



FRIENDS OF DEANE ROAD CEMETERY

Restoring Our Heritage



Welcome to the first issue of the Friends of Deane Road Cemetery Newsletter! You are receiving this because you either filled in a questionnaire at our open day on 18 June or have, at some other point taken an interest in Deane Road Cemetery.

This newsletter, which will be published quarterly, will bring you all the news and updates from the project, allowing you take an active part in the restoration of this fascinating and historic place.

In this issue, our head of volunteers, Muriel Sumner, gives the lowdown on the current physical state of the cemetery, while Lisa Vingoe of Community 7 discusses the funding opportunities currently on the table.

Over the page, there are some photos from the open day and the first in a series of biographies of notable people buried at Deane Road. This issue features David Lewis, the most famous resident of the cemetery.

We would love to hear from you regarding anything to do with the cemetery, including offers of physical and practical help, as well as funding sources and any historical information you have about anyone buried here.

Contact Saul at info@deaneroadcemetery.com or 0151-261 0306



When my friend Ruth Raisman asked me to look at Deane Road Cemetery I fell in love with place. I promised to give two hours a week for as long as I am fit.

I was not daunted by the rubbish or the Japanese Knotweed as I know that huge projects can succeed with lots of patience.

My current focus is to clear the central area, one row at a time, by digging out rubbish and the roots of perennial weeds. The rubbish goes to the heap at the back and the weeds to a great compost heap near the inner gate. This should give us good nutrients to dig into the soil of the street-side garden we are soon to create.

As I clear the ground, I am seeding it with grass to make a level footing for the public.

My peaceful Wednesday mornings are often accompanied by memories of how much the people buried there have influenced my life.

As a child and as a teenager, I loved the Christmas Grotto at Lewis's store. I always enjoyed the pantomime at the David Lewis Theatre. I stared at the gold in the jewellers windows without considering the people who created the jewellery business. I remember the kosher butcher on Penny Lane and my dad explaining to me what kosher meant.

My grandparents were married in 1896 which made them Victorians. The cemetery was in constant use then.

Two of my uncles died before reaching school age and I think of all the children who are buried here. The death of any child is a tragedy so I feel for those parents.

I don't feel gloomy, just grateful for that pleasure of working in this peaceful space.

To contact Muriel about volunteering at the cemetery, e-mail volunteers@deaneroadcemetery.com or ring 0151-427 4527.



The Fundraising committee has been able to secure funding from a number of sources:

We have so far received £2,000 from the New Communities Fund (NCF) and £7,000 from LCVS, which was used to remove a large tree from the front of the cemetery and

for plants and trees to replace them. More recently we have secured a further £500 from the LCVS Trust, which will go towards the re-erection of headstones. The total cost for this part of the project is £8,500 – a very reasonable quote for the amount of work involved.

An application is being prepared for the Heritage Lottery Fund. The pre-application form has been accepted and two positive meetings have taken place with HLF staff. In the next few weeks, we will be applying for up to £200,000 to pay for the listed archway, the boundary wall, railings and gates and pathway. You can read about the progress of this application, in future issues of this newsletter.

A number of relatives of the people buried at Deane Road have been approached for support and some have made donations to enable us to restore their ancestors' graves. These include the large domed tomb of Baroness Miriam de Menasce and the monument to Rev. Raphael Cohen of Dover.

A variety of people continue to give valuable in-kind support: those who volunteer their time on-site and in planning and fund-raising. One such group, from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, stripped and re-painted the gates and railings at the end of September.

If you know of any organisation which may be interested in supporting the cemetery restoration project, please contact Lisa Vingoe at funding@deaneroadcemetery.com or on 0151-285 1373.

Cemetery Open Day

We are delighted to report that, despite the rain, our open day was a huge success. Around 250 people visited. Many were local residents who had spent many years walking past and wondering what was behind the gates. Others were those who have a keen interest in history. There were several local councillors, teachers from local schools and even a few of the local police force who came for a tour of the cemetery. We were also pleased to welcome Rex Makin, who has been most supportive of the project and he gave an extra gravitas to the day. A few of the male visitors admitted to having scaled the cemetery walls in their youth in order to scare themselves with ghost stories and we were pleased that this time they decided to use the gate!



Left: Cath Taylor, Muriel Sumner and Louise Baldock in high spirits, despite the rain.

Above Left: The open day attracted the young and old.

Above: Saul Marks, giving his first tour of the day.



DAVID LEWIS (1823 – 1885)

David Lewis was born David Lewis Levy in London, the son of a Jewish merchant. In 1839, he moved to Liverpool to work for Benjamin Hyam & Co, a firm of tailors and outfitters. Within 18 months, he was appointed manager of the Liverpool branch and, in 1842, he was placed in charge of opening new branches in Scotland and Ireland and supervising existing branches.

Lewis started his own business at 44 Ranelagh Street, Liverpool, in 1846, selling boys' clothing. Most of the clothes were made in his own workshop, as was common at the time, and he also designed new clothes, particularly knickerbocker suits. His customers were mainly working class, and had not been able to afford tailoring until that point.

Lewis established strong ethics at the outset, which would be the foundation of his businesses: he would fix a low price and stick to it; he was always willing to exchange unsatisfactory goods; he never borrowed money; and he always fed his profits back into the business. In 1859, he opened new premises on Bold Street – a more fashionable area – he started selling London and Paris women's fashions in 1864. While his new ventures were taking off spectacularly, Lewis was extending the original Ranelagh Street premises, eventually buying and merging five adjacent properties and adding a clock tower and he continued to add departments.

In 1877, Lewis opened a new shop in Basnett Street, and called it *Bon Marché*, specialising in women's fashions and novelty items. Lewis kept *Bon Marché* completely separate from his main store, and its clientele was very different.

In 1880, Lewis opened a large, purpose-built store on Market Street in Manchester, with six departments. In the early 1880s, Lewis also began to sell tea, in response to the rapid increase in its consumption in working class families, and his 2-shilling tea became famous nationwide. Another well-known product was velveteen, and that department was the largest in the Manchester store, spawning a large mail-order section. The store soon required physical extension and, by 1885, there were seven floors.

Lewis was always aware of the importance of advertising and used it well. His most famous stunt was shortly before he died. He chartered the famous haunted and ailing steamship the *Great Eastern* for a year, and arranged for it to be anchored in the Mersey estuary as part of the Liverpool International Exhibition of 1886. It was used as a social centre and was a huge success.

David Lewis died on 4 December 1885 at his home in Liverpool, after a long illness, leaving an estate of just over £125,000 (approximately £63.5million today). He had created the largest department store in Liverpool, on the corner of Ranelagh Street and Renshaw Street (which still exists today), catering for the working classes of the north of England, and had branches in a number of other cities.

Lewis also set up the David Lewis Trust, for charitable purposes in Liverpool and Manchester. His executors developed the David Lewis Northern Hospital and, in 1906, the David Lewis Hotel and Club Association was founded, as a neighbourhood centre in the Liverpool docklands. Lewis also left a lasting tribute to Princes Road synagogue when, in 1875, he donated the uniquely ornate bimah (reading desk), replacing the original wooden one, which was seen as out of keeping with rest of the interior, when the synagogue was built in 1874. He had served as Junior Treasurer in 1865-67 and Senior Treasurer in 1867-68.

The full version of this biography can be seen at www.deaneroadcemetery.com/biographies.htm