



ALTRINCHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

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Hello everyone,

We have some changes in who does what at Altrincham History Society. Hazel has retired as Chairman, but will still do the Newsletter.

As you may be aware at the AGM no one felt able to take on Hazel's Role as Chairman. As we wish the Society to continue, after some discussion the committee have decided that the way forward is for a more "collectivist" approach sharing the Chair's various roles amongst a wider group. Various members have offered to take on specific limited tasks for which we thank them. If you feel you could help we would be glad to hear from you. For the moment I will attempt to act as a Convenor and coordinate such an approach.
Ray Thompson Treasurer

What's On

The National Archives events include **online talks, Free**, but you need to book. Just an example: 'Tracing your Railway ancestors' on Friday 12 September 2pm. Find more events here:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/visit-us/whats-on/online-events/>

You can sign up for regular news from The National Archives.

August - South Trafford Archaeology Group

STAG has a number of projects that require post-excavation work. Most especially pottery marking. Help is needed to assist in this and dates have been arranged on Tuesday's between 11.00am and 3.00 pm starting 29th July and through August and also on Sunday 6th August. No special knowledge needed. At STAG's Display Centre, behind the Old Hall Hotel, Stockport Road.

Looking ahead

Saturday 11th October is Cheshire History Day. This year the theme is 'Moving Cheshire: How Transport Changed the Face of our County' and it will be held at Tarporley Community Centre. The day runs from 9am to 4.30pm and the cost is £16.

News

Sad News - Member Chris Hill died on 12 April 2025.

Chris was a long time member of Altrincham History Society, and also of other local societies - Bowdon History, Ashton & Sale History, South Trafford Archaeological Group. He was a committee member at Altrincham History Society; and a member of the Altrincham Court Leet, its Provost in 1998 and kept detailed records of its activities. He was involved with providing blue plaques for Ronald Gow and Helen Allingham. Chris wrote many articles and contributed to various local history publications.

See Chris's Obituary in the latest issue of 'Browsings' from STAG. Pick up a copy at STAG HQ.

The Orange Tree pub, in Old Market Place is closed and at present work is going on at the building, with scaffolding all round. I hope that won't involve removal of the old beams and timber framing.

Update – Planning Application 4th August. Ref : 116644/FUL/25 – Plans for a restaurant on ground floor and 10 (ten) bedrooms for HMO 'multiple occupation', with a new extension at the rear, and toilets in the cellar.

I worry for the timber framing on the stairs and the lovely beamed ceiling in the room behind the bar. Going to check the plans now.



Trafford Local Plan – Did you know there was a consultation that ended in June this year? There's a summary at this website or link to the Greater Manchester 'Places for Everyone'

<https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/local-plan/trafford-local-plan.aspx>

Also there is currently consultation about a proposed **Heritage Framework for Trafford**. There was a meeting in July 2025 at Lancs. County Cricket Club about ideas/thoughts on Sports heritage. This was attended by 40-50 people, and there is another meeting in August about Green / Growing Heritage, and another planned for September on Industrial heritage. We'll have to see what comes out of this.

Watling Gate, Leys Rd, Timperley

There's a Planning Application (116384/LBC/25) asking for

Listed Building Consent for the **dismantling of Watling Gate** HP got an Email on 23 April 2025 headed: A decision by Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration has been published: Update on Watling Gate, Timperley

Stating –

Noted the precarious state of the building and risk to any persons going near it;

Noted that the building is too unstable to repair or shore-up

“That an application for listed building consent be made for significant alteration / partial demolition to preserve as much as possible of the remainder of the house and render the structure safe.” That “ the Corporate Director of Place, be delegated authority to make the necessary preparations to submit a listed building consent application, and if approved in due course make an application for de-listing of the building”. Etc, etc.

To see the publicly available information, follow the link: Decision details on public web site<https://democratic.trafford.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?id=1429&LLL=0> [SEE THIS FOR MORE DETAILS]



Watling Gate in its prime 1970s

One Hundred and Ten Years Ago - August 1915.

Gallipoli – two local men were killed on 7th August, both were in the 6th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment. Pte. Leonard Evans was aged 18, son of Robert (a foreman emery turner) and Alice Ann, living at 'Nansen House', Heyes Lane, Timperley (on the right towards the Conservative Club). The other was Sidney McDougall – son of Isaac S. McDougall, who in 1911 Census was listed as 'Manufacturing chemist' (and developed McDougall's flour). Sidney was one of the managing directors of McDougall Bros Ltd. He was 39, and is listed as Captain on the Christ Church memorial, but as Lieutenant in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records. He may have lived on Hale Road. You can find more details on the website - traffordwardead.co.uk.

On YouTube

'Great British Road Journeys – Cheshire – Crewe to Chester Ep 62. A 10 minute video taking in the railway Works at Crewe, Nantwich, Bickerton and on to Chester. By Auto Shenanigans, a bit quirky but includes historical aspects, old maps. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tn15-NeRFjA>

And another Road Journey video Alsager to Northwich, including bullets, salt and plastic c 10 minutes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmnRZ-jPsU>

'Beneath our Feet: Everyday discoveries reshaping history' (1 hour presentation by two experts) about archaeological items reported by finders to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (finds.org.uk).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQxK9wewRxg>

'Village Bigger than Liverpool with a Lost Railway' (Parkgate, Wirral) an 8 minute video from 4 years ago, by The Wirral Channel, about the old port at Parkgate, and a rail line to the colliery at Neston.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TBys4BgcxQ&t=133s>

'When the city of Chester was a thriving pilgrimage spot', an article from Cheshire Life.

<https://www.greatbritishlife.co.uk/magazines/cheshire/24938933.city-chester-thriving-pilgrimage-spot/>

Warburton Toll Bridge

“This bridge toll is increasing by 733% - why?” - Walking round Warburton Toll Bridge, a video by Bryn Buck, about 9 mins. He discusses the current work on the toll bridge, and the proposed increase of the toll to £1. The toll refers to the bridge over the old course of the River Mersey, now dry, rather than the steel structure over the Ship Canal. (Photo H Pryor)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRd7RK_AzT8



“The New Town of a Norman Prince” - I’ve been catching up on old episodes of Time Team, including Series 1 episode 3 on Much Wenlock. First aired in 1994 (Tony Robinson with hair). 48 minutes.

https://www.google.com/search?q=the+new+town+of+a+norman+prince&rlz=1C1GCEA_enGB1077GB1080&oq=%22The+new+town+of+as+Norman+Prince%22+Much+Wenlock&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUqBwgBEAAY7wUyBggAEEUYOTIHCAEQABjvBTIHCAIQABjvBTIHCAEQABjvBTIKCAQQABiABBiiBDIKCAUQABiiBBiJBdIBCTIzMzA2ajBqN6gCCLACAFefcGRSPt1Q4P8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:68a1b7ff,vid:YqHTYEcOAwk,st:0

‘The Chilling True Story of the Pendle Witch Trials’, on YouTube, a 20 minute video by History Hits with Alice Loxton. With a transcript to follow.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wegs_uHDZiE

Some Mediaeval stuff here:

Shotwick Park, west of Saughall, Chester, was a mediaeval deer park attached to the royal castle of Shotwick on the banks of the Dee. Its boundary can still be traced in hedgerows, and place-names hint at its history: Shotwick Lodge Farm, Lodge Lane, Parkgate House.

If you want to know more, start with summaries of the HER records on Heritage Gateway:

https://heritagegateway.org.uk/Gat.../Results_Single.aspx...

For recent Aerial Photography and LiDAR discoveries, see J Goodchild, Cheshire Aerial Investigation and Mapping Project: The Chester Environs <https://historicengland.org.uk/.../CheshireAerialInvestig...> and search 'Shotwick'.

There is a detailed study of the documentary evidence by R Stewart-Brown, 'The Royal Manor and Park of Shotwick' in THSLC 1912 <https://hslc.org.uk/.../2017/06/64-8-Stewart-Brown.pdf>.

There is also an article about life in the park in JCAS vol 84: O'Neil, S V: The Shotwick court rolls 1338–1344: a snapshot of peasant life and manorial administration in fourteenth-century Cheshire, pages 111-27

[https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-2910-](https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-2910-1/dissemination/pdf/JCAS_ns_084/JCAS_ns_084_111-128.pdf)

[1/dissemination/pdf/JCAS ns 084/JCAS ns 084 111-128.pdf](https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-2910-1/dissemination/pdf/JCAS_ns_084/JCAS_ns_084_111-128.pdf). These articles may be a bit heavy going, but are available at Local Studies Library at Sale.

From The National Archives – a database of Railway Worker Accidents, including various records from 1889 to 1939. The database is available as a downloadable spreadsheet. Copy this link into your web search.

https://www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk/the-accidents/?utm_source=e-shot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Weekly+newsletter+-+05.06.25

Altrincham 1861 Census

– the town was divided into ‘Districts’ for the Census, and at the start of each listing there is a description of the District. Here is the one for District 4. The enumerator was Isaac Turton.

“All that part of the Township of Altrincham comprising George Street from Collins and Warrens to and including Mrs Jones’ and Cottage near and with the Axe & Cleaver, Well Street to and including the Lockups, and John Fosters, Stamford Street, from Worthington’s Beerhouse to Mr Blease’s and Post Office Place, Dunham Road from Mr Lyon’s to and including Mr Norris’, also High Street and the Market Place, including Albert Place, Church Street from Walker’s Shop to Stamford House, with Mount Pleas[ant,] Sandiway from M. Okell’s to Mr Hethorn’s, and Oldfield Hall, Oldfield Road and Victoria Street.”

'Walk Flour Mill in Cheshire', a 13 minute video by Alan Parker from 2015. At Foulk Stapleford, on the Waverton to Tarvin road and on the site of an ancient water mill on the River Gowy. Now growing their own wheat, and milling, and baking with their own flour. Check Walk Mill website for details - tours of the mill, cafe, and walks leaflet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_95jIAMSi0U

Websites:

Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society website <https://altrinchamandbowdoncs.com> has lots of local news on planning, including the Draft Local Plan, Trafford's Heritage Plans and the draft list of Local Heritage Assets (the Local Listing).

Family History Society of Cheshire has a good website, with details of their meetings – visitors welcome for a fee. <https://www.fhsc.org.uk/>

Cheshire Local History Association <https://sites.google.com/site/cheshirelha/> Or follow on Facebook.

Historic England has recently launched 'Local Heritage Hub', "with nearly 400 new digital pages packed with stories, images, and hidden histories from every corner of the country. As a local library service referenced on the UK Government Website, the hub includes pages for every county, district, city, major town, and national park in England, allowing users to explore aerial photos, listed buildings, archive material, videos, podcasts and local stories, all in one place. It is designed for local people to connect with the places they know and love in new and surprising ways." Check here: historicengland.org.uk/local . I checked it for Altrincham, it gave me Trafford, Cheshire, Warrington, Peak District National Park, Stockport and Manchester. Within each link there are photos, lists etc. Needs time to explore it.

Legal and medical

ONE of the youngest barristers in Manchester, 30-year-old Mr. John da Cunha, and Dr. Janet Savatard, 25-year-old daughter of doctor parents, have announced their engagement. Both live at Timperley, Cheshire. Mr. da Cunha was a prosecutor



Barrister—and doctor.

of war criminals in Germany in 1946. In one case "Odette" was a witness. He had to travel all over Europe to get evidence for the trials.

A major in the war, when he was wounded in 1944 on the beaches of Normandy, Mr. da Cunha was called to the Bar in 1948.

Dr. Janet Savatard played hockey and tennis for Manchester University. Her parents—Dr. Louis Savatard and Dr. Judith Savatard—are skin specialists.

Mr. da Cunha's father is Dr. Frank da Cunha, Portuguese Consul in Manchester.

I've been trying to sort out some old notes (a couple of boxes full) and came across this cutting. It's from a scrapbook of Harold Holmes who was a local photographer. It is from September 1952, with a couple from local Timperley families.

Janet, the daughter of Dr Louis Savatard (1874-1962) who was a pioneer in dermatology. He opened his house Heyesleigh in Timperley as a Red Cross Hospital in WW1.

John, was the son of Dr Frank Da Cunha. His father came to England to study and stayed. He studied at the University of Manchester and was honorary surgeon at Altrincham General Hospital. He had his general practice in Park Road, Timperley, in the house that became Park Medical Practice.

John was a tank commander just after the D Day landings, and was wounded. He was seconded as a junior counsel involved in the War trails, aged only 23. He later went on to be a judge.

I think they stayed local, so I wonder where this couple lived.

[Manchester Medical Collection: Biographical Files accessed via <https://archivehub.jisc.ac.uk> Wikipedia from Obituary in The Times June 2006]

More sorting out to come, lots of boxes and files to check through.

See you around, Hazel