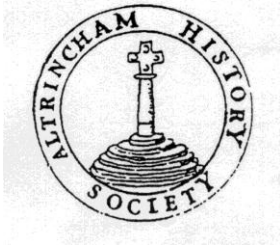


ALTRINCHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No. 41 January 2025

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Hello everyone,

Seasons Greetings and wishing you a Happy New Year.

Our next meeting is on January 14th on The Ordnance Survey. This will be at the Altrincham Conservative Club, on Market Street.

I hope you had a peaceful Christmas and have survived the weather and were not severely affected by the flooding. The Bridgewater Canal breach at Dunham Massey on New Year's Day reminds me of the earlier breach in August 1971. I think it was roughly the same area, but smaller. The repair involved driving steel pilings into the embankment and the repaired section was half the width of the original. It re-opened in May 1973.

[Photo from *Altrincham Guardian* Jan 25th, 1973 - my cuttings collection !]



What's On

A couple of items from the Working Class Movement Library

Starting Weds 15th Jan the Working Class Movement Library has a 6 week course on **Trade Union History**, 6pm to 8pm at the WCML in Salford. Looks like it is FREE.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/trade-union-history-course-tickets-1088695981989?aff=oddtcreator>

Exhibition - From Weds 11th Dec. 'The Collectors, The Cameraman, The Poets and The Pits: Miners' Strike 40th Anniversary' at the Working Class Movement Library. Marking the 40th anniversary of the 1984-1985 Miners' Strike, the Working Class Movement Library's exhibition showcases the strike through artefacts, photos, and poetry from its collections. Photographs by John Harris, who operated "behind the lines" during the dispute, capture events from the strikers' viewpoint. Almost all the poems were written by women during the strike, many of them miners' wives, and published in works now in the library's archive. Together, they provide a powerful insight into the strike from the perspective of those who were there.

Saturday 25th January 'Reconstructing Roman Chester' - Lecture by Julian Baum of Chester Archaeological Society. Starts at 2pm, at St Columba's Church Hall, Plas Newton Lane, Chester. Visitors £4 (includes tea & cake). [If you are interested in this let me know, I will probably be going. Hazel]

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From The National Archives – The latest Newsletter includes a Recipe from the 17th century that starts:
Take halfe a peck of the finest Flower . . .

Read the new 'Record Revealed' feature for a full transcript and to learn the strange story of how this item ended up in the collection. Here's the link for the recipe:

https://beta.nationalarchives.gov.uk/explore-the-collection/stories/a-recipe-for-six-mince-pies-of-an-indifferent-bignesse/?utm_source=e-shot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Weekly+newsletter++5.12.24

It's an interesting Newsletter with info about the Princes in the Tower, and compensation for the Boston Tea Party. Use this link:

<https://news.enews.nationalarchives.gov.uk/NLI/ViewHtmlEmail.aspx?a=AB9EEEF470B53268CDD392FB8A54C2AB&b=9158F81B5F7FB174AC4F0D114B0EA470>

The National Archives – another Newsletter - includes an example of techniques for enhancing illegible writing on old documents.

<https://news.eneews.nationalarchives.gov.uk/NLI/ViewHtmlEmail.aspx?a=F31576ECFEA0262A3377AC466DC4D15F&b=9158F81B5F7FB174AC4F0D114B0EA470>

Bit of News

If you have ever used Ellis' watch and clock shop on Regent Road, you will be sad to hear that the shop has closed. Started in 1944, the shop was run by Lawrence Ellis, and then by his daughter for many years. She took over in 1974 and is retiring (at the age of 88). In 1942 the shop was occupied by Norman Boden, a cycle agent and previously had been a drapers shop.



“A Spotter's Guide to High Street Architecture” - 8 minute video from Historic England

Join Professor Janina Ramirez for a tour of Gloucester High Street and discover some of the key architectural features found on English buildings from the 15th to 20th centuries. Very interesting. Has sub-titles.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0oP1mwe9Es>

Enquiry

From George Cogswell: ‘Does anyone know anything about an aircraft that crashed in the Timperley area on the 6th April 1943?

I am trying to trace the place (presumably a field?) where this a/c crashed. The AM1180 Crash Record Card states that a Mustang Mk.I ‘belly-flopped’ “NEAR TIMPERLEY”. The undercarriage was up and there was very little damage done to the a/c; the pilot also escaped without injury. Unfortunately he was killed over Yugoslavia in February 1944.

This is NOT the Park Road nor the Thorley Lane incidents, which I know about.’

Some online articles

Nantwich Museum newsletter includes an article

‘Cheese-making in Cheshire 1550-1750’ from *Northern History Journal*, focus is on the utensils and equipment and practices, using 1600s probate inventories.

https://mcusercontent.com/4f63a680139f40fcd7aed8ac/files/f3195938-bb42-7c88-1167-5a2b9e891642/Cheesemaking_in_Cheshire_1550_1750.pdf [copy the link into an internet search]

Hoard of Roman coins found during building work

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4gxnjq3ye0o#:~:text=The%20treasure%2C%20consisting%20of%201%2C368,at%20more%20than%20%2C%20A3100%2C000>

Archaeologists find remarkable Roman Villa . . .

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/a-remarkable-roman-villa-in-britain-boasts-magnitude-decor-and-mysterious-miniature-objects-180984063/>

The Lancaster Hoard of Bronze Age items. Photos of the items on the Dig Ventures Virtual Museum.

<https://projects.digventures.com/barrowed-time/virtual-museum/lancaster-hoard/> Also photos of the Morecambe Hoard.

Remembering Lindow Man – an article from *Cheshire Life*

<https://www.greatbritishlife.co.uk/magazines/cheshire/24525467.remembering-discovery-lindow-man-cheshire/?ref=socialflow>

Some items from YouTube

“The UK’s largest lost forest” a video by Paul Whitewick about 10 minutes - a quick look at Wychwood in Oxfordshire. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGHGe9Pf9mo> with sub-titles.

“The Ridgeway Mystery: You never knew!”. 16 minute video by Paul Whitewick. The launch of new long distance path called The Chalk Way, and Paul’s speculation about its connection with Doggerland. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IO2eEGARfmsz> with (a bit unreliable) sub-titles

“**Rescuing an Abandoned English Manor House**, with Hopwood DePree”

17 minute video from Historic England a year ago. Very interesting.

‘The Grade II* listed Hopwood Hall in Middleton, near Rochdale, dates from the 15th century. In the summer of 2023, we held a school to pass on essential and at-risk traditional heritage crafts to trainees across North England. This saw trainees participate in craft workshops delivered by master craftspeople, designed to help tackle the critical shortage of essential skills needed to rescue historic buildings nationwide. Hopwood Hall, one of Greater Manchester’s most important surviving halls, is the ancestral home of Hopwood DePree, the American actor, writer, and filmmaker who is working alongside local volunteers, Historic England, Rochdale Borough Council and Hopwood Hall College to restore and transform it into an artistic and cultural venue.’ Narrated by the American owner (don’t worry), about the restoration of Hopwood Hall, with advice and training by experts – wood carving, plasterwork etc.. With sub-titles. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbQ4phRjPg8>

I’ve recently looked at the website for Warrington History Society – it’s very good. There are posts of articles about different topics and even a series of audio recordings called ‘Listen to some Local History’. Just the thing for a cold, rainy day <https://warringtonhistorysociety.uk/>

Enquiry

Elizabeth Clancy is looking for info on her ancestor Thomas Carter who was mayor of Altrincham in 1807. In the Tithe Award of 1835 he owned 4 cottages in Altrincham and was ‘occupier’ there - plot no. 229. This was located in Chapel Street (now under the 1960s flats).

The 1852 Board of Health town plans has this property listed as plots 649 – 661 on both sides of Chapel Street, and the owner as ‘The Mortgagee of the late Thomas Carter (J.Barrow)’.

Has anyone come across more details?

Some of you may be aware of my holiday trips to the USA and interest in the history of the West. So here is something a bit different:

“Exploring an abandoned railroad and the Johnson Canyon Tunnel” – the railroad was constructed in the 1880s and last used in the 1960s. I didn’t know it cost \$10,000 a mile to build a railroad. It was the main route west through Arizona, and was so important that through WW2 the tunnel was protected day & night. This video by ‘Sidetrack Adventures’ is c.23 minutes, as he walks the line of the track and adds interesting historical details.

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

[OK the photo is not Arizona, but on the Georgetown Loop in Colorado, a great spiral built to gain height across a steep valley/canyon.]



“The Incredible Eryri viaduct fading into obscurity” Short article - Eryri's Cwm Prysor viaduct is a marvel of Victorian engineering in the Tryweryn valley near Capel Celyn which was drowned to provide water for Liverpool. (Good photos of a quiet part of Snowdonia.)

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/incredible-eryri-viaduct-fading-obscurity-29985391>

Another Railway - but **a bit different** – Five youngish men exploring history, and they have done their research. This video episode is called “The Great Arches of Heckmondwyke” following disused railway line – LNWR route built in 1900 – to Cleckheaton, the site of the station and a rare viaduct. About 16 minutes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRxZmko0VnI> [Ignore the loud music at the start, doesn't last long.]

Lots of episodes by this group, another is Ep. 129 “The Battles that built Britain: Sandal Castle, West Yorkshire” a 16 minute video exploring this castle near Wakefield. [I didn't know about this.] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hw1ME5o85ak>

If this sort of video can encourage an interest in history, good for them.

There is more on “Sandal Castle and the Battle of Wakefield 1460” by Chris Knowles about 6 minutes. A more conventional video, this is mainly about the battlefield and includes the Bridge Chapel at Wakefield. Brief but good. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OW2dMKn53EY>

And for more in-depth details on the Battle – an article from British Battles.com

<https://www.britishbattles.com/wars-of-the-roses/battle-of-wakefield-1460/#:~:text=On%20the%20morning%20of%2030,by%20surprise%20by%20the%20attack.>

“Swarkestone Bridge, Derbyshire. Longest stone bridge and turning point for Bonnie Prince Charlie”. about 9 minutes video by ‘Highways & Byways with Dr John Dunn’. Looking at this crossing of the R Trent, with subtitles. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jHboihS6C8>

Seasonal Greetings

“A Christmas Special: Gaudete ! - And what happened to it in the 20th century”. Something for carol singers. This 20 minute programme traces the development of this carol from the 1500s to Steeleye Span. By Early Music Sources.com <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aab7TvfDEKE>

Memories of days before fridges, by Joyce

“Before the war [WW2] it was really something to be a provisions man in a big shop. You had to know all about keeping and curing bacon, and cheeses. I worked for John Williams [grocers] shop in Hale, on the cash desk, and they had no fridges. The first job of the provisions manager every morning, was to lift the trap door, and go down to the cellar, bring all the bacon up and get all the maggots out. They used to scrape the maggots off with a knife, clean it up, and then put the cheesecloth back on. They did that every morning, especially in the summer, and cleaned the cheeses up as well. These were kept in the cold cellar on slabs. And it made me sick. I wasn't used to anything like that. And the boiled ham – they used to have to clean up the ham as well, every morning. In those days before the war, I've known my mother take half a pound of boiled ham back, because it was nearly walking, even to the best of shops. I didn't stick it very long, I couldn't do with the smells, because the provisions stuff was near the cash desk, and I was looking at it all day . . . crawling!”

A bit of a contrast to the queue outside Treadgolds butchers in Timperley village. The queue went round the corner to the Iceland shop, all day long on the 23rd Dec. [No big queue on 24th, got my bit of bacon OK.]

Enjoy your festive ham, this season !

Keep warm.

See you around, Hazel