

KM

# Kirkstall Matters

Issue 120    Spring/Summer 2016

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

# KEN STRATFORD

(1949 – 2016)

**Get involved and have your say**



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# Note from the Chairman

Submitted by **John Liversedge**, Chairman of the KVCA/Festival

**No doubt many of you are already aware of the sudden death on February 8th of our much loved friend and colleague Ken Stratford. This was a shock to us all and Ken will be missed by all his friends on the KVCA and Kirkstall Festival Committee's.**

I have known and worked closely with Ken for many years and was proud to call him my best friend. Ken was wise and had a range of expertise that covered many subjects. In every project he became involved with he did it with a passion, as someone said "like a dog with a bone". He would help or advise anyone with any issue or problem they had, nothing was ever too much trouble and he was never ever too busy. A good speaker and a very good listener. As well as being a trustee of the KVCA, he was an organiser of the Kirkstall Festival, one time editor of this magazine, keen supporter of the Kirkstall Art Trail, active member of our local Labour Party, supporter of Kirkstall in Bloom along with many other interests as well. Ken's input into the Kirkstall community, the work he did, the ideas he had and the things he wanted to do in future are appreciated now and still will be in the years to come.

**This issue of the magazine is dedicated to Ken Stratford a man who will be sadly missed but remembered fondly by all who knew him.**

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He would help or advise anyone with any issue or problem they had, nothing was ever too much trouble and he was never ever too busy.



**John**  
Chair KVCA/Festival



# In loving memory of Ken Stratford

Contribution to Kirkstall Festival (Written by Ciara Stratford)

**We moved to Leeds in the summer of 1996 and that is the only Kirkstall Festival my dad and I haven't been involved in. While my role has been largely from the sidelines - initially corralled into selling programmes as a condition for having a birthday party and now I'm London based, just as compere on the day, my dad was never one to get involved 'only a little bit'.**

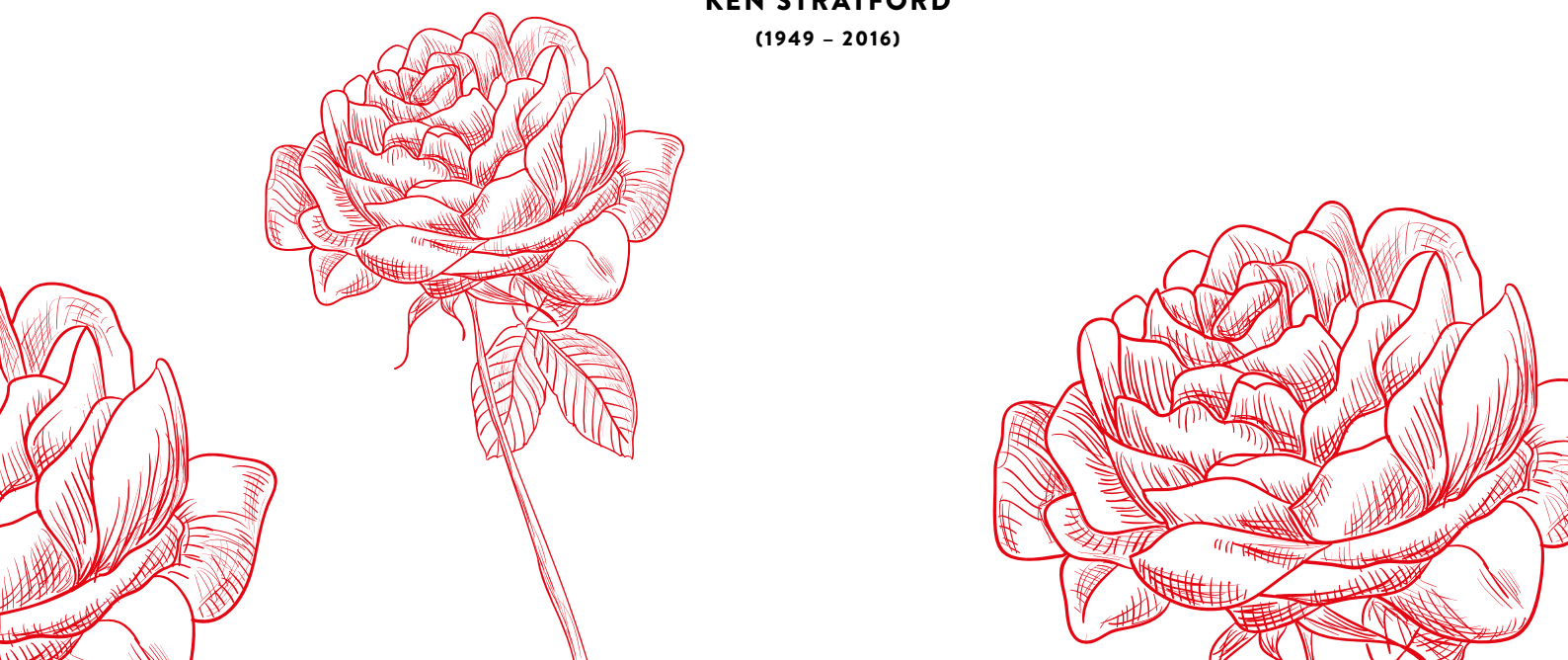
Within two years he was running the thing. He then brought on board long time (and current) Chair John, acting as his no. 2 for the last 10 years or so. Years of endless meetings, health and safety assessments, late night certificate printing on the eve of the festival, giving the vote of thanks at the end of the day (despite his rather non-religious stance) - and all with a smile, because it was fun; working to put on something great with your friends for others to enjoy. I've been told Chair and Vice Chair were Ying and Yang - decisions made with heart (John) and head (Ken). To be honest I think he just quite enjoyed wandering the grounds on festival day in his high-vis and proclaiming that he had calculated (quite accurately he might add) that we had record numbers of visitors that year ("I've just got an eye for it").

I love being part of the festival committee. I think it epitomises what is truly great about our community - just that, a close and supportive community. What the committee is able to achieve every year is a real triumph and I am very proud to be a part of it, even in a small way. I know my dad thought the same. I am also proud to know that he has been at its very heart for so many years. When I think of him it will be very hard not to see him hands on hips, walkie talkie on his belt and high-vis jacket blowing, standing in the abbey grounds in the sunshine (because it never rains on the second Saturday of July don't you know) with a great big grin on his face.

I will find it strange this year without him, although this year's theme is certainly a fitting one - "Heroes and Heroines" - he was certainly mine.

**KEN STRATFORD**

(1949 - 2016)





**The following pages are dedicated to Ken, with comments, stories and memories from Ken's family, friends and members of the community.**

*We will miss Ken terribly in the Kirkstall Labour Party. I will remember Ken for his passionate anti-trident speech in our recent debate and for his warmth, conviction and humour.*

*(Fiona Venner)*

You will share with me many happy memories from years ago, of young Ken livening up KVCA meetings at KSS school, in the days of late Geoff Hodgson, Marjorie Kilby, Doug Kilvington, Peter Lowe and Gerard Roe etc. (& Ken contributing so much effort to KVCA, Kirkstall Matters & the Festival over the years). I can't imagine Kirkstall Festival without Ken.

*(Val Crompton)*

*I will always remember working with him when I compered the Kirkstall Festival - a great guy and some lovely dry chuckles with him. He was personally responsible for getting me lifted in the air by Ronnie Rhino and 2 of his mates!*

*(Chris Cole)*

Ken's name has come up in conversations about Kirkstall so many times in the last two decades. In time his legacy will be all those people he helped bring on board to do things.

*(John Preston)*

*Devastated to hear about my friend, Kirkstall colleague and comrade Ken. So much life left to live, so much passion still to give. A light has truly gone out in our world. Bless you Ken.*

*(Richard Honey)*

I shall remember his cheeky grin and twinkling eyes, and the gentle way he would poke fun at pompous authority. Ken had a wonderful mischievous sense of humour and I shall miss him greatly.

*(John Illingworth)*

*He was a great friend and ally to me, and always gave me the right advice.*

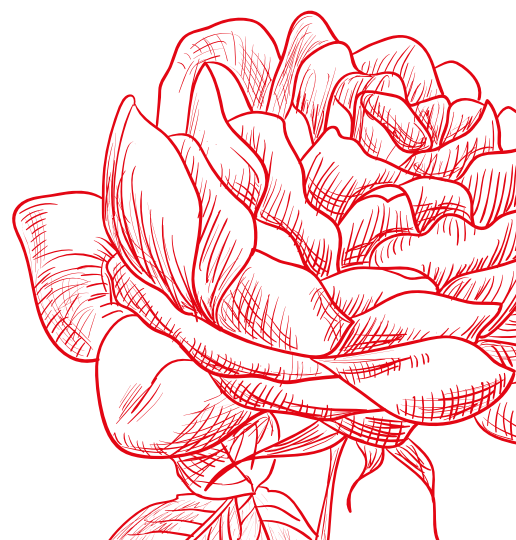
*(Simon Dawson)*

He was a great friend and did so much work for the community in his many roles.

*(Ray & Sue Booth)*

*I have such great memories of his patience in everything he did and his gentle persistent way with even the most difficult political situation. I was only looking yesterday at a cutting of me, him and Allan Green on hunger strike outside the Polish embassy many moons ago.*

*(Dave Mitchelmore)*





Dad was given a shaver for Christmas one year - he promptly went to try it out.... However, he hadn't realised you need the plastic cover to regulate the length of the cut and shaved off all the hair around his left ear. Obviously he had to balance it out. He looked like Baldric from Blackadder.

When I was turning 21, I remember discussing with my parents what kind of present I would like to mark the occasion. My dad's years at East Street Arts clearly had an influence, "I was just wondering Ciara if you might like a statue of yourself?" A life size, stone statue of myself. "Well I know an artist you see..." For my flat maybe? Because "well...I've always fancied a bust of myself haven't you?" he asked. In the end I went with a bracelet although I only think of the statue when I wear it! *(Ciara Stratford)*

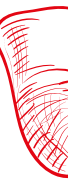
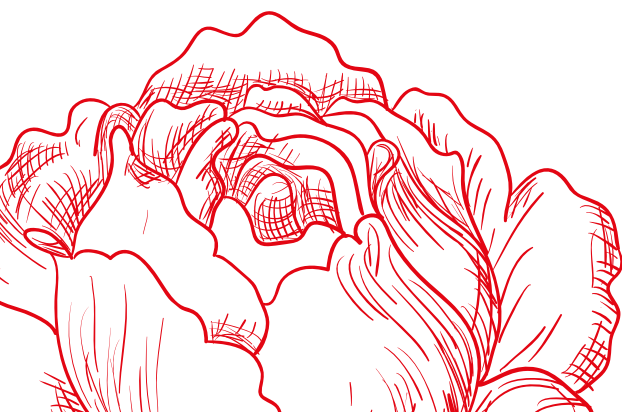
Not too long ago I phoned to speak to Ken and Mary (Ken's wife) answered, Ken had gone out and locked her in the house and she needed to go out. Without going into detail I phoned Ken's mobile and said Mary wasn't very pleased - he went straight back. *(John Liversedge)*



Ken was always denting the bumpers on his car, he just couldn't gauge the length of it and we always said he needed a cushion to see over the dashboard.

Only last year while marking out the field for the Festival, Ken came down with his dog. After chatting to the group for several minutes, Ken turned and threw the ball for Princess to chase, forgetting he still had her firmly on the lead! Ken covered 25 yards before he could get the lead off his hand whilst trying to stay on his feet.

On the Sunday after the festival we all have a get together in the Cloisters and a few years ago after we had finished, I was locking up. Ken pointed out that people could get in under the metal security gate. Naomi and Laura were there and they agreed with me that Ken was wrong - no one could get under that gate. With that Ken proceeded to squeeze under the gate (and I mean squeeze!) - but he did it. Naomi and Laura were hysterical with laughter and the more they laughed the more I laughed. *(John Liversedge)*





It is the same every year. The Festival committee and numerous volunteers find it no trouble at all to put on a festival that welcomes over 25,000 people and to make it a fantastic day for all. What we do have trouble with every year is deciding on a theme. This particular year in question was no different. Themes were put forward, liked by some, hated by others. The months were marching on and we needed a theme.

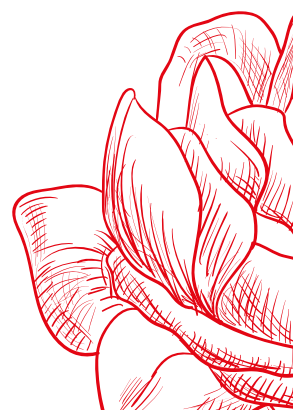
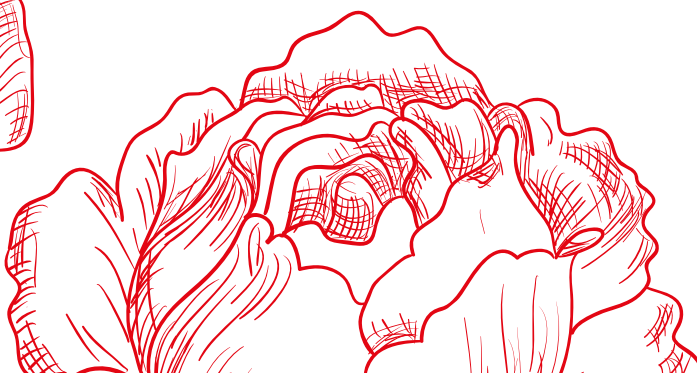
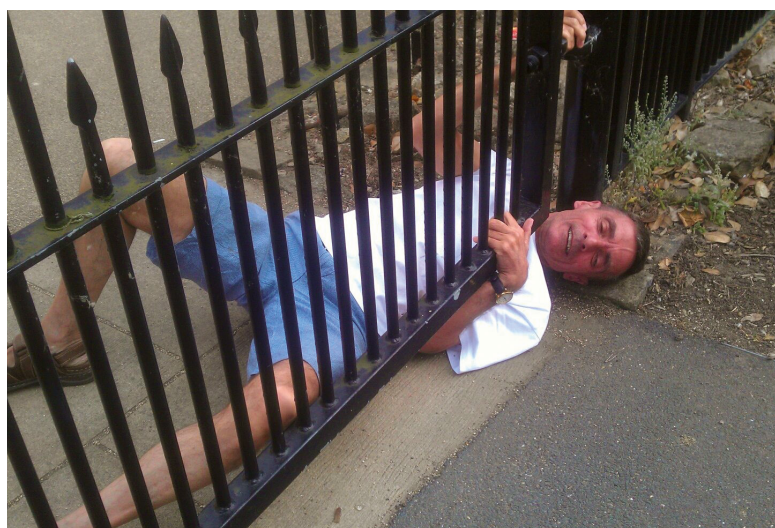
And then at the meeting Ken, yes Ken, spoke up. "I've got an idea". We all stopped talking because when Ken spoke that's what happened. "How about this, HATS OFF TO KIRKSTALL?" Well we mulled it over, talked about it and everyone agreed, that would be the theme for the 2011 Kirkstall Festival. And I think that is a fitting tribute to Ken, someone who put a great amount of time, energy and commitment into the community of Kirkstall. HATS OFF TO KEN.  
(Catherine Simpson)

Ken spent many enjoyable years as a school governor at Beecroft Primary School.

"Ken was the most supportive man of integrity and intellect that any school would hope to have as governor and friend. He could get to the heart of a matter, be incisive, yet always with fairness and humour. Ken's family supported Beecroft from the start of my Headship and with great trust. I have never forgotten that.

He has been with us, at Beecroft, in the good times and the bad, yet always unfailingly and reliably there. His talents have always seemed endless; health and safety, history, art to name but a few (not to forget finance and parking committee!) Ken has taken an interest in every part of school life - and I am so thankful for that.

I can only say that I, together with other leaders in the school regard Ken highly, not just for his work but for his uplifting positivity and humour. He has contributed much to Beecroft as governor and friend. He will be hugely missed in every respect, I am thankful for what he has given us all." (June Turner)



# Kirkstall Diary

Submitted by **Rachel Reeves**, MP for Leeds West

The last few months have been momentous for Kirkstall, the floods were terrible, some businesses have been totally devastated and face many challenges, a couple have even closed forever but most have somehow come through, often with tremendous support from local volunteers. For many Kirkstall folk, the 'quiet time' between Christmas and New Year became anything but as they put on wellies and rubber gloves and set to work in a volunteer clean-up operation that drew attention country wide, and even internationally. For over a month Open Source Arts warehouse at Aire Place Mills was a hub for hundreds of volunteers and for donations towards the flood relief work. Their skill at organising a 'volunteer army' and co-ordinating with Cllr Lucinda Yeadon to make sure that Council resources were properly directed, was something to behold. I said in Parliament that the community spirit we witnessed after the floods made me so proud to be your MP – **Kirkstall has shown what it is made of.**

To all of you who played a part, either for a few hours or over a number of weeks, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you. It is great news that Kirkstall businesses are re-opening and the mood is positive. Those businesses that have ongoing challenges with insurance, rent, utilities or anything else are

being helped by an expert team at Leeds City Council and can contact my office at any time for help on 0113 2552311.

Post floods, all of the Leeds MPs called on the Environment Secretary to look at ways water can be managed along the River Aire. In an Adjournment Debate in Parliament that I secured, the Government finally agreed to conduct a feasibility study on how best to prevent future flooding in Leeds and we await progress and the opportunity to feed into this piece of work. After the flood defence scheme which would have covered Kirkstall was cancelled in 2011, it is imperative that the government now acts.

Looking ahead in the year, I'm delighted that the Kirkstall Art Trail is returning, to take place the weekend after the Kirkstall festival. Both the Festival and the Kirkstall Art Trail are true community events, run by passionate volunteers. I'm really looking forward to taking my family along to both.

Talking of family trips out, I thoroughly recommend a walk along the canal and a visit to TCV Hollybush, the gardens there are beautiful and there are always things for children to look out for ... and then the café is on hand for a cup of tea and some cake. TCV Hollybush is a great charity that provides opportunities for people out of work and with

health problems to get involved with a number of projects, many of them in the outdoors.

Finally, I wanted to touch on some very sad news. As many of you know, Ken Stratford died suddenly on 8th February. Ken will be much missed by everyone in the Kirkstall Community and beyond. Ken will be known to many as an enthusiastic member of Kirkstall Valley Community Association, a stalwart of Kirkstall festivals, school Governor at Beecroft Primary and from his work with East Street Arts as well as a number of other roles. There have been some wonderful memories of Ken shared via Facebook, and a massive Kirkstall turnout for the 'Celebration' of Ken's life at the Milford Sports club. Kirkstall is lucky to have had people like Ken, and I know that he has inspired many of us to put something back into our communities to make them stronger, more vibrant places for us all.

As ever if you want to contact me on any issue - local or national, or book a surgery appointment please contact my office at:

**Telephone: 0113 255 2311**

**Email: [Rachel.reeves.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:Rachel.reeves.mp@parliament.uk)**

**Address: Unit 8a, Bramley Shopping Centre, Leeds, LS13 2ET**

**You can also follow me on twitter at [@RachelReevesMP](https://twitter.com/RachelReevesMP) or on Facebook at [facebook.com/rachelreeves10](https://facebook.com/rachelreeves10).**

## Councillor Surgeries

**Kirkstall councillors are available to support you with any local issues, including housing, environmental or highways concerns. If you would like to talk to a councillor, our contact details are below. We also hold surgeries at the following times:**

<b>1st Saturday of the month</b>	<b>10am</b>	Kirkstall Leisure Centre, 2pm STEP Day Centre (formerly Queenswood Drive Day Centre), Queenswood Drive
<b>2nd Tuesday of the month</b>	<b>10am</b>	Cragside Close Community Centre, Hawksworth Wood
<b>3rd Tuesday of the month</b>	<b>7pm</b>	Greenhow Community Centre, Haddon Road, Burley
<b>4th Tuesday of the month</b>	<b>7pm</b>	Kirkstall Educational Cricket Club, Queenswood Drive

### MICE Funding

**Do you run a community group in Kirkstall? Did you know you can ask your councillors for funding?**

Councillors have a fund to support local groups called MICE, Member Involvement in Community Engagement. We can give grants of a few hundred pounds to support community activities. Previous groups supported include local allotments, children's centres, Kirkstall in Bloom, tenants and residents associations and neighbourhood networks which support older people. If you would like to request MICE money, please contact [lucinda.yeadon@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:lucinda.yeadon@leeds.gov.uk)



# The Floods of Boxing Day 2015

Submitted by Cllr Lucinda Yeadon

**Boxing Day 2015 will, for many in Kirkstall, be a day that will not easily be forgotten. While some of us were tucking into Christmas Day leftovers and celebrating with family and friends, Storm Eva wreaked havoc and Leeds experienced the worst flooding in living memory. After the wettest winter on record and unprecedented rain during December, the River Aire could no longer cope and broke its banks in several places. The flooding stretched from Leeds City Centre, through Kirkstall and then again at Newley in Horsforth. Otley was also badly hit. However, for those of us in Kirkstall the scenes which we witnessed and the goodwill we experienced in the proceeding days and weeks will be remembered for a lifetime.**

Kirkstall Road last flooded in 1866 during the Great Flood of Leeds. To receive a phone call from my colleague, Cllr Fiona Venner, Boxing Day afternoon to say that Kirkstall Road was now a river and needed closing was extraordinary. As the extent of the flooding became apparent during the next few hours, we knew that many homes and businesses will have been devastated. It was at this point that we harnessed the power of social media



**Continued on next page >>**

## Councillor contact details

Lucinda Yeadon	<a href="mailto:lucinda.yeadon@leeds.gov.uk">lucinda.yeadon@leeds.gov.uk</a>	0113 395 1735
John Illingworth	<a href="mailto:jonh.illingworth@leeds.gov.uk">jonh.illingworth@leeds.gov.uk</a>	0113 267 3755
Fiona Venner	<a href="mailto:fiona.venner@leeds.gov.uk">fiona.venner@leeds.gov.uk</a>	0113 268 4652

# The Floods of Boxing Day 2015 (continued)

## << Continued from previous page

and the spirit of Kirkstall to begin Operation Kirkstall Clean-up.

We'd hoped that we could make a start on the clean-up efforts the next day, however, when we visited Kirkstall Road early on Sunday morning it was clear that the flood waters were too dangerous to work near. Kirkstall Road was still impossible to pass and properties inaccessible. We could, however, see that the task ahead of us was huge with basements completely submerged and several feet of smelly dirty flood water at ground floor level.

This gave us another 24 hours to appeal for volunteers to join us. During that time pictures of flooded Kirkstall Road were being broadcasted around the world, our call out for volunteers began trending on Twitter and we were being inundated with offers of help.

Monday morning and our first target for Kirkstall Clean-up was the Kirkstall Bridge Pub. The Bridge is not a stranger to flooding, however, this time the impact was significant, even losing some of its beer garden to the Aire. Not knowing exactly how many people might turn up to help was quite nerve wracking. However, as we made our way down to the pub we began to see troops of people, heading in the same direction, carrying buckets, mops and brooms. Between 40 -50 people turned up to help first thing that morning, an hour later and another 30 met us on Station Parade and they just kept on coming.

By mid-morning there were teams of volunteers knocking on doors with myself, Cllr Venner and Cllr Illingworth, speaking to residents and businesses to see where help was required. John Liversedge, Chair of the KVCA, came out every day, over several weeks, to patrol Kirkstall Road and direct help and resources where they were most desperately needed. During those first few weeks hundreds of volunteers could be seen walking up and down Kirkstall Road and in and out of Kirkstall Industrial Estate, clearing out basements and cleaning up properties. Teaming up with the wonderful volunteer centre, established by Phil Marken and Team

Kirkstall at Open Source Arts, there was an effective and co-ordinated flood relief effort, powered by the community spirit of incredible people and fuelled by donations from charities, groups, businesses and individuals from across the city and country. Staff from Leeds City Council, went above and beyond, coming in early, going home late and working every day (even on their days off). The number of stories we have of pure generosity that was displayed over this time would fill endless copies of Kirkstall Matters and it would be impossible to name everyone. From Church congregations who knocked on doors, Guide Troops who filled sandbags, Mosques who fed us, Firefighters from Devon who cleared out the Chinese Christian Church, Ex-squaddies from Isle of Wight who built temporary flood defences, the bus driver from Cannock who brought us donations on New Year's Day, Junior Doctors who came to support small businesses to the pensioner in Kirkstall who collected all her small change so she could make a donation. Our thank yous will never really express our immense gratitude.

In the worst of times we see the best of people and this Christmas we certainly saw that in Kirkstall.

Due to the location of the flood only a few homes in Kirkstall were impacted, yet for these people it was heart-breaking. But we also saw many small independent businesses whose livelihoods were washed away. Some of these had been based on Kirkstall Road for generations. Not all were insured or had the right insurance. Many employed local people.

The Sheesh Mahal, a Kirkstall landmark, was one of the businesses badly affected. Kirkstall Road has been its home for 26 years and its owner, Azram, has been friend to many during that time. To see how the waters had devastated this well-loved restaurant was so incredibly sad to see. Knowing how well cherished the Sheesh Mahal is, dozens of volunteers teamed up to help clear the building. However, there is still a lot of work to be done and we won't be satisfied until Azram's smile is greeting his customers once again.

Although, some establishments were able to get back and operating fairly quickly, for others the road to recovery is taking longer. There is support and advice available from Leeds City Council, but the red tape of insurance companies is often difficult to navigate. We know that some companies have sadly closed their doors for good.

There are many questions left for the future. The most pressing is - what flood alleviation measures do we need for the future? A feasibility study has been commissioned and is expected to take 2 years, but as yet, there is no answer to how will defence be funded and will they be appropriate. We also need to ask - how do we ensure that Kirkstall Road remains vibrant and thriving? With the potential loss of businesses we need a regeneration plan that is driven and owned by the local community. We've cleaned up Kirkstall, now it's time to rebuild.

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**In the worst of times we see the best of people and this Christmas we certainly saw that in Kirkstall.**

**Photos by Ben Dauré  
www.grape-productions.com**







# St Stephen's Garden

Submitted by **Mandy Long**

**As I write this, everything in the garden looks a bit dull and soggy, with the exception of some misguided daffs!**

But the off season has actually been quite a productive time in the community garden.

You may have noticed that our gates now sport new bright orange signs proclaiming that we are open to EVERYONE 24/7. I defy anyone walking down Station Parade to think now that it's a private garden, or just attached to the church!

We've also recently built more raised beds which will be producing vegetables for everyone to share. If you'd like to get more involved in growing please come and introduce yourself or drop us an email. We always welcome new volunteers.

Our flower beds should be looking a bit more colourful this year too, thanks to a

grant from LCC. Many thanks to Redhall Nurseries, we'll try to do you proud!

We have many events planned for the coming year, the first of which was an Easter celebration, complete with barbecue, cakes, fancy dress and an Easter Hat competition (Easter bonnet apparently is for girls, and we definitely wanted it open to men, women and boys too!).

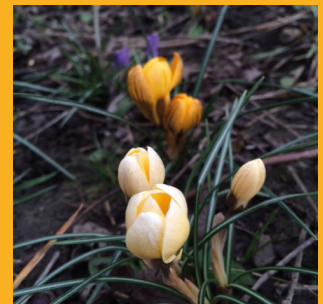
Look out for more details of these on the noticeboard in the garden, in school newsletters and on social media. You can also request to receive email updates by joining our mailing list, you can do this by dropping us an email and asking to be added.

Most of all, please come on in and enjoy the garden!

Our email address is [ststephensgarden@gmail.com](mailto:ststephensgarden@gmail.com)

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**We've also recently built more raised beds which will be producing vegetables for everyone to share. If you'd like to get more involved in growing please come and introduce yourself or drop us an email. We always welcome new volunteers.**



## Kirkstall in Bloom

**Kirkstall in Bloom is entering its 5th year and has many exciting projects planned including entry to Yorkshire in Bloom this Summer.**

We are always looking for more volunteers, with or without gardening experience, please contact [kirkstallinbloom@gmail.com](mailto:kirkstallinbloom@gmail.com) or check out [@KirkstallBloom](https://twitter.com/KirkstallBloom) on twitter.

The next meeting date is 24th April, 11am opposite the Leisure Centre.



# Upcoming Events at the Abbey

2016 is the year of all things 'Crime and Punishment' at Abbey House Museum. Our new exhibition explores the history of crime and punishment in the UK through themes such as street crime, fraud and dodgy trading, poisons and poisoners, crime fiction and cruel and unusual punishments. Interesting objects on display include mantraps, poison bottles, police equipment and three ghoulish penny arcade machines. There are objects on loan from Leeds' Thackray Medical Museum, Ripon Museum Trust and Nottingham's Galleries of Justice.

A series of afternoon talks by local authors and historians accompanies the exhibition. An upcoming highlight is a talk by Carlo Harrison from the Aireborough Historical Society on Tuesday 17th May about the famous lockout at Yeadon's Old Dog Mill in 1909 which led to local rioting. May half term is also inspired by the exhibition with lots of crime fighting superhero activities, including Silly Science Superheroes flying and floating experiments on Wednesday 1st June.

From January to July this year, Abbey House Museum is also hosting a display to mark the centenary of the Senior Section of Girlguiding. This has been put together and interpreted by members of Girlguiding Leeds. Objects featured include Land Ranger uniforms from the 1940s and 50s, historic badges, mugs and photographs, and items from Leeds' very own Sea Ranger Section. A 12 minute film made especially for the exhibition explores the history of the Senior Section and what it means today.

Over in Kirkstall Abbey we are getting ready to start our popular markets again at the end of March. There will be lots of exciting local products on offer including exciting street food, the best of Yorkshire food and drink and a wide variety of gifts and collectables. There will be extra special markets on Saturday 30th April

and Sunday 1st May with stalls, tasting and tours from the International Medieval Congress looking at 'Medieval Kirkstall for its modern community'.

We are also getting ready for our Gnome Trail in May Half term, when we will be hiding lots of friendly gnomes around the abbey for families to find. There will also be a Little Gnomes session for under 5's and their siblings on Tuesday 31st May 10-11am.

If you are aged between 13 and 24, there are free workshops on offer at Kirkstall this Spring. Come to our lino printing workshop at Abbey House Museum on Thursday 7th April. Or book on to our photography workshop at Kirkstall Abbey on Thursday 14th April where you can bring your own camera, learn photography techniques from a professional and have a chance to see your photos displayed in our Visitor Centre. Both events run from 12pm-3pm. Email our Youth Curator Angie at [youth.curator@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:youth.curator@leeds.gov.uk) to book a place. Bring your own packed lunch – light refreshments are provided.

**We are always looking to work with local community groups. So whether your group wants to have a guided tour or object handling session, or you are looking at a bigger project that could involve Abbey House or Kirkstall Abbey, get in touch. Email our Assistant Community Curator [Patrick.Bourne@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:Patrick.Bourne@leeds.gov.uk)**

**Photo credit to Stuff and Nonsense**  
[www.stuffandnonsense.co.uk](http://www.stuffandnonsense.co.uk)

Crime and Punishment runs until Saturday 31st December.

100 Years of Girlguiding: The Senior Section runs until Sunday 24th July.

To book on a talk, call **01133784079** or email [abbey.house@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:abbey.house@leeds.gov.uk).

All talks are £5 (no concessions), and include entry to the rest of the museum. Payment is taken on the day.

Full details on all upcoming Crime and Punishment talks can be found at:

**[www.leeds.gov.uk/crimeandpunishment](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/crimeandpunishment)**

kirkstall  
deli market

**The Market Dates this year are:**

April 30th & May 1st

May 28th & 29th

June 25th & 26th

July 30th & 31st

August 27th & 28th

September 24th & 25th

October 29th & 30th

November 26th & 27th

They run from 12noon till 3pm each day



# May the Fourth, be with you and The Bookshop Kirkstall

**Looking around The Bookshop Kirkstall at 10 Commercial Road, memories seem to seep from every shelf and wall. The shop has been owned and run by Roy and Pippa Brook for 25 years, but will close down on May 4th this year. The memories will stay with Roy and Pippa, and, hopefully with their customers for a lifetime.**

There's the framed telephone. This came from Temple Galleries which was at 41 Commercial Road. Roy had worked in books since leaving school, first at Austicks in Leeds, then for various publishing companies. At weekends, he used to help out his friend Tony, who owned Temple Galleries. Later, Roy became a partner in the business but, sadly, a fire at the gallery caused considerable damage and melted the telephone. Roy framed and kept it. It was through the Gallery that Roy and Pippa met, when she, then a student nurse, took a picture in to be framed. Mesmerised by Roy, she bought an etching from him and some days later he contacted her and offered to show her more etchings! Pippa says "Reader, I married him" – Jane Eyre remains a favourite of hers.

At that time the Bookshop was owned by Marjorie and Alan Jones. Roy was a frequent customer and always enjoyed a chat with Alan. When Alan and Marjorie were ready to retire, they wanted the building to remain as a bookshop. Roy leapt at the chance and bought the business. Alan and Marjorie were generous and helpful landlords and advisers for many years and after their death, their son Ian continued as generously. But now he is ready to sell

the building and Roy and Pippa know that it is time for them, too, to retire. They will continue to sell books online via ABE (Advanced Book Exchange) [www.abebooks.com/bookseller/kirkstall](http://www.abebooks.com/bookseller/kirkstall).

Over the years there have been changes to the shops surrounding the Bookshop. At one point there was a "Massage Parlour" next door! The Massage Parlour stayed open till the early hours of the morning. Often Roy would arrive at the Bookshop to find the keys to next door had been posted through the letter box with a note asking him to hand them to one of the girls who would arrive during the morning. That's the story he tells Pippa anyway. On one occasion, a young lady who worked in the Bookshop was waiting outside for Roy to open up. A gentleman walked past and asked her how much she charged "Anything from 20p" she replied. The "customer" looked surprised but, fortunately, didn't pursue the matter. Only afterwards the Bookshop Assistant realised he wasn't referring to books!

One Saturday morning Pippa took a phone call from a man asking for the shop opening hours. The caller told her he was working at Kirkstall Abbey and would come in during the day. Sure enough, later in the day, the door opened and a man in very muddy shoes came in. "Did you call earlier?" Pippa asked, he confirmed he had done. He looked very familiar. It dawned on Pippa who he was and she quickly

googled "who played Ron Weasley's dad?" When the customer chose a lovely set of books he asked if they could be shipped. "Of course" said Pippa, "Could I have your name and address?", "Mark Williams" he replied. He was in the live production of Wedding of Frankenstein at the Abbey.

Jane Eyre, Harry Potter, both favourites of Pippa's. Her 'all-time favourite', though, is Skallagrigg by William Horwood. She wrote an article for a previous edition of Kirkstall Matters describing her "Desert Island Book" and explained how she loved the book so much that in May 2000, when she and Roy adopted a dog from Whitehall Dogs home they called him Skalla, short for Skallagrigg. On February 12th 2016, Skalla died. This was the end of an era for Roy and Pippa, and now, for the Bookshop Kirkstall.

From now until the Bookshop Kirkstall closes on May 4th all books will be sold at half the marked price and, as the shop's loyal customers know, half of "not a lot" is even less!



# Kirkstall Art Trail 2016

## 16th & 17th July

**The Kirkstall Art Trail will be returning this summer and it is looking set to be another memorable weekend!**

This year it will be over 2 days rather than one and will include more artist exhibitions, more workshops and more opportunities to get involved! The event is free and will include fun and creative activities to suit all ages.

The catchment area has been expanded this year and over the last few months the team have been asking creative people and organisations from West Leeds and the surrounding areas to get in touch.

There are some very exciting collaborative projects in the pipeline which will be revealed over the next few months leading up to the event so watch this space!

If you have a creative practice, an idea, a home, a shed, a garage or a local business that could be a great addition, please do not hesitate to contact us on [kirkstallarttrail@gmail.com](mailto:kirkstallarttrail@gmail.com). If you like the idea of hosting an artist or two in your living room but have questions about what is involved, we would be happy to put you in touch with one of last year's host for a chat. We will also be looking for volunteers to help guide visitors, set up and clear away on both days.

The event is entirely organised by volunteers who love art and their community and who want to highlight and support the talent around us, whilst encouraging greater engagement and confidence in the arts. The positive response last year from both artists and visitors was overwhelming and the committee hope this year will be no different.

For regular updates please keep an eye on our Wordpress which we are currently in the process of updating and our various social media accounts. (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram)





# Kirkstall: Liverpool 124; Leeds 3 ¼ miles

Submitted by **Mike Harwood**

**Finished in 1816, begun in 1770, 46 years in the digging with little but the muscle strength and endurance of the navvy with his shovel; this is its bicentenary year. Watch out for events and celebrations. I refer of course to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, England's longest single and probably most successful canal. And in the days before hard hats, health and safety regulations and European Directives to protect him, many a navvy paid the price of his work.**

*'A stranger called Thomas Jones supposed from Shropshire having been unfortunately killed in the works near Gannow by a fall of earth.'*

*Entry in Leeds Committee Minute Book, Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company 27 February 1800 (see A Burton, The Canal Builders, 1993, p 155)*

But when finished, passing through Skipton, Keighley, Shipley and of course Kirkstall on its 127 ¼ -mile journey into the centre of Leeds, where it joins up with the Aire-Calder Navigation, the canal provided what was in the nineteenth century an important trade and transport route between Liverpool

and Hull, for coal, limestone for mortar and agriculture, textiles and much else; a crucial part of the main transport artery of the Industrial Revolution unfolding in the West Riding and Lancashire; until superseded as the nineteenth century ebbed away by the railways; and later still by the motorways.

Today, we should be happy that Kirkstall still has not only its abbey (in ruins); but the flow of its canal, still governed by its locks, with its towpath to be enjoyed on a sunny day by walkers walking, joggers jogging, toddlers toddling with mums and dads, cyclists reliving the Tour de France (Yorkshire style) or just making a healthier and safer journey to work, fishermen, little ones on their little bikes (bikelets?) and more.

You will, if you care, find a much longer piece looking at some aspects of the canal and its history on Kirkstall Online. And if you would like to take a greater interest in the canal, its history and its life and leisure today, get in touch with the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society.

<http://www.llcs.org.uk>

For the time being I will just mention two points of interest.

First, a historical curiosity: If you walk (as you should from time to time!) along the towpath from Kirkstall to Leeds, in Armley you will come upon on the opposite bank an upside down sign on the wall whose watery reflection reads: 'THE REMAINS OF A WOODEN ICEBREAKER LIE SUBMERGED'; a connection here to the canal's important industrial past, it marks the site of what became known in 1808 as Botany Bay, the landing place of the first shipment of Australian raw wool bound for Yorkshire mills. Submerged in Botany Bay are the remains of a wooden icebreaker. These heavy vessels were pulled onto the ice by teams of horses and rocked from side to side, causing the ice to fracture.

Secondly, a milepost. Just beyond the Broad Lane bridge over the canal in Kirkstall, you will find on the towpath, rather rusty, a white-painted, iron milepost: 'L'POOL 124 MILES and, on the other face: 'LEEDS 3 ¼ MILES.' In the days when the canal was an industrial transport artery, tolls had to be paid by the boats and barges using it to haul their goods. The canal was then of course privately owned, by the Company, run for a profit. This milepost is part of what was, though now a bit gat-toothed as it were in many places, a system of mileposts (and in between the mileposts, half- and quarter-mile posts) stretching from Liverpool to Leeds; a measure for the toll to be charged; and, its starting from Liverpool on its 127 ¼ mile journey, explains why on each post Leeds carries the odd ¼ . This system of iron posts set up in the late nineteenth century replaced an earlier, largely lost, system of stone milestones. If you are asking 'Why bother with halves and quarters?' let me just quote Parliament's statute of 1893 which governed the tolls which the canal company could charge:

'15. For a fraction of the first mile the company may charge as for a mile, and for a fraction of a mile after the first mile the Company may charge according to the number of quarters of a mile in that fraction, and a fraction of a quarter of a mile may be charged for as a quarter of a mile.'

In conclusion, it is good to know that the Canal and River Trust which now runs the Canal is planning to repair and maintain at least the whole mileposts.







## HELPING PARENTS GIVE THEIR CHILDREN THE BEST START IN LIFE

### COULD YOU BE A HOME-START VOLUNTEER?

Are you a parent or do you have parenting experience?

Home-Start volunteers help families with at least one child under 7 years, by visiting them in their homes offering support, friendship, a listening ear and practical help.

We need people who have lots of common sense and a genuine interest in helping families.

Our next volunteers' preparation course will be starting soon.

If you have a few hours to spare each week and would like more information about becoming a volunteer with Home-Start Leeds please:

Phone us on: 0113 244 2419 or email us at: [office@home-startleeds.co.uk](mailto:office@home-startleeds.co.uk)

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# Abbey Safe from Floods

Submitted by **John Battle**

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The fresh water and drainage relied on a water source coming down into the River Aire from the north. There was a mill pool at what is now Vesper Gate supplied from a water course coming down from the Dales through Horsforth.

**It was in the early 1950s that the great archaeological digs at Kirkstall Abbey took place (written up in the 1980s by the West Yorkshire Archaeological Society) and those digs focussed on the drainage systems.**

All Cistercian monasteries in the twelfth century were built according to the same plan; solidly round four sides of an interior cloister and usually built on the northern bank of a “considerable river; so placed that all the offal and filth from the offices passed immediately into the flowing current”.

Abbot Alexander, who built the original monastery including the Church with a huge north wall to keep out the north winds and cold, two dormitories, a refectory and a chapter house all round the cloister, used a well developed Roman drainage system. His main aim was to ensure the Abbey was sheltered, warm and enclosed. Most histories of the Abbey focus on the building structures and the land deeds but neglect the complex water management system.

The fresh water and drainage relied on a water source coming down into the River Aire from the north. There was a mill pool at what is now Vesper Gate supplied from a water course coming down from the Dales through Horsforth. Water was drawn off from a rivulet called “Oil Mill Beck” and passed down to the Abbey though supplemented by a well and connected by oaken pipes (young oak trees bored through) which were 4 inches in diameter, then entering a large quadrangular covered drain. Slightly to the north west of the granary was a place where the stream could either be turned off by another channel

directly into the river or allowed to reach the Abbey to cleanse the drain by raising or lowering a small floodgate. The grooves in the masonry for this are still visible. The remains of the Lavatorium are between the entrance to the old refectory in the south wall of the cloister. As the 1950’s digs revealed, some pipes were lead and supplemented by stone conduits, and there seems to have been some sort of pressure system driving the water supply round. Cisterns were revealed in the cloister and the ‘warming room’.

The excavations tried to distinguish the original plumbing from the much later refurbishment but basically the old system held and the Abbey records never mention any flooding from the River Aire. Between the Abbey and the river there were two fish ponds and heavy tree coverage which would have added flooding protection if the River had even risen in those 400 hundred years to the levels we experienced in Kirkstall this winter. Ironically, the Kirkstall monks abandoned a four year attempt to settle higher up the Aire valley at Barnoldswick but moved down to the shelter of Kirkstall because of “continual rains”. It seem that for Kirkstall Abbey the Roman drainage system adopted by the Norman monks provided water and drainage and held against flooding for centuries.







