

ALTRINCHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

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Hello everyone,

It was good to welcome some new members at the September meeting. Please remember to pay your subscriptions if you haven't done already. I hope you managed some visits during Heritage Open Days. Here are some more events coming up.

The Archaeology of the Monastery in North West England. A new course by Dr Mike Nevell, details here: https://mancent.org.uk/?page_id=4784 Wednesday evenings.
Starts 28th Sept for 6 weeks at the STAG HQ behind The Old Hall Hotel.

Heritage Discovery Day at Chester Cathedral **Saturday 22nd October 2022** from 10am to 8pm.
Book your **FREE** tickets at <https://bit.ly/3pkFgol>
family activities, mediaeval treasures, lectures, music, heritage skills demos, sensory tours, and more.

Cheshire History Day - Advance Notice - Saturday 29th October 2022.

The theme this year is 'Cheshire Strongholds'. It will be at The Grange Theatre, Hartford. Always a good day, and good value at £12. More details to follow.

Trafford Local Studies - Following on from Meghan MacGabhann's talk at the September meeting, here are links to a couple of the items she mentioned:

Exploring Trafford's Heritage: [Honouring Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II \(1926-2002\) · Exploring Trafford's Heritage \(omeka.net\)](#)

Guides and Resources (especially family history research): [Guides and resources · Exploring Trafford's Heritage \(omeka.net\)](#)"

It seems ages ago now, but I can report back on the society visit to Norton Priory - we had good guides, and a good lunch (after a bit of confusion). It was a hot day, but cool inside the undercroft and in the woodland. Interesting to see the changes following the Heritage Lottery grant. Everyone seemed to enjoy it. I skipped the walled garden, will have to go again and explore some more.

The Biographical Dictionary of Greater Manchester Architects, 1800-1940 is now live on-line, at www.manchestervictorianarchitects.org.uk with details of over 1,000 architects, 400 partnerships and 10,000 buildings. It deals with architects known to have been born, trained, lived or worked in Greater Manchester between 1800 and 1940. Searchable by name or location of architect, practice, or building. Information is mainly based on contemporary newspaper reports and, from 1843, *The Builder*.

I checked it for local architect John Cocker, and got a list of ten works, but I know there are more in the Altrincham area.

Puzzle photo - Where is it? This date-stone has been removed as a possible falling hazard, but I've been assured it is being kept, and will be re-installed when alterations are complete. Clue at the end.



Russell, Newbery & Co. some more information.

A while ago Charlotte Starkey pointed me to this item on the website Great War Forum.

[Travis Perkins, Grosvenor Road, Altrincham - Places & Infrastructure - The Great War \(1914-1918\) Forum \(greatwarforum.org\)](https://www.greatwarforum.org) Members of the forum contributed this information:

‘The firm Russell, Newbery & Co. made parts for tank engines in WW1. It was based at premises in Grosvenor Road, Altrincham, Manchester between 1909 and 1949 and those premises still stand. The site was later occupied by Duncan Knowlson plumber’s merchants, and then Travis Perkins, builders’ merchants. I assume the premises were previously engine sheds for the railway?’

42 Years Ago An item from the journal *Open History* no.35 June 1990:

Altrincham’s 700th Anniversary

Here are further details of the activities planned by this Greater Manchester town to celebrate the granting of its charter. Altrincham has really gone overboard in having a full year’s events.

Each Sunday in Moated Site Excavations Exhibition by STAG,
June, July, at rear of Timperley Old Hall Hotel 10.30 - 4.00
August, September:

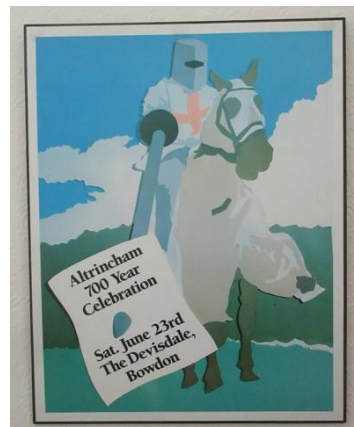
17th June: Beating the Bounds, annual boundary beat in mediaeval costume.
No.1 Higher Downs, Bowdon 10.00

23rd/24th June Mediaeval Weekend - main outdoor show event of the celebration with a living history event showing village life in 1290, including Ox Roast and Joust on the Devisdale, Bowdon.

2nd July - 28th Sept. Exhibition of Altrincham’s History 1290-1990, Altrincham Library, Stamford New Road.

“One of *Open History*’s editors, Jill Groves, had a very small hand in designing the panels for an exhibition of Altrincham’s history 1290-1990.”

[HP wasn’t much involved with any of the events due to a change of job that summer, but that’s our Publications Officer Jill.]



Cheshire Archives and Local Studies has a new blog – *A Farmer’s Life: Diary of James Higginson Aged 57½.*

The blog features excerpts of a diary kept over 200 years ago and gives a snapshot of day-to-day life on a 19th century Cheshire farm, as well as national events we’re still familiar with today. Part One can be found at <http://cheshirero.blogspot.com/2022/08/a-farmers-life-diary-of-james-higginson.html> and Part Two will follow later in August.

Crafts Skills declining - I picked up something from The National Trust Magazine that I didn’t know existed - A Red List of craft skills at risk of being lost. <https://heritagecrafts.org.uk/redlist/> From gold beating to glass eye making, with lots of basketry - kishie baskets and swill baskets and withy pot making. And what is Lorinery? I had to look it up.

The National Archives - The Scandalous Case of *The North Briton* - John Wilkes

This notorious newspaper was first published on 5 June 1762. Our focus is on issue 45, which came out on Saturday 23 April 1763, and caused outrage, as it seemed to attack the monarch directly – a serious crime which prompted the government to prepare to prosecute John Wilkes. Wilkes founded *The North Briton* to attack the government of the Earl of Bute, Prime Minister and favourite of the recently ascended George III. Bute was Scottish, a north Briton, and Wilkes used his paper to claim that the Prime Minister’s Tory government was a Scottish takeover of the English government.

https://clicks.econnectmail.com/view_online/view_online.php?token2= hGJHeY3rr8VpimMn1NDtPcL_Sq MG0ZjmX0HUSNWgvt69m-eepl2iFGtZt3R-d7hWQwGrJp9sc_OsVWiw6IZrw..

Royal Wedding and Murder - an article about the Brunner family, of Brunner-Mond (ICI), Northwich. <https://www.knutfordguardian.co.uk/news/20299381.royal-wedding-murder-looking-lives-brunner-family/?ref=ebln>

Some short pieces on **YouTube**:

French Armour damaged at Waterloo - a short 5 minute video of the effect of a cannonball on a breastplate. Makes you think. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuGP7IJhP0>

Capturing an Eagle at Waterloo - a 15 minute video from the Household Cavalry Museum.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-xhRXtHga0>

Timber-framed houses - conservation - Peter Ward does several videos on conserving timber buildings. Here are a couple: 'Opening up an historic timber frame - many problems' - 34 minutes.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s99Oj1EuxgQ> And
'A hidden treasure is revealed' 13 minutes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=de89TS-eJvs>
[Warning - he uses hand-held camera, and I wound up feeling slightly nauseous.]

"The Roman Road that just stopped" - a YouTube video by Paul Whitewick, who has done other videos tracing Roman roads, mostly in the south. This 15 minute video covers one near Wantage.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHIV4q11s6w>

"Forgotten WW2 plane found on beach" - 7 minutes story by Mark Felton Productions, about a Lockheed Lightning fighter nick-named 'The Maid of Harlech' revealed then hidden (and repeated) by movement of sands at Harlech. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeVOc2V-bGo>

I came across a short YouTube piece about Llangelynin Old Church above the Conwy valley, and looked it up. There is a factsheet with a walking route, you can download from Penmaenmawr Museum, along with other information about the area.
<https://www.penmaenmawrmuseum.co.uk/downloads-eng>

November - Remembrance WW2

I wondered recently why there is no Roll of Honour at Timperley Parish Church for local people who died in WW2, to go with those from the First World War. So I started to compile a list, then realised - by 1939 Timperley, as a separate local government entity had ceased to exist and had been absorbed into the Borough of Altrincham, so any local names would be part of a Roll of Honour for Altrincham. There are other reasons why there is no list for Timperley. George Cogswell has outlined these on his website: <http://traffordwardead.co.uk/background.php>

S.S. Empire Wave - I found a story from WW2, while checking for Timperley people killed in WW2 on Trafford War Dead website. Timperley resident John Kellett was lost in the S.S. *Empire Wave* that was torpedoed 500 miles south-west of Iceland. See George Cogswell's booklet "*S.S. Empire Wave 1941: the Tragic Story of the Loss of a CAM Ship*". This can be read in full on the Ashton & Sale History Society website under "Short Stories".

Ashton & Sale History Society - Have you looked at their website - it has different content to the AHS one
<https://www.ashistorysociety.co.uk/>

Heritage Gateway - <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/> a very useful source.

Stretford Memorial Hospital was put forward to English Heritage for Listing, but 'did not meet the criteria'. The hospital started as a house known as Basford House, then became an auxiliary hospital in WW1. "Aviation pioneer Sir John William Alcock (b1892) was born not at the house, but in the coachman's cottage lived in by his parents, while musician Andy Gibb (b1958) had only a very short association with the hospital, and neither association is thought to be of special interest in a national context."
The reasons for not listing, and some interesting history of the building are accessible on the Heritage Gateway website, which is a very useful site if you haven't come across it before, it includes all buildings rejected for listing since 2012. (via Lis Lewis, Trafford's Conservation Officer, back in August 2021.)

First World War Nurses - project work at The National Archives

Since late 2021, an increasingly large group of volunteers has been working its way through record series WO 399, which comprises records of women who served in the military nursing services during and after the First World War.

Read more here: https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/new-insights-into-the-first-world-war-military-nurses/?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=weekly_mailer_4_aug_22&utm_content=2022-08-15

Edison& Swan United Electric Light Co. Ltd.

Spotted at the 'Internal Fire Museum' at Tan-y-groes, Ceredigion, a name plate for this firm on a dynamo, that says Broadheath Engineering Works, near Manchester. [Thank you to Jan for passing on a photo].

I haven't found much about this firm in Broadheath. I did a search back in 2007 via the National Archives A2A search, for anything 'Altrincham' and found a 'Conveyance of land in Altrincham to Edison Swan Company'. This is among the Bridgewater Estates Archive at Salford University [ref: BEA/1/813 dates covered 1896-1902]. This implies it was near the canal.

I'm trying to locate just where the firm was in Broadheath; it's not listed in Slater's Directory for 1905, so may not have been there long, or sold out, or changed name.

Grace's Guide to British Industrial History website has information about the firm, with a works in Ponder's End, London, but information about any works at Broadheath is scarce.

https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Edison_and_Swan_United_Electric_Light_Co

Looking at it 'sideways' gives us some mention of people who worked there: Professor Samuel Joyce "took a position as Manager of the Edison & Swan Company's Works at Broadheath, near Manchester, and Chief Engineer to the Altrincham Electric Supply Company. When the works at Broadheath were closed he was transferred to a position of increased responsibility at the Ponder's End Works of the Company."

Now there's a hint, as the Altrincham Electric Supply Company is listed in Slater's Directory, with Showrooms at 29 Stamford New Road (recent photo). The 1910 OS map shows 'Electricity Works' between the Canal and Davenport Lane, just where it bends. Then I have another note of a Mr W.P.J. Fawcus, electrical engineer, who was at Manchester Ediswan Co, Broadheath, 1892-98, from an item on 'Manchester-based pioneers of the British Switchgear Industry'. It all adds to a confusing story.



There's a new local book - ***The story of St Vincent's Catholic Primary School***, by Christopher King; published by Minuteman Press, in 2022. Available from Abacus Books, Regent Road. The book is mostly photos, but is another addition to the history of the area. Not got my copy yet.

Archaeology bits: **Heatwave reveals** England's lost prehistoric sites: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-45170581?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/clw2rl7ekd6t/uk-heatwave&link_location=live-reporting-story

On a different scale: Men digging up car park - turn up old ink bottle.

I think we are having electric vehicle charging points put in at Thorley Lane car park, Timperley. Anyway, there's a lot of digging going on, and a passing member of STAG, looking down the holes, asked the diggers if they had found anything interesting. So he has acquired a small square glass ink bottle. That's what you get for being curious. There's dark cultivated soil in places down there, along with the odd piece of brick and local underlying clay. I wonder if the bottle came from nearby Fir Tree Farm (rebuilt 1676), the old butcher's shop (1890s), or the early days of the (now closed NatWest) Bank (1909).

See you soon, Hazel