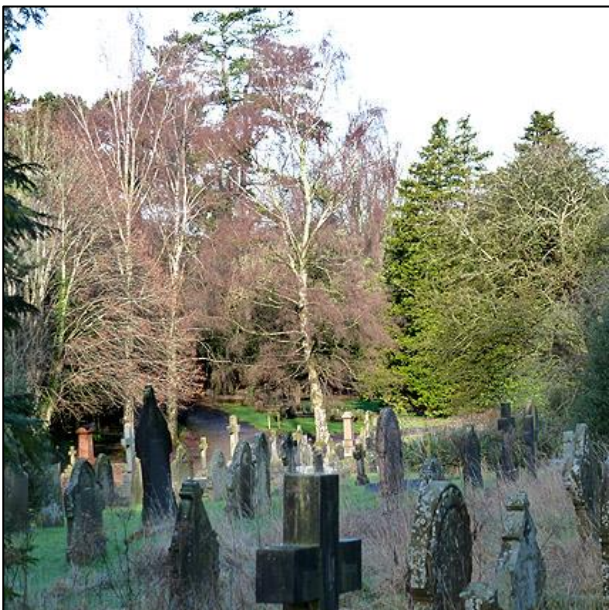


A Bit of Everything ...

... but nothing to excess. Yes, in Cardiff, there have been plenty of frosty nights, but nothing too severe, the rare snow flurry, but you needed to be quick to catch a Cemetery snow scene ...



There has been plenty of sun, but rarely the warmth to compliment it, and there have been many gloomy drizzly days though, perversely, we have had a near record for low rainfall in February. Indeed, for a time, the Cemetery was remarkably dry.



Nature has just shrugged her shoulders and got on with things, so there has always been something delightful to enjoy. As Spring approaches, the buds on deciduous trees swell and can give a distinctive colouring, sometimes almost autumnal in effect. In the February view across Section L above, the silver birches in the centre of the picture show this.

We often feature the purple crocuses that fill the most westerly corner of Section N, but make no apology for showing below a picture of them again. The area they fill is expanding and has even jumped across the adjacent paths into Sections T and RL.



With Spring events now regularly starting in Winter, in February we can rely on seeing spreads of primrose, celandine and wood anemone (the first of these pictured below in Section S) ...



And the first blossoms on cherry and bird cherry - the latter pictured below at the northernmost corner of Sections V.



Less happy news relates to the Cemetery's ageing tree stock. The wonderful avenues of Corsican, or black, pine are deteriorating and several have required major branches to be cut off to remove the possible danger of them falling unexpectedly, especially when they overhang well-walked paths. While the precise cause would need specialist diagnosis, the Corsican pine is very susceptible to red band needle blight and, today, is not recommended for planting because of this. The species is also susceptible to *Lophodermella* needle disease and shoot dieback caused by *Brunchorstia*.

As a result of prolific self seeding, the ash has become the dominant deciduous tree in the Cemetery. But ash dieback is definitely taking hold and it must be expected that the population will decrease in the coming years. This is a mixed blessing as a reduction in numbers and reversing the uncontrolled spread is desirable, but there will be demands on the maintenance regime for safety reasons.

The lone monkey puzzle tree, just inside the main entrance on the left, was looking increasingly sorry for itself during the last year and produced very few cones. It now appears to be dying upwards, suggesting a disease originating in its roots. We have our fingers crossed, but fear the worst.

It is easy to forget that, like humans, trees have a typical lifespan. Also trees have predators and new ones are appearing all the time: a parallel with Covid in humans, perhaps.



The monkey puzzle tree

While lives of 100 years or more for some larger native trees are not uncommon, smaller trees, particularly non native or exotic hybrids, may be significantly shorter. Maybe the imminent review of the Cemetery Strategy should consider the need for gradual replacement of trees that die or are toppled by gales.

The conservation areas have never really recovered from the restrictions on the annual trim in the dormant season during Covid. This problem has been exacerbated this year by problems within the probation service that have seen little activity on this important work. The picture below, taken recently in Section L tells its own story.



Winter Miscellany

Regular visitors may have spotted new plaques on the seat just inside the main entrance, on the left:



The notices, one in Welsh and one in English, identify this as a "Happy to Chat" bench. They invite you to sit, if you don't mind someone stopping to say hello. It seems that the idea started in Cardiff when a lady noticed an elderly man sitting alone on a bench for 40 minutes, ignored by passers by, all too busy to even say "hello". Did he want company? Did he want to be alone? Did anyone actually care? The initial signs were hand made and hung on a few seats in Cardiff parks. The idea was picked up on social media and has spread across the world. The wording of the original signs has generally been adopted (and translated) verbatim.



Notice on Cathays Cemetery seat

In the UK, more than a million older people say they always or often feel lonely. This can impact on memory, mental and physical health and this has become a bigger problem post Covid. But it's not just the elderly who can benefit from a random "hello". Talking to a stranger may be beneficial to people whose stress is related to a home or work environment. It can be

beneficial for any anxious person's wellbeing. So, any time you feel like a chat, just head for the seat at the Cemetery - but, until its purpose becomes better known, avoid obscuring the plaque on the seat back!

All Cemetery Friends groups have been asked if they can contribute to a project called 'Filling the Voids'. The objective is to find the graves of non-British war dead. During the two world wars, thousands of non-British soldiers and civilians died on British soil. German dead were originally buried in over 700 separate cemeteries and churchyards throughout the UK. But there are also large numbers of Italians, Americans, French, Belgians and other nationalities. Through the work of the CWGC, we have excellent records for the dead of Britain and its former empire, but there is now very little trace of these other victims of the world wars.

This is because most of the non-British dead were gradually exhumed after the war and either repatriated or concentrated into large national war cemeteries, such as the Brookwood American Cemetery in Surrey or the Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery in Staffordshire. The original plots were often reused and traces of the war dead lost.

The aim of the 'Filling the Voids' project, run by historians at the Universities of Chester and Kingston is to locate and record where the non-British war dead were originally buried and where they rest today. The hope is to get a fuller picture of the scale of wartime death and how it affected local communities. The project will establish a publicly accessible database to collate information about the individual war dead.

In February, several newly broken headstones were found in and around Section R. The memorials affected were replacements from the lawn conversion period, but the number of damaged stones in a short period was a cause for concern. Specialist investigation for

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Bereavement Services has identified the cause as exceptional weather conditions and they are now looking into ways to restore or stop this happening.



Broken headstones in Section R

Captain Baselow's Boys

In our last issue, we talked about Captain Heinrich Baselow, his wife, Sophie, and their daughter (also Sophie) and her husband, Emile Martin, who are all buried in the same plot in Section L. We can now turn our attention to Captain Baselow's three boys, who were all born in Rostock and moved with their parents to Cardiff as children. All of the family became naturalised British subjects (although they might commonly have referred to themselves as English, despite living in Wales!).

Henry David Frederick - born in 1848

Despite naturalisation, he chose to fight on the German side in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71, serving with distinction and seeing action during the key battles at Sedan and Metz. His experiences provided plenty of material for lectures which he went on to deliver about the war. In the 1881 census, we find him in a Middlesbrough boarding house, described as an iron merchant. Ten years later, he married Alice Emma Bielski at Broadway

Chapel, in Roath. She was the daughter of a Polish shipbroker and had grown up in Roath. They went on to have four children, one of whom died soon after birth.

Henry attended Broadway Wesleyan Methodist Church, supported temperance and, in 1898, campaigned against the running of trams on a Sunday. His business interests included establishing a large cigar factory in Mexico and, for a time, he was the British vice-consul in Vera Cruz. However, the Mexican climate was detrimental to his health causing him to return to the UK, spending his later years in London, though still in the cigar business. His surviving children, Florence, Henry and Alice grew up living between Middlesex and Mexico.

When Henry dies, in 1913, the funeral takes place back in Cardiff, officiated by the minister of the Broadway Church. Among those attending were the German Consul and W H Seager, the Cardiff shipowner. He is buried close to the southernmost corner of the eastern part of Section W. The location is pictured below but, perhaps surprisingly, has no memorial to mark the plot. It seems unlikely that this family could not have afforded a decent memorial or that they would have chosen not to mark the plot. From archive records of the lawn conversion procedure 60 or so years ago, there is no record of a memorial being removed from this plot at that time.



Location of Henry David Baselow's grave

After Henry's death, Emma and the children returned to Cardiff, living at 55 Westville Road, Penylan. Henry and Emma's son, Henry Frank Baselow, worked briefly in the accounts department of Morgan Wakely and Co, coal exporters, based in Mount Stuart Square. At sixteen, he joined a Public Schools Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (one of the so called Pals Battalions) and, after initial training, found himself on the Western Front, in November 1915. He returned to the UK in May 1916 for officer cadet training, at Oxford. In September that year, he was commissioned in the Hampshire Regiment, later transferring to the Machine Gun Corps. He returned to France in February 1917 and was killed in action on 5 October, aged 20. He is buried in Buttes New British Cemetery in Belgium but is remembered on a war memorial plaque that used to be in the Roath Park Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. When the chapel closed some 30 years ago, the plaque was removed, to be rediscovered propped against a wall in one of the chapels at Cathays Cemetery. The plaque is now in safe storage at Thornhill Crematorium.

Franz 'Frank' Ernst Baselow - born 1852

After his father, Captain Baselow, died in 1881, Frank continued to live with his mother in Mount Stuart Square. He was a provisions agent, meeting the needs of the seemingly endless stream of vessels calling at Cardiff, to bring in goods for the thriving port or to load up with black gold. By 1901, he and his mother had moved to 'Rostock', 1 Howard Gardens and the census of that year describes Frank as the head of the household.

In 1902, his mother dies and later the same year he marries Florence Lydia Smith, who was born on 29 October 1871 in Stoke Goldington, Buckinghamshire. Simple arithmetic tells us that Frank is about 50 and his new wife some 20 years younger than him.

Newspapers provide an insight into Frank's apparently flamboyant character. In 1888, he advertised for the return of a 'massive gold

watch seal with green and red stone', promising the finder a substantial reward. In 1907, he had a diamond tie pin, reported to be worth £23 (perhaps £3,500 today) stolen from outside a restaurant in Soho. He was clearly a wealthy man but, when he dies in 1915, aged 64, probate records valued his estate at just £105. Yet the memorial (pictured below) in Cathays Cemetery, topped by a bespoke carved stone sculpture speaks of wealth.



Note the wooden post in the foreground which marks a stop on the Heritage Trail, a guide produced by Bereavement Services. A downloadable copy can be found on the Friends' website.

The disparity between the value of the estate and the likely cost of the memorial feeds speculation. Florence's family appear to have been quite wealthy. Her father, Thomas, was a farmer, with a holding of 164 acres and employing around 27 workers. He also had interests in building and brick and tile making. Could there have been concern that the family fortune might have been dissipated by Frank's flamboyant lifestyle? Was the concern recognised in a 19C version of today's prenuptial agreement?

Frank and Florence had one child, Frank Thomas Henry, born in 1904, and he was only about ten when his father died. So, it may have been in recognition of the likelihood that Florence could be left to bring up a young child on her own that prompted some prudent inheritance planning.

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While this is far more common today, could Frank and Florence have been pioneers of this sort of financial planning?

What seems more certain is that the poignant sculpture of a mother reading to a child, epitomises the situation which the widowed Florence and young Frank found themselves in. This memorial is one of the finest in the Cemetery and is well-deserving of its place on the Heritage Trail. Sadly, at the present time, it is well coated in lichen and grime and the inscription on it is hard to read. Oh for a little TLC!



Baselow mother and child sculpture

Florence joined her husband in 1950, having reached the age of 78. Their son, Frank Thomas Henry Baselow, died in Croydon, in 1961, aged 57, with no known next of kin. He returned to Cardiff to be reunited with his parents in Cathays Cemetery.

Arthur Jahanas August - born 1862

In 1881, he is living in the family home in Mount Stuart Square and working as a chemist's assistant but, in 1888, he emigrates to America, where he works as a 'druggist', in Manhattan. He becomes an American citizen, marries Joanna Salinger, in 1897, and they have two daughters, Marjorie Louise Baselow and Dorothy Lorna Baselow. In 1911, the family is living on East 96th Street and Arthur is the manager of the Altamont Pharmacy on 7th

Avenue, a few yards from Times Square. A brain haemorrhage results in his sudden death in 1914, aged 52, and his funeral took place at St Peter's Church, Manhattan.

Baselow Descendants

It is clear from the foregoing that there is no continuity of the male line, but it is highly likely that there are descendants through the female grandchildren of Captain Baselow. While we have not attempted to further research the family up to the present day, we would be very interested if anyone can bring the story up to date.

We are pleased to acknowledge research by Kathy Thomas into the Baselow family, which made writing our articles so much easier.

Recent Events

AGM

After two years of online AGMs, it was back to normal this year - that is, if anything can be regarded as normal again. It was certainly appreciated by those who lacked the facilities to be present during Covid, so could join in again. For others who cannot readily get to Cardiff, but had enjoyed the last two meetings, it was not so good. In terms of attendance numbers, the pluses and minuses balanced out.

The AGM was held in the Anglican Chapel at the Cemetery on Saturday 4th February, starting at 10.00 a.m. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending, noting that this was a further step towards normality, as activities such as walks and workdays and, more recently in-person talks had already resumed. The papers for the AGM had been sent out by post and he hoped that everyone had received them. There were a few apologies for absence and these were recorded. The minutes of last year's AGM were accepted and there were no matters arising.

The Chairman reported on a surprisingly busy and successful year, highlighting:

- the live streaming of one of the

Heritage Walks on WalesOnline

- several guided walks or talks to meet requests from other groups
- 3 sold out performances of Graveyard Voices by the A48 Theatre Company, who also performed other works by the Living Lines writers group, relating to the Cemetery, both in the chapels and at other venues across Cardiff
- an attendance of over 200 people at Open Doors, which included two walks during the day with different itineraries and leaders, each attracting about 40 people
- representation at the Remembrance Services in both Cathays and Western Cemetery
- a significant increase in activity on social media

He went on to thank the following:

- Bereavement Services, especially Carmel Thomas and Denise Rogers, for their continuing and abundant support
- Roger Swan, no longer with Bereavement Services, but continuing to lead the Heritage Walk and generally support activities in the Cemetery
- the Probation Service, for organising so much of the maintenance work in the Cemetery
- the hard working committee members
- Gordon Hindess, for his work on the newsletter, presenting the Cemetery at talks and walks, etc
- Simon Morgan of Mossfords
- Cardiff University School of History, Archaeology and Religion, for the use of their lecture theatre and Zoom facilities
- the unstinting support of members
- Linda Jones, his wife, with her help and support in so many ways

In his report, the President endorsed the Chairman's report, but chose to highlight other aspects of what had been happening, such as:

- thanks to a lot work by Carmel Thomas,

particularly obtaining tenders and processing the necessary approvals on a listed structure, it was hoped to see the replacement of the missing shield on the main entrance arch and other restorative works start soon

- to facilitate the use of the chapels in evenings, lighting of the entrance area was being pursued. With changes to parking arrangements at the University, this would help with the aim to bring the Friends' talks programme to the chapels
- in response to several requests to raise the subscription rate, the committee had now agreed to do this. The increase from £5 to £10 would take effect after the renewals currently due
- attention was drawn to the Events Programme for 2023, with a request for continued support
- he emphasized that few cemetery friends groups enjoyed the the level of support which we receive from Bereavement Services and for which we are greatly indebted
- collaboration with the Wildlife Trust for South & West Wales and other local groups, means that bird boxes for a variety of species will be placed shortly in the Cemetery, ready for this year's nesting season

In presenting the audited accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022, the Treasurer noted that the balance on the account had increased by approximately £1000. Membership subscriptions had bounced back after the previous year's subscription holiday and there had been several new members. The drop in donations was largely linked to the subscription holiday, when many members had chosen to keep standing orders running, with the sums being treated as donations. Publication income had increased, thanks to the production of new booklets and sales at events, with particular recognition to the performances of the A46 Theatre Company. It was noted that a

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significant portion of the account surplus would be committed in the coming year to planned works and equipment acquisition. Attention was drawn to the Notes to the Accounts, regarding the the publication stock and the support "in kind" from Bereavement Services and the University.

There was no competition for officer or member posts on the Trustees, all nominees were duly nominated and seconded and the new committee was elected unanimously. The only changes were that Ian Campbell had stood down because of conflicting commitments, while his contribution while in post was gratefully acknowledged, and Sue Clancy, who was previously a co-opted member, becomes an elected one. So the trustees are now:

Chairman: Paul Jones

Treasurer: John Farnhill

Trustees: Sue Clancy, Jean Sanford, Margaret Smith, Ivor Lippett, Paul Nicholson (Honorary President) and Des Sanford.

Carmel Thomas gave an update on behalf of Bereavement Services, thanking the Friends for their continued support. The Cemetery had again gained the Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards and applications for these awards for the current year have been submitted. The chapels are well used for weddings, funerals, staff and third party meetings, performances, etc. She was grateful to the Friends for their attendance and involvement in Remembrance Services both here and at Western Cemetery. She was pleased to note the significant involvement of local schools, using the Cemetery as an educational resource. In closing, Carmel noted that the Bereavement Services' Strategy for the Cemetery was due to be updated this year and that the Friends would be consulted.

The last two items on the agenda were taken together, the most significant points being:

- Thanks were due to Michael Fairclough for his dedication to litter picking in the Cemetery, but it was considered that

the problem might be eased by continued replacement of litter bins.

- In response to a query about insurance for the proposed new shield on the main entrance arch, it was considered that it would not be especially vulnerable, nor require special consideration for indemnity purposes.
- The notice board on the boundary fence a short distance to the west of the main gates has fallen into disrepair. As its role has also become superfluous, it will be removed.
- There was a discussion about the possible re-erection of fallen memorials (e.g. one of the trio on the plot of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd). While the desirability may be accepted, there were legal problems. Carmel Thomas undertook to review the related conditions and report to the committee.

The meeting closed at 10.50am.

Our Regular Events

Monthly Workdays

Well, things don't always go to plan! We don't normally have a workday in January, but we did this year. And our normal meeting day is a Saturday, but the February workday was rearranged for the Sunday. The late changes were primarily to agree arrangements for the erection of the new bird boxes and, then, to carry out the work before the main nesting season. It also provided the opportunity to return our tools to the store room after the repair of its roof and to tidy up the Anglican chapel in advance of the AGM.

The fixing of the new bird boxes proved a satisfying day, with everybody present involved, including a couple of younger helpers. In total, a dozen boxes, aimed particularly at members of the tit family, were put up in the conservation areas. We look forward to seeing how much of the new accommodation is taken up.



Denise Rogers fixing one of the bird boxes

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? Hopefully, there will be no last minute changes, so put the last Saturday of the month in your diary, as the next dates are **25th March, 29th April, 27th May and 24th June.**

Weekly Walks

While winter weather tests the mettle of our group, none have been found wanting, so we have always had a reasonable turnout.



Wet Tuesday walk

But it doesn't rain all the time ...



Dry Tuesday walk

All are welcome on these weekly walks, which are not strenuous and concentrate on finding the seasonal highlights around the Cemetery, while being informative about the history of the Cemetery and those buried in it. These sociable walks, which last about an hour, start just inside the **gates adjacent to Cathays Library** at **10.30 am every Tuesday morning**. The socialising continues afterwards over tea or coffee in a local cafe.

Future Events

Talks

Please note that the venue for our talks will now be the Anglican chapel at the Cemetery.

On **Tuesday 25th April 2023 at 7.00 pm**, **Rosemary Challenor** will talk about "**Angels in the Line of Fire**", looking at the bravery and dedication of women in times of conflict. Many readers will be familiar with Rosemary from her book about Louisa Maud Evans, "**The Balloon Girl**", or, indeed, her talk to the Friends on the same subject a few years ago. In her past, she has been a dancer, stage manager, Redcoat, hotel hostess and facilitator at the Cardiff Story Museum. But now she is committed to researching and writing about fascinating people with a local interest ... and this lecture will show how well she does it.

On **Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at 7.00 pm**, **Peter Finch** will give a talk on "**Edging the City**", on the theme of his book of the same title, published in August 2022. Peter's response to the 2020 lockdown restrictions, confining people to their local authority area, was to begin walking the boundary of his, Cardiff. This talk will tell you what he found. Peter is a prolific poet and perhaps the foremost chronicler of Cardiff, past and present. He is also a critic, rock fan and psychogeographer and much in demand as a reader and lecturer, where he is always entertaining. You may be tempted to "google" psychogeography, but still be none the wiser about this newly emerging discipline. Maybe this lecture will help your understanding

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with some local examples.

Walks

The walks will start just inside the **main entrance in Fairoak Road.**

On **Sunday April 23rd at 11 am**, the **Heritage Walk** will be led by **Roger Swan**, on behalf of **Bereavement Services**. If you are new to the Cemetery, this walk will provide an excellent introduction.

On **Tuesday June 20th at 7 pm**, **Gordon Hindess** of the Friends of Cathays Cemetery will lead the **Midsummer Walk**. After last year's excursion to the New Cemetery, we will be back in the Old Cemetery. As usual, the primary aim will be to present the results of more recent research into the residents of the Cemetery.

Other Events

The **A48 Theatre Company** will again be performing to **new scripts by the writers of Living Lines** on a guided walk around the Cemetery on **Tuesday 13th June at 7 pm**, **Thursday 15th June at 7 pm** and **Sunday 18th June at 2 pm**. There will be a small charge for these events. Details are subject to confirmation, so please check closer to the time on the Bereavement Services' website, the Friends' website, social media and posters on the Cemetery gates.

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.

Themed guides (12 - 20 pages) - mostly £1.50 with black & white images or £2.00 for those with colour images. Because of disproportionate postal charges, these booklets have generally only been sold at events. The stock was replenished post Covid and there are some 20 titles available, many with new subjects. Those currently available are:

Murder at Cathays
The Cardiff Blitz and Cathays Cemetery
Another batch of Murders at Cathays
Builders & Architects at Cathays Cemetery
The Five Legs of Cathays
Restoring the Chapels at Cathays Cemetery
Sportsmen in Cathays Cemetery
Doctors & Men of Medicine
Exotic Trees in Cathays Cemetery
Cathays Cemetery Tree Trail
Cardiff Mayors in Cathays Cemetery
More Mayors & Councillors in Cathays Cemetery
Circuses & Fairs in Cathays Cemetery
Wild Flowers in Cathays Cemetery
Another Bunch of Wild Flowers
Men & Women of The Church
Mentioned In Stone - - Non-CWGC Graves
The Cemetery Gates
Queen Victoria's Wars in Cathays Cemetery
The Crimean War in Cathays Cemetery
The Boer War in Cathays Cemetery

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