south west corner of Section P, was exposed during a recent workday, but it was the words 'Late Cardiff Empire Orchestra' inscribed on it that sparked curiosity.

From census records, Thomas first appears as the 8 year old youngest son of John and Mary Edgley, in County Clare in 1851. John was a shoemaker and his wife a laundress. The time,



Edgley headstone

the Irish Sea and we find Thomas living with an elder brother, John, and his family in Birmingham. At this time, Thomas' occupation is given as a domestic servant, but he must have brought some of the strong music tradition with him from Ireland because, 10 years further on, he is listed as a musician and lodging in Mynyddislwyn parish. (At this time, this was a large parish including much of the lower Ebbw and Sirhowy valleys, with coal mining and

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industrial towns, like Risca, Newbridge and Pontllanfraith.)

By 1991, Thomas has settled in Cardiff, where he seems to be established as a musician, although it is only 20 years later that the record is more specific: cornet player, Moss Empire. However, it seems a reasonable assumption that after "learning his trade" around South Wales for around 20 years, he landed a job at the top music hall in the foremost and wealthiest town in the principality. It seems that he never married, but continued to work into his seventies. He died in 1923, at the age of 80.

Some of our older readers may remember the Empire Cinema in Queen Street, but we can trace the origins of the theatre in this location back to Levino's Hall, which was first opened in the spring of 1887 by Professor Dolph Levino, who was noted for his mesmerism experiments. Its shows gained rapid popularity and, within a year, closed for two months for extensive alterations to the building and lavish and expensive decoration, re-opening as Levino's Museum of Varieties. Contrarily, Levino's public appear to have reacted negatively to the plusher environment and the venue's popularity declined. Levino himself headed for America.

Around this time, the building (and some adjoining properties) were bought by Mrs. Stoll and her son Oswald, who renamed it the Empire Palace of Varieties. Business now boomed and a merger with the Moss family allowed the Empire to be re-built, in 1896, on the site of the original theatre and an adjacent property. The Company went on to become Stoll Moss Theatres, a huge Company running many theatres around the country. Three years later, the Empire was gutted by fire. Oswald Stoll's resilience and organising ability were apparent when he secured the nearby Panopticon Theatre and his show continued there the day after the fire. Within a year, the Empire had been rebuilt with even more superior fittings and decoration ... and the most

advanced fire precautions known at that time. It went on to be the home of Variety in Cardiff for the next three decades with all the biggest music hall and variety names appearing there.



*Empire Theatre around 1910
courtesy of Denis Jones*

In 1931 the Empire Theatre was converted for Cinema use by its new owners Gaumont British Theatres Corporation and, two years later, a Compton theatre organ was installed. Gaumont retained the stage and the Empire name, and the Theatre ran with live shows and film shows until 1954, when it was renamed Gaumont, until its eventual closure at the end of 1961.

Sadly the building was demolished in 1962 to make way for a C & A clothing store, although entertainment did carry on in the form of a ballroom which was built underneath the store with the Top Rank name. Even this building has now gone, the site having been redeveloped by Primark.

Recent Events

Walks

The dramatised version of the Heritage Walk, presented under the title **Trails & Tales** -

Bringing the Past to Life, was run on successive **Tuesdays, 7th and 14th June**. This collaboration lived up to its title, with excellent performances by students from the **University of South Wales**, acting out graveside stories about those buried in the Cemetery, from the rich, heroic or esteemed to the profoundly tragic and emblematic. Both evenings were thoroughly enjoyed by large audiences.

The Friends **Midsummer Walk**, on **Tuesday 21st June** was led by **Gordon Hindess**. Once again, the aim was to showcase the results of recent discoveries and research. The tales inspired by the graves included a showman dynasty, a prominent industrialist and philanthropist, a naval tragedy and four lost limbs, not to mention two of the Cemetery's special trees. An enjoyable evening for the 30 or so guests ended with a chance to look at the restored chapels.

On **Sunday 10th July**, **Roger Swann** of Bereavement Services led the **Heritage Walk**, for a relatively small, but enthusiastic, group of visitors.

Common to both of the last two walks was the high proportion of first time visitors, who were pleased to find out how much the Cemetery has to offer.

Our Regular Events

Monthly Workdays

The summer recess means that there is only one workday to report on. While, on the face of it, this was much the same as many other workdays i.e. reining back nature's over-enthusiastic growth, it also provided something new to think about. Tackling the overgrown laurel hedge by the Allensbank Road entrance, required small, but unusual, precautions to be taken. It is not commonly known that the leaves and fruit pips contain cyanolipids that are capable of releasing cyanide and benzaldehyde. The latter has the characteristic almond smell associated with cyanide which can

starve the central nervous system of oxygen and, thus, cause death. Simple pruning in the open air necessitates only basic hygiene - hand washing afterwards, while the trimmings need to be bagged and disposed of safely. More significant risk is associated with shredding (a modern day method of disposal that might be employed unwittingly) or accidental consumption. Going back 100 years or more, there are records of death due to consuming by mistake and even murder, using a distillation from the leaves!

If you fancy some gentle exercise in sociable company, why not join us on the last Saturday of the month, the next three being **24th September, 29th October and 26th November**. We meet by the chapels at 10 am and work until noon, with a break for elevenses. You can work at your own pace and tools and gloves are provided.

Weekly Health Walks

Everyone is welcome on these walks and afterwards, when we go to a cosy local café for a chat over tea or coffee. We meet just inside the **gates adjacent to Cathays Library** at **10.30 am every Tuesday morning**, regardless of the weather, and walk, at a leisurely pace for between 40 minutes and an hour. But these are



Bindweed

more than just walks: we endeavour to exercise the mind as well, talking about the heritage hidden in the Cemetery and the natural history. Recent walks have seen us concerned about the welfare of a forlorn looking baby pigeon and examining some bindweed to understand the

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Flanders and Swan song "Misalliance" and its sad tale of unrequited love. Following what has now become a tradition, the walk on 8th November will include a ceremonial reading of the names of those in the World War 1 military graves section of the New Cemetery.

Future Events

Walks

On **Sunday September 18th at 2.30pm**, there will be an **Open Doors Guided Walk** led by the Friends of Cathays Cemetery. Please note especially that this walk is in the **New Cemetery, north of Eastern Avenue**, and starts from just inside the **Allensbank Road entrance**.

On **Sunday October 23rd at 2pm** an **Autumn Walk** will be led by Bereavement Services, starting from the chapels, just inside the **main entrance in Fairoak Road**. This walk will concentrate on military aspects of the Cemetery, looking at the range of military insignia and relating stories of some of the servicemen buried in Cathays and their regiments.

Talks

Another contribution to the **Open Doors** programme, on **Tuesday September 13th at 7 pm**, will be an **Illustrated Talk** by **Simon Morgan**, of Mossfords and Morgans Consult. Many of you will remember Simon's previous talks for the Friends and know that this latest talk, entitled "**Memorial Symbolism Within Cathays Cemetery**", is an opportunity not to be missed. The venue for this talk will be **Room 4.45** in the **John Percival Building, Cardiff University, in Colum Drive** (behind Colum Road). The talk is free to members of the Friends, but there will be an entry fee to **non members of £2**.

On **Thursday September 15th at 7.30 pm**, the prolific local writer and television presenter, **Lionel Fanthorpe**, will be reading excerpts from the book, "**Padfoot: A Supernatural History**"

by **Lionel & Patricia Fanthorpe**. The reading will be given in the **chapels**, with **access via the main entrance in Fairoak Road**.

Tickets are **£3** each in advance from Bereavement Services - contact **02920544820** or **Thornhillreception@cardiff.gov.uk**.

Refreshments will be available and all proceeds will go to the chapel restoration.

The **Bill Mosley Memorial Lecture**, on **Tuesday November 15th at 7 pm**, will be given by **Jeff Childs**. Jeff is the author of "**Roath, Splott and Adamsdown - One Thousand Years of History**", so will talk knowledgeably about the local area. The venue for this talk will be **Room 2.03** of the **John Percival Building**. Please note that there is a **£5 Entry charge to the Public**.

10th Anniversary Celebration

This will be held on **Sunday November 27th at the chapels**. The detailed programme for the event is still being finalised, but please put a marker in your diary.

Wanted - Treasurer

The Friends are still in need of a Treasurer and would be pleased to hear from anyone who would be willing to take on this role. If you would like to know more about what would be involved, please contact the chairman, Paul Jones, for an informal chat.

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