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The Story of Our Cemetery

Welcome to Bedford Cemetery. Opened in 1855, the cemetery has been part of the town's history for more than 170 years. Covering 36 acres, the cemetery has approximately 100,000 interments and 16,000 memorials including a dedicated area of war graves.

In 1999, a small group of local residents started work uncovering and researching memorials along with improving the accessibility of the site. A quarter of a century later, the group, now called the **Friends of Bedford Cemetery**, are still researching and caring for this remarkable place.

Our eleven new interpretation panels are designed to bring the cemetery's history to life and encourage more people to appreciate, explore and enjoy this fascinating space.

We are incredibly grateful to our exhibition sponsors the **Gale Family Trust and Bedford Architectural, Archaeological and Local History Society (BAALHS)** for financially supporting this project.

A view of Bedford from the Cemetery circa 1860

The Story of Our Cemetery

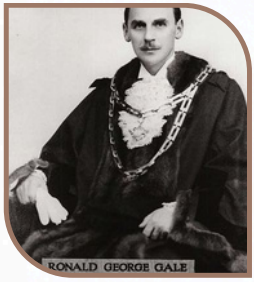
Notes on Panels & Suggested Further Reading

The History of Bedford Cemetery

Timeline of the cemetery and the people who influenced its development such as James Wyatt, Thomas Jobson Jackson, Albert Prosser and Thomas Dann. **Further reading:** "Bedford's Victorian Cemetery" published by the Friends of Bedford Cemetery 2022. See also the Friend's website www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk

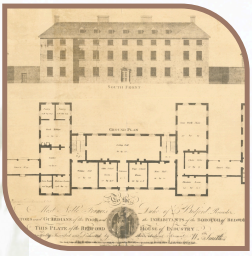
Remember Me This Way

Examples of **different styles of memorials** which can be seen in the cemetery and the **symbolism** of memorial motifs such as crosses and angels. **Further reading:** "Bedford's Victorian Cemetery" published by the Friends of Bedford Cemetery 2022.
See also the Friend's website www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk



Notable Bedfordians

Bedfordians who shaped the development of our town including Charles Wells, Cecil Higgins and Ronald Gale. **Further reading:** "Bedford's Victorian Cemetery" published by the Friends of Bedford Cemetery 2022. "A Town transformed: Bedford in the 1950s-1970s", author Bob Ricketts published 2026.
See also the Friend's website www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk



Bedford Workhouse

There are many **workhouse burial**s at the cemetery, some with hopeful stories and some with tragic stories. **Further reading:** "Private Charity and the Public Purse: Development of Bedford General Hospital, 1794-1988", author Bernard Cashman, published 1988. "The Workhouse Encyclopedia", author Peter Higginbotham, published 2012. For personal stories see https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1749449?page=1#sr-261580921

New Bedfordians

Pearl Thompson was one of many who settled in Bedford as part of post WW2 migration from overseas. **Further reading:** "Bedford's Victorian Cemetery" published by the Friends of Bedford Cemetery 2022.
"A Town Transformed: Bedford in the 1950s-1970s", author Bob Ricketts published 2026.
"The Unmelting Pot", author J Brown, published 1970.
See also the Friend's website
www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk

The Panacea Society Graves

A millenarian community based in Bedford, many P**anacea Society** members are buried at the cemetery. **Further reading:** Bedford's Victorian Cemetery published by the Friends of Bedford Cemetery 2022.
"Imagining Eden", author Adrian Bean, published 2018.
See also the Friend's website
www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk

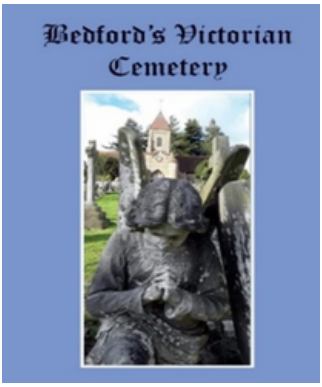
Bedford's Highlanders

The story of the **Highland soldiers' arrival in Bedford** in August 1914 and their tragic losses due to disease. **Further reading:** Bedford's Victorian Cemetery published by the Friends of Bedford Cemetery 2022.
Local historian Richard Galley's blog
https://bedfordhighlanders.blogspot.com/
See also the Friend's website
www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk

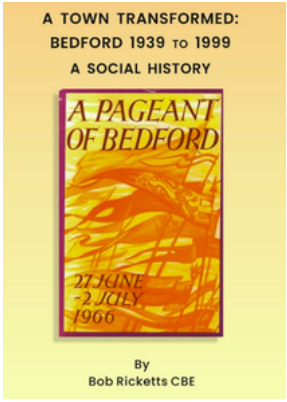
Ruth Hogan & The Wisdom of Sally Red Shoes

A novel of unexpected friendships, second chances and dark secrets with many scenes inspired by the author's dog walks around the cemetery. **Further reading:** "The Wisdom of Sally Red Shoes", author Ruth Hogan, published 2018. See also https://www.ruthhogan.co.uk/ for details of Ruth's other publications.

Publications on Sale today



£15, or £5 if a member of the Friends



£10

To make a donation please scan the QR below with your phone camera or vist www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk/donate Thank you!

For information on volunteering with the Friends please see https://fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk/volunteering/

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Foster Hill Road Cemetery

www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk