

Arthur's mural is worth a look

If you have walked down Leith Walk recently during your daily exercise, or while shopping, you may have missed the lovely new mural on the side of Casa Amiga.

Stop and have a look at artist Shona Hardie's painting of Arthur Williams which is both a tribute to the local man as well as a fundraiser for charity, Streetwork.

It is painted on the side wall of the café – where else but on Arthur Street?

Arthur (83) is well known in Leith and distinctive with his long dreadlocks. He was homeless, and slept rough in the area for over 20 years. Finally, after much trying, his family obtained guardianship for him and he has lived in a care home since 2013, where he is 'well fed and looked after and he continues to thrive'.

His family wanted to give something back to recognise the years of tolerance, kindness and generosity from locals which kept Arthur safe and alive all those years. They decided upon the mural which will honour him and give some cheer to the community. They commissioned a mural portrait of Arthur's image by the [local artist](#) which has now been completed.



Arthur: © 2020, Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com

Ben Macpherson MSP for Edinburgh Northern and Leith said:

"This stunning mural is a really uplifting tribute to Arthur, who I know is doing well in his new home. The widespread positive response that the painting's received already is testament to how much Arthur is loved by the community in Leith and beyond. It's also testament to Shona Hardie's magnificent artwork. What's more, the generous donations that are being made to the family's fundraising campaign, for Streetwork, emphasise that people want to help those in need where they can, like local people in Leith supported Arthur over the years, and our shared commitment and determination to tackle and prevent homelessness."

Jan Williamson, Assistant Director for Streetwork said, "We are so grateful to Arthur and his family for arranging this mural for the community of Leith, and for raising awareness of homelessness and mental health. The team at Streetwork were honoured to know Arthur and to have been part of his remarkable story, he is a real gentleman and a true Leith legend and this mural is a fitting tribute to him."

As part of Trams to Newhaven, there is a project to liven up utility boxes on Leith Walk. The box below the mural will have text with information for those who are homeless or need help with mental health issues.

You can donate to Streetwork which is part of the Simon Community Scotland [here](#). As little as £1 pays for someone to have a warm drink in a safe place off the street, and £5 pays for a hot shower and access to laundry.

Throughout his life on the streets, Arthur Williams was known to Social Services, NHS Lothian and Police Scotland and was supported by them and the local homeless charity Streetwork (streetwork.org.uk) which is part of Simon Community Scotland (simonscotland.org).

It is hoped that this mural will serve as a reminder of the plight of people experiencing and at risk of homelessness and

that the homeless/mental health signposting may be of use to anyone out there who needs it.

If you wish to make a donation to Streetwork, no matter how large or small, it will help make a difference through the work they deliver:

- £1 pays for a warm drink in a safe place off the street
- £5 pays for someone to have a hot shower and access to laundry.
- £10 helps someone to become more employable – to find a route off the street.
- £30 pays for a sleeping bag when all options for the night are exhausted.
- £50 per month helps our outreach team reach and speak to vulnerable people on the street.
- £150 provides ongoing support to someone in a situation of crisis, including access to health services.

We know that people can and do recover from homelessness. Individual support, linking people into the services they need and, above all, human kindness make a huge difference. Every day we are astounded by the resilience and tenacity of people to survive and find their way to a more positive future. Arthur Williams is a perfect example of this and embodies the motto of Leith – “Persevere”.

justgiving.com/campaign/StreetworkArthur



Arthur by Shona Hardie. Arthur Williams is a perfect example and embodies the motto of Leith – Persevere. Photo: © 2020, Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com