

Ranmoor Society News

May 2011

Future Meetings and Summer Walk

We would like to draw your attention to the revised programme for the second half of the year shown in the box below.

Will members please note that we have had to switch the June and September meetings?

The talk *Remembering Ranmoor's Fallen* will now take place in

June, whilst the one on *Early Sport in Sheffield* will happen instead in September.

Before then, for our next meeting on May 17th Helen Mathers will tell us about the *Foundation of Sheffield University* and about the several connections its founders have had with Ranmoor.

For a change this

year's Summer Walk on Wednesday, June 8th will take place outside our immediate area – visiting High Bradfield. This is the result of an invitation from Malcolm Nunn of the Bradfield Historical Society, who has given us talks on the Sheffield Flood and the Rivelin Valley area.

We'll meet on the green opposite the

Old Horns Inn at 7.15pm. It will take the form of a gentle stroll around the village (no serious climbing involved!) and finish with a guided tour of the church at about 9pm.

Please park on the street rather than in the pub car park. If anyone would like a lift we can probably arrange one. Let's hope for another sunny evening!

Membership Matters

Message from the Chairman

We are pleased to report that as a result of our publicity campaign the Society's membership is now at a record level and we have welcomed thirty new members.

Our recent meetings have been very well attended, and we will now be preparing for larger numbers by reorganizing the seats to ensure that suitable gangways remain.

Even though most members have already paid this year's subscriptions, we would like to remind those who have perhaps forgotten, or mislaid their form, to contact our Membership Secretary, Carolyn Feely, to renew.

Thanks to all members for your continued interest, enthusiasm and support.

Revised Programme for 2011

Tuesday May 17 th	<i>The Foundation of Sheffield University</i> With reference to its links with Ranmoor Helen Mathers
Wednesday June 8 th	<i>Summer Walk in High Bradfield</i> Stroll around High Bradfield village with views of the Loxley Valley Meet opposite the Old Horns Inn at 7.15pm
Tuesday June 21 st	<i>Remembering Ranmoor's Fallen</i> Impact of world war on some Ranmoor families Dan Eaton
Tuesday September 20 th	<i>Early Sport in Sheffield and its Suburbs</i> How we joined and participated in local sporting clubs Tom Dakin
Tuesday October 18 th	<i>Sheffield's Heritage of Steel</i> What became of the great companies of yesteryear Geoff Marston
Tuesday November 15 th	<i>Crosspool and Around</i> Memories and Photos Gerald Eveleigh and Judith Hansen

Ranmoor History Snippets

Did she jump or was she pushed?

In late 1912 newspapers in many parts of the world gave great prominence to events surrounding a Ranmoor lady. The New Zealand *Evening Post* introduced her story like this:

“Newquay the fashionable Cornish watering-place, is now the centre of a mystery which at present shows no sign of being unravelled. Mrs. Nowill, the wife of a Sheffield merchant, has disappeared. Mr. J. A. Delay, a retired Singapore solicitor, has committed suicide.”

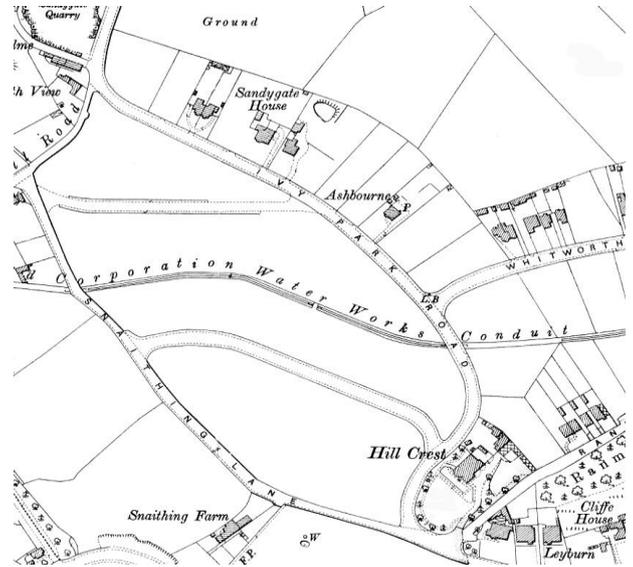
In 1900, 49-year-old Sidney Nowill, who lived at Sandygata House, 94 Ivy Park Road, had married twenty-two year old Marian Foster. Twelve years on, Marian and her mother, who by now lived with them, arranged a holiday in the Atlantic Hotel, Newquay. On this occasion Sidney Nowill did not accompany them, but James Delay, a friend of some years, was staying in the hotel at the same time. One afternoon, Marian and James set off for a walk along the cliffs.

She was never seen again. It later emerged that a coastguard had seen her on the cliff top apparently arguing with Mr. Delay, who became extremely agitated in the hours following her disappearance. During the search for Mrs. Nowill, Delay apparently seized a coastguard and was reported to have said *“I’ll throw you over the cliff too”*.

These facts became known only later, allowing newspapers to expand on the story over a number of weeks. It was next reported that Mr. Delay had committed suicide by hanging himself on the back of his hotel-room door. Even more intriguing, it became known a few days later that he had very recently changed his will to leave £30,000 to Marian Nowill. On another day it was reported with great emphasis that he was a married man. Not until nine days after her disappearance was Marian discovered – dead at the base of a cliff near the hotel.

At the inquest for Mr. Delay, a friend described him as reserved and eccentric, but confirmed that *“there was no insanity in the family”*. Mr.

Nowill said his wife was *“fond of gaiety”* but he was *“sure there was nothing of an improper nature”*. However, given that the two people who knew what happened were by now dead, the truth was never uncovered.



Sandygate House and Ivy Park Road c.1902

Marian Nowill’s burial in Fulwood churchyard was attended by a large number of curious onlookers, and no doubt there was much gossip about relations between this young wife and both her older, absent husband and the mysteriously-present James Delay.

Sidney Nowill continued to live in 94 Ivy Park Road until his death in 1920 at the age of 68.

Ranmoor Society Committee 2011

Chairman	Andrew Swift	268 5158
Secretary	Gerald Eveleigh	230 1992
Treasurer	Gill Battye	230 1596
Archive	Peter Warr	230 9174
Planning	David Barber	230 4717
Membership	Carolyn Feely	230 7421
General	David Everingham	230 6041