

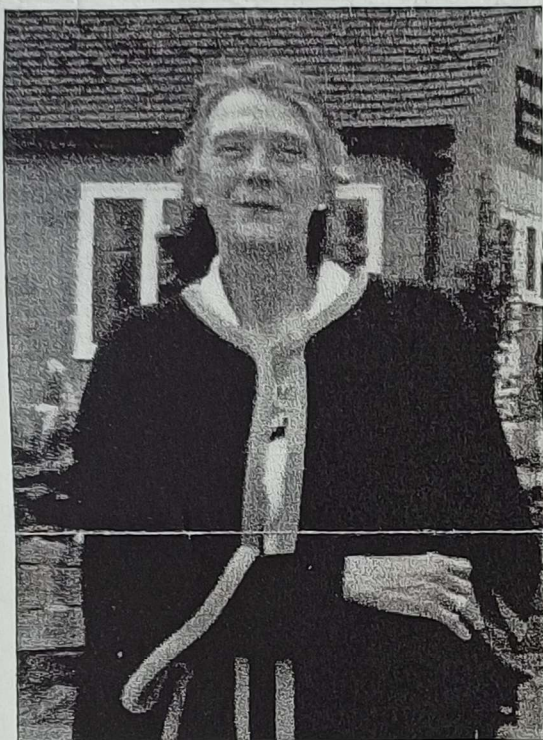
# Ranmoor Society

May 2008

News

## Shelagh McDonald

It is with great regret that we must report the recent death of our membership secretary Shelagh McDonald that occurred after a short illness.



For most members hers was the smiling face that met you as you arrived at our monthly meetings, gently urging all to sign in and collect a raffle ticket. It was Sheila who collected and meticulously recorded your annual subscriptions and always knew whether you had paid or not – and whether by cash or cheque! And for those who attended the Ranmoor Society AGMs she would have your membership cards ready for collection. Those who didn't get to the AGM would receive them shortly afterwards in the post. She also controlled the distribution of our newsletters, linking up with our team of distributors as soon as a new one came off the press.

Shelagh performed another less conspicuous but no less valuable function for us. She was often the main source of contact between the Society and those members who are unable to come to our regular meetings in the Parish Centre. She provided our "human face" by always seeming to have sufficient time to scribble a friendly note to accompany the membership card or newsletter.

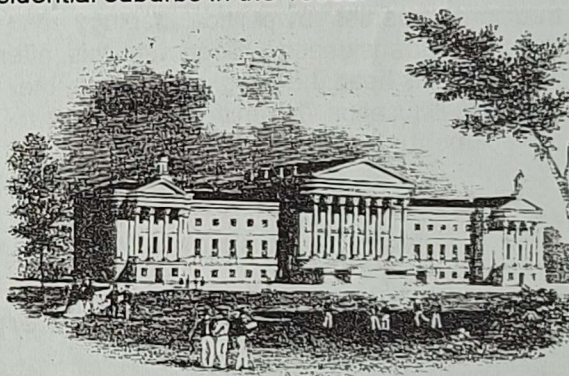
We will miss her greatly.

## March 2008 Meeting

### *The History of King Edward VII School*

At our March meeting John Cornwell selected for us some of many intriguing facts about the school's history that he had amassed over the three years he spent researching and writing *The History of King Teds*.

There was a huge amount to choose from. King Teds itself was founded in March 1905, but it was born out of the amalgamation of the *Free Grammar School* (founded in 1604), the *Sheffield Collegiate School* (founded 1826) and *Wesley College* (founded 1844). Indeed KES has inherited the latter's bold, classical-style building designed by William Flockton, who had already cut his teeth by building a parade of eight town houses named *The Mount* during the early development of Broomhill as one of Sheffield's prestigious residential suburbs in the 1830s.



John Cornwell did not attempt to reiterate the school's comprehensive history which he covers thoroughly in his book, but selected several key events and turning points. Particularly poignant was the effect that the two world wars had on the school. A bronze plaque there commemorates the 90 boys and 2 masters that died in the Great War, which he estimates as about 12% of those that had passed through the school between 1905 and 1918. The fact that four head prefects in the consecutive years 1912-16 had gone on to study at various Oxford University colleges but then unceremoniously perished in the trenches of Northern France and near Arras and Passchendaele provides a sad chapter to a school that was just nine years old at the start of the war.



King Edwards inherited a cadet corps (later the Officers Training Corps) from Wesley College and the Collegiate School. It was attached to the West Yorkshire Royal Engineers Volunteers and lasted for 20 years with varying levels of popularity. After the armistice, numbers dropped significantly as the sight of young boys drilling and marching became less acceptable. But the school believed, in line with other public schools at the time, that the OTC taught leadership, co-operation and self-discipline, as well as improving employment prospects in the civil and colonial services.

Although by 1926 the OTC was well established, it was the huge political change that took place that year on the Sheffield City Council which resulted in its abrupt demise. That year saw the election of a Labour majority (for the first time in a large English city), and it had been part of the Labour party's election manifesto to abolish the OTC. The group was deeply pacifist, and many councillors also resented the snobbery inherent in a corps devoted only to the training of potential officers.

Amongst the seven deposed councillors were Sir William Clegg and Alderman Robert Styring, two men who could rightly be considered as the founding fathers of King Edwards. Soon afterwards the headmaster withdrew the school from the Headmasters' Conference (the standard criterion for recognition as a public school), and arranged for questions to be raised in the House of Commons over the assault of a headmaster's traditional "liberties" by political ideology and "northern intransigence". Soon after this, after only four terms as head, he resigned, obliging the Sheffield Education Committee to seek a replacement.

### **Next Meeting May 20<sup>th</sup>**

#### ***Ranmoor & the General Cemetery***

This month we are lucky to have Jo Pye, a Friend of the General Cemetery, to talk about the history of one of Sheffield's finest assets. The Cemetery contains nine listed buildings and monuments but it is still far too little known even within the City.

The Friends of the General Cemetery do much work to save the site from neglect, and, gradually, it is being restored to something like its former glory. Recent Lottery money has restored the Gatehouse (just off Ecclesall Road), and a team of volunteers wage a constant struggle to keep the vegetation from taking over. Those of you who plan to come on the annual Ranmoor Society walk on the 5<sup>th</sup> June will be able to see the progress that has been achieved.

Nancy Greenwood, also a long time Friend of the General Cemetery, has studied some of the links with Ranmoor. These occur because the cemetery

was chosen as their final resting-place by some of the considerable Victorian steel-makers and industrialists that had been attracted to Ranmoor and the local area in their lifetime. Those buried here include Mark Firth of Oakbrook (now Notre Dame School), Henry H Andrew of Snaithing Brook (now Ranmoor Hall), James Nicholson of Moordale (now the Fulwood Inn), and William Laycock of Stumperlowe Hall.

We can also find here the graves of a butcher who lived in Cliffe Terrace (now Deakins Walk), an umbrella manufacturer & hosier from Ranmoor Road, a brewer linked to Carsick Grange, a tea and coffee merchant from Fulwood Road and several other "locals"

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century people were moving rapidly from the countryside into towns where living conditions were squalid, disease spread easily and death rates soared. Several epidemics had swept the town in the early 1830s and the new cemetery was opened in 1836. It was approached along Cemetery Avenue, lined with lime trees, and marked at its junction with Ecclesall Road (then the Manchester Turnpike) by two imposing obelisks.

### **Meetings Programme 2008**

May 20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sheffield General Cemetery and its Ranmoor Connections</b>
June 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ranmoor's Pubs and Beer-houses</b>
June 29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>A Walk around the General Cemetery (meet 6pm at Gatehouse)</b>
July & August	<b>No Meetings</b>
September 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sheffield Then and Now</b>
October 21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Ranmoor in the Newspapers</b>
November 18th	<b>Sheffield Dialects Past and Present</b>

#### **Ranmoor Society Committee**

<i>Chairman:</i>	Andrew Swift	268 5158
<i>Secretary:</i>	Gerald Eveleigh	230 1992
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Gill Battye	230 1596
<i>Archive Coordinator</i>	Peter Warr	230 9174
<i>Planning Matters:</i>	David Barber	230 4717
<i>General Matters</i>	Carolyn Feeley	230 7421