

# **Friends of Zion Graveyard Attercliffe**

132 Wincobank Avenue, Sheffield S5 6BB

Private Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England & Wales

Company No: 11016737 Registered Charity: 1188411



2020 -21 Trustees :

Michael Bruin, Jean Hine , Samantha & Peter Hurman , Stephen Randall, Penelope Rea

## **Annual Report for 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2021**

What a year! Certainly, it was one that will be remembered however hard we try to forget some of the bleaker moments. It was some consolation that while we were all confined to quarters during the seemingly endless lockdowns the wildlife was able to flourish in the peace and quiet.

### **IN THE GRAVEYARD**

1. **LOCKDOWN ZION** When possible, Mick Bruin visited the graveyard to check on the remote cameras and ensure the birds had sufficient food. During the year he reported seeing green finches, goldfinches, chaffinches, wrens, blackbirds a thrush, long-tailed tit, collared dove, great spotted woodpecker, our usual robins, magpies and woodpigeons as well as nesting blue tits and great tits. The tree camera even caught wood mice stealing from the birdfeeders and the ground level camera has caught a fox, a cat and a rat. We have been identifying the wildflowers as they come through and were very interested to find new species now some of the more invasive plants have been cleared back.
2. **SPRING CLEAN** Nature had done its best to reassert control and in addition to a carpet of catkins and a resurgence of ivy we found a lot of broken branches from the high winds. Our neighbour had cut back overhanging branches and returned them to us resulting in a dangerously high woodpile. Bradwell's Skip Hire kindly provided two skips for the removal of this and at the same time we took the opportunity to clear unwanted topsoil and leaf litter that had been removed from the graves.
3. **VOLUNTEERS** Our volunteers worked hard to finish painting the palisade fencing from grey to green, clearing the catkins from the graves and pulling up bracken and brambles. We were particularly impressed by the earnest endeavour of young Abel Appleby and were really pleased to welcome him and his mum Amanda as regular volunteers. With some much-appreciated funding from Sheffield Town Trust we were able to purchase new tools, a storage bench and tool bunker.



*Our youngest volunteer Abel, sweeping up the catkins from Mary Ann Rawson's memorial stone.*

We are aware that, in order to improve accessibility, some sensitive work is required to level off the sloping paths and make the drains safe so it was decided that the proceeds from this year's raffle should go towards this project. We have had some beautiful art prizes donated as well as hampers of drink and cosmetics. Thanks to Jean, Sylvia and Sam for organising our first online raffle and to our supporters who bought the tickets.

The winning numbers were 1<sup>st</sup> 0196, 2<sup>nd</sup> 0027, 3<sup>rd</sup> 0270, 4<sup>th</sup> 0257, 5<sup>th</sup> 0048. All prizes were claimed. The raffle raised a total of £400.

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### 4 INTERPRETATION



*1 Two of the ten new interpretation panels telling the story of Zion chapel, church, institute and graveyard.*

We were pleased to be able to reopen the graveyard in May with the launch of the wonderful interpretation panels that had been funded by J G Graves Charitable Trust. Local historian Mike Higginbottom and graphic designer Ann Beedham had worked with us to produce a set of ten panels that tell the history of Zion Congregational Chapel and Church, the graveyard and the local area. Many more people contributed fascinating images. We are particularly grateful to staff from Picture Sheffield at the City Archives for their help.

**5 AN EXTRA PANEL** The launch event was very well attended. We were particularly pleased to welcome a group from the Hallamshire branch of Soroptimists International who had funded an additional interpretation panel about the life and work of Mary Anne Rawson and also provided funds to purchase some plants for the graveyard. We were also delighted to meet Mr James Tear, Director of Thessco, who came along with his wife Jo. Thessco, (The Sheffield Smelting Company), was founded by Mary Anne Rawson's grandfather in 1760, and is now one of the world's largest manufacturers of silver alloys.

### 6 FERGUSON STREET

Socially distanced refreshments served in Ferguson Street were very welcome and our thanks go to Kinder Kalsi and his group the Attercliffe Angel and Darnall Diamonds for helping clear the enormous amount of litter that had accumulated there during the lockdown. This is a problematic wind-trap and we have been liaising with Streets Ahead to try and improve this area which is our most accessible entrance.

## 7 CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY FAMILY DAYS

Zion Graveyard is a validated Children's University Learning Destination accredited by Sheffield City Council.

We were pleased to be able to welcome families for two activity days in the summer holidays to explore firstly the Zion Wildlife Day when the children were encouraged to explore the graveyard to identify flora and fauna. They found some huge spiders sunbathing on the wall and with tuition from Mia, the children produced some beautiful wildlife inspired print work and made mobiles.



*Nature themed printing with Mia*

## 8 HISTORY DAY



*Victorian History Day activities*

Our second family day was themed around the life of Victorian children with much talk about how different life was in past times. The children enthusiastically played marbles and drafts, and made spoon dolls. Once again Mia came up with a truly impressive activity to create Victorian hats from paper collage. It was wonderful to see so many new families who had heard about the event through Sheffield Children's University publicity. We were followed this up with a Happy Halloween afternoon on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

## 9. HERITAGE

For Heritage Open Days this year, our good friend Mike Higginbottom was able to bring his Attercliffe Walking Tour back to the graveyard and we also had good attendance on our own Open Sunday. The interpretation panels relieved us of the need for a guided tour and it was much more interesting to be able to talk to small groups. During the lock down Penny gave several talks by Zoom for different groups including one from Sheffield Libraries that attracted an audience of 200.

## 10 DISCOVERING DEAKINS

Sam and Peter Hurman have done some fascinating research into the Deakin family who were prominent in Zion Chapel's history. Amanda has been uploading information on to the Find-a-Grave website. Margaret Hemmings has been in touch to pass on her father's memories of the Attercliffe Theatre and Roy Bragger has sent us his memoir of growing up in Attercliffe. Peter has acquired some very special historic books about Attercliffe including a Bible from Zion Church.



## 11 FAMILIES

It is always heartening to hear from living relatives of those interred in the graveyard and this year we have made contact with more relatives including Richard Grindrod, a descendent of Rev Joseph Brown Jefferson and his brother Rev John Jefferson, both Ministers at Zion Chapel. Members of two different branches of the family of Mark Oakes: Richard Denby and Rhonda Wells, have been in touch to share information about the family. Jose Bosworth, whose Great Great Grandparents were Jonathan Wood and Catharine Wood, has also sent fascinating details of her family. Her mother Helena and grandparents, Thomas and Lucy Hague lived at 70 Ferguson Street until about 1945. Thomas was the son of Nancy Wood.



*Richard Grindrod at the grave of the Jefferson family*

## 12 WILSONS

Another exciting contact made this year is Mr Ashley Irons, descendant of the Read family and nephew of Ronald E Wilson, descendant of the Read family, who wrote “Two Hundred Precious metal Years”, the History of the Sheffield Smelting Company. After an initial contact through a neighbour of Ronald Wilson’s now deceased son, Ashley has promised to get back in touch to share more information about his extraordinary ancestors.

## THE ORGANISATION

### 13 SUPPORTERS

We currently have 540 followers on our Facebook page. 255 addresses on our gmail circulation list, 151 followers on Twitter and 247 fully signed up members on our database. It’s a full-time job keeping up with it all and consequently we don’t always manage to keep on top of it. We hope to build our team of regular volunteers this year and welcome all offers of practical help.

We were very sorry to hear about the death of Alison’s mother, Mrs Ann Cathels, earlier in the year. Ann had been a keen supporter and had donated the green chairs in the graveyard. We miss her very much but are honoured to have received some of her gardening tools which is a lovely memento and a reminder of her encouragement and support.

### 14 STRUCTURE

A key decision made by the trustees has been to work towards closing down the Limited Company that was set up to purchase the graveyard within a tight deadline. We achieved Charitable Status in February 2020 and are working with Faithstar LLP to transform the organisation to a Charitable Incorporated organisation. We are now waiting for approval of our new constitution from the Charity Commission. The new structure will not make a material difference apart from relieving the need to report to Companies House and HMRC.

We are sorry to lose our Treasure Steve Randall who has resigned for personal reasons. He was a founder member of the organisation, having raised the alert in the first place after having seen the notice that the graveyard was for sale. He has been a mainstay over the past five years and we thank him for his support. Jean Hine has agreed to take over as treasurer.

The trustees meet regularly with an advisory group of volunteers. If any members would like to join this group we would really appreciate your input, especially in the area of biodiversity and conservation. We aim to keep a balance between safe access to the historic memorials and preserving a safe habitat for wildlife and it is essential that all interests are represented.

#### 14 OLD SCHOOL HOUSE, WINCOBANK

We have now changed our registered office address to 132 Wincobank Avenue, S5 6BB. This is the address of Upper Wincobank Chapel and the Old School House, next door. Friends of Zion Graveyard are represented in the group working to raise funds and renovate the School House so that it can be used as a community and a base for local heritage groups. It is expected that renovation work will start in March so that the building will be open for use by July.



*The Old School House, 132 Wincobank Avenue, S5 6BB*

#### 15 LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022

We are looking forward to a good start to the New Year and look forward to welcoming visitors on our monthly Open Afternoons every second Sunday from 2 – 4pm and volunteers for work sessions on the Wednesday before the open days and at other times as arranged.

I would like to finish by thanking my fellow trustees Sam, Peter, Mick, Jean and Steve, our advisors Alison, Sylvia, Amanda and Alanna and all our other volunteers for their hard work and commitment turning out throughout the year to look after the graveyard and dealing with research, administration and fund-raising despite their busy private lives.

#### 16 ACCOUNTS

Thanks to our treasurers Steve Randall and Jean Hine, and to Peter Foyle for his help in checking the accounts.

# **Friends of Zion Graveyard, Attercliffe**

Accounts for the year ending 31 October 2021

## **Income**

Donations	£385.50	✓
Grant	£1,250.00	✓
Raffle	£10.00	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,645.50</b>	

## **Expenditure**

Graveyard maintenance and improvement	£2,958.50	✓
Membership Services	£245.07	✓
Administration costs	£26.00	✓
Other	£55.38	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,284.95</b>	✓
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>-£1,639.45</b>	

## **Balance Sheet**

Opening Balance	£5,712.08	✓
Less deficit	-£1,639.45	✓
	<b>£4,072.63</b>	✓

## **Represented by**

Current Account	£4,072.63	✓
	<b>£4,072.63</b>	✓