
To enhance, promote and protect Lawnswood Cemetery, including its monuments, buildings, landscape and records.

Message from the Chair

This is the 6th year that we have been operating as the Friends of Lawnswood Cemetery and on behalf of the committee I want to thank all our members and supporters, past and present, including the volunteers who attend the monthly Action Days, for all your continued support.

It is particularly poignant for me writing this as the current Chair, as my husband Mike was Chair when he died in 2015. Having taken a back seat role since then I recently decided that I would be prepared to take on this role if asked by the Committee, as it is important to me and the rest of the Committee, that the Friends continues. We are a smaller Committee now and we made some minor changes to the constitution at the recent AGM to give us a bit more flexibility in how we fulfil the officer roles.



We will do our very best to keep things running as well as we possibly can, but as we are smaller in number we will have to prioritise what we do. We would really welcome additional support on the Committee. So if you are interested in joining us, do get in touch and I or any of the Committee members would be happy to talk it over with you. We would particularly value any help with social media and the website.

We were sorry to lose Ann Lightman who resigned from the Committee earlier this year and thank her for all her hard work on the Committee over the years we have been in existence. Ann was a founder member of the Friends and held the group together as acting Chair after Mike's sudden death. She is continuing to support the work of the Friends as a member and is still very active with us.

Bev Forrest did not stand for re-election to the Committee this year but she remains a member of the Friends and will continue to support the committee by arranging visits as in the past. In this respect, she would welcome suggestions for future outings. We thank her for all her support and encouragement.

The Committee welcomes any feedback from the members so let us know what you think – about the newsletter, the cemetery, what our priorities for the year should be, or anything else you might have on your mind about the Friends or the cemetery. You can email us directly at friendsoflawnswoodcemetery@yahoo.co.uk.

Do keep visiting the website <http://lawnswoodcemetery.org.uk>: Steve Miller set it up for us and Kate and I are still developing it with continued support from Steve and others. I hope you like it and find it useful and interesting. Enjoy this 8th edition of our newsletter!

Janice Simpson

Chair

Action Days

Since the beginning of the year, we have had a very successful series of Action Days, with an average of over 15 volunteers per month, very ably led by Ranger Pete Banks and Head Gardener Chris Raines.

In the winter months there was quite extensive cutting down of laurels in the Victorian Section, opening up very pleasing vistas across the cemetery. This task was aided on a couple of occasions by the presence of the 'chipper' which enabled the resulting debris to be reduced to a manageable state and transported elsewhere. Volunteers had been concerned about having to leave the sawn off branches in the undergrowth - so this is a welcome addition to the equipment used by the council, knowing that staff have listened to our concerns.

With the onset of spring, cutting back has paused in the interests of wildlife and the focus has moved to gravel spreading in the Victorian section and edging in the '1910' area. Throughout this period the preservation of benches has continued unabated.

The morning break provides a welcome opportunity to relax, get to know each other and partake of refreshments including delicious home-made cakes. Our thanks go to all the volunteers who give up their leisure time to help to maintain this very extensive, historic cemetery to the highest standard possible.



Ready for Action



Working with the 'Chipper'



Preserving the benches

Lawns Wood – It's all in the Name.

Research and Reminiscence

by Don Cole

Readers may be interested in the cemetery name “Lawnswood”. Where did it come from?

Some readers will be aware that a farm, “Lawns Hall”, formerly sited at the end of Lawns Hall Close, finished its days during the Second World War when the recently demolished government buildings were erected. But why Lawns Hall?

The farm was built in the early 18th century when the large area known as Adel West Moor began to be enclosed. Woodland covered that part of the moor where eventually the farm was sited. Throughout medieval times and up to enclosure, Adel tenants were allowed to graze their stock there, and the pasture within the glades was known as “Launde”...which with the passing of time became “lawn”.

Thomas Dean tenanted the farm in 1810. It totalled 76½ acres (a middling-sized farm when compared with others in the parish), of which ten acres (roughly six football pitches) was still woodland, some covering the eventual Victorian cemetery. It was a mixed farm - wheat, barley, oats (sixteen acres, the largest area of arable, providing food for stock and people as oatcakes were the staple diet for most folk



at this time), potatoes, clover, fallow, meadow...and pasture for three cows, their calves and five young cattle. The woodland was coppiced and/or pollarded. His land tax, £1-5s-10d was paid by his landlord. His yearly rent was £65.

A map dated 1882, just seven years after the cemetery opened, shows two remaining woodland areas, “Lawnswood East” now the car park, funeral directors and florist and “Little Moor Close Plantation” which edged St Helen’s Lane, where today houses and a petrol station stand.

An old friend of mine, Harry Mawson 1889-1987 worked for Mr Dixon of Lawns Hall Farm as a carter, a horse and cart (two wheels) or a wagon (four wheels) being essential then. He described working on the 1910 cemetery extension:

“The cemetery people bought more land, out to New Adel Lane wheer the big wall and the lodge is, and they developed that. Mr Dixon hired out his horses, flat carts and wagons to them and we made the gravelled roads and such like. The superintendent, Mr Dyson, had a special cart made by Sam Wade, who lived down Tile Lane, by the ponds (*now the site of Adel Primary School*). The tyres on that cart were a foot wide. We’d all strict orders not to travel along the same place, but to move about to roll the gravel in.

One of our shires, Billy we called him, was a real bad ‘un. You had to carry a short stick when feeding him and hold it against his flank and the side of the stall so he couldn’t bump and trap you

This particular morning I’d taken old Billy to work in the cemetery. T’other horses were going to work some wheer else later. Well, Billy heard ‘em being harnessed in t’farmyard and he suddenly set off, cart an’ all. He left me standing some distance away! He went along the tracks we’d laid to the gate, down New Adel Lane, across the Leeds-Otley main road, along the lane and into t’farmyard. He didn’t do a ha’p’orth o’ damage either, no turf cut, no gravestone knocked, nothing! Aye, clever, even if he was a bad ‘un”.

1920 photo of Mr Stanley Dixon with Mr Harry Mawson his son in law, Renee Mawson his granddaughter and the horse "Prince" at Wood Nook Farm, Tinshill.

Don Cole is an eminent local historian whose 19 booklets mainly on the ancient parish of Adel are well known in the area. One of these is "Just an Ordinary Life, Memories of Adel and Cookridge" contains Harry Mawson's memories.

Don came to Leeds many years ago as a school master, ending his career as deputy-head of an inner city middle school in Leeds.



The 6th AGM on 27th April 2017

The 6th AGM took place on Thursday 27th April attended by 15 members and two guests. We were pleased to see everyone who came along and supported us.

We made some minor amendments to the constitution to make it easier for us to be more flexible about how we fulfil the officer roles of chair, secretary and treasurer, given that we are a smaller group, as the Bank needs assurance that we are acting in accordance with our constitution. We wanted to be able to appoint one person into two roles this year.

The Committee for the year was voted in at the AGM, and the process then is that the Committee from its numbers elects the officer roles. So the current Committee, agreed at our May Committee meeting is:

Chair – Janice Simpson

Secretary – Gladys Strawbridge

Treasurer – Gladys Strawbridge

Membership Secretary with responsibility for social media– Kate Vernon

Action Day co-ordinator and publicity lead – Sue Harris

Committee member with responsibility for website development– Steve Miller

After a pause in proceedings for tea and biscuits we all enjoyed a stimulating and entertaining talk from Professor Mark Seaward on Graveyard Lichens.

My thanks to everyone who came along, to Professor Seaward and to the Committee members who did the organising.

Janice Simpson

Start Birding!

Sunday May 7th saw our first bird song identification walk for the Friends of Lawnswood Cemetery. It was led by Linda Jenkinson of 'Start Birding'. By 9.00am a group of about 25-30 had assembled in the car park where a red kite was flying overhead.

Linda took this mixed ability group through the varied habitat in the older part of the cemetery. The floor of the woodland glade was carpeted with wild flowers. The Victorian cemetery with its stunning memorials provided perfect perches for the show-off robins and wrens! The open lawns in the Memorial Gardens provided a different habitat in which we saw a pied wagtail, blackbirds and other ground feeding species. But it was the trees that provided the most sightings – a greater spotted woodpecker on a dead branch, nuthatches and tits (blue and great) attracted by the oaks, and the conifers were host to a stock dove (heard but not seen) and a tiny goldcrest ...a total of 23 species were seen or heard.



Different calls and songs were pointed out and tips given on how we can develop our own skills in their identification. We learned the difference between songs – for most species only used in the spring/early summer to attract a mate. We learned about their respiratory system which allows birds to sing without having to stop and gasp for breath! We understood why some birds – e.g. the bittern and the wren have such loud songs – especially for the size of the latter.

Not only did we hear the birds, we also saw them. Once you can recognise their songs you can start to look for them – and thus see a far greater number of species. This didn't apply to the tit family as they were simply too busy feeding their young to sing.

I had not realised what a short time they have to fledge their chicks...whilst the tree leaves are just emerging. The chicks are fed on grubs found on new leaves because as the leaves darken the grubs ingest tannins which are fatal to the chicks. In fact we learned that being a chick is pretty perilous – most don't survive the first year, many ending up as food for larger birds.

I feel sure that everyone on the walk learned a great deal – the more experienced asked questions – and we learned facts about migration, and that “early fledglings” could in fact be a courtship ritual in which the female pretends to be a chick so that she can assess how well he cares for her before accepting him as her mate...clever bird! Also why some species are under threat – mainly due to their feeding or breeding grounds being decimated – intensively farmed or turned into housing, as well as direct threats encountered in their migratory patterns.

Linda is an accessible and extremely knowledgeable guide and I would encourage anyone to check out her website www.startbirding.co.uk for details of walks and the classes she runs.

Ann Lightman



Grave Spotlight: Obadiah Nussey 1812-1902



Born November 1812 in Leeds, Obadiah was the third son of woollen manufacturer George Nussey and his wife Sarah. He was educated at Leeds Grammar School and then apprenticed to his uncle, Mr Willans who owned a woollen mill at Kirkstall.

In 1836, instead of joining his father's firm, he and his brother Joseph founded the firm of Hargreaves and Nussey, Woollen Manufacturers and Merchants, West Bar, Leeds. They were later joined by their younger brother Thomas. The firm had two mills, Wortley Low Mills and Farnley Low Mills (the latter being the site of Ringways Garage today) and a warehouse in Wellington Street. That same year Obadiah married Ann Varley of Stanningley in Calverley Parish Church. They had seven children and lived at 55 Clarendon Road before moving in 1865 to Morley House, Headingley Hill.

From 1853, aged 41, Obadiah took an active role in public life: he was an alderman of the city for nine years and Mayor for the Civic year 1863/64 then in 1865 he was appointed a JP for Leeds. It was almost wholly due to his efforts whilst Mayor that Leeds and not Wakefield became an Assize town. This was a coup for Leeds – the visiting judges and their wives brought trade to Leeds – and it enabled public hangings to take place, no doubt seen as a tourist attraction then! He was also largely responsible for founding the Royal Exchange, Leeds which opened for all trades on 31 August 1875.

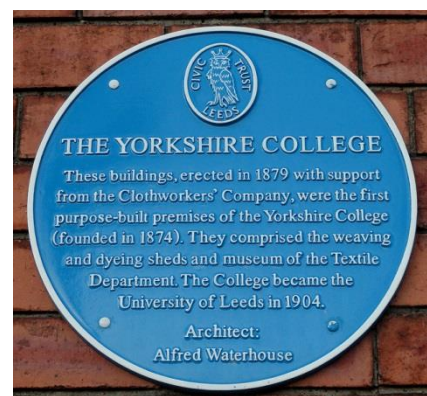


One of Obadiah's great interests and achievements was in technical education, a new subject for those times. He served as Chairman of the Clothworkers' Advisory Committee and on 8th May 1873 when a conference of 'Yorkshire Mayors and Chairmen of Commerce' was held at Clothworkers' Hall in the City of London, it was addressed by Obadiah who said that it was essential to establish schools like those in Europe for 'practical trade instruction' connected with the manufacture of textile fabrics in Britain.

As a result The Clothworkers' Company sponsored the creation of a Department of Textile Industries at the Yorkshire College in Leeds, followed in 1885 by a Department of Dyeing and Tinctorial Chemistry.



Department of Textile Industries University of Leeds



The Yorkshire College became The University of Leeds in 1904 and the Company remains associated with its two "Clothworkers' Departments" now known as the School of Design and the Department of Colour and Polymer Chemistry. In total they have invested well over £10 million in Leeds and their financial support continues today.

Obadiah and his two brothers retired from Hargreaves and Nussey in 1882, the business being continued by his son George and Joseph's sons James and Thomas Nussey.

Obadiah died March 14th 1902 and was buried in Lawnswood Cemetery beside his wife who had died six years earlier.



Obadiah Nussey, Esq., JP, Chairman of the Textile Industries and Dyeing Committees (1875-1902)

My family connection is through my grandmother who was adopted by her aunt and uncle, Obadiah's nephew Thomas Henry Nussey, and his wife Elizabeth (nee Lander). My grandmother's father Peter Jones Lander was killed at the age of 27 when he was hit by a train.

George Whitehead

– Aunt Nellie and the VAD –

This article was written to mark the centenary of WW1 which will end Nov 2018

The VAD – Few people recognise these initials any more but during WW1 everyone was familiar with the wonderful work of the Voluntary Aid Detachments.

The VAD came into being when the War Office, following the Boer War, felt that in the event of another conflict, medical and nursing services would be unable to cope. Sir Richard Haldane, Secretary of State for War, made a number of reforms based on lessons learned during the Boer War. His new Territorial Scheme of 1907 made co-operation between the army and voluntary agencies possible. In 1909 the War Office issued its Organisation of Voluntary Aid Scheme to fill in the gaps in Territorial Medical Services. By early 1914, 1,757 female and 519 male detachments were registered with the war office and it is thought that between 70,000 and 100,000 women served as VADs during WW1. Aunt Nellie was one of these.

Ellen Eaton, my father's sister and known as Nellie, was born in 1891. She was the fourth of five children of William and Hannah Eaton, my father Walter being the youngest. I knew aunt Nellie as the only member of the family to remain single. This I took for granted as a young child. She was always kind, though rather aloof on reflection. My father told me later that she had served in the Great War of 1914-18 in France as a VAD. Her fiancé Stanley had been killed at the second battle of Ypres possibly May 1915, hence her reason for volunteering. She was admitted as a VAD on October 1st 1915.



Ellen Eaton

She was demobilised at Folkestone after the war, and on returning home she resumed her secretarial job and became a keen golfer. There were two proposals of marriage but neither appealed to her. After her father died in the early twenties Nellie stayed with her mother and later had to give up work to nurse her as her mother became more immobile. On the death of her mother she took an evening job as a telephone operator to qualify for a retirement pension, later buying a bungalow in North Wales. Nellie died in Prestatyn in September 1970 aged 79 and is buried in the family grave in Southern Cemetery Manchester. My elder son remembers seeing a photograph of her deceased fiancé Stanley on her bedside table

Items found amongst her effects included her identity bracelet inscribed N. Eaton VAD 222 East Lancs, and two scrolls issued by the Red Cross and the Order of St. John stating proficiency in First Aid and Home Nursing. Further items include her autograph album which has entries from soldiers as varied as Canadians, Black Watch, Scots Rifles, Welsh Fusiliers and the Manchester Regiment dated mainly 1917 and 1918, humorous illustrations and serious verse. There are two ashtrays, one depicting the Basilique Albert and the other with tiny shields, only one decipherable as Osterreich. Also found was a letter from the VAD Department dated August 2nd 1921 thanking her for her service. It also contained a General Service Medal 1914-1918 and a Victory Medal.

On reflection I think she had a sad life. I wish I had known her better and asked more about her time with the VAD.

June Binks



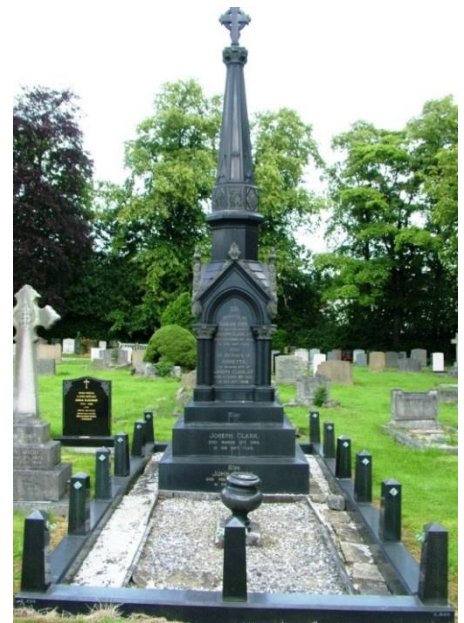
Stanley

Grave Spotlight - Joseph Clark 1856-1939

This impressive black polished granite monument commemorates Joseph Clark and various family members, at least eight of whom are interred and others have their ashes buried here.

The monument was built for Joseph's wife Sarah Ann Clark, who died aged 67 as the result of a tragic accident on 1st November 1922. Her chauffeur driven car overturned when the brakes were suddenly applied trying to avoid a 14 year old apprentice electrician, Henry Metcalf, who had walked out in front of the car. Both Henry and Sarah Ann died on 13th November; Henry in Leeds Infirmary from meningitis and it was said that the shock of the accident contributed to Sarah's death.

Joseph Clark was born in South Leeds in 1856, the third of seven children of dyer, Charles Clark and his wife Hannah. The 1861 census gives their address as Coopers Court, one of eight brick-built, blind-backed Georgian houses off Bowman Lane, Hunslet—he started work aged 12 as a paper maker.



In 1877 Joseph married Sarah Ann Gunson from Hunslet –and by 1891 the family, now with four sons, Arthur 12, Charles Gunson 10, John 8 and Henry Stanley 3, lived at 31 Kirkstall Road, Headingley with Joseph employed as a foreman dyer. However it was not long before he went into business on his own at Dean Street Mills, the firm he built from scratch and provided him and his family with a good source of income.

In 1906 he stood for and won the Headingley seat on Leeds City Council for the Liberals. The Leeds Mercury in supporting his election stated that “Mr Clark has a splendid reputation amongst his workpeople” and recalled his kindness as a local employer. It stated that as superintendent of a Sunday School, Joseph came to the conclusion there was no point in teaching children with empty stomachs, so he and some others provided breakfast for between 150-200 poor children every Sunday.

After his three year term on the Council finished, he was appointed Alderman, from which he retired in 1913 in order to seek re-election. He won the contest to represent the West Ward, which he did until 1920. He held many posts on Council Committees including Deputy Chair of the Electricity committee for five years, deputy chair of the Library committee from 1910-11 and chair of Book Purchasing for six years. He was also Chair of the Sanitary committee 1911-12 as well as serving on the Finance, Highways Improvements, Gas, Distress, and War Pensions committees. It was said that his fearless outspokenness, combined with a natural wit and sound business qualities, meant his contribution to debates was always welcomed. “In business and in public life Mr Clark never fell below his own high standards of commercial integrity.” Added to this he was a magistrate (JP) for twenty years (1918-1938),



often presiding in the second court where his style was said to be “homely rather than judicial.” It was said that he had “a greater knowledge of the weaknesses of his fellow man than he had of the law.”

As a businessman he travelled extensively on the continent and it was on a trip to Nice in 1923 that he met Mrs Annette Norman, an American widow. The family said he came back minus his whiskers but plus a bride-to-be. In 1924 he and Mrs Norman were married at St. George's, Hanover Square, London. She found our climate rather difficult to adapt to after the Californian sunshine, and died aged just 60 in 1936. Joseph handed his business over to his sons and after she died, he moved from Burley Mount to live with his son in Jackson Avenue, Gledhow, Leeds where he became a regular attender of the Lidgett Park Methodist Church. He was also a freemason – a member of the Excelsior Lodge. Joseph died in 1939 aged 83 years.

Ann Lightman from family details given by Anne Norman

Forthcoming Events

June 17th Saturday- Visit to Holbeck Cemetery 11am. If you would like to attend email bevforrest@outlook.com

July 23rd Sunday - 2pm - British Archaeology Fortnight – ‘Victorian Medical Men’ – walk by Caroline Vernon

August 19th - Saturday Member's Summer Tea Party. Details TBA

Membership now stands 97 which is our best year yet. Thanks to all of you for your loyal support.

Please don't forget to visit our web site <http://lawnswoodcemetery.org.uk> and our Facebook page.

If you would like to contact us with any queries or suggestions please email
friendsoflawnswoodcemetery@yahoo.co.uk

-Finally –

Notice in a cemetery in Portugal:

"Persons are prohibited from picking flowers from any but their own graves".

