

Sheffield Dementia Involvement Group

November 2024

‘Gone but not forgotten’

Background

Last Christmas I was gifted an image of 'The Casbah' a Sheffield nightclub where my friends and I spent many hours through our teens and twenties. I soon realised that the artist was a person with whom I had attended art college, Greg Harris. Thirty years later and with the help of Facebook I got in touch with Greg, and we met up. He showed me more of his work and we discussed his role as a carer for both parents, one of whom had Dementia. Greg's images stayed with me, and I considered their potential to generate memories and discussion. I asked his permission to use them for a SHINDIG event. Together we selected five images of Sheffield landmarks.

November's SHINDIG was attended by nine people with a diagnosis of Dementia and seven carer/supporters. Six people were unable to attend but sent apologies. Our guests were Admiral Nurses Georgia Kipling and Michaela Chand who informed the group about the service which has recently launched in Sheffield. Observing the facilitated discussions were Jane Gleason Activity Coordinator from Woodland View and Nawal Mohsen a second year Occupational Therapy student.

In November SHINDIG attendees were split into three groups. As numbers have continued to increase this has enabled us to resume the type of groups we had pre-pandemic.

A group for people with a Dementia diagnosis.

A group for carers/supporters.

A mixed group.

Facilitated discussions

Each group were given A3 prints of each landmark. These were passed round to be viewed individually and then people were invited to comment.

I have tried to capture the conversations that resulted as naturally as possible. Feedback directly afterwards showed how much people enjoyed the session.

Two people emailed me the following day to say it was the best SHINDIG we've ever had.

Another person shared how much the images helped him communicate his thoughts.

"You know doing this, looking at the pictures. In some way it was easier to describe, easier to describe your thoughts. You know I can't always think of something, what I want to say, but it's so good to talk".

The hole in the road

The hole in the road became a recognisable Sheffield landmark back in 1967. It's famous 'fish tank' held an impressive 2000 gallons of water.



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

QJHarris



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Q. H. Jones

Questions

Did you use it?

What was down there?

Why did it get filled in?

I came in 1956, there was no hole in the road then.

I moved here 1993, and the hole in the road was still there.

I can't remember when it was built but I remember having to go down the escalators.

I remember having to get out the way of a bus coming past the hole in the road, I survived but my bike didn't
Park Roundabout that was another one, I used to call it Kamikaze Island, going round it on my bike.

Our Jean was a clippie on the old trams. (a clippie was a slang term for a bus conductor or ticket taker).

The Supertrams used to be grey, I nearly got hit by one.

It got dirty down there they filled it in to build the trams.

I can remember seeing it filled in, it was unsafe people used to congregate there at night taking drugs.

I was there when they built it, I worked at Walsh's, and they had to knock part of the building down to build the hole in the road. It's sad that they filled it in. You would get into Walsh's from an escalator, they changed Walsh's to Rackham's

Did it later become TX Max, no TJ Hughes.

Where's C&A in the picture?

I worked in C&A.

There's C&A in Europe, I saw one in Prague the other week.

I'm 84, my mum and dad used to take me there to lose me, but they never did. My mother used to leave me there, wait here she'd say, I wandered around getting dizzy I used to run up and down the escalators.

The fish tanks, underneath there were fish tanks.

Did anyone ever see the fish? I wonder what happened to them?

We ate em.

There was a kiosk for newspapers down there.

People went to hide down there from the rain.

There was a Christmas tree.

You'd have people selling wrapping paper, little stalls.

I seem to remember a shoe mender.

There was a prison nearby, Sheffield Castle was once a prison, they're excavating the site now, they knocked the old Market Tavern pub down by mistake

The Queen's Head that is a listed building, oldest pub in Sheffield.

It used to be busy, like the market what do they call it now, Castle market. Such a shame, it were putting Sheffield on the map.

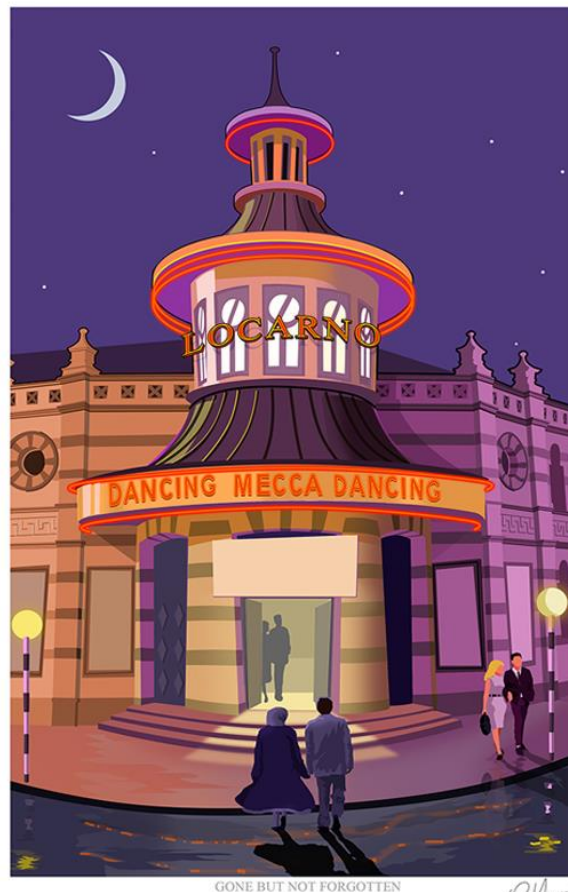
There are a lot of developments going on in the city centre now.

I'm looking forward to it all being done all this footpath stuff, looking forward to getting it organised and made nice, know what I mean it's unique.

They're making it nice, a garden near where the castle market was.

That'll be nice, gardens, not just all plastic.

Locarno's



The building was originally Lansdowne Picture Palace which opened in 1914. Designed by Architect Walter Gerard Buck of Campo Lane. There was seating for 1,250 people. It later became a temporary M&S in 1947 then a succession of nightclubs enjoyed by multiple generations.

Questions

Where was it?

What other names has it had?

Did you learn to dance?

I used to go dancing.

I met my wife there for dancing, it was a nice place.

When I was courting my wife, I got some free tickets to Locarno's, but when we got there, we were told we'd made a mistake the tickets were for the night before! The manager arranged for us to come back another night instead.

I was bopping there, but I'm showing my age now. I had blue suede shoes. We won a competition there for dancing. You had to be able to bop or they wouldn't let you in.

So, none of you went ballroom dancing, more the sixties?

I went to an all-girls school, and we had ballroom lessons, but that was proper dancing, not shuffling. Because I was one of the tallest, I had to have the men's role and lead all the time, and I would always try to lead whenever I danced after that.

I went to Mansell Road School, best football team in the city.

Drugs didn't exist to us in those days, we all smoked instead

My daughter used to sneak into nightclubs, but when she had her 30th birthday she was refused entry as she didn't have an ID.

I used to go to the Shades at the bottom of Ecclesall Road, nice music, it was the building where Napoleon's Casino is now.

Near Gleadless Village there was a place called Selliners, the Beatles played there just as they were coming up, they've still got the poster there.

I never went in Locarno, but I used to sit on the bus and see it, it's all lodged in here (pointing to head).

I was a dancer, but my husband wasn't, I went to the Top Rank that was before we met, then I had to become a folk lover because he liked folk music.

It was the Palais when I was young, Stone Roses, Pixies. Then it was Bed and painted grey and black.

C&A had half day closing so I used to go to dancing every Thursday afternoon. known as treetops back in 1981.

There's a couple at the memory cafe and that's where they met.

Yes, we used to go dancing, Birdwell, Rockingham, she kept putting her feet under mine.

Looking at the painting he's really captured it, simple lovely lines.

Cole's Corner



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Q. Harris

The original Cole Brothers Department store stood on the corner of Fargate and Church street. In 1963 it was relocated to Barkers Pool where it became John Lewis which closed it's doors in 2021.

Questions

Why did it become famous?

Did you have a favourite meeting place?

Where did you meet your spouse/partner?

Cole's Corner was a meeting place for courting couples.

We didn't have phones so you couldn't be late.

I had my first passport photo taken in the building at Coles corner.

We didn't live in Sheffield but came to Sheffield to go to Coles Brothers.

I got my wedding dress material from Cole brothers when it was on the corner. Someone who worked in the alterations department made the dress for me.

There's a couple of gravestones in the General Cemetery, I went on a tour and the Cole brothers are on a corner there.

Favourite meeting places

There was a pub called Marples in Fitzalan Square, and there was also a statue of Queen Victoria where you could meet, but not your girlfriends that was for your gang of friends. When we used to go to town, the police used to wait and follow you to make sure you didn't cause any trouble.

Pond street bus station is where we'd meet.

We'd meet at the bus stop, I still know the number, the 69, we'd get up early to buy shoes cheap from Sheffield market, really had to get there early to get them cheap, pod shoes.

(In the 1980's teenagers would go to a shoe market known as 'The Grovel' before school. There they would purchase cheap yet fashionable shoes that had apparently been worn by models on the catwalk).

I remember meeting my friends outside Redgate's it used to be a three-storey toy shop, a landmark for meeting.

The image of Coles Corner led to a lot of discussion about which buildings remain and what they have become.

This must have been before 1960 as the old-style tram is in the picture. They have the old-style trams on display at Beamish.

M&S was there and still is, there used to be a woman who wouldn't let you in if she didn't like the look of you.

That's looking up towards Barkers Pool, That's what is now JH Samuel. Was Scofield's department store there?

I remember Rumbelows and Curry's, what was the other electrical one always in competition they were.

Comet, that's it.

There was a cobblers shop there too.

I used to come on the tram all the way from Fox Hill, by the time I got to town I felt sick.

The Duke of Norfolk owns a lot of land in Sheffield, people used to have to pay ground rent to the duke, ridiculous.

How we met

Well, I went to school with his sister, we both had asthma so we couldn't play hockey, so we became friends I used to go around to his house, peer through the crack in his bedroom door, I could see him he'd be doing yoga I used to think what a weird bloke. Don't know how I fell in love with this weird bloke, but I did. Our first date we went to a folk festival at Abbeydale Industrial estate, we saw Tony Capstick.

We met on the bus, on our estate there's one went this way and one went that way, and what it were, if you didn't time it right, then you could miss one, but get the other. She were 16, or 17 when the buses were 2p and 10p fares and we got chatting. I was going to take my driving test and she wished me luck. I said you know what when I pass I'll pick you up. I've just had me birthday, I'm 56 and we've been married for 35 years.

I met my wife at the Ritz.

We met in a pub in Penistone, her sister used to race pigeons, my wife is Penistone born and bred. I wasn't that interested in the pigeons I was more interested in her.

There's a chap at the memory café that's made a film about racing pigeons you can see it on Youtube.

Queen Elizabeth, she used to raise pigeons.

Is it still a thing then, pigeons in Sheffield?

There used to be a lot of lofts on Penistone Road, but they've all gone now.

Women of steel



GH

This bronze sculpture by Martin Jennings commemorates the women of Sheffield who worked in the city's steel industry during the first and second world war. One hundred female steel workers witnessed it being unveiled in 2016.

Questions

What does this sculpture represent?

Did you or family members work in the steel industry?

How old were you during the second world war, do you have any memory of it?

The city waited too long for the women of steel. The sculptor of the women of steel statue also did the sculpture of Sir John Betjeman at St Pancreas.

Have they got names, are they based on real people?

They were called "Buffer Girls", if you were a man, you didn't cross them.

My mum was a buffer girl, and I went into the steel industry tool cutting.

The women of steel are next to the Jessica Ennis post box. Did you know that they put purple hats on them to protest the appointment of a new bishop of Sheffield?

We wouldn't have managed without the buffer girls.

I used to work at Parkin, where they put the silver on the cutlery, I used to get two shillings an hour. Then I was a nursing auxiliary and that was harder, lifting without a hoist.

Parkin and Dixon were the main competitors.

Some women worked in the munitions factories, and they used to have yellow powder on them.

My mother used to work in the factory, shooting at helmets to test they worked.

I was in the steel industry down at Stocksbridge, united steel, used to be old Samuel Fox's they made umbrella frames that's how they started. There's all property on the site now. Slinging and grinding was my job, Slinging and lifting up the plates. Thousands of tons of these steel plates were being sent to China at that time. They later became Tata steel, that Indian firm. We had a right experience with Tata, we went cruising, to India cruising. There was a statue of Mr Tata, I said I'll have a picture with Mr Tata to show the kids but then there was a swarm so I never managed to get my picture with Mr Tata.

The wards at the northern General Hospital are named after steel firms, Vickers, Brierely, Hadfield

I used to work for Edgar Allan engineering tools.

Sheffield was always know for it's cutlery.

There are still people making it, specialised.

We went with Age UK to The Cutlers Hall, it was a right eye opener, how much we relied on it.

Sheffield was the Rome of the north because it was built on seven hills.

My dad was a ladle man I remember him getting burnt. He had to clean the ladle a lot of forge masters suffered from the dust.

The second world war

I was born in 1937 I am one of ten. My oldest sister was in the land army. My Oldest memory is of my sister coming back from work and saying there is a doodle bug coming down. We were trying to get to the shelter in the garden. My dad had sunk it down and put flowers over the top.

(A doodle bug was a bomb with wings and described as one of the most fear-inducing terror weapons of the second world war).

Three of my siblings were evacuated to Leicestershire, I was too young. My father used to put the fires out, they used to drop fire bombs.

I remember being aged three and there were sirens going off, they grabbed me, I was in a red dressing gown and I got shoved under the table whilst they got things ready to go down the garden to the shelter.

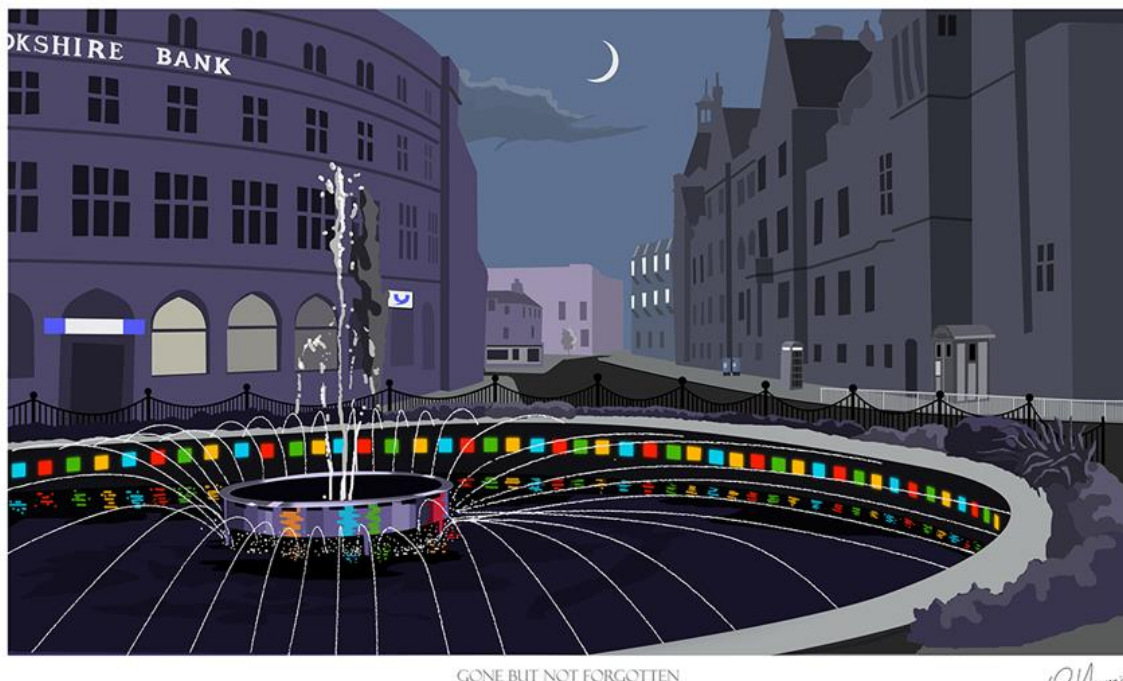
I remember my mum holding my newborn sister while there were bombs going off nearby.

There was a big fire, people were singing 'roll out the barrel' and cooking potatoes in the flames.

My grandad worked as a batman don't know why they were called batman. He used to drive the generals around.

I never knew my grandad he apparently died on Flanders field and is still there.

Goodwin Fountain



On the 3rd of November 1961 to the accompaniment of Handel's water music and the sound of rain. The Lord Mayor of Sheffield flicked the switch and turned on the glittering Goodwin Fountain for the first time. The fountain was paid for by Sheffield steel industrialist and philanthropist Sir Stuart Goodwin.

Questions

The Lord Mayor of Sheffield switched on the Goodwin Fountain in what year?

What prank brought traffic to a standstill a year later?

Think of the water features we now have in the city, are they pleasing or an eye sore?

Goodwin was a philanthropist in Sheffield

It was a scandal that they knocked that down

Bubbles everywhere.

Was it washing up liquid?

I wish I did that!

If you want to do it, you need to use the quality stuff, fairy you'll get more bubbles.

We can blame Shindig! Shindig put us up to it.

They put soap powder in the fountain as a prank. I remember that.

Goodwin Fountain led to tales of outdoor privies

The house we used to live in, the toilet was up the path, and you had to go for a bath up the road, on a Friday or Saturday night you had to pay to have a bath.

You had to share toilets; people put their own locks on. We didn't have toilet paper, we had to use newspaper the print used to get everywhere that's why you needed a bath at the weekend.

I remember going to the outside toilet with newspaper, but then my aunt got an indoor one and everyone used to come around and look at it.

After newspaper they invented Izal paper, but it was like greaseproof paper so no better.

(Izal was a brand of toilet paper that was hard and medicated with disinfectant. It was shiny on one side and rough on the other. It was given away free to local authorities that bought large quantities of hygiene products).

When my wife was a child she lived in a thatched cottage, the toilet was in the yard, but the pig sty next to it disguised the smell.

I used to live in Fox Hill and had to walk past Hillsborough Stadium, then I'd have to hold my breath going past!

At Crookes, if you're on the bus on the top deck you can see the terrace crofts where they added on toilets to the outside, these houses used to accommodate the servants. Crookes was originally a place for posh families to house their families to get the fresh air, as it was so high up one of the streets was called Ocean View, overlooking a reservoir.

Trips along the canal.

We went on a barge trip.

Went with Parsons Cross Forum up to Tinsley Lock and back, interesting with the graffiti on the walls. I think it was quite good graffiti though, I think it had been done special.

It were that big barge, I went on with Age UK, I went towards the bridge and it's big and next minute he shouts were going to F and F, one of the other guys he was learning, it were a right shunt, there designed for it tyres on the side they told you about it.

Interesting though, the barge we went on, it had been built special, access for wheelchairs, space for three or four.

There are not many fountains in the city nowadays

Health and safety

There are the Peace Gardens and what about the one near the train station?

Some people call that a big urinal.

Conclusion

This SHINDIG gave people an opportunity to step back in time to share knowledge and memories from their pasts. They adopted the role of the story tellers. Greg's images triggered powerful memories from childhood, courting, family and working lives. It was hard to capture everything as people had so much to share. Something special about this session was the shared humour and feelings of connection as we spoke about Sheffield, our city. As the three groups gathered back together you could hear giggles as Everly Pregnant Brothers played through someone's phone.

Well you walk down from Fargate
with the wind in your hair
You come down escalators
Cause they didn't have no stairs
It were too far
For your tired legs
With your Nannan
Walking through Hole in t'road

I would like to say a huge thanks to Greg for sharing his artwork and look forward to future collaboration.

To view Gregs work please visit www.bygregharris.com

For further information about SHINDIG or to request a referral form please contact:

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For past reports go to www.shsc.nhs.uk/shindig

D.A.S Dementia Advice Service: 0114 2502875