

= Cardiff Castle =

Cardiff Castle ( Welsh : Castell Caerdydd ) is a medieval castle and Victorian Gothic revival mansion located in the city centre of Cardiff , Wales . The original motte and bailey castle was built in the late 11th century by Norman invaders on top of a 3rd @-@ century Roman fort . The castle was commissioned by either William the Conqueror or by Robert Fitzhamon , and formed the heart of the medieval town of Cardiff and the Marcher Lord territory of Glamorgan . In the 12th century the castle began to be rebuilt in stone , probably by Robert of Gloucester , with a shell keep and substantial defensive walls being erected . Further work was conducted by Richard de Clare , 6th Earl of Gloucester in the second half of the 13th century . Cardiff Castle was repeatedly involved in the conflicts between the Anglo @-@ Normans and the Welsh , being attacked several times in the 12th century , and stormed in 1404 during the revolt of Owain Glyndŵr .

After being held by the de Clare and Despenser families for several centuries the castle was acquired by Richard de Beauchamp in 1423 . Richard conducted extensive work at the castle , founding the main range on the west side of the castle , dominated by a tall , octagonal tower . Following the Wars of the Roses the status of the castle as a Marcher territory was revoked and its military significance began to decline . The Herbert family took over the property in 1550 , remodelling parts of the main range and carrying out construction work in the outer bailey , then occupied by Cardiff 's Shire Hall and other buildings . During the English Civil War Cardiff Castle was initially taken by Parliamentary force , but was regained by Royalist supporters in 1645 . When fighting broke out again in 1648 , a Royalist army attacked Cardiff in a bid to regain the castle , leading to the battle of St Fagans just outside the city . Cardiff Castle escaped potential destruction by Parliament after the war and was instead garrisoned to protect against a possible Scottish invasion .

In the mid @-@ 18th century , Cardiff Castle passed into the hands of the Marquesses of Bute . John Stuart , the first Marquess , employed Capability Brown and Henry Holland to renovate the main range , turning it into a Georgian mansion , and to landscape the castle grounds , demolishing many of the older medieval buildings and walls . During the first half of the 19th century the family became extremely wealthy as a result of the growth of the coal industry in Glamorgan . The third Marquess , John Crichton @-@ Stuart , used this wealth to back an extensive programme of renovations under William Burges . Burges remodelled the castle in a Gothic revival style , lavishing money and attention on the main range . The resulting interior designs are considered to be amongst " the most magnificent that the gothic revival ever achieved " . The grounds were re @-@ landscaped and , following the discovery of the old Roman remains , reconstructed walls and a gatehouse in a Roman style were incorporated into the castle design . Extensive landscaped parks were built around the outside of the castle .

In the early 20th century the fourth Marquess inherited the castle and construction work continued into the 1920s . The Bute lands and commercial interests around Cardiff were sold off or nationalised during the period until , by the time of the Second World War , little was left except the castle . During the war , extensive air raid shelters were built in the castle walls , able to hold up to 1 @,@ 800 people . When the Marquess died in 1947 , the castle was given to the city of Cardiff . Today the castle is run as a tourist attraction , with the grounds housing the " Firing Line " regimental museum and interpretation centre . The castle has also served as a venue for events , including musical performances and festivals .

= = History = =

= = = 1st ? 4th centuries AD = = =

The future site of Cardiff Castle was first used by the Romans as a defensive location for many years . The first fort was probably built about AD 55 and occupied until AD 80 . It was a rectangular structure much larger than the current site , and formed part of the southern Roman border in Wales

during the conquest of the Silures . When the border advanced , defences became less important and the fort was replaced with a sequence of two , much smaller , fortifications on the north side of the current site .

A fourth fort was built in the middle of the 3rd century in order to combat the pirate threat along the coast , and forms the basis of the Roman remains seen on the castle site . The fort was almost square in design , approximately 635 feet ( 194 m ) by 603 feet ( 184 m ) large , constructed from limestone brought by sea from Penarth . The fort 's irregular shape was determined by the River Taff that flowed along the west side of the walls . The sea would have come much closer to the site than is the case in the 21st century , and the fort would have directly overlooked the harbour . This Roman fort was probably occupied at least until the end of the 4th century , but it is unclear when it was finally abandoned . There is no evidence for the re @-@ occupation of the site until the 11th century .

= = = 11th century = = =

The Normans began to make incursions into South Wales from the late 1060s onwards , pushing westwards from their bases in recently occupied England . Their advance was marked by the construction of castles , frequently on old Roman sites , and the creation of regional lordships . The reuse of Roman sites produced considerable savings in the manpower required to construct large earth fortifications .

Cardiff Castle was built during this period . There are two possible dates for the construction ; it is possible that William the Conqueror built a castle at Cardiff as early as 1081 on his return from his pilgrimage to St Davids . Alternatively the first Norman fortification may have been constructed around 1091 by Robert Fitzhamon , the lord of Gloucester . Fitzhamon invaded the region in 1090 , and used the castle as a base for the occupation of the rest of southern Glamorgan over the next few years . The site was close to the sea and could be easily supplied by ship , was well protected by the Rivers Taff and Rhymney and also controlled the old Roman road running along the coast .

Cardiff Castle was a motte @-@ and @-@ bailey design . The old Roman walls had collapsed and the Normans used their remains as the basis for the outer castle perimeter , digging a defensive trench and throwing up a 27 @-@ foot ( 8 @.@ 2 m ) high bank of earth over the Roman fortifications . The Normans further divided the castle with an internal wall to form an inner and an outer bailey . In the north @-@ west corner of the castle a wooden keep was constructed on top of a 40 @-@ foot ( 12 m ) tall earth motte , surrounded by a 30 @-@ foot ( 9 @.@ 1 m ) wide moat . The motte was the largest built in Wales . The overall size of the castle was around 8 @.@ 25 acres ( 3 @.@ 34 ha ) , with the inner bailey being around 2 acres ( 0 @.@ 81 ha ) in size . Mills were essential to local communities during this period , and the castle mill was located outside the west side of the castle , fed by the River Taff ; under local feudal law , the residents of Cardiff were required to use this mill to grind their own grain .

The conquered lands in Glamorgan were given out in packages called knights ' fees , and many of these knights held their lands on condition that they provided forces to protect Cardiff Castle . Under this approach , called a castle @-@ guard system , some knights were required to maintain buildings called " houses " within the castle itself , in the outer bailey . Anglo @-@ Saxon peasants settled the region around Cardiff , bringing with them English customs , although Welsh lords continued to rule the more remote districts almost independently until the 14th century . Cardiff Castle was a Marcher Lord territory , enjoying special privileges and independence from the English Crown . The medieval town of Cardiff spread out from the south side of the castle .

= = = 12th ? 14th centuries = = =

FitzHamon was fatally injured at the Battle of Tinchebray in 1106 and died shortly afterwards . Henry I then gave the castle to Robert of Gloucester in 1122 , the king 's illegitimate son and the husband of FitzHamon 's daughter , Mabe . After the failed attempt of Robert Curthose , duke of Normandy , William the Conqueror 's eldest son , to take England from Henry I , Robert of

Normandy was imprisoned in the castle until his death in 1134 . Robert held the castle during the troubled years of the Anarchy in England and Wales and passed it on to his son , William Fitz Robert . Around the middle of the century , possibly under Robert of Gloucester , a 77 @-@ foot ( 23 m ) wide , 30 @-@ foot ( 9 @. @ 1 m ) high shell keep was constructed on top of the motte , along with a stone wall around the south and west sides of the inner bailey . The polygonal shell keep has architectural links to a similar design at Arundel Castle . The building work was probably undertaken in response to the threat posed following the Welsh uprising of 1136 .

Tensions with the Welsh continued , and in 1158 Ifor Bach raided the castle and took William hostage for a period . A further attack followed in 1183 . By 1184 town walls had been built around Cardiff , and the West Gate to the town was constructed in the gap between the castle and the river . William died in 1183 , leaving three daughters , one of whom , Isabel , Countess of Gloucester was declared the sole heir to the estate by Henry II . This was contrary to normal legal custom in England , and was done in order that Henry could then marry her to his youngest son Prince John and thus provide him with extensive lands . John later divorced Isabel , but he retained control of the castle until she married Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1214 .

Upon Isabel 's death in 1217 the castle passed through her sister to Gilbert de Clare , becoming part of the Honour of Clare , a major grouping of estates and fortifications in medieval England . The castle formed the centre of the family 's power in South Wales , although the de Clares typically preferred to reside in their castles at Clare and Tonbridge . Gilbert 's son , Richard de Clare , 6th Earl of Gloucester , carried out building work at the castle in the late 13th century , constructing the Black Tower that forms part of the southern gateway seen today . On the ground floor the tower contained the Stvell Oged and Stavell Wenn chambers , with three rooms constructed above them . Richard was also probably responsible for rebuilding the northern and eastern walls of the inner bailey in stone . The inner bailey was reached through a gatehouse on the eastern side , protected by two circular towers and later called the Exchequer Gate . The defensive work may have been prompted by the threat posed by the hostile Welsh leader Llywelyn ap Gruffudd , Prince of Wales .

Richard 's grandson , Gilbert de Clare , the last male de Clare , died at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314 and the castle was given to Hugh Despenser the Younger , the controversial favourite of Edward II . Poor harvests and harsh governance by the Despenser family encouraged a Welsh rebellion under Llywelyn Bren in 1316 ; this was crushed and Llywelyn was hanged , drawn and quartered in Cardiff Castle in 1318 on Hugh 's orders . The execution attracted much criticism from across both the English and Welsh communities , and in 1321 Hugh arrested Sir William Fleming as a scapegoat for the incident , first detaining him in the Black Tower and then executing him in the castle grounds . Conflict between the Despensers and the other Marcher Lords broke out soon after , leading to the castle being sacked in 1321 during the Despenser War . The Despensers recovered the castle and retained it for the rest of the century , despite the execution of Hugh Despenser for treason in 1326 . Under a 1340 charter granted by the Despensers , the castle 's constable was made the de facto mayor of Cardiff , controlling the local courts .

= = = 15th ? 16th centuries = = =

By the 15th century , the Despensers were increasingly using Caerphilly Castle as their main residence in the region rather than Cardiff . Thomas le Despenser was executed in 1400 on charges of conspiring against Henry IV . In 1401 rebellion broke out in North Wales under the leadership of Owain Glyndŵr , quickly spreading across the rest of the country . In 1404 Cardiff and the castle were taken by the rebels , causing considerable damage to the Black Tower and the southern gatehouse in the process . On Thomas 's death the castle passed first to his young son , Richard , and on his death in 1414 , through his daughter Isabel to the Beauchamp family . Isabel first married Richard de Beauchamp , the Earl of Worcester and then , on his death , to his cousin Richard de Beauchamp , the Earl of Warwick , in 1423 .

Richard did not acquire Caerphilly Castle as part of the marriage settlement , so he set about redeveloping Cardiff instead . He built a new tower alongside the Black Tower in 1430 , restoring the gateway , and extended the motte defences . He also constructed a substantial new domestic range

in the south @-@ west of the site between 1425 and 1439 , with a central octagonal tower 75 @-@ foot ( 23 m ) high , sporting defensive machicolations , and featuring four smaller polygonal turrets facing the inner bailey . The range was built of Lias ashlar stone with limestone used for some of the details , set upon the spur bases characteristic of South Wales and incorporated parts of the older 4th and 13th century walls . The buildings were influenced by similar work in the previous century at Windsor Castle and would in turn shape renovations at Newport and Nottingham Castles ; the octagonal tower has architectural links to Guy 's Tower , built at around the same time in Warwick Castle . A flower garden was built to the south of the range , with private access to Richard 's chambers . Richard also rebuilt the town 's wider defences , including a new stone bridge over the River Taff guarded by the West Gate , finishing the work by 1451 .

Cardiff Castle remained in the hands of Richard 's son , Henry and Henry 's daughter , Anne until 1449 . When Anne died , it passed by marriage to Richard Neville , who held it until his death in 1471 during the period of civil strife known as the Wars of the Roses . As the conflict progressed and political fortunes rose and fell , the castle passed from George , the Duke of Clarence , to Richard , Duke of Gloucester , to Jasper Tudor , the Duke of Bedford , back to Richard Neville 's wife Anne , back to Jasper and finally to Prince Henry , the future Henry VIII . The ascension of the Tudor dynasty to the English throne at the end of the wars heralded a change in the way Wales was administered . The Tudors were Welsh in origin , and their rule eased hostilities between the Welsh and English . As a result , defensive castles became less important . In 1495 Henry VII formally revoked the Marcher territory status of Cardiff Castle and the surrounding territories , bringing them under normal English law as the County of Glamorgan .

The Crown leased the castle to Charles Somerset in 1513 ; Charles used it while he was living in Cardiff . In 1550 William Herbert , later the Earl of Pembroke , then bought Cardiff Castle and the surrounding estates from Edward VI . The outer bailey contained a range of buildings at this time , and extensive building work was carried out during the century . The Shire Hall had been built in the outer bailey , forming part of a walled complex of buildings that included the lodgings for the traditional twelve holders of castle @-@ guard lands . The outer bailey also included orchards , gardens and a chapel . The castle continued to be used to detain criminals during the 16th century , with the Black Tower being used as a prison to hold them ; the heretic Thomas Capper was burnt at the castle on the orders of Henry VIII . The visiting antiquarian John Leland described the keep as " a great thing and strong , but now in some ruine " , but the Black Tower was considered to be in good repair . In the inner bailey , the Herberts built an Elizabethan extension to the north end of the main range , with large windows looking onto a new northern garden ; the southern garden was replaced by a kitchen garden .

= = = 17th ? 18th centuries = = =

In 1610 the cartographer John Speed produced a map of the castle , and noted that it was " large and in good repair . " In 1642 , however , civil war broke out between the rival Royalist supporters of King Charles I and Parliament . Cardiff Castle was then owned by Philip Herbert , a moderate Parliamentarian , and the castle was initially held by a pro @-@ Royalist garrison . It was taken by Parliamentary forces in the early period of the war , according to popular tradition by a sneak attack using a secret passageway . The Royalist commander William Seymour , the Marquess of Hertford , then attacked the castle in turn , taking it in a surprise assault . Parliamentary forces and local troops then immediately besieged the castle , retaking it after five hours of fighting and reinstalling a garrison . In early 1645 Mr Carne , the High Sheriff , rebelled against Parliament , taking Cardiff town but initially failing to seize the castle . The King sent forces from Oxford , under the command of Sir Charles Kemys , to reinforce Carne but Parliament despatched a naval squadron to provide support to their forces from the sea . A small battle ensued before the castle was taken by the Royalists .

With the Royalist military position across the country worsening , King Charles himself came to Cardiff Castle that July to meet with local Welsh leaders . Relations between his commander in the region , Sir Charles Gerard , and the people of Glamorgan had deteriorated badly and when Charles

left the castle , he was confronted by a small army of angry locals , demanding to be given control of the castle . These clubmen then declared themselves the " Peaceable Army " and increased their demands to include near independence for the region . After negotiations , a compromise was found in which the royal garrison would quit the castle , to be replaced by a local Glamorgan force , commanded by Sir Richard Beaupré ; in return , £ 800 and a force of a thousand men were promised to Charles . In September , Charles returned to South Wales and reneged on the agreement , disbanding the Peaceable Army , but his military position in the region was collapsing . The Peaceable Army 's leaders switched sides and forced the surrender of Cardiff and the castle to Parliament in mid @-@ September .

With the outbreak of fresh fighting in 1648 , a Royalist army of 8 @,@ 000 fresh recruits was mustered under the command of General Rowland Laugharne and Sir Edward Stradling , with the intent of retaking Cardiff . Parliamentary forces in Brecon under the command of Colonel Thomas Horton moved quickly to reinforce the castle , although with only 3 @,@ 000 men they were content to wait until a larger army under Oliver Cromwell could arrive from Gloucester . With time against them , the Royalist army attacked , leading to the battle of St Fagans just to the west of Cardiff , and a heavy Royalist defeat .

After the war , Cardiff Castle escaped the slighting , or deliberate damage and destruction , that affected many other castles . Probably because of the threat of a pro @-@ Royalist invasion by the Presbyterian Scots , a Parliamentary garrison was installed instead and the castle remained intact . The Herberts continued to own the castle as the Earls of Pembroke , both during the interregnum and after the restoration of Charles II . The castle 's constable continued to act as mayor of the town of Cardiff , controlling the meetings of the town 's burgesses , bailiffs and aldermen ; the Herberts usually appointed members of the more important local gentry to this position during the period .

Lady Charlotte Herbert was the last of the family to control Cardiff Castle . She married twice , latterly to Thomas , Viscount Windsor and on her death in 1733 the castle passed to their son , Herbert . Herbert 's daughter , Charlotte Jane Windsor , married John Stuart , who rose to become the Marquess of Bute , beginning a family line that would control the castle for the next century .

In 1776 the Marquess began to renovate the property with the intention of turning it into a residence for his son , John . The grounds were radically altered under a programme of work that involved Capability Brown and his son @-@ in @-@ law , Henry Holland . The stone wall that separated the inner and outer baileys was destroyed using gunpowder , the Shire Hall and the knights ' houses in the outer bailey were destroyed and the remaining ground partially flattened ; the whole of the area was laid with turf . Considerable work was carried out on the main lodgings , demolishing the Herbert additions , building two new wings and removing many of the older features to produce a more contemporary , 18th century appearance . The keep and motte was stripped of the ivy and trees that had grown up them , and a spiral path was laid down around the motte . The motte 's moat was filled in as part of the landscaping . A summer house was built in the south @-@ east corner of the castle . Further work was planned on the property , including a reported proposal to roof the keep in copper , insert new windows and turn it into an assembly room for dances , but these projects were cut short by the Marquess 's son 's death in 1794 .

= = = 19th century = = =

In 1814 Lord Bute 's grandson , John , inherited his title and the castle . In 1825 the new Marquess began a sequence of investments in the Cardiff Docks , an expensive programme of work that would enable Cardiff to become a major coal exporting port . Although the Docks were not particularly profitable , they transformed the value of the Butes ' mining and land interests , making the family immensely wealthy . By 1900 , the family estate owned 22 @,@ 000 acres ( 8 @,@ 900 ha ) of land in Glamorgan .

The second Marquess preferred to live on the Isle of Bute in Scotland and only used Cardiff Castle occasionally . The castle saw little investment and only four full @-@ time servants were maintained on the premises , meaning that cooked food had to be brought across from the kitchens at a nearby hotel . The castle remained at the centre of the Butes ' political power base in Cardiff , however ,

with their faction sometimes termed as " the Castle party " . During the violent protests of the Merthyr Rising of 1831 , the Marquess @-@ based himself at Cardiff Castle , from where he directed operations and kept Whitehall informed of the unfolding events . The governance of the city of Cardiff was finally reformed by an act of Parliament in the 1835 , introducing a town council and a mayor , severing the link with the castle constable .

The third Marquess of Bute , again called John , inherited the title and castle in 1848 . He was then less than a year old , and as he grew up he came to despise the existing castle , believing that it represented a mediocre , half @-@ hearted example of the Gothic style . Bute engaged the architect William Burges , to undertake the remodelling of the castle . The two shared a passion in medieval Gothic Revivalism and this , combined with Bute 's huge financial resources , enabled Burges to rebuild the property on a grand scale . Burges brought with him almost of all of the team that had supported him on earlier projects , including John Starling Chapple , William Frame and Horatio Lonsdale . Burges 's contribution , in particular his research into the history of the castle and his architectural imagination , was critical to the transformation .

Work began on Bute 's coming of age in 1868 with the construction of the 150 @-@ foot ( 46 m ) high Clock Tower . The tower , built in Burges 's signature Forest of Dean ashlar stone , formed a suite of bachelor 's rooms , comprising a bedroom , a servant 's room and the Summer and Winter smoking rooms . Externally , the tower was a re @-@ working of a design Burges had previously used in an unsuccessful competition entry for the Royal Courts of Justice in London . Internally , the rooms were sumptuously decorated with gildings , carvings and cartoons , many allegorical in style , depicting the seasons , myths and fables . The Summer Smoking Room rested at the top of the structure and was two storeys high with an internal balcony that , through an unbroken band of windows , gave views of the Cardiff Docks , the Bristol Channel , and the Glamorgan countryside . The floor had a map of the world in mosaic . The sculpture was created by Thomas Nicholls .

As the rest of the castle was developed , work progressed along the rest of the 18th century range including the construction of the Guest Tower , the Arab Room , the Chaucer Room , the Nursery , the Library , the Banqueting Hall and bedrooms for both Lord and Lady Bute . In plan , the new castle followed the arrangement of a standard Victorian country house quite closely . The Bute Tower included Lord Bute 's bedroom and ended in another highlight , the Roof Garden , featuring a sculpture of the Madonna and child by Ceccardo Fucigna . Bute 's bedroom contained extensive religious iconography and an en @-@ suite bathroom . The Octagon Tower followed , including an oratory , built on the spot where Bute 's father died , and the Chaucer Room , the roof of which is considered by historian Mark Girouard to be a " superb example of Burges 's genius " .

The central part of the castle comprised a two @-@ storey banqueting hall , with the library below . Both are enormous , the latter to hold part of the bibliophile Marquess 's vast library . Both included elaborate carvings and fireplaces , those in the banqueting hall depicting the castle itself in the time of Robert , Duke of Normandy . The decoration here is less impressive than elsewhere in the castle , as much of it was completed after Burges 's death by Lonsdale , a less talented painter . The Arab Room in the Herbert Tower remains however one of Burges 's masterpieces . Its jelly mould ceiling in a Moorish style is particularly notable . It was this room on which Burges was working when he died and Bute placed Burges 's initials , and his own , and the date 1881 in the fireplace as a memorial . The central portion of the castle also included the Grand Staircase , recorded in a watercolour perspective prepared by Axel Haig .

Burges 's interiors at Cardiff Castle have been widely praised . The historian Megan Aldrich considers them amongst " the most magnificent that the gothic revival ever achieved " , J. Mordaunt Crook has described them as " three dimensional passports to fairy kingdoms and realms of gold " , and John Newman praises them as " most successful of all the fantasy castles of the nineteenth century . " The exterior of the castle , however , has received a more mixed reception from critics . Crook admires the variegated and romantic silhouette of the building , but architect John Grant considered them to present a " picturesque if not happy combination " of varying historical styles , and Adrian Pettifer criticises them as " incongruous " and excessively Gothic in style .

Work was also carried out on the castle grounds , the interior being flattened further , destroying much of the medieval and Roman archaeological remains . In 1889 , Lord Bute 's building works

uncovered the remains of the old Roman fort for the first time since the 11th century , leading to archaeological investigations being carried out in 1890 . New walls in a Roman style were built by William Frame on the foundations of the originals , complete with a reconstructed Roman North Gate , and the outer medieval bank was stripped away around the new walls .

The grounds were extensively planted with trees and shrubs , including over the motte . From the late 18th century until the 1850s the castle grounds were completely open to the public , but restrictions were imposed in 1858 and as a replacement the 434 acres of land to the west and north of the castle was turned into Bute Park . From 1868 , the castle grounds were closed to the public altogether . Stables were built just to the north of the castle , but only half were completed during the 19th century . The Animal Wall was built along the south side of the castle , decorated with statues of animals , and the Swiss Bridge ? a combination of summerhouse and river @-@ crossing ? was erected over the river by the West Gate . Cathays Park was built on the east side of the castle , but was sold to the city of Cardiff in 1898 .

= = = 20th and 21st centuries = = =

John , the fourth Marquess , acquired the castle in 1900 on the death of his father , and the family estates and investments around the castle began to rapidly reduce in size . Cardiff had grown hugely in the previous century , its population increasing from 1 @, @ 870 in 1800 to around 250 @, @ 000 in 1900 , but the coal trade began to diminish after 1918 and industry suffered during the depression of the 1920s . John only inherited a part of the Butes ' Glamorgan estates , and in the first decades of the 20th century he sold off much of the remaining assets around Cardiff , including the coal mines , docks and railway companies , with the bulk of the land interests being finally sold off or nationalised in 1938 .

Development work on the castle continued . There was extensive restoration of the medieval masonry in 1921 , with architect John Grant rebuilding the South Gate and the barbican tower , and reconstructing the medieval West Gate and town wall alongside the castle , with the Swiss Bridge being moved in 1927 to make room for the new West Gate development . Further archaeological investigations were carried out into the Roman walls in 1922 and 1923 , leading to Grant redesigning the northern Roman gatehouse . The second half of the castle stables were finally completed . The Animal Wall was moved in the 1920s to the west side of the castle to enclose a pre @-@ Raphaelite themed garden . The grand staircase in the main range was torn out in the 1930s . During World War II , extensive air @-@ raid shelters were tunnelled out within the medieval walls , with eight different sections , able to hold up to 1 @, @ 800 people in total , and the castle was also used to tether barrage balloons above the city .

In 1947 , the John , the fifth Marquess , inherited the castle on the death of his father and faced considerable death duties . He sold the very last of the Bute lands in Cardiff and gave the castle and the surrounding park to the city on behalf of the people of Cardiff ; the family flag was taken down from the castle as part of the official hand @-@ over ceremony . The castle was protected as a grade I listed building and as a scheduled monument .

Cardiff Castle is now run as a tourist attraction , and is one of the most popular sites in the city . The castle is not fully furnished , as the furniture and fittings in the castle were removed by the Marquess in 1947 and subsequently disposed of ; an extensive restoration has been carried out , however , of the fittings originally designed for the Clock Tower by Burges . The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama , founded in 1949 , was housed in the castle 's main range for many years , but moved into the castle 's former stables north of the castle in 1998 . A new interpretation centre , which opened in 2008 , was built alongside the South Gate at a cost of £ 6 @. @ 5 million , and the castle also contains " Firing Line " , the joint regimental museum of the 1st The Queen 's Dragoon Guards and the Royal Welsh .

The castle has been used for a range of cultural and social events . The castle has seen various musical performances , including by Tom Jones , Green Day and the Stereophonics , with a capacity to accommodate over 10 @, @ 000 people . During the 1960s and 1970s the castle was the setting for a sequence of military tattoos .

