

Lest We Forget: Remembering Sheffield's forgotten war graves at Wardsend



Nature has reclaimed many of the graves in Wardsend Cemetery

Wardsend Cemetery, just behind Owlerton Stadium in Sheffield, was once home to 16 traditional stone war graves, marking the burial site of young men who died during the First World War.

Since the last burial at Wardsend in 1968, nature has reclaimed much of the land. These markers were removed in the 1980s by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

A spokesperson said: "As maintenance and access to the Commission headstones at Sheffield (St Philip) Wardsend Church Cemetery became increasingly difficult, not only for staff but for relatives wishing to pay their respects, it was decided that the casualties would be alternatively commemorated at Sheffield City Road Cemetery on a Screen Wall."

The [Friends of Wardsend Cemetery Group](#) have since installed 16 wooden crosses with metal inscriptions of names, regiments, and date of death, to ensure the men are remembered where they are buried.

Chair of the Friends of Wardsend Cemetery Group, Howard Bayley, 64, said: "These lads were from around here, and they should be remembered here.

"Not only do we have the soldiers that are buried here but we also have about another 20 who are remembered on family memorials, but are perhaps buried in places like France."

A lot of effort has gone into finding these war graves, and learning about the men buried there.

Sally Jowitt, 58, is a local researcher who spends her spare time researching the lives of the fallen.

Her work has revealed many details about their lives before the war, including one soldier who was a talented musician and performed concerts across Sheffield.

The remembrance event at Wardsend is held on Armistice Day itself to coincide with the 11 o'clock silence.

Mrs Jowitt said: "It's important as it means they're not forgotten, and they have been forgotten for so long."

The service itself will be held by James Gould, 35, who is a trainee vicar at the nearby St John the Baptist Church in Owlerton.

Mr Gould said: "They are falling out of living memory, so it becomes even more important that we do consistently remember, as people are giving up a lot to maintain peace and freedom."

You can read more about Sally Jowitt's research [here](#).

Word Count: 364

Link to video: <https://youtu.be/FUwseAVI9Ec>