



## ALTRINCHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No. 47 January 2026

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Hello everyone,

Welcome to 2026, and best wishes for the New Year.

One anniversary I've found for 2026 is the Menai Suspension Bridge, completed and opened in 1826. [Memories of holiday trips to Anglesey and seeing the remains of the ship *HMS Conway* below the bridge. I must have been about 5.]

Here are reminders of some exhibitions and events that you might be interested in, some articles online and bits of local history.

Our February meeting is a [History of Stockport Plaza](#), well worth a visit if you have not been.

We are currently booking speakers for next season, and wonder if you have any suggestions. Please let us know.

### What's On

[Cheshire Local History Assoc. \(CLHA\) 2026 Programme – FREE talks by Zoom:](#)

[Saturday 14 February 2pm](#) *The Historic Towns Trust Historical Map of Chester - What did we learn?*

*The 'New' Historical Map of Chester* by Dr Tom Pickles & Dr Katherine Wilson (University of Chester)  
2pm via Zoom

If you would like to attend any of the CLHA Zoom talks, please email [clhachair@outlook.com](mailto:clhachair@outlook.com).

Please give your name and indicate whether you are an individual member of CLHA or state you are a member of Altrincham History Society. The zoom link will be forwarded a few days before the event.

**Lots of ONLINE talks from The National Archives** coming up in February; for more details of these, and to book check this link to the TNA Newsletter:

[https://news.eneews.nationalarchives.gov.uk/B345AF5E43C713704BE7193EB801B42523DD3E879275B959077C726762D88550/9158F81B5F7FB174AC4F0D114B0EA470/VIB?utm\\_source=e-shot&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Pre-sale+mailer+Q4+What%27s+On+04.12.2025+](https://news.eneews.nationalarchives.gov.uk/B345AF5E43C713704BE7193EB801B42523DD3E879275B959077C726762D88550/9158F81B5F7FB174AC4F0D114B0EA470/VIB?utm_source=e-shot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Pre-sale+mailer+Q4+What%27s+On+04.12.2025+)

### Looking ahead

Cheshire Local History Association 2026 Programme

**Monday 20 April 2pm** in Chester

['Delving in Delamere Forest: a Medieval Glassworking Site at Risk'](#)

Talk by [Stewart Ainsworth](#), Landscape Investigator (of Time Team)

At the Blue Coat School, Chester, 2pm to be followed by the AGM

**Wednesday 6 May Day field visit**

'Daresbury: a Church and a Cheshire Cat' Details to follow.

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### Exhibitions

**14<sup>th</sup> February to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2026** at The Grosvenor Museum, Chester

['Chester Amphitheatre: an 8000 year story'](#) finds from the dig in 2000s.

More exhibitions, and children's activities and events and lots more information on the website

<https://westcheshiremuseums.co.uk/> Includes The Saltworks and Weaver Hall..

## **Exhibition Reminders**

Spies, Lies and Deception- exhibition at IWM North – Nov 2025 until August 2026 – free, family friendly exhibition about deception and espionage from WW1 to the present day. See the stories of spies including Noor Inayat Khan and Eddie Chapman, and the tools of their trade. Details here:

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/events/spies-lies-and-deception-iwm-north>

Treasure: History Unearthed - Exhibition at the Museum of Liverpool until March 26 – celebrating Treasure hoards found in the North West. Find out more about it and tickets here

<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/whatson/museum-of-liverpool/exhibition/treasure-history-unearthed>

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## **More from The National Archives – Medical records from WW1.**

This is a blog article about the series of records, only a sample of (literally tons) more that were destroyed in the 1970s. [Not yet checked it for any of our relatives.]

[https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/explore-the-collection/the-collection-blog/tracing-medical-records-from-the-first-world-war/?utm\\_source=e-shot&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Main+mailer+21.11.25](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/explore-the-collection/the-collection-blog/tracing-medical-records-from-the-first-world-war/?utm_source=e-shot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Main+mailer+21.11.25)

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**News from Cheshire Archives & Local Studies** Two new record offices are being built, one near the railway station in Chester and the other at Crewe. Programmed to open in Autumn 2026 they will replace the old Record Office in Duke St, Chester. Lots of preparation by the archives staff, as a sample - “We’ve been busy working through more than 700 different collections of Methodist and non-conformist church records, to determine which go where when we move to our new buildings in 2026.” Altrincham area local records from the pre-1974 county are most likely to be in storage in Deepstore at the salt mines. So they can be retrieved to either new centre as convenient for researchers (probably Chester for me). More details about the new buildings and all the records on the Cheshire Archives website.

<https://www.cheshirearchives.org.uk/home.aspx>

Cheshire Archives also has a YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJpdfb6yMiSvaRCrmp50Hg/featured>

## Lancashire & Cheshire Antiquarian Society (LCAS)

“The society promotes the study of the history and archaeology of the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, and in 2023 celebrated its 140th anniversary. We regularly publish Transactions, which are collections of peer-reviewed papers focusing on the two historic counties. Volume 115, is hot off the press, full of interesting articles, covering topics such as Bronze Age child cremation at Lytham, the architectural brain behind Port Sunlight and a new look at Lindow Man, forty years after the discovery of the extraordinary 'bog body'.

We want to raise the profile of LCAS and attract new members. As a society, we arrange regular talks via Zoom covering diverse and fascinating subjects and organise trips to places of local historical and archaeological interest. We already have a wide-ranging programme, touching on family history, rebellion, folklore, literary giants, architecture, museums and archives - something for everyone, taking us through to the summer.” The membership fee for individuals is £25, [ not a bad cost for the talks and trips that they organise, and they have digitised all the Transactions, now available online to members].

Visit the Society's website [www.landcas.org.uk](http://www.landcas.org.uk) to find out more about the Society, its Transactions and the programme of talks and trips.

**Dr Mike Nevell** is Chairman or President of LCAS and also has an honorary role as Surveyor of the Antiquities of Altrincham for the town’s Court Leet. He has a podcast with various details about Altrincham buildings. Here is his piece about The Orange Tree, and another about Dunham Camp. And there are more that you can access from either link.

<https://archaeologytea.wordpress.com/2025/10/10/the-antiquities-of-altrincham-preserving-timber-buildings/>  
<https://archaeologytea.wordpress.com/2023/08/29/new-light-on-the-landscape-of-second-world-war-altrincham/>

and this one about Queen Street Mill, Burnley and ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage’ – interesting concept.

<https://archaeologytea.wordpress.com/2025/12/30/queen-street-mill-and-intangible-heritage/>

## **Altrincham Heritage Trail**

BBC news website has information about the Trail. The A4 leaflets are available from Altrincham Town Hall (and should be in Altrincham Library). As you follow the trail there are QR codes which give extra information. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn9zl8nv2z0o>

From this BBC website you can follow to 'The 13<sup>th</sup> century roots of Altrincham Market'. Hazel did a interview by Zoom with BBC Radio Manchester's Phil Trow. We spent about 20 minutes talking about the history and my memories of the Market, and he said it would be edited down. So I think there is about 2 minutes of me. Anyway it's here if you want to have a listen. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0jy2l4h>

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The National Archives - Civil War Petitions website of a digitisation project. Going through petitions for relief from sickness or poverty.

I had a look for Timperley and found Robert Chapman – see his petition here, the original and a transcription and a modern version: <https://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/petition/the-petition-of-robert-chapman-of-timperley-cheshire-trinity-1653/>

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## **On YouTube**

"Britain's most complete Anglo-Saxon church – Escomb, Co. Durham". A 17 minutes video by 'Church Searcher'. He gives a good description and history of this small church. ( I was on holiday in the North-east a few years ago and called in there for the Sunday service.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9qs6ToLDsY>

"How they're preserving The Mary Rose, Henry VIII's flagship". Very interesting video from Time Team Official, with Dr Helen Geake. 35 minutes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kUCbRBesNU>

"Castleshaw Roman Fort: uncovering the past with Archaeologist Norman Redhead", a 21 minute video by Saddleworth Uncovered, talking with the diggers at the 2025 excavations. Good aerial photos.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQbRMRh9dp8>

"1968: A History of English Windmills" from BBC Archive, titled "A Couris Thing" 30 minutes long excellent video documentary, very good. Transcript available, but very clear narrator, historical pictures, good background music, and voices from 1968. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5m4TALNvog>

"The windmill is a couris thing, Completely built by art of man, To grind the corn for man and beast, That they alike may have a feast" [ There was a 'Windmill Field' in Timperley. On the Tithe map of 1838 it had been split by the Bridgewater Canal, so that two fields on either side of Timperley Station were both called Windmill Field. ]

"Four years of War in One Field – WW1 Documentary" - a 19 minute film by 'Battle Guide' about Thiepval village, now the site of famous large memorial. Using trench maps and historic and aerial photographs. Clear commentary and sub-titles

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrwUDqdW0Ds>

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## **News**

The Orange Tree pub, Old Market Place. Good news. The Orange Tree building is now Listed Grade II. The decision of Historic England has just come through. A HE inspector visited in September and produced their report, giving architectural/historic details about the building. The description will be available soon on the Historic England website. <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

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Blue Plaques I called in Trafford Local Studies at Sale and the librarian mentioned they were compiling a list of people for possible new blue plaques for Trafford, and were short of notable women for the list. I thought about Alderman Edith Fitton, the first female Mayor of Altrincham in the 1950s. Can you suggest any women who would merit a blue plaque. Any pioneers in medicine or social care?

Denzell and Devisdale – free to walk and explore - Denzell Gardens and The Devisdale open space. Turn off from Dunham Road, and there is some parking space up the drive, and from there you can walk through to Devisdale. You can also find lots of information about the history of Denzell, wildlife on the Devisdale and much more at <https://www.friendsofdenzellanddevisdale.com/>

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**More on Neville Cardus** – or rather . . . more on **Eliahoo Joseph** [carried on from the last Newsletter.]

First mentioned in newspapers in early December 1892, the story gathered together here is from extracts from various newspaper reports [from British Newspaper Archive].

“Breach of Promise Case. A Jewish Method of Engagement. In Manchester yesterday, before Mr Justice Grantham, Sophia Hettena, daughter of Ezra M. Hettena, merchant and agent of Port Said sued Eliahoo Joseph, merchant of Manchester, for breach of promise of marriage. . . .

Correspondence was the only means of courtship . . . In 1890 Mrs Sassoon, a sister of the defendant [Joseph] met the plaintiff’s parents at Port Said . . .

According to Jewish custom the betrothal was consecrated at Port Said, plaintiff appearing by proxy . . . . . the custom of the Jews in regard to betrothals was of great importance. A Jewish merchant residing at Manchester, named Eliahoo Joseph, was betrothed by proxy to Sophia, daughter of Ezra Hettena, merchant at Port Said. The parties afterwards met at Paris ...

. . . serious obstacle in the shape of another wife living had to be considered. [!] The courtship of Eliahoo Joseph and Sophia H. Hettena reads up to a certain stage like a story in the Arabian Nights, but ends in a more Western fashion ... [Freeman’s Journal (Dublin) 6 Dec 1892]

In the Court of Appeal . . . The plaintiff claimed £5,030 damages, and the jury awarded her £1,350. [Manchester Courier 11 Feb 1893]”

At the time of the Breach of Promise case, Eliahoo Joseph was residing in Clyde Road, Albert Park [Manchester]. By 1903, he was living in Timperley. [More to come on the Cardus connection.]

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### Changing words

This is from Cheshire Wildlife Trust wildlife gardening email newsletter -

Did you know that newts used to be called ewts? But over time, people started saying “a newt” rather than “an ewt”. That shift went the other way with adders, though – before 1500, we talked about “a nadder”!



Windmill at Bidston, Wirral, 2018

(on a visit with Chester Society for Landscape History).

A tower mill. I wonder if Timperley’s was a post mill?



*HMS Conway* in 1953.

Originally launched 1839 as Nile, a 92 gun second-rate line-of-battle ship. Destroyed by fire in 1956 down to water level.

*See you around,*

*Hazel*