

Autumn Glories

The Cemetery responds to each autumn in a different way, depending on the weather patterns from the middle of the year. One of the earliest fruits, blackberries, looked as if they would be abundant, but an arid September saw most of the crop wither and dry out, so that the picture below was typical.



Another disappointment was apples, where there was no fruit on the tree, presumably because the blossom and pollinating insects were out of sync. On the other hand, some of the rowans were so heavy with fruit that branches were bent down to the ground, as shown below.



The late sowing in the wild flower garden, due to Covid19 restrictions, produced patchy results, but we were pleased to see some evening primrose, a welcome addition to the flowers recorded in the Cemetery.



Evening primrose

The autumn colours didn't disappoint, with a progression of colours on different trees and shrubs. One of our favourites, the liquidamber in Section W is shown below.



Sometimes, the best visual effects are on the ground, like the carpet of pine needles on the path through Section E, pictured on the next page.

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With no significant wind for a few weeks, we found this near perfect circle of multi-coloured cherry leaves in Section U ...



... and, for the young (and some not so young!) who enjoying scrunching through them, the following layer of brown leaves in Section T.



With an unusually dry November, the fallen leaves stayed dry and crisp, providing ideal conditions for scrunching. At the end of the month, high winds picked up the dry leaves and piled them into drifts, like snow. One leaf drift behind Cathays Library was about half a metre deep.

Conditions have clearly favoured fungi and it is worth featuring those that are so good at breaking down timber. Just inside the entrance to the New Cemetery, shredded cuttings have been spread under the trees, as a mulch to suppress weeds. This sprouted the miniature forest of small fungi, pictured below.



In contrast, in the Old Cemetery (Section S) we found this fungus tackling a substantial tree trunk.



Autumn Miscellany

We were pleased ... and more than a little intrigued ... when Cathays Cemetery was chosen for the launch of a new type of funeral conveyance, the cycle hearse. This service is marketed by local funeral director, Ivor Thomas Funerals. The battery assisted hearse, pictured below, has a range of about 10 miles, which would cover most journeys from chapel of rest, to home, to church and to the cemetery or crematorium.



The hearse offers a greener option for funerals and, for the purposes of the launch, used a rainbow coloured wicker casket. The service includes a rider dressed in traditional funeral wear plus a driver's cap and a lead trike can be provided for the Funeral Director to lead the coffin.

Early in October, Fr. Anastasios Salapatas, the Greek Orthodox Archbishop visited the New Cemetery to pay his respects at the grave of Fr. Gennadios Themelis, which the Friends had been pleased to help him locate. Sadly, the cross erected on the grave has been laid down for safety reasons, so appears as shown below.



The Archbishop wore his full habit for the visit and was accompanied by the newly elected and appointed Archimandrite Iakovos Savva, Bishop of Claudiopolis, who is based at the Greek Orthodox Church of St Nicholas, in Butetown.

The war graves plot in the New Cemetery was looking immaculate for the annual Remembrance Service, held this year on Tuesday 9th November. While Covid restrictions still applied, they were not as severe as last year and, as usual, the whole event was excellently organised by Bereavement Services.



War Graves plot ready for the service

The service was officiated by the Rev Lionel Fanthorpe. After the opening address by the Lord Mayor, Cllr R McKerlich, and the playing of "The Last Post" by Alan Bourne, Director of Music, RAF St Athan, eleven wreaths were laid, including one on behalf of the Friends and the Tuesday walking group, by Jean Sanford.



Jean Sanford placing the wreath at the Cross of Remembrance

After the service, the Mayor went on to place a wreath at the Blitz Memorial in Section EJ, while the members of the walking group, assisted by other attendees, read the role of honour from the headstones in the War Graves plot, the practice which initiated these services.

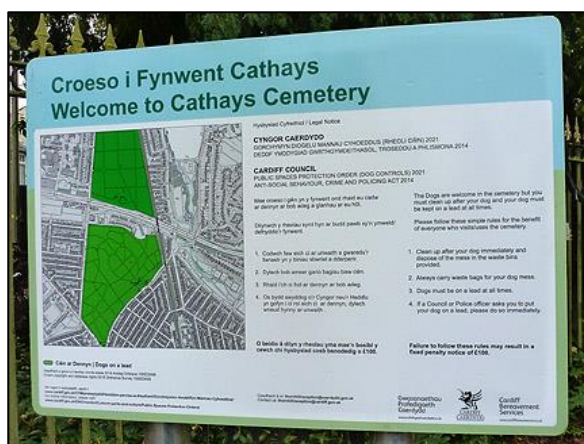
It was particularly pleasing to see the Lady Mayoress in attendance, providing the first opportunity for many to see at first hand the exquisitely made Spiridion chain of office.



Lady Mayoress chain of office

For the first time, a similar Remembrance Service was held in Western Cemetery, on 12th November. The Friends were represented by Des and Jean Sanford and Ivor Lippett, with the latter placing the wreath on this occasion.

Recent visitors to the Cemetery may have noticed the new notices which have been placed at all entrances, one of which is shown below ...



The notice explains that, under a new Public Spaces Protection Order, dogs are now allowed in the Cemetery, subject to a few simple

conditions but, principally, that they are kept on leads. Failure to comply could result in a fixed penalty notice of £100. While the change is welcome, it seems a shame that most people passing the notice will see the "Welcome to Cathays Cemetery" and the excellent map of the Cemetery, but could easily miss the important 'Dogs on Lead' message!

On 17th November, the Cemetery celebrated the reward of the Green Flag and Heritage Award for a further year, with a formal flag-raising ceremony. This was conducted by Cllr Michael Michael, Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and Environment and Martin Birch of Cardiff Bereavement Services, with the Friends representative, Ivor Lippett, pulling up the flag (pictured below).



We featured John Henry Harding in our last issue, closing with the hope that he could be given a more fitting memorial. Happily, the proposal moved quickly forward and the arrangements blossomed into an impressive unveiling ceremony on 23rd November. The event was attended by more than 70 guests, including representatives of the Welsh Regiment, several veterans organisations, family members, the current owner of the medal awarded to Harding, the Lord Mayor and his consort, the Lord-Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, together with Council officers and members of the Friends.



Assembled guests

Prof Paul Nicholson of the Friends gave the welcome address and conducted the whole event, while Tim Hill, great-great grandson of John Harding put the family perspective and Martin Berkeley, a retired officer of The Light Dragoons, gave an insight into conditions at the time and described the Charge itself. At the graveside, Tennyson's famous poem was read, the new headstone was unveiled and wreaths and floral tributes were placed, led by the Lord Mayor. Shenkin, the regimental goat was in attendance throughout.



Shenkin and Lord Mayor placing the first wreath

Guests retired to the Anglican chapel, to enjoy refreshments provided by the family and Bereavement Services. We are very grateful to all those who came to the event, many from some distance (as far afield as Yorkshire), and made contributions to proceedings. Special thanks go to Mossfords and Simon Morgan for providing a fitting memorial to this hero of The Charge, which is pictured below with the tributes left on the day.



The Harding grave is well into Section L, which is part of the Conservation Area, so the location of the grave and access to it needed an early annual trim, with slightly closer attention than normal. A surprise discovery because of this was a 'garden path', complete with barley-sugar twist kerb, on the grave of John and Ann Davis, of Dumphries Place, who died in 1875 and 1877, respectively. The sinusoidal path seems to be unique in Cathays Cemetery ... and possibly in the country - unless any reader knows better.



The "garden path"

Did you see a newspaper article headed "Google Maps for Graves"? The project is being funded by Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund as well as the genealogy websites, Family Search and My Heritage. It is being set up by the Church of England to help alleviate pressure on vicars bombarded with requests from amateur genealogists. Atlantic Geo-matics, the company mapping the churchyards, will use £10,000 scanners which

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their surveyors wear on their backs. They expect to achieve an accuracy that will pinpoint graves to within about 15cm (six inches).

It will still be necessary to incorporate information from Parish Registers, but it is hoped that the first graveyards will be accessible online through this system quite quickly, although the whole project is expected to take seven years. However, the current project is confined to Church of England graveyards, so it may be sometime time before it reaches other countries or denominations or municipal cemeteries. So don't expect to see the facility available for Cathays Cemetery in the near future. But it is undoubtedly a system which the Friends would welcome.

The Dewsbury Connection

When I came to Cardiff more than forty years ago, just after finishing university and nervous about my first proper job, I thought I was the first person in my family to have any connection with Wales, let alone Cardiff.

But then I started researching my family history.

Farnhill is not a common name, and I quickly found that I was related to just about all the other Farnhills in my home town of Dewsbury in the West Riding of Yorkshire. It was only when I started following various non-Farnhill cousin's lines that I found that relatives had preceded me to Cardiff in the mid-19th century, and that their extended Dewsbury family made a significant contribution to the development of Cardiff.

My first hit was Sidney Peel (1839-1884) - a 3rd cousin, 4 times removed! He was born in Heckmondwike, the next town to Dewsbury, in 1839, and married Annie Turner in 1863. He is described in the baptismal entries of his Yorkshire-born children as a carpet weaver. By 1871, though, he is to be found in James St, Docks, Cardiff, and is listed in the census as a

licenced victualler. He is specifically listed in a trade directory of 1875 as being the landlord of the White Hart in James Street, a hostelry he remained in charge of until his death. He is buried in Cathays Cemetery, plot M1635.

Sidney and his family, as it turns out, were just one part of a larger exodus from Dewsbury to Cardiff. Through Sidney's wife's family we find connections to other Dewsbury families, mainly public works contractors and publicans, who also made Cardiff their home.

Sidney's mother-in-law, Mercy Turner (nee Hemingway) (1809-1892), was widowed at an early age, and is likely to have come to Cardiff with Sidney and her daughter Annie. She was obviously an independent woman though, as by 1881 she was the landlady of the Dowlais Hotel in West Bute St, before moving on to manage the Railway Hotel on West Wharf. Mercy is buried next to her son-in-law, plot M1652.

Among her many siblings, Mercy had three brothers (or half-brothers), John, James and Joseph Benjamin, all of whom were born in Dewsbury and made their mark in Cardiff:

John Hemingway (1795-1872) was a stonemason and he moved around the country, working on numerous civil construction projects, for Robert Stephenson amongst others.

In Cardiff, in partnership with Charles Pearson, he is best remembered as being the principal contractor for the construction of the East Dock in the 1850s for the Marquis of Bute. Hemingway Road in the Docks is named after him.



Perhaps his most noted work was the construction of the masonry for the Britannia

Bridge across the Menai Strait in 1846. In preparation for this he moved with his family to Craig Owen in Menai Bridge where he lived for the rest of his life.

He is buried on Church Island in the Menai Strait, overlooking the bridge he helped build.

When James Hemingway (1802-1854) came to Cardiff in the late 1840s, he took up residence on the corner of St Peter Street and Plucca Lane (now City Road), on land that he had apparently purchased. The area was still largely rural and in the 1851 census he is described as a farmer of 65 acres. The area did not stay rural for long as James started developing his estate, most likely building Talworth House, the one-time residence of John Batchelor, between what is now Talworth Street and Pearson Street. Other streets built on Hemingway land were Charles Street (now part of Plasnewydd Road), Rose Street, and Lily Street.

James died in 1854, and was buried in a Roman Catholic chapel. His wife Hannah is buried in Cathays, and it is thought that he was dis-interred and re-buried with her, though his name is not on the memorial.



Hannah Hemmingway memorial, plot D930

Joseph Benjamin Hemingway (1812-1856) was probably the first Hemingway to settle in

Cardiff as he is to be found in 1841 living in Bute Street. He was variously described as a contractor or railway contractor. In 1850 he started the construction of the Grade II listed Quarry Hill House in St Mellons (now Quarry Hall Residential Home). He died in 1856 and is buried beneath the largest, Grade II listed, memorial in St Mellons' churchyard.

The Hemingways and their descendants were involved in many other construction works across Cardiff including drains, work on the Cefn Onn tunnel, and the laying out of Roath Park.

This is where it all gets a bit complicated.

Two more Dewsbury brothers, Charles and John Pearson, also came to Cardiff after working with the Hemingways on the Britannia Bridge.

Charles Pearson (1811-1870) as previously mentioned, was a partner with John Hemingway for the construction of Cardiff Docks. Indeed, in the early 1840s, he was in a partnership with all three Hemingway brothers. It was probably this close relationship which result in the naming of the street in Roath.



He settled initially in Leckwith before taking up residence in Talworth House for the last few years of his life. In 1866, his daughter Elizabeth married John Hemingway, the son of James Hemingway (above), who had started developing the area.

John Pearson (1807-1880) also settled on the 'Hemingway Estate' in Roath. In the 1871 census he is listed as being a mason, living at 41 Plucca Lane (City Road). He died on 30th March 1880, his Golden Wedding day, and is buried in Cathays. John's son, John Charles (1844-1913), another resident of City Road, was responsible for building many of the houses in Pearson Street and is buried with his father. His

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daughter Martha married Freeman Gravil, the manager and eventual owner of Raper's Temperance Hotel in Westgate Street.



Left: John Pearson memorial, plot M419
Right : headstone of Martha and Freeman Gravil, plot M261

Robert Hemingway (1806-1879) was a Dewsbury born cousin of the three brothers and a carpenter by trade, who also made his home in Cardiff between stints of contracting elsewhere. In 1877, his daughter Sarah married William the son of Robert Day (1822-1895), yet another Dewsbury born contractor at Roath Parish Church. Robert Day lived for many years in Mount Stuart Square and was responsible, amongst other things for laying out the drains in Canton. Such was his reputation that for many years he was a long-standing Chairman of the Principality Building Society.



Headstone on the grave of Robert, William and Sarah Day, plot L486

A three great grand-daughter of Robert Hemingway, Betty Morgan, married Geoffrey Dart who was for many years the Head Librarian of Cardiff.

Other members of the Dewsbury-born Hemingway clan who came to Cardiff are:

Benjamin Nowell Cooper (1823 -1870), yet another mason/contractor who lived in Moira Place, Adamsdown. He is buried in Cathays Cemetery, plot L1189

William Willans (1831-1900), a shipwright of Henry Street and Conway Road; and his son Abraham Charles Willans (1855-1906) , a shipyard manager who later became the landlord of the New Sealock Hotel in Harrowby Street. They are buried in Cathays Cemetery, plot M899.

The one 'Cardiff' Hemingway who is not related to this family is Walter Hemingway, who was Chief Constable from 1876 until his death in 1889. He was from Yorkshire though! He is buried in Cathays Cemetery, plot L604.

Such are my connections to this extended family from my home town. They may be tenuous but knowing that they are related, however distantly, and coming from a part of Dewsbury I knew as a child makes me feel quite at home when walking through their Cardiff stomping grounds.

John Farnhill

Dictionary Corner - Taphophile

Recent communications had us reaching for our dictionaries and searching the internet for advice. The outcome of this research is shared below.

A taphophile is someone who has a passion for or finds enjoyment in cemeteries. Their passion might be stimulated by epitaphs, gravestone rubbing, photography, art, the flora and fauna, the history of the deceased or driven by genealogical research. You may not have

realised it, but the definition is sufficiently broad to include you, dear reader! The word is derived from the Greek, meaning to love graves.

But don't be alarmed. Surely taphophile sounds more distinguished than other terms that have been used, like cemetery enthusiast, grave hunter, graver, cemetery (or tombstone) tourist.

The appreciation of cemeteries has evolved along with science and technology. The internet allows enthusiasts to visit cemeteries (and in some cases the gravesides of their own ancestors) from the comfort of their own home.

A taphophile is said to practice taphophilia - it is important not to confuse this with necrophilia, which is very different! There are people who describe themselves as tapho-photographers, while another word with the same derivative is taphonomy, the study of decomposing or decaying things.

But do not expect the Friends to rebrand themselves as Cathays Cemetery Taphophiliacs anytime soon.

Recent Events

Walk

On **Sunday, 24th October, Bereavement Services** provided their popular introduction to the Cemetery, the **Heritage Trail**, kindly led by **Roger Swan**. Taking in some of the most prominent graves in the Old Cemetery, the tour was enjoyed by about 15 people, who were also grateful for the opportunity, at the end, to buy some honey from the Cathays Cemetery bee hives.

Talk

Unfortunately, venue and technical problems meant the planned **Bill Mosley Memorial Lecture** had to be cancelled, but we were extremely grateful to **Dr Julian Litten FSA** for stepping in at short notice. On **9th November**, he gave a fascinating lecture on Zoom, entitled

"The Victorian Funeral : 1837-1901". He explained that there was no comparison between a Victorian funeral and the majority of the funerals that take place today. In the 19C, a funeral director visiting a newly bereaved family would see his role as assessing the family circumstances in order to decide on the quality of funeral to offer. On the other hand, poorer people could be put to unreasonable expense because of the standards set by the rich.

In talking about paupers' funerals, which were often put out to tender by burial boards, Dr Litten noted these were carried out respectfully. He also noted that the equivalent funerals today are on the rise with the cost borne by the local authority ... or us as Council Tax payers.

In Victorian times, a host of businesses and trades contributed to the overall funeral package and Dr Litten illustrated this with pictures of trade advertisements and catalogues. As a rule, Victorians took a close interest in their own funeral arrangements whereas, today, a funeral is likely to be epitomised by remarks like "I hope that is what he would have wanted." He advocated that we should all take an interest in these things and, to show that he practised what he preached, showed us pictures of his own grave and coffin!

This was a thoroughly enlightening lecture, enjoyed by about 38 people who joined online.

Our Regular Events

Monthly Workdays

Our workdays continue to be well supported and it was particularly rewarding to help prepare the area around the War Graves plot for the November Service.

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, so why not join us for a couple of hours sociable exercise? Because of the festive

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season and the AGM, there will not be a workday in December or January, after this, put the last Saturday of the month in your diary, as the next dates are **26th February, and 26th March.**

Weekly Health Walks

It was great to get going again after the 18 month break. Apart from the need to keep track-and-trace details, the walks have resumed pretty much as they have always been – sociable and informative, concentrating on the history, fauna & flora around the Cemetery.



Walkers pleased to be back in business

The walks, which last about an hour, start just inside the **gates adjacent to Cathays Library** at **10.30 am every Tuesday morning**. All are welcome and we continue the chat afterwards over tea or coffee in a local cafe.

Future Events

AGM

Because of the continued uncertainty about Covid rules, the **Annual General Meeting** of the Friends will again be on Zoom. This meeting will be on **29th January 2022 at 10am**. Agendas and other relevant papers will be sent out in January 2022 and will include details on how to join the Zoom meeting. We hope those that can will join us and apologise to those who are unable to use the technology.

Zoom Lecture

The first lecture in the 2022 programme will be via Zoom on 8 March 2022 at 7:00 pm. Entitled 'Highgate Cemetery – a Victorian Valhalla', it will be presented by Stuart Orr of Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust.

Publications

Books (about 100 pages, full colour) – £5:

Cathays Cemetery on its 150th Anniversary
Hidden Histories: Tales from Cathays Cemetery

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 029 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.