

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024



Hello again

As I look out on my snow-covered garden, I note that this year is going out with a bang following a series of storms with more on the way. As always, I wish all our members and supporters greetings of the season, together with my best wishes for the next year. I take this opportunity to update you on what has been happening since our summer newsletter in September.

Annual General Meeting

We held our latest AGM on 16 October 2024 at the Burton Street Foundation in Hillsborough. The meeting was quorate with several Friends 'tuning-in' through the Zoom facility set up by our Secretary Verity Brack. We did encounter problems with this and will look to alternatives for the next AGM.

The meeting confirmed the election of our three officers — Mike Ford (Chair), Verity Brack (Secretary), Jane Pratt (Treasurer) and five members of the Management Committee (MC) — Lynda Barnett, Sue Fisher, Malcolm Nunn, Peter Easter and Mark Pickering. The meeting noted the retirement of Ron Clayton (thanks again, Ron) and formally welcomed Peter Easter as a new member of the MC.

There are now five MC members and three vacancies open to any member who wants to become more involved with the Friends group.

The Treasurer provided a report on the current financial position. Please don't forget that subscriptions are due on 1st January. They are essential for us to continue our work. My thanks to everyone who donated this year.

In addition to what might be called the formal business, Verity presented her paper on 'Gravestone Symbolism'.

Student Volunteering?

Sue Fisher, Peter Easter and myself attended a daytime event at Sheffield Hallam University. We had a good reception, with several students expressing an interest in joining mid-week work sessions. We also had an approach from The Wadsley Scouts, who might also be



Photo—Olivia Lester

interested in getting involved. Hopefully these new volunteers will be able to join us next spring or summer.

Remembrance Day (11 November 2024)

On Monday 11 November we welcomed members of Year 5 from Loxley Primary School, together with their year tutor, Dan Eaton. Malcolm Nunn, Peter Easter and Hannah Isherwood hosted the event, which has become a staple in the calendar. They covered most of the known graves and memorials, as well as two in the area where they have been working this year that FoLC did not know about. Well done Y5 Loxley Primary!

There is more information about this on page 5.

Volunteer Sessions

Finally, I must pay tribute to the fantastic team of volunteers who have been giving up their Saturday afternoons (13:30-16:00) through most of the autumn. If anyone is in need of some fresh air and light duties over the winter, feel free to attend one (or more) of the sessions, which are run by our Treasurer, Jane Pratt. I believe you might even get a hot drink and a mince pie!

Best wishes for 2025

Mike Ford (Chair)

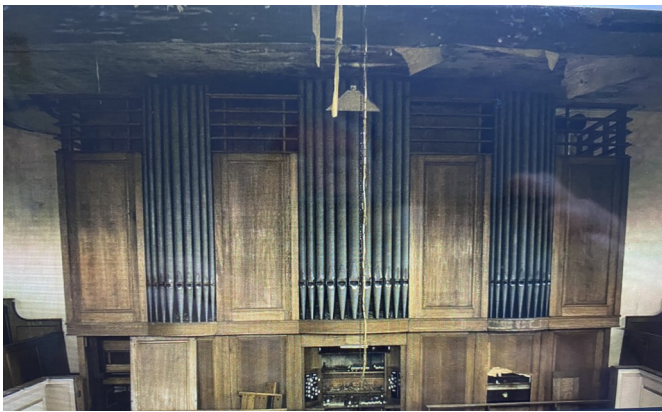
'PRESERVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE'

THE HISTORIC LOXLEY BANDSTAND

Many thanks to one of our members, Malcolm Nunn, for bringing to our attention that a bandstand once stood in the grounds of the cemetery or adjacent Manse and was used by the congregation on 'High Days and Holidays' for a number of years before sale and transfer to Hathersage in Derbyshire. It is even more amazing that the bandstand is still in use today.

In the beginning . . .

It is known that the Chapel had a local reputation for its fine organ and the recitals for which it played the central role.



The Chapel was also a gathering place for congregations from other churches and chapels for the traditional 'Whit Sings' at Whitsuntide.



A 'Whit Sing' gathering at the then-designated Loxley Independent Chapel

These musical events most probably led to the decision to erect a bandstand in the grounds of the adjacent Manse on Loxley Road. The bandstand was thought to have been sited downhill from the Chapel in the area of the Manse's garden where a summerhouse currently stands. Despite extensive searches, FoLC volunteers have been unable to find any photos of it in its original position. If any readers have photographs or other

evidence of its location at this time, copies would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the Chair.

The Bandstand, chapter two . . .

Having decided on the erection of a bandstand, the Chapel Elders/Committee did not stint on the cost. They approached one of the foremost manufacturers of cast iron bandstands in the UK, W. McFarlane & Co Ltd in Glasgow, which operated the world famous Saracen Foundry in the city. This foundry is well-known for such edifices as the Raffles Hotel entrance canopy and fountain in Singapore, the Rondebosch Fountain in Cape Town and the Kibble Palace in the Botanic Gardens in Glasgow.

The foundry operated between 1850 and 1965. During this time it produced both stock and bespoke water fountains, conservatories, verandas, telephone boxes, public conveniences, gates and railings as well as some of the finest bandstands made in this country, all in cast iron. The one at Loxley was no exception. We do not know when it was erected, possibly at the turn of the century, but we do know that a decision was taken to sell it on in the 1930s.

New Lease of Life . . .

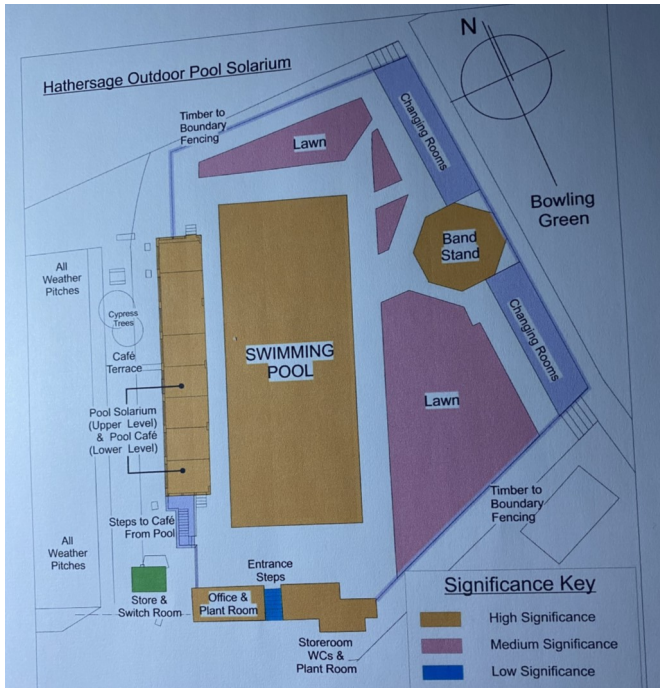
It cannot be a coincidence that the buyer - George H Lawrence - was a Methodist who was born in Sheffield and had a substantial manufacturing presence at his Laurel Works on Nursery Street. In 1932 he and his wife Elsie moved to Hathersage, where they funded many projects and improvements over several years, including the installation of the Loxley bandstand.



Continued on page 3 . . .

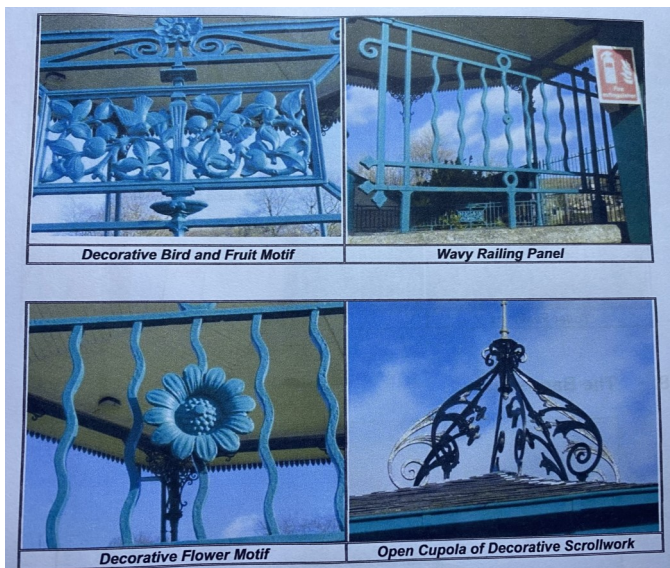
The bandstand story continues . .

George Lawrence had humble beginnings and started his working life as a street vendor for the Sheffield Star, before rising to become one of the world's top producers of razor blades. He was a renowned local philanthropist, donating to local and international causes throughout his life. He bought and donated the land that Hathersage's park, playground, bowling green and swimming pool occupy to this day. He also purchased the bandstand and paid for its transportation to Hathersage and re-erection between the bowling green and swimming pool, as shown below.



The bandstand is still in fine condition, and the only known replacement has been its timber floor, which has now been replaced by one in concrete. The structure is still in occasional use and has obviously been well maintained. Long may this continue.

Mike Ford (Chair)



One of our last Ministers



In a secluded corner of the cemetery, not far from the chapel and near the track leading to the Long Lane section, lies the grave of one of the last ministers of Loxley Chapel — the Reverend Frederick William Nicholls, who served here for 20 years from 1951 to 1971. As you can see, the grave is in a sorry state.

Reverend Nicholls was born in Birmingham in 1889. Between 1915 and 1919 he studied at Paton Congregational College in Nottingham to train as a minister. He was ordained in 1923 and then became a pastor in Wibsey on the southern outskirts of Bradford.

In 1927 he and his wife moved to West Hartlepool, where he was the minister at St George's Church for 24 years before taking up his final post at Loxley. He was a popular and significant figure in the Hartlepool district by the time he left.

The photograph below shows Reverend Nicholls (in the centre wearing glasses) at a harvest supper in the Chapel in about 1956.



Heritage Open Day 2024

The British weather was not kind to us on our Heritage Open Day in September this year. Despite that, a good number of visitors enjoyed the tours and talks, checked out our bookstall and took advantage of our burial research service.

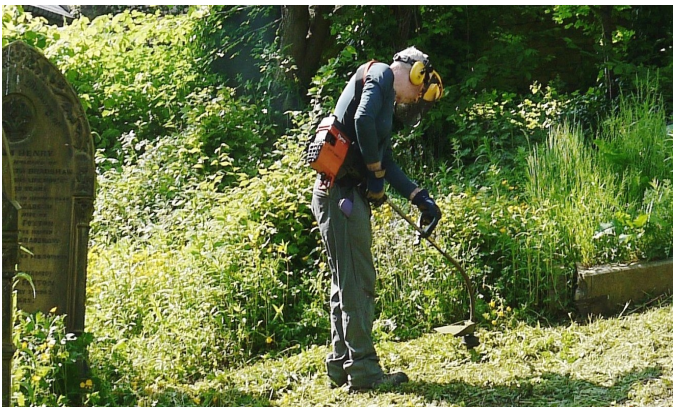
Our chairman, Mike Ford, spoke in detail about the connection between the cemetery and Henry Tingle Wilde, chief officer of RMS Titanic, who died with his ship in April 1912. His family's grave is by the steps on the east side of the Chapel.

Malcolm Nunn lead a tour of the Commonwealth war graves in the cemetery.

Other visitors took the opportunity to get help with their burial research or browsed through our fairly extensive collection of books, CDs and DVDs, helping to raise funds for our work.



Volunteers Eddie, Peter and Stuart at work this autumn



Remembrance Day 2024

Loxley pupils take centre-stage

Led by their tutor, Dan Eaton, Year 5 pupils from Loxley Primary School came to the cemetery on Monday 11 November to mark Armistice Day, as they have in recent years.

The girls and boys of Year 5 have been maintaining an area of the cemetery throughout the year and also researching the occupants of some of the graves. They marked these during their visit on the 11th.



MEMBERSHIP REMINDER!

Your Friends of Loxley Cemetery membership is due for renewal in January. Membership still only costs £5 a year.

You can pay by bank transfer or cheque — details are at <https://e-voice.org.uk/friendsofloxleycemetery/join-us/membership/>.

Donations are also very welcome!

Please complete the Renewal of Membership form online. It really helps us to keep track of who has given us what!

Sheffield Heritage Fair 2025

The Sheffield Heritage Fair is being held on 25 and 26 January at the Millennium Gallery in the city centre. As well as ourselves, there will be a lot of other heritage-related organisations and Friends groups to talk to and gather information from.

We need help to run our stand on the two days — so a couple of hours of your time would be appreciated. Please contact our Secretary, Verity, if you can help.

Fragrant memories

Verity (our Secretary) and Peter Easter were intrigued by references to 'fragrant memories' on two gravestones in the cemetery. It seems likely the phrase comes from a poem — 'You remain' -- by Arthur Symonds (1865-1945).

You Remain

*As a perfume doth remain
In the folds where it hath lain,
So the thought of you, remaining
Deeply folded in my brain,
Will not leave me; all things leave me -
You remain.*

*Other thoughts may come and go,
Other moments I may know
That shall waft me, in their going,
As a breath blown to and fro,
Fragrant memories; fragrant memories
Come and go.*

*Only thoughts of you remain
In my heart where they have lain,
Perfumed thoughts of you, remaining,
A hid sweetness, in my brain.
Others leave me; all things leave me -
You remain.*

How to contact us . . .

For general inquiries and volunteering, please email our Secretary, Verity Brack:
loxley.secretary@yahoo.com

For membership and subscription inquiries, please contact our Treasurer, Jane Pratt:
loxleytreasurer1@gmail.com

For archive and committee business, contact our Chairman, Mike Ford:
loxley.chair@gmail.com or Tel: 07879 075619

Our website:
e-voice.org.uk/friendsofloxleycemetery
Burials research: loxley.burials@gmail.com