



Sheffield
General
Cemetery
Trust

undertakings

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May 2025



News and Events

The Sharrow Lantern Festival, held this year entirely in the Cemetery, was a delight, lanterns, music and lights combining to make this one of the highlights of the Cemetery's year. A record number of people attended.

Abtisam Mohamed, Member of Parliament for Sheffield Central, visited the General Cemetery at Dave Hunt's invitation in February. Like many local people she had not walked through the Cemetery before, so Dave, as Chair, gave her a tour of the site and structures, which she enjoyed.

The Burial Research team were thrilled to meet David Worth recently. He is a descendant of Samuel Worth's younger brother Henry and had researched his family so was pleased to be shown Samuel Worth's modest monument and the interior of the Samuel Worth Chapel. He plans to visit again for Heritage Open Day in September when the theme is Architects and Architecture and will feature Samuel Worth.

You may have noticed that occasional pockets of work are happening on site. The last of the money from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Parks for People project, is being used to refurbish some of the monuments. The lost pieces of railings for the Nicholson monument are being recast and the original colour, an imperial purple, restored, while work has also been done on the Burch and Allen monuments just below the Samuel Worth Chapel. Also new on site is the green fencing, which replaces some of the chestnut palings and is neatly gated, making life easier for the landscape team.

This summer the 80th anniversary of the ending of World War 2 is being commemorated, coordinated in Sheffield by Sally Rodgers, Libraries and Archives Engagement Officer. There will be a small onsite exhibition and a display curated by Sally during National Cemeteries week in June. There will also be a 'meet the burial team day' that week, when members of the team will be in the Chapel to discuss their work and answer enquiries.

In April, Sarah Howell organised a day of Hidden Histories, with two tours and a talk on those interred in cemeteries in unmarked graves. Cathy Spence created an exhibition displayed in the Samuel Worth Chapel, and Professor Lizzy Craig-Atkins, lecturer in human osteology from the University of Sheffield, gave an



Cover photograph Andrew Littlewood.

This page from top clockwise: grave clearing, Dave Hunt and Abtisam Mohamed, David Worth with Sue Turner and Jean Lees, the restoration of the Allen monument, Lantern parade through the Cemetery.

interesting talk on what can be learned about the everyday lives of those in un-named graves from their remains.

Both general history and specialist tours continue to be very popular, as do the many and varied events arranged by Andy, the events manager, at the Samuel Worth Chapel. Into the Trees, a monthly event of music and dancing, is particularly popular. Check our website for news of forthcoming events and new trails. Two self-guided leaflet trails for children, a nature trail and a symbolism trail, are available from the Office.

Finally, in March, the Trust welcomed Sophie Parkin as our new Press and Marketing manager. She replaces Emma Larson Revitt who stepped down at the end of February.

Introducing Sophie Parkin



I recently took on the role of Press & Marketing Manager, having joined the Trust as a Marketing Volunteer in November, and wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself...

I'm a proud Sheffield native with nine years' experience in marketing, most recently as Marketing Manager for Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust in Rotherham. I studied Law at the University of Exeter followed by an MSc in Marketing, before living in London for several years. Yet here I am, back in the Steel City (Oughtibridge to be precise) with my fiancé (James) and cat (Misty) in tow and am now studying an MBA at the University of Sheffield. I love travelling, theatre, trying new foods and visiting heritage sites, museums, and galleries in my spare time.

I am passionate about heritage and culture and am keen to explore new and exciting ways to engage people with local history. I very much look forward to getting to know you over the coming weeks / months and getting my teeth stuck into this exciting project! Due to my busy university schedule, I will mainly be working on Mondays but please feel free to drop me an email (sophie.parkin@gencem.org) and I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

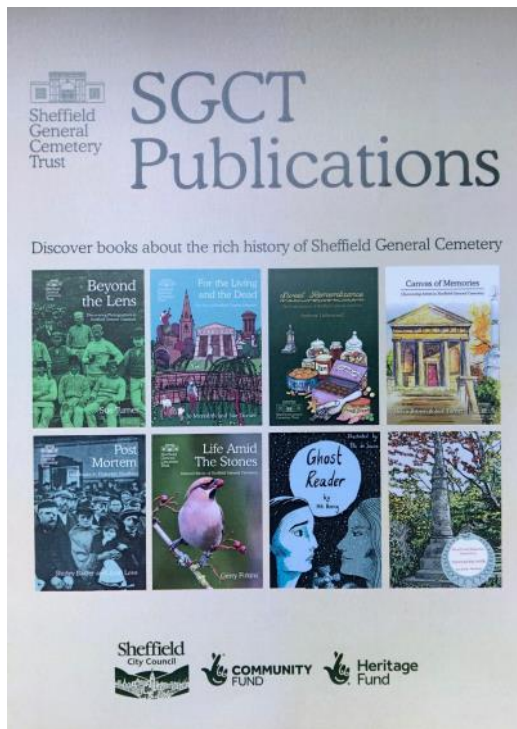
The Burial Research Team

Sue Turner

The sale of our books is an important way of raising money for the Trust and we were pleased to hear that we sold 1027 books last year. To try and improve sales even more, a leaflet has been produced, available at the Gatehouse and at events, which gives details of all the books we currently have in print.

One of our recent publications, 'A Window into The Workhouse' by Cathy Spence, has had to be reprinted due to popular demand and therefore we are very pleased that Cathy has nearly finished writing another book 'Demon Drink' which we hope will be published in June. Telling the stories of people buried in the Cemetery who engaged in the alcohol trades in Sheffield and those in the Temperance Movement, it promises to be an excellent addition to your library! Also being reprinted is 'A Woman's Place', this time with minor amendments.

All our books will be on sale at our Burial Research Open Day during Cemeteries Week. On 12 June, 10.30-3.30, in the Samuel Worth Chapel, members of the team will be on hand to talk about the work we do and answer any questions. We are always happy to help you with your family history, or maybe house, research so if you think you have an ancestor buried in the Cemetery do come along, with as much information as you have, and we will look into our records for you.



Flowers, Fencing and Fires

Sally Puddifoot Landscape Conservation Manager

Would you like some good news or bad news?

Starting with the *bad news*, summer brings warm days which also bring those who think it is a good idea to build a fire. Fires are not allowed due to the risk of it spreading, and the hazard to dogs and children of hot ashes or coals, but common sense does not always prevail and this year we have had a few incidents that have caused damage to a tree and to the large field.

The *good news* is the flowers, birds and butterflies on site. Sue T, Phil and Patti have been busy in the memorial garden weeding, staking, and cutting back last years' growth. It's looking fantastic and when we had a visit from the RHS to see the progress on the garden since its relocation from Tatton, they were delighted to see how well tended it was. There will be a little article on the RHS website to update their supporters on how the Psalm 27 garden is settling in in its new home. This before photo shows you what a challenge it was to transform the area. But what a successful and rewarding challenge it was.



The pond is looking well maintained and has newts this year again. Damselflies are on the wing and the king cups looked glorious. The wildflower meadows are shooting up and already beginning to flower. It's been a good year for butterflies. Sue M and Claire have counted quite a number already including; comma, peacock,

orange tip, speckled wood, green veined white and holly blue. Lots of birds are building nests and raising young. I saw a lovely little goldcrest by the Gatehouse just a few weeks ago.

The volunteers are keeping the site maintained and paths weeded. The War Memorial was tidied and washed with water in readiness for VE day. We've been keeping the lawns mowed and visitors have been enjoying the shady spots on hotter days.



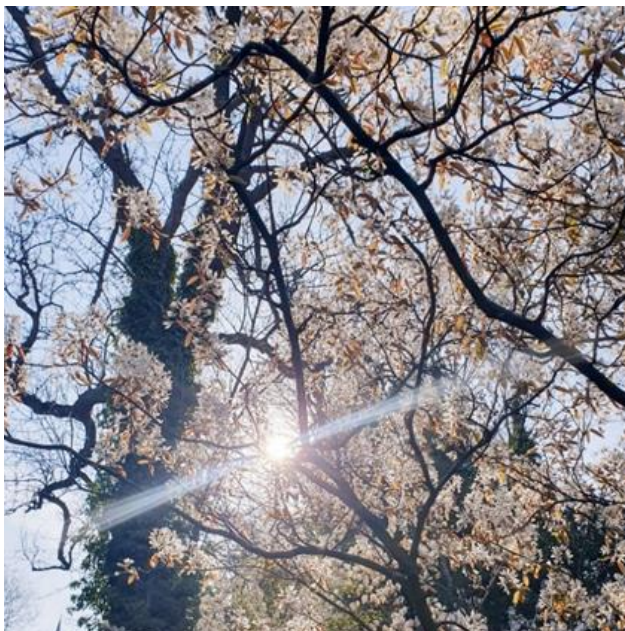
hard work of our now 30 strong landscape volunteer team.

Photographs Sally Puddifoot



Although it is no more May now, we do keep some areas close cut. Birds like a mixture of long and short grass. And around historic areas such as key graves it enables visitors to read inscriptions. As I was cutting and clearing moss from one such grave I discovered this fabulous praying angel.

If you haven't been on site for a while, please do come for a visit. It is looking fantastic thanks to the



The Brownill Tiles

Andrew Littlewood

The Brownill grave first drew attention by its dramatic rescue from a Cotoneaster bush, which featured in a previous edition of Undertakings (February 2021).



It wasn't so much re-finding the memorial that was the surprise, but the four marvellous tiles that are inlaid into it. These tiles feature the four Evangelists – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, represented as their Christian symbolism of winged creatures. Matthew the Evangelist is shown as a man or angel, thought to be because his gospel shows Christ's human nature.. Mark the Evangelist is depicted as a lion, as his gospel is about courage and monarchy. Luke the Evangelist is drawn as an ox or bull, a figure of sacrifice, service and strength, representing Jesus' sacrifice. Finally, John the Evangelist is the eagle, a figure of the sky, repre-

senting the Ascension of Christ. Unfortunately, the weather has taken its toll on the tiles, as can be seen in the photograph montage above but it can still be appreciated how stunning they must have looked when the memorial was new.

I was reminded of the Brownill tiles during a visit to Christchurch Priory, Bournemouth, where embedded into the main aisle of the nave there is a similar set of square tiles. These tiles, living indoors, are in good condition (though they must have been walked over a million times!). The photograph here shows how the Brownill tiles would have looked back in the 1890s. Also, a set of these square tiles are displayed in the V&A Museum, London, Room 122, C.81-1976. The V&A catalogue describes these tiles as from c1845, made by Minton and designed by Pugin.



Herbert Minton ran a ceramics factory in Stoke-on-Trent that made tableware and ornamental items. In 1830 Samuel Wright of Shelton took out a patent for making encaustic floor tiles. Minton saw an opportunity and made a licensing deal with Wright for his

patent It took a further five years of research and development until encaustic tiles could be mass-produced. Encaustic tiles are made from a red-brown clay, indented with an ornamental pattern of a lighter coloured clay. "Encaustic" comes from the Greek, meaning "burnt in", referring to the pattern being fired into the base clay. A screw press was used to force the base clay into a mould, then a further press made the indent to take lighter-coloured liquid clay that formed the pattern. Extra pattern layers could be added if needed. The challenge was finding clays that could all be fired at the same temperature. When partly dried the clay surface would be smoothed off to reveal the inlaid designed, then the tiles would be fired at temperatures up to 1,200 degrees Celsius to produce a very hard tile that could withstand water, dirt and wear; ideal for floors. Usually, the tiles were not glazed.

Augustus Pugin was an architect who favoured the Gothic Revival architecture style. Pugin designed many churches, with his most famed being St. Gile's Catholic Church in Cheadle, which has a highly decorated interior full of encaustic tiles. Pugin's masterpiece are the Gothic interiors of the Houses of Parliament.

Some of Minton's earliest commissions for encaustic tiles came from Pugin, which led to a successful business relationship between the two men. Pugin designed tiles, particularly for religious settings, based on medieval examples. In 1844 Pugin wrote: "Every ornament, to deserve the name, must possess an appropriate meaning, and be introduced with an intelligent purpose, and on reasonable grounds. The symbolical associations of each ornament must be understood and considered: otherwise, things beautiful in themselves will be rendered absurd by their application." In the Four Evangelist tiles this ethos can be seen at work, and perhaps the placement of similar tiles on the Brownill memorial is significant symbolism too?

The history of the Minton company is complex. Herbert Minton died in 1858. Quoting Hayley Barry, from Stoke-on-Trent Archive: "From this point on there seems to have been much tile-related wrangling which eventually culminated in the effective separation of "Minton, Hollins & Company" from the china & earthenware business in 1869. In all, there were seven company names making Minton tiles in the nineteenth century". Augustus Pugin died in 1852.

So are the tiles in Sheffield General Cemetery, on Brownill's memorial made by Minton and designed by Pugin? The first burial in the grave was 1862 and Henry Brownill died in 1890. We do not know when the memorial was erected. The Brownill tiles are round whereas the examples that are verified as Minton/Pugin are square. Very few catalogues of Minton tile designs now survive to check against. The only way to determine for sure if the "Brownill tiles" are Minton is to remove them from the memorial and look for makers marks on the rear. This is not going to happen. So, what can be said is that

the Brownill tiles are encaustic tiles, as developed by Minton, using a design inspired by Pugin. Perhaps they were chosen to embellish his monument because of his involvement with Allen Street Sunday School, part of the Methodist New Connexion which had its roots in Sheffield and was particularly associated with missionary work in China. In 1869, it was reported that, at Allen Street Sunday School's annual social gathering of friends,

“Mr. H. I. J. Brownill, formerly and for many years one of the Superintendents of the school, occupied the chair and said in his introductory address ‘three missionaries having gone forth from Allen Street School - two of them to China and the other to Australia, was of itself sufficient to stimulate them to renewed efforts in their Master’s service’”.

Whether or not Brownill described himself as an Evangelist we cannot know, however the fact that the Four Evangelists were chosen to feature so prominently on his memorial suggests how passionate he was regarding Christian outreach.

The Brownill monument is in the Nonconformist section, plot LL 26. Starting from the Gatehouse, turn right off the main path, and climb the steps through the Egyptian style arch. Brownill is a low, black memorial behind the huge Philipps tomb— still under threat from that Cotoneaster bush!

Thanks to

The following organisations have generously offered grant support to the Trust since January:

The Gripple Foundation
JG Graves Charitable Trust
The Grocers Charity
Sheffield Town Trust

And thank you to all our hardworking volunteers and staff, including everyone who has also contributed to this edition of Undertakings!

Nature Matters No 10

Gerry Firkins

It's that beautiful time of the year when the greens are rich and fresh, and the bluebells are at their best. I've been asked several times this year how you can tell the difference between a native bluebell as opposed to a cultivated one. It's a little bit of an art but to identify a native bluebell you should look for narrow leaves, a flower spike that droops on one side, a flower that is a cylinder as opposed to a bell shape, and the ends of the petals really curving backwards, with white anthers inside. The two photographs below demonstrate the difference between the native bluebell, and the hybrid, which is crossed with a Spanish species.



Native bluebell



A hybrid—crossed with a Spanish species

The butterflies are having a field day! The dry sunny weather has been great for them this year as opposed to last year when the wet weather reduced their numbers significantly, even affecting the species that emerged later in the year. Commas, peacocks, whites, speckled wood, and even brimstone are some of the butterflies seen regularly over the last few weeks. The brimstone's food plants are either purging buckthorn or alder buckthorn.

Both plants used to be uncommon, and the brimstone was nearly lost, but action by conservationists promoted planting of both food plants and the species has recovered well. Its sunny greeny-yellow flitting is a great sight in spring.

Common brimstone butterfly
Wikipedia Commons



The Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society

Megan Beevers



Hello, I'm Megan Beevers, I am 20 years old, a second year History student at the University of Sheffield, and currently a research volunteer at the Cemetery. I am originally from North Lincolnshire but my Dad is from Sheffield, so I have always felt a strong connection to the city before university. It is such an inclusive and engaging city, with a friendly community and so much to do. I've been volunteering with the Cemetery since October, because I am interested in local history and giving power and a voice to people previously marginalised by grand national narratives. I've also been working on a couple of military history projects for young people for the Cemetery.

The Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society (SLPS) was a learned Society founded in 1822 and closed down in 1932. Its primary goal was to promote intellectual discussion, with hopes that it would lead to improvements in knowledge and personal development of its members. The meeting which launched the Society's inception was on 12 December 1822 at the Cutlers Hall, chaired by Dr Arnold Knight. It was decided that it would diffuse knowledge through lectures, collect information scattered across Sheffield, to submit to the SLPS in the form of essays and to record experiences to collate transient thoughts.

The constitution of the SLPS was established shortly after. Here the key logistics were formalised by the influential founders. These included Samuel Bailey, James Montgomery and Thomas Asline Ward. It outlined that the SLPS would consist of proprietors, annual subscribers and honorary members. Proprietors would pay 2 guineas each as entry money, followed by an annual subscription of 2 guineas. Subscribers had the privilege of attending lectures of the Society, admission to museums and introducing friends to the Society. Honorary members had to live within 10 miles of Sheffield, must present literary communications to the Society and make donations of value. They were not subject to the expenses of the Society, and had free entry to lectures and meetings. Members were admitted by ballot. They had to be over the age of 17 and must be nominated at a general meeting of the Society, with a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority. If anyone in the Society resigned, they had to forfeit payments and subscriptions and lost the right to sell or transfer their stake in the SLPS.

Annual meetings of the SLPS were held in January. The president chaired the meeting, examined the ballots and maintained order. Secretaries kept regular minutes. The treasurer was in charge of funds and lay accounts. The curator was in charge of the Society's books, apparatus and museums. General meetings were to be held monthly. Strangers were allowed to be admitted into these meetings 30 minutes in. Strangers could only be admitted to the general meeting if a proprietor introduced them. Business in meetings were distinguished into three categories: private, literary or scientific. Private business included balloting candidates and determining matters relating to the governance of the Society. By contrast, literary and scientific business entailed hearing essays and communications, and conversations of topics or objects of the Society. Any member of the SLPS could submit an essay or composition. The SLPS was quite open in its content, it could be on any branch of literature and science, excluding the discussion of politics and religion. There had to be at least eight lectures delivered in the course of a year by the proprietors. Members got lower entry rates for public lectures, yet it was up to the Council as to who could access extraordinary lectures.

Some key members of the initial SLPS Council (1823-1850) were buried in the Sheffield General Cemetery. Their roles and occupations varied, highlighting the diversity of the SLPS, despite its exclusivity of being a learned, gentlemen's club. James Montgomery, one of the founding members of the Society and the second president, was a writer, publisher, campaigner and poet. He was thoroughly active in the SLPS from 1822-1844 and after his death in 1854 was buried close to the Anglican Church. Another influential member was Luke Palfreyman, a solicitor, who was the secretary from 1822-1834. Also buried in the Cemetery were two of the SLPS' influential academics. One was George Calvert Holland, a Doctor of Medicine, who had varying Council roles from 1830-1847; and the other was Nathaniel Phillips, a Doctor of Divinity, who also had varying Council roles from 1823-1827. Finally, three surgeons who were members of the SLPS were buried in the Cemetery, and they were Henry Boulton, William Jackson and James Ray. Thus, it is clear that some of the Sheffield elites had a direct connection to the Cemetery.

The Society flourished through the 19th and early 20th century but by the late 1920s / early 1930s its future was in doubt. At an Extraordinary Meeting of the Proprietors held on 10 October 1932, it was resolved to wind up the affairs of the Society, and to present all local material in its library to Sheffield City Libraries. One might suggest that a fall in membership precipitated this decision.

Researching Uncle Sam

David Worth



My name is David Linley Worth and I am Samuel Worth's 2x Great Nephew. I am also, possibly (subject to further searching the Ancestry website), the only surviving great nephew of Samuel Worth, Architect, Surveyor and the designer of Sheffield General Cemetery.

I was born in 1944 and grew up in the Broomhall area of the city. Whilst my immediate family (all born at the turn of the century) were aware of Samuel Worth there were no Sheffield relatives from the generation before that so knowledge of him, his life and achievements was very sketchy. Post war the interest in the past was small and genealogy was difficult to pursue in those pre-internet days. The only really known fact

in the family seemed to be that "he was the man who built the Cutlers' Hall". His other Sheffield achievements, the bank next door to the Cutlers' Hall, a bridge over the River Don and, more notably and pertinent to this publication, the General Cemetery, were lost in the mist of time.

With no knowledge of these I was unaware that I was treading on Uncle Sam's footprints almost daily. We lived just off the bottom of Ecclesall Road a short walk from Broomhill where he built two "interesting" large houses and Glossop Road and St. Georges Terrace where he lived between 1820 and 1850. I attended Pomona Street School (now Porter Croft) just round the corner from the General Cemetery. I later moved to Hunters Bar School and, in those safer times of the early 50's, I used to walk home with friends along Sharrow Vale Road and Frog Walk on the way home. I have to admit also that on occasions, we ventured through the iron gates and explored the Cemetery and especially the handy Catacomb areas.

In the 70's, and married with the next generation being on the way, with a little prompting I sat down with ageing relatives and a collection of old family photographs, and slowly the connections to the past were mapped out. Connections to other well-known Sheffield families were also revealed. The Linley family in Norton, the Bingham, Batchelors, Eadons and Glossops in Sheffield and, most importantly, the connection between my 2 x Great Grandfather Henry and his brother, Uncle Sam. However, one question remained unanswered. If he built the Cutlers' Hall, one of, if not the,

most prominent buildings in the city, where did he and his brother come from as it was known he was not a Sheffielder. So, with the help of Ancestry and Family Tree Maker, the unknown hidden pieces of the jigsaw were slowly pieced together.

Samuel was born March 1798 in Hougham, a small village in Lincolnshire, 12 miles South East of Newark. His parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Arnold were married in Avonham, part of the village of Staythorpe near Newark, Nottinghamshire, in 1789 and had 8 children, 4 boys and 4 girls, of which Samuel was the 3rd child. As usual at this time the family were local to the area and his father, muddlingly, also Thomas, was born in Hougham in 1767 and married Anne Gilbert in Gedney, a village just a few miles south of Hougham. Thomas was a joiner by trade having been apprenticed to a Master in Newark but he may actually have developed his skills to be more of a builder. We think it possible that, like his father, Samuel was also apprenticed in Newark as the first trace of him is actually his marriage at the age of 22 in June 1820 to Elizabeth Turner in Girton, a village 10 miles north of Newark.

We now have a gap in time to the next “sightings”. On the professional side this is him entering into a partnership in Sheffield with Joseph Botham as architects and surveyors. Presumably he had moved to Sheffield around 1822 to 24 for him to have developed his skill and connections enough to enter into an architectural partnership in 1826. On the personal side there had been some sad times as the next trace is his marriage (as a widower) on 11th March 1829 at Sheffield Parish Church to a 36-year-old lady, Ann Andrews, whose parents, John and Ann Nettleship Andrews, were an Upperthorpe family. Currently we do not know what happened to Elizabeth but presumably, since there is no mention anywhere, there were no children from the first marriage.

Uncle Sam’s professional life in Sheffield and beyond and the interesting growth and development of his children will all be detailed in the 2nd part of Researching Uncle Sam.



Sharrow Lantern Festival

Lexa Candler, Events Volunteer



On an unusually mild March evening, the quiet, serene landscape of the Sheffield General Cemetery was transformed into a magical landscape of sound and light.

The Lantern Festival had arrived.

Just before sunset, the only sign that this was going to be a magical night was dozens of

volunteers in high visibility jackets scuttling around making sure all preparations were in order, everyone knew their duties and the sound of kettles boiling and kegs being attached.

Then from the entrance, the spectacle began; the light from the sun faded and was almost immediately replaced by hundreds of people appearing from the fading shadows, brandishing the most unique and imaginative paper lanterns you can imagine.

Families galore descended, drawn like moths to the lights and sounds of the multiple bands. Carnival dance music meddled with the bang of the steel drums which materialised to lead the parade.

As the show began and the drums led the lanterns on a wonderfully slow parade weaving up and down throughout the Cemetery, it almost seemed that the normal peaceful residents of the ground arose from their slumber and became the grateful dead, reveling in this yearly party and celebration.

As the train of light wormed its way through the woods, more and more people descended on the park, many purely drawn by the noise and sights, wondering what was happening. Perplexed young students and newcomers alike wandering around with a look of total confusion and amusement on their faces. "What is going on? Is this some kind of party? I've just seen a bunch of mushrooms walk past my house" (and no, he wasn't high; there were actually paper mushroom lanterns!)

Overexcited children full of sugar and wonderment over the bright lights dashed around, dragging their families around chasing the lights before demanding their treasure of sweets, chocolate, pizza and pop.

And the adults who were suddenly transformed back into amazed little children (the alcohol probably helped); not one face showed annoyance about being brought to the park by their kids; every single person was beaming and happy.

Alas, all good nights must surely end, and what an ending as the paper bird lanterns, mushrooms, and even a crocodile filed back down to the entrance, passing a troupe of fire-dancing elves, spinning burning sticks with the elegance of true mystical elves. The steel drums swirled and swirled, forming a drum circle before smashing out one final awe-inspiring drum solo.

Then as the last notes echoed in the still night, the magic was ended. The lanterns dispersed and flew back to their homes, full and content that their job of bringing joy was a success.

Sharrow Lantern Festival

Sarah Tadman, Events Volunteer

I really loved volunteering at the Lantern Festival at the Cemetery earlier in the year. Such a wholesome evening, bringing a large community together of all ages, to enjoy the brightness of the lanterns in the dark of the Cemetery.

The Cemetery was such a wonderful backdrop for the lanterns, with little nooks for lanterns on display, including a stunning bird flying! I really hope that it becomes a regular event at the Cemetery, and I get to volunteer at it again next year.

Photographs Andrew Littlewood



The Late George Bennet, Esq. 1775-1841

Patricia Wenz

After my first contact with the SGC burial research volunteers in September 2024 I wanted to find out more about the Cemetery's history, and the SGCT publication *For the Living and the Dead* was a good place to begin. I noted a line in the entry for George Bennet and his Grade II listed memorial: *Bennet died suddenly in 1841 in London and was buried in Hackney*. As a grave research volunteer at Abney Park Cemetery, Hackney, my interest was aroused. Could George Bennet be buried at Abney? The Cemetery had been opened in 1840, founded by - and the last resting place of - many non-conformists. I checked the database, but Mr Bennet was not listed. So, I set out to find the last resting place of this esteemed son of Sheffield and friend of James Montgomery, in the process discovering a hidden corner of Hackney.

The *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* of 27 November 1841 carried a lengthy report covering George Bennet's death and funeral. He was 64 and 'generally enjoyed good health and good spirits.' He set out from his lodgings after breakfast on the morning of Saturday 13 November, walking to town, 'apparently in perfect health.' 'While in Birdcage Walk, a short walk from Hackney to the City' he suddenly collapsed and died.

Bennet's cause of death was recorded as 'Natural death by the visitation of God.' This was, I learnt, not an uncommon term in early nineteenth century records, used to describe a sudden unexplained death. (The post mortem examination found evidence of heart disease.)

Superintendent Registrar's District <i>Bethnal Green</i>									
Registrar's District <i>Hackney Road</i>									
1841. DEATHS in the District of <i>Hackney Road</i> in the County of <i>Middlesex</i>									
No.	When Died.	Name and Surname.	Sex.	Age.	Rank or Profession.	Cause of Death.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.
	<i>Thirteenth November 1841 at 3 Birdcage Walk</i>	<i>George Bennet</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>64 years</i>	<i>Gentleman</i>	<i>Natural death by the visitation of God</i>	<i>W. Baker Crown Crossby St.</i>	<i>Thirteenth November 1841</i>	<i>James Murray Registrar</i>

The internment was reported in the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* 27 November 1841:

THE INTERMENT OF THE LATE GEO. BENNET, ESQ
(From a Correspondent)

On Friday the 19th the mortal remains of our highly esteemed friend, Mr George Bennet were removed from his late abode in Grove Place (where he had resided for more than seven years) to the chapel in St Thomas's Square, when the Rev Dr Pye Smith delivered a very solemn and affecting address. The Rev Dr Burder offered a most impressive and appropriate prayer; and that beautiful hymn from Watts' Lyric was sung –

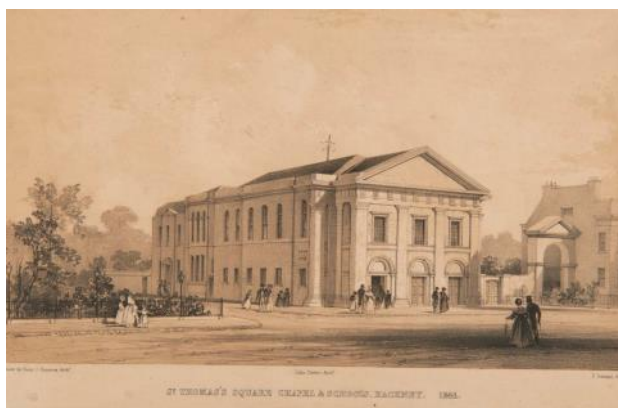
‘Do flesh and nature dread to die,
And timorous thoughts our minds enslave?
Yet grace can raise our hopes on high,
And quell the terrors of the grave.’

The remains were then deposited in the burying-ground adjoining the chapel, there to rest until the morning of the resurrection, when ‘the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.’

The image of the relevant page of the Chapel's burial register (accessed via *Ancestry*) is not very legible. The transcript wrongly gives Bennet's death and burial dates as 13 and 19 *October* 1841. A closer reading proves this to be a result of a correction made a few lines above Bennet's entry.

A contemporary print of *The St Thomas's Square Chapel and Schools, Hackney 1841* depicts a substantial building (right).

Thomas's Square references the fact that the land had been granted to St Thomas's Hospital in 1553. The Congregational Chapel, founded in 1772, closed





in 1896. Burials ceased and the ground was laid out as a public garden in 1885, maintained by the Hackney District Board of Works. Under the Disused Burial Spaces Act of 1884 the ground remained intact, the bodies undisturbed. Now called St Thomas's Recreation Ground, the site is freely accessible. One icy cold Sunday in February this year I entered from Mare Street, through the old archway. It's clearly recognisable from the 1841 print, while the site of the Chapel itself

(to the left of the archway) is now occupied by student accommodation (above). Most memorial stones were removed and now line the perimeter wall behind discouragingly rampant bramble thickets, while a few ledger stones and table tombs remain *in situ*.

It was perhaps too much to expect that a perfectly-preserved memorial stone recording George Bennet's life and achievements would be visible somewhere among the brambles – but who knows? The site has seen many changes over the centuries and one day there may be a further 'rearrangement', enabling a proper record to be made of these silent stones.



*Photographs (above) Patricia Wenz
Photograph of Bennet monument SGCT Archive*

Previous page: Print of St Thomas' Square Chapel and Schools 1841 Courtesy London Museums—Creative Commons



Introducing

Nicky, research volunteer

I joined the Cemetery's Burial Research and Interpretation Team last October after attending one of the Heritage Open Day events in September. My background is varied: many years working as a researcher in the homelessness field in London, administrator, maintenance gardener and a passionate family history sleuth. I've lived in Sheffield for a number of years but to my shame had not really got to know the Cemetery, so my retirement last year seemed to be the perfect opportunity to remedy that. The Burial Research team have been very welcoming and it's clear that they are an absolute treasure trove of knowledge about the Cemetery, its graves and occupants. They have all been generous in sharing that knowledge and welcoming me to the team but there is also great scope for individual passions and interests. So at the moment I'm looking at some aspects of daily life in the Cemetery over time and researching the various Chaplains and religious figures in its history and development. But who knows what next?!



Tim, landscape volunteer

Hi, my name's Tim, I'm recently retired, and I used to walk through this park very frequently because I worked just across the road from where the park is and I still go to the gym there.

I was always very interested in how the park looks and always enjoyed walking through so when I retired I thought 'Why not volunteer there?' so now I'm volunteering two hours a week, on a Friday, working in the landscaping team. I'm thoroughly enjoying it, meeting some nice people and getting some fresh air!



Events : Into the Trees

Into the Trees is a monthly fund raising event held from 8.30 to 1.00 am, a night of dark 80s, post punk, new wave and synth pop sounds, held in the atmospheric venue of the Samuel Worth Chapel. Fans often dress in costume and dance the night away. Book early – tickets are always snapped up.



Photographs Andy Smith

KEYSTONES PIANO FESTIVAL

A weeklong festival of Piano based music in the Samuel Worth Chapel, thanks to the loan of a Steinway grand piano from Music In The Round.

Friday 23rd May

Maria Chiara Argirò + Bruno Heinen

Doors 7.30pm

Saturday 24th May

Music in the round dawn concert

Saturday 24th May

Emergence Collective

Doors 7.30pm

Sunday 25th May

Simeon Walker

Doors 2pm

Sunday 25th May

Robert Mitchell, Laura Cole and Whale
Detective with Nicola Farnon

Evening concert

Doors 6.30pm

Monday 26th May

**Sheffield University Classical
Showcase**

Doors 2.00pm & 6.00pm

Tuesday 27th May

Hallam Sinfonietta & Chris Noble

Doors 7pm

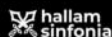


University of
Sheffield

JAZZ
AT THE
LESCAR



Sheffield
General
Cemetery
Trust



MUSIC
IN THE ROUND

Tickets available through our
website:

<https://gencem.org/whats-on/>
or scan the QR code.



Events

Keep up to date by visiting

gencem.org/whats-on

Tickets for the history tours, which usually take place on the first Sunday of the month, should be booked through our website www.gencem.org which links to TicketSource.

The café and bookstall in the Samuel Worth Chapel are open on tour days.

Book your tickets at ticketsource.co.uk/sgct

Membership

You can join us as a member by visiting

gencem.org/membership

The membership costs £10 per person per year and is renewable from the date of joining.

This edition of Undertakings was edited by Shirley Baxter



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[@SheffieldGenCem](https://twitter.com/SheffieldGenCem)



Sheffield
General
Cemetery
Trust

The Sheffield General Cemetery Trust, The Gatehouse, Cemetery Avenue, Sheffield S11 8NT

0114 268 3486 - sgct@gencem.org - www.gencem.org

Charity No. 1103158 - VAT Registration No. 222 3822 40 - Company No. 04997593