



FRIENDS OF  
**LAWNSWOOD  
CEMETERY**

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Newsletter June 2015

Dear Members,

Welcome to our 4th newsletter!

First of all a very big thank you to all our members who fund the Friends Group and to all our volunteers who continue to do fantastic work in the cemetery on the monthly action days. We could not continue without all your support.

There have been many improvements to the cemetery over the last year and we continue to receive very positive comments from the public who visit Lawnswood. This is due to the partnership approach between Leeds City Council and ourselves, where working together has enabled more to be done by our combined efforts. Everyone involved should be proud of what has been achieved and the vast improvements to, and maintenance of the cemetery.

I would also like to thank officers of Leeds City Council for their support and in particular Dave Blackham the Park Ranger who has supported the Action Days without fail and always with great enthusiasm! Also, Sarah Roebuck who was new into post last year and has been a great supporter of the work we do. This has made a big difference to us.

I am delighted to welcome Ann Lightman back this year as a co-opted member of the committee. We have missed her expertise and enthusiasm. It is great to have her back on the committee.

We are still looking for new committee members who can add fresh ideas to our group and would welcome any one who feels they have something to offer. Please do get in touch with me if you would like to discuss the possibility of joining us.

We are hoping to install a World War 1 commemorative bench which is available through the British Legion and which we are going to part fund in partnership with Leeds City Council. We will let you know on Facebook when this is in place.

I hope you find the newsletter interesting and informative and look forward to your continued support.

**Mike Simpson  
Chair**



Just some of the hundreds of bulbs planted last October by our Action Day volunteers and worth every back-breaking moment!

## **ACTION DAYS**

The Action Day volunteers continue to meet on the first Saturday of every month to undertake tasks in the cemetery. There is a marvellous and very loyal group who have continued to support this work since we started three years ago! New members have joined us over this time and we also have staff from the local McDonalds restaurant who come regularly. We really appreciate their support and the work they do.



Much work and improvement has taken place mainly in the Victorian and 1910 sections. We have cut back overgrown shrubs, bushes and trees, tidied the old Victorian graves and laid gravel to keep them maintained; cleared paths, cut back edging, cleared litter, planted spring bulbs, filled in sunken areas with soil and re seeded to help the gardeners improve the grass mowing. In fact, we will have a go at anything! One group has been re- painting the commemorative benches and they have done a fantastic job. Many benches are now completed and fit for people to sit on!!



As a group we really enjoy the work and we meet all year round. We find it very satisfying to see the improvements and feel that we make a difference. We work under the supervision of Park Ranger Dave Blackham who provides the gardening equipment and also Chris Raines, who is Lawnswood's gardening supervisor. We hope our efforts provide encouragement for the small group of paid gardeners employed by Leeds City Council.



Dave Blackham, Park Ranger

We meet at 10am in the main car park opposite the cemetery gates. There is something to suit all abilities. You can do as much as you wish and leave whenever you are ready. Coffee and refreshments are provided mid-morning when we enjoy a chat and a catch up. Some of us also bring a packed lunch!



We are always pleased to welcome new volunteers so, if you are interested just come along on the first Saturday of any month and give it a go!

**Mike Simpson**

## **Archibald Witham Scarr**

### *A Mayor of the Masses*



Archie Scarr was born on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1827 in Burnley, Lancashire the son of Thomas and Sarah Scarr, grocers and tea dealers. Thomas was a Wesleyan Local Preacher. Archie attended Burnley National School at 1d a week.

When he was about 13 the business failed and the family moved first to Addingham and then to Leeds living in 'dark and dingy rooms' in Myrtle Street in the Leylands. Thomas took a small piece of land on Vicar's Croft and sold vegetables from a portable stand. Archie became a general 'utility youth' in a warehouse in Basinghall Street helping his parents in the evenings and Saturday afternoons.. Some years later he joined them in the trade. On Market Gardener's mornings he got up at 2am in order to get the choicest produce. Thomas died in 1855 and Archie took a permanent wooden stall. A resourceful and determined trader he expanded into dried fruit specializing in figs 't'scripser frewt' - a new line for Leeds markets. He expanded into first four and then nine shops in the market selling first confectionary then groceries, hardware and crockery. By the time

of his death in February 1904 he had 29 shops across Yorkshire and Lancashire, the last of which did not close until 1974. They were known as 'The popular cosmopolitan stores Messrs A.W.Scarr and Sons'. Sometimes, in the interests of trade he would provide musical evenings for his customers.

As a dedicated follower of the Temperance movement Archie was a successful speaker at temperance meetings. He believed that perseverance, total abstinence and thrift were the route to success.

At an open air meeting in Victoria Square Mr Scarr, wearing his official chain as Lord Mayor, said he had been temperate in all things except language – (laughter!) As Mayor he never used the wine cellar and did not allow wine to his guests – including the circuit judges.

He failed in his first two attempts to enter the council in 1870 and 1871- partially because he did no electioneering in public houses.

In 1872 he was elected to the North-East ward. Mr Scarr spoke freely at council meetings. A fellow councillor commented that if everyone spoke as frequently and at such length as Mr Scarr it would take seven days to conclude each Council meeting!

Having been a councillor for 15 years he was elected Mayor in November 1887.

Some regarded him as an unsuitable person to represent the burgesses of Leeds as mayor and chief magistrate; his background in trade and lack of education being held against him.

One of the highlights of his year in office was held on 7th July 1888. Mr Scarr's Free Gala, a monster gala for 50,000 people in Roundhay Park. This included a military display, athletics, six brass bands and orchestras, a military tournament including the Charge of the Light

Brigade (with 6 men instead of 600), bicycles and tricycle races and football; and the sun shone! Mr Scarr had made a tactful, hospitable and dignified mayor and the members of the council told him so and thanked him.

Returning to his role as Alderman he continued to speak out against anything he regarded as extravagant but his career as Alderman ended in 1898 when the Conservatives gained a majority. However, he remained an active member of the Leeds Working Men's Parliamentary Reform Association, The Reform league, The Leeds Radical Association, The Leeds Liberal Registration Society and also a member of the executive committee of the Leeds Liberal Six hundred.

In 1899 he was attacked by three young men outside the market and never fully recovered although he continued to make daily visits to the market until 10 days before his death in 1904 aged 76. He was buried in Lawnswood Cemetery after a service in Woodhouse Moor Wesleyan Chapel. The business he had founded was continued by his three sons.



Jane Luxton



Grave of Archie Scarr

Archie's grandson, also remembered on the family tomb, was Second Lieutenant Reginald Graham Scarr, of the 12th Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who was killed in action on 14th July 1916. He is remembered in Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, Longueval, Somme, France. He was the son of Reginald Collinge & Alice Scarr of Lidgett Park Road, Roundhay. He was just 19 years old.



## **Lawnswood's Great War stories**

As you will all be aware, we have been having some difficulties with our Heritage Lottery Funded First World War Project, "Lawnswood's Great War Stories". After spending a lot of time on research and writing a script, it then proved impossible to recruit actors to perform it. Since the last update, we have been negotiating with local theatre groups to perform the script this summer. Unfortunately those discussions have proved fruitless with no one prepared to take on the performance within timescales which were acceptable to us. This means that the performance aspect of the project has had to be abandoned, which is a great shame.

However, the Heritage Lottery Fund has been very patient and flexible, and has agreed to allow the funds allocated to be used for the production of a book on Lawnswood and the First World War instead. Unfortunately this means more hard work for me, but I am hoping to have the book ready for publication by August. More information will be given to members as time goes on, but we are hoping to hold a launch party this summer in lieu of the tea party we have held in the last two years.

**Andrea Hetherington**



## **Return of the Angel**



You may remember the article in the last newsletter about the 'missing angel', the lovely bronze by Edward Caldwell Spruce which was the subject of an attempted robbery in 2009.

I am delighted to tell you that after five years of languishing in safe-keeping the angel was finally reinstated in December 2014.

Thanks to Leeds City Council it is once again keeping watch over the Jacques family grave.

**Kate Vernon**

## Lawnswood Friends on tour...

A visit to the Leeds United Hebrew Congregation Cemetery

Following on from our successful previous visits to Beckett Street and Undercliffe the Friends of Lawnswood recently visited the Leeds United Hebrew Congregation Cemetery in Gildersome. Their guide was local expert on Jewish life and history Nigel Grizzard. Through the tour the group gained a better understanding of how the Jewish community developed in Leeds and how their presence contributed to making Leeds 'the city of a thousand trades'.



**Group at UHC Cemetery, Gildersome**

The group asked Nigel why this site was chosen for the cemetery as it is so far from the established Jewish communities in North Leeds? Nigel pointed out to us that when this site was bought back in 1840 the Jewish community lived mainly in the centre of Leeds. This predated their wealth and movement out into such areas as the suburbs of Chapeltown and Alwoodley. They were also able to buy this land very cheaply from the Earl of Cardigan and added to that, in those days health reasons made them consider it not too advantageous to live close to a burial site.

The group's first impression was one of surprising uniformity and starkness compared to the layout and design of Lawnswood. The

inscriptions on the graves were in Hebrew and English. The former includes the Hebrew name, including that of the father. The English version covers name, dates, mourners and often a final religious quotation or versions of "May His/Her Dear Soul Rest in Peace" Very few memorials made reference to occupation and place of residence both popular features among early graves at Lawnswood. However on closer inspection particularly in the Victorian section they did see some familiar imagery including broken columns, doves and draped urns. It is clear from these features that the Jewish faith is not as keen for open shows of ostentation in its burial grounds. With reference to the use of symbols on memorials Nigel reminded the group that a Star of David on a memorial doesn't always denote the grave belonging to someone of the Jewish faith as it is also a masonic symbol.



**The old Main Avenue and disused Prayer Hall (Ohel) at Gildersome**

For a number of years Lawnswood Committee Member Ann Lightman has been busy researching the Lightman family history. Many members of her husband's family were buried in the cemetery including the furniture maker Victor Lightman. The group heard fascinating stories from Ann of how Victor made his fortune and become a prominent member of the Jewish community. One of his projects was designing and making the dining furniture for the then (1912) new teachers training college at Beckett's Park - now Leeds Beckett University.

As well as learning about the history of the cemetery and the stories of many of those buried there, the group was also able to learn more about Jewish life and culture. It is fascinating to find out how this community thrived, from emigrants from Eastern Europe to become the hugely successful businessmen who helped to build Leeds to the city of a thousand trades. Those buried here include Arnold Ziff, Herman Friend and until the 1960s Montague Burton (now buried in Harrogate). The Ziff family originally émigrés from Russia founded the famous Stylo shoe company and were responsible for many projects in Leeds including the building of the Merrion centre. Herman Friend the tailor was famous for supporting the breaking down of the process of manufacturing a garment into many stages so that each one could be carried out by a relatively unskilled worker thus cutting costs. He worked as a subcontractor for John Barran among others.

A very distinctive grave in the cemetery is that of the artist Jacob Kramer. Kramer was born in the Ukraine but the family settled in Leeds when Jacob was only eight. He went on to be a leading artist and Leeds Art Gallery has a wonderful collection of his work including the large painting Day of Atonement. Leeds College of Art was renamed after him in 1968 and retained that name until 1993. His memorial is very simple just a rough stone with his name, dates and the word 'Artist'.



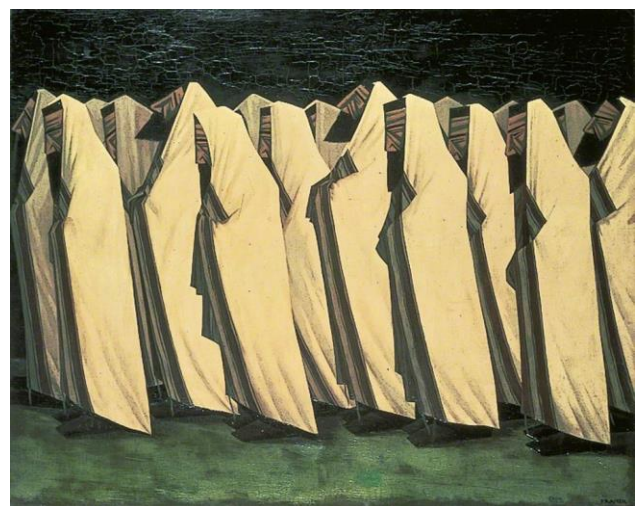
**Jacob Kramer's tombstone**

Inspired by the Friends tour? If you would like to undertake your own visit, then take a look at the Jewish cemeteries website [www.jewishgen.org/icr-uk/Community/Leeds/cemeteries/UHC%20Cemetery/Cemetery\\_menu.htm](http://www.jewishgen.org/icr-uk/Community/Leeds/cemeteries/UHC%20Cemetery/Cemetery_menu.htm) You will find your trip well supported as the Jewish community have worked hard to digitalise the cemetery records making it easy to trace individual plots. Guided walks and tours are also available if you contact Nigel via his website [www.nigelgrizzard.co.uk](http://www.nigelgrizzard.co.uk)

The group would like to continue this popular programme of visits to local cemeteries. If you have any ideas for future visits please contact Bev Forrest via email at [b.forrest@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:b.forrest@leedstrinity.ac.uk) or through our Facebook page.

## **Bev Forrest**

Friends of Lawnswood Cemetery committee member and Associate Principal Lecturer at Leeds Trinity University



**The Day of Atonement**

by Jacob Kramer painted 1919.

It hangs in Leeds City Art Gallery

## The Missing Monument?

Tony Hinton, one of our regular 'action day' members kindly brought a photograph album to show us. It had belonged to his late sister Brenda who was a very keen amateur photographer and loved to record graveyard monuments! The album contained her collection taken at both Lawnswood and Beckett Street cemeteries over the years.

Most of the monuments she captured are very familiar to us but one of them is something of a puzzle.



The girl is standing at the prow of a boat.

Unfortunately Brenda didn't record the name or dates of the deceased but she does mention 1902 which would suggest that it was in the Victorian section and also the words "See over the foaming billows fair Haven's

land." These words are taken from a hymn by American, Philip Paul Bliss 1838-1876 which is called 'Pull for the Shore.'

"Light in the darkness sailor, day is at hand!  
See o'er the foaming billows fair Haven's land.  
Drear was the voyage sailor, now almost o'er,  
Safe within the lifeboat sailor, pull for the shore."

In all my years of wandering around the cemetery I cannot remember ever seeing this attractive monument. Brenda mentions that it measures 33" high and is made of 'porcelain.' Perhaps it has been accidentally broken....

Do any of the readers recognise it? If you do we would love to hear from you! You can email us at

[friendsoflawnswoodcemetery@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:friendsoflawnswoodcemetery@yahoo.co.uk)



**Brenda Hinton 1949-2006**

I feel sure that Brenda would have been an active member of The Friends of Lawnswood Cemetery had she survived and that she would approve of what we do.

**Kate Vernon**

## LAWNSWOOD BURIAL RECORDS AT LOCAL & FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

We often receive enquiries about burial records for the cemetery and what information is held at the library. The Local and Family History section of the Leeds Central Library does hold some burial records for Lawnswood. The burial records are not yet on a CD rom, but are on microfilm. The years covered are 1876 to 1992 and the records are in three different boxes in a filing cabinet in the Local & Family History Library. There are microfilm readers available in the library and friendly staff on hand to assist if you have any difficulties.

Yorkshire Indexers have compiled cremation records between 1905 and 1986 which you can also access online through the library. This is a searchable database but is not complete, even for the years described. It also doesn't specify, for the most part, where the individual's memorial is within the cemetery.

Any other information is only held by the council at the Farnley Hall offices.

**Andrea Hetherington**

### Membership

Membership currently stands at 67 which is slightly down on last year. Many thanks to those who have renewed their membership and a big welcome to all our new members, we could not exist without you!

## Get Social with the Friends of Lawnswood Cemetery:



## Forthcoming Events

**Sunday 12 July** (part of the Festival of Archaeology) "Lawnswood Cemetery, its variety, history and recent changes". Meet at 11am in the car park on Otley road opposite the main gates. Please note that this is a 90min walk - so wear comfortable footwear. Also, although the walk is on pathways, some are uneven in places.

The above walk is to be repeated on **Sunday 13 September** also at 11 am for the Heritage Weekend.

**Book launch** and tea party to be announced.

The **AGM** will take place on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 7pm at the Friends Meeting House on New Adel Lane (Same venue as last year).

The guest speaker will be Michael Meadowcroft. Please try and come along if only to hear our excellent speaker!

### Friends of Lawnswood Cemetery Committee

**Chair** – Mike Simpson

**Vice Chair** – Janice Simpson

**Secretary** -

**Minutes Secretary** – Gladys Strawbridge

**Treasurer** – Alan Williams

**Membership Secretary** – Kate Vernon

**Events and Education** - Bev Forrest

**PR and Social Media** – Alan Mann

**Committee members** – Andrea Hetherington, Ann Lightman (co-opted member)

Our Treasurer Alan Williams will be leaving us at the end of June. We would like to thank him for all his hard work and wish him well. Gladys Strawbridge has kindly offered to take over the role until the AGM when the new committee will be elected.

Email

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Web site

[www.friendsoflawnswoodcemetery.co.uk](http://www.friendsoflawnswoodcemetery.co.uk)

