



HISTORY ALIVE TAMESIDE



Free

Issue 2

THE TAMESIDE LOCAL HISTORY FORUM

Established in the year 2000 to increase public awareness of all the elements of local history throughout the Borough.

We aim to:

- promote the study of archive and source material for social, business and archaeological purposes and to make sure that such material is well preserved, collated and accessible to all,
- bring together representatives of voluntary groups, statutory authorities and individuals,
- act as a point of contact for, and to encourage co-operation between related historic/civic societies and statutory authorities.

This is the second edition of our new style magazine for Tameside's Heritage **'History Alive – Tameside'**

To find out about our events and activities look at our new website:

www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk



Tameside Local History Forum would like to thank Community Foundation for their support in funding this issue.



Photograph on front cover:

Old Chapel Dukinfield, which celebrates its 300th Anniversary this year.



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History Alive Tameside

No. 2 - 2007

Editorial

Welcome to the second edition of *History Alive Tameside* (HAT), which includes a wide variety of articles about people, events and places across Tameside plus book reviews and our directory. The first edition was widely distributed throughout the borough, Greater Manchester (South Lancashire and North East Cheshire, if you prefer!) and further afield, with requests for copies coming from as far away as the Midlands and South. We know also that copies were sent abroad. *HAT* received positive reviews in *Local History Magazine* and *North West Labour History* and a detailed mention in the Open University History Society's North West Region *Newsletter*. Following the success of the first edition, this issue has an increased print run. Once again the Community Foundation for Greater Manchester contributed generous financial support for which we are grateful. Thanks are also due to the University of Manchester for its kind donation. Last, but not least, thanks go to the groups and authors for their articles and also to all those who put in so much effort behind the scenes. With our wide circulation, and positive feedback from readers and reviewers, why not advertise your business or organisation in the next edition?

The Editors

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Tameside Local History Forum

A Year in our Diary 2006

The Tameside Local History Forum members are very actively involved in what is going on in the Borough of Tameside and meet socially on a regular basis. Word of our success has spread so far and wide that we often have enquiries from other groups wishing to know how we set up the Forum.

In 2006 members have been involved in planning issues regarding heritage and conservation and in making links with developers due to the redevelopment of mills with a historical interest and other developments in towns.

Our links with Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council are excellent, with the Forum being involved in the Blue Plaques and Sculptures schemes, events and exhibitions with the local Museums and Galleries, Libraries and Local Studies.

The University of Manchester Archaeological Unit support the Forum with a series of books ***History in your own Words***, which has allowed several of our members to get into print. UMAU also publishes a series of books on the history and archaeology of Tameside.

We have visits to places of interest throughout the year such as the Gaskell House and Knutsford Unitarian Church and the Chester amphitheatre. The Forum members hold a social evening once a year. This year a short talk by a local crime writer and music from the Yew Tree Singers made a most enjoyable evening.

Heritage Open Days 2006 were a huge success in Tameside: linking up with TMBC we produced an information leaflet of the 25 buildings opened, and hosted mainly by volunteers. Visitor numbers totalled almost 6,000.

During "Britain in Bloom" Tameside towns were ablaze with colour and our members were involved in the judging day by linking our heritage to parks and buildings.

The icing on the cake for us in 2006 was an event at the former Stalybridge Market Hall, which was a huge success. This beautifully restored building played host to our 30 member groups, exhibiting their work. There were bookstalls full of local history and family history books, with stands from Manchester Transport Museum, Gorton Monastery and Victoria Baths. You could also find out "Who do you think you are" from the Dukinfield Family History Society.

We hope that this will become an annual event.

Do look at our website to see "What's going On in Tameside"

www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk

Christine Clough
Secretary: Tameside Local History Forum

Albion United Reformed Church Stamford Street East, Ashton-under-Lyne

Albion United Reformed Church is a Grade II* building, the church having been erected in 1895. The congregation of Albion has a long history. The Independents, as they were referred to, met originally in Dukinfield, and later commenced meetings in Ashton during the 1780s. By 1816 they had built their own chapel on Albion Street, extending those premises in 1827, and later building new premises in 1835.

Eventually these premises were again too small for the large congregation. Mr D.F. Howorth, proprietor of a long established private school, and member of Albion, sold the land of his now closed private school to the Albion members. This site was perfect as it was directly opposite the Ashton Parish Church and the rich mill owners of Albion sought to erect a fine edifice to represent the achievement of independent worship. As was said at the stone laying in 1890,

"We who lay this stone today are not blind to the fact that a great conflict has yet to be fought out in England before all religious communities stand in the same relation to the law of the land as free churches in a free state"

The architect chosen for the new building was Mr John Brooke. On completion the church was said to be the most beautiful Congregational Church building in England.



The entire structure is in stone, the inside however is in red sandstone. The church is early perpendicular on the orthodox medieval cruciform plan of nave, aisles, transepts, chancel, and at that time seated one thousand members. Internally the pews are made of Dantzic oak. The woodblock floor is in oak and teak. The chancel has an encaustic tiled floor. There is a hammer-beam roof filled with tracery and angel finish – the angels clasping harp, trumpet, cymbals and organ, as in Manchester Cathedral.

All the stained glass windows are designs by Burne-Jones, and installed by Morris & Co. The East window shows the virtues and graces of the Christian character. The chancel windows are original designs by Burne-Jones and depict characters from the Old and New Testaments.

The organ, which was installed with the new building, is a Lewis organ, the finest organ that even today is appreciated for its tonal qualities and its vast range.

At the present time the organ is in need of a complete overhaul which will cost in the region of £200,000. We are organising many musical events and attempting to establish ourselves as a building of musical excellence. For 2007 we have already arranged the Denbigh Male Voice Choir to visit us on the 22nd April, the Stockport Male Voice Choir on the 19th May, and an organ recital on the 30th June.

Groups are encouraged to visit us (no charge), and these can be arranged by contacting either Rev. A. Wickens, on 0161 339 0925, or Mary Whitehead on 0161 330 9164. Also please visit our web-site: www.albionurc.org.uk

Mary Whitehead
Albion United Reformed Church

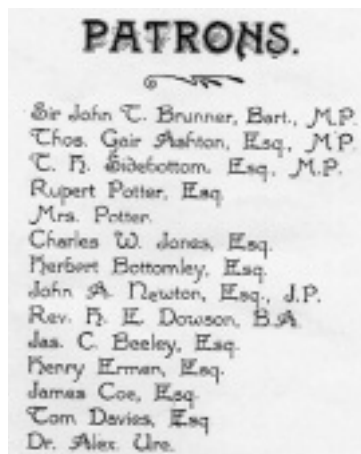
Churches in Tameside Quiz

1. Which is physically the highest church in Tameside?
2. Which Tameside church shares its name with a Canadian river?
3. Which three Tameside churches are dedicated to angels or archangels?
4. Which Tameside thoroughfare is named after a Unitarian minister?
5. Which Tameside church worships in a former bank?
6. Where is Tameside's only three-decker pulpit?
7. What links Mossley with Luke chapter 24 and Terry Waite?
8. Which Tameside church has reputedly the largest graveyard in England?
9. Which Tameside church is sandwiched between Sisters and Bethren streets?
10. Which Tameside church took 5 years to build?
11. Which is the oldest Methodist church building still in use by Methodists?
12. Which renegade Methodist is buried in St John's Dukinfield?
13. Which Tameside Christian was David Livingstone's mother-in-law?
14. Which Tameside chapel was built by Manchester Water Board?
15. What is the connection between Hyde Chapel and Peter Rabbit?

See answers on page 38

The Beatrix Potter Connection

An exhibition at the Setantii Museum in Ashton-under-Lyne recently showed the links to Beatrix Potter and the area of Tameside. Beatrix's mother Helen was born at Gorse Hall which was situated on the Gorse Hall estate, between the towns of Stalybridge and Dukinfield. Beatrix's visits to see her grandmother Jane Leech are recorded in her diary, her last one being after the death of Jane in 1884.



Stalybridge Unitarian Church owes its existence to the Leech family who were supporters of the setting up of a Unitarian Church in Stalybridge. When the idea to set up a Unitarian school in Stalybridge was mooted, Messrs John and William Leech gave over part of Hob Hill House for this. It was opened in 1862. As the school grew an extension was added and the Leeches generously supplied the school with free gas from their adjoining mill.

A building fund was set up to provide a church and in response to this John and William Leech gave a plot of land and a donation of £200. Mrs Leech and the Misses Leech contributed a further £200. The foundation stone was laid by Mrs Leech on Whit Friday 1869; John and William Leech gave a further £80 so that the building opened free of debt.

The Stalybridge official hand-book for the "Grand Bazaar" in 1900 listed amongst its patrons, Rupert Potter Esq., Mrs Potter and Thos. Gair Ashton MP.(1st Lord Ashton of Hyde, Jane Leech's nephew). The opening ceremony on the second day was performed by Rupert Potter Esq. B A of London, Beatrix's father. On 24th October 1883 Helen and Rupert went to Stalybridge for the Bazaar and returned to London on the 30th.



Hyde Chapel and Old Chapel Dukinfield have connections with generations of the Leech and Potter families in the graves that can be seen there. At Old Chapel Dukinfield Beatrix's grandfather and grandmother John and Jane Leech, her mother's sister and brother who died young, and Beatrix's great grandfather and grandmother, John and Elizabeth Leech plus William her grandfather's brother, who died age ten years old.

Hyde Chapel, Gee Cross has links with generations of Jane Leech's family, the Ashtons. Helen and Rupert were married there in 1863 and both are buried there along with Beatrix's grandparents Edmund and Jessie Potter; several aunts and uncles are also buried here. In a tribute to Beatrix at the 'Connection' celebration in 2000, at Stalybridge Unitarian Church the Rev. Dr A. Long said, "Whilst it needs to be said that she herself was not perhaps a committed Unitarian in the strict sense, she did come of solid Unitarian stock, her life is typical of what happened to so many of those great Unitarians of the immediate past. Most of them like Beatrix Potter, slipped back into the Establishment, but continued to speak with a sort of pride, of their Dissenting origins".

Christine Clough
Friends of Gorse Hall

Many thanks to Stalybridge Unitarian Church for the use of the images.

Anniversaries in Tameside 2007

- | | | |
|-----|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 60 | 1947 | First Gardeners' Question Time came from Tameside. |
| 75 | 1932 | Astley Cheetham Art Gallery, Stalybridge opened.
Cheetham Park, Stalybridge opened. |
| 90 | 1917 | Munitions explosion, Ashton-under-Lyne. |
| 100 | 1907 | Nield Conservatory in Stamford Park, Ashton-under-Lyne.
Death of Francis Thompson, poet, resident in Ashton 1864–1885.
Moorside and Manchester Road Primary Schools, Droylsden opened. |
| 125 | 1882 | Opening of St Anne's Church, Haughton, Denton. |
| 150 | 1857 | Establishment of Ashton-under-Lyne Co-operative Society.
Opening of Ashton-under-Lyne cricket club.
Creation of Stalybridge as a borough. |
| 200 | 1807 | Opening of Hunter's Tower, Gorse Hall, Dukinfield.
Opening of Old General public house, Dukinfield. |
| 250 | 1757 | Consecration of St George's Church, Mossley |
| 300 | 1707 | Building began of the original Old Chapel, Dukinfield. |

‘Not in the North’: The Rebellion of Charlotte Seymour Yapp, Matron the Lake Hospital, Ashton-under-Lyne (1914-1925)

Nursing and the health needs of Lancashire were relatively unknown to the voluntary hospital matrons of London, who, as a result of the nurses registration act of 1919, crafted new rules, regulations and restrictions on nursing, omitting the main providers of care, the Poor Law nursing service. Politically powerful and with a focus on self-interest, this elite London group has dominated nursing history. However, an expanding regional and national archive reveals that the redoubtable Charlotte Seymour Yapp, publisher of numerous nursing texts, editor of the nursing **Poor Law Journal**, Matron of the Ashton-under-Lyne Lake Hospital, challenged the hegemony of the London elite. Embedded within a culture of industrialisation, liberalism and female suffrage this native of Manchester had been an inspired appointee as a First World War matron. The Lake Hospital and its school of nursing with Yapp as its head would act as a force of democracy within nursing politics for the next decade.



MISS C. SEYMOUR YAPP.

‘Not in the North’ was the maxim Yapp used to challenge lowering nursing wages, restrictions on working hours and the setting of unattainable entry requirements. Advocating an educational approach that was inclusive and culturally sensitive, she successfully amended the famous St Thomas’s Hospital’s Nightingale’s School of Nursing syllabus with ideas and content from the Nursing School at Ashton-under-Lyne. This was then accepted as the blue print of clinical nursing and used as a teaching tool for the General Nursing Council.

Creative and defiant her defence of the working class population and its workforce is all the more remarkable when we consider she was the solitary poor law educated member of the council. Yapp’s championing of the causes of lower social classes disconcerted her fellow council members. It would appear they made several subtle efforts to oust her from the council. Ironically questioning her legitimacy to be on the council and scrutinising every expense related to travel, they were concerned she would form a clique. Pleading the cause of her stu-

dents to have a transitional period allowing them to 'catch' up with their education, several London Matrons were astonished that intending student nurses would leave school at fourteen. 'Surely it would compromise a girl's character!' Miss Cox Davies asserted.

Politically adept, Seymour Yapp's parry to council was to open the meetings up for public debate. A flurry of skilfully penned letters from the 'Matron Lake Hospital' to Bolton and other Poor Law nursing schools record how she would make a 'fight of it' at further council meetings, lamenting that she was a solitary voice representing the majority of the artisan class. She lobbied other local hospitals for their views on unworkable, unsympathetic, centralised, nursing reforms warning them of their negative impact on staff and the whole Poor Law nursing service.

This defiance is made more poignant, when we consider Charlotte Seymour Yapp was ill with terminal cardiac failure. Insisting on representing provincial nursing, the constant pressure of managing both hospital and teaching, whilst defending occupational livelihoods, forced her to resign from her position in 1925. Charlotte Seymour Yapp played a pivotal and hitherto unrecognised role in the development of English nursing, one that should be redressed. Contemporary nurses would find her writings remarkably accessible and scholastic; her rebellion was based on a duty of discontent, counterbalancing professional elites in London who would have otherwise determined the future of nursing without the consideration of many of its members.

Lesley Wade

lwade@manchester.ac.uk

**Taken from the Denton St Lawrence Church parish registers 1758
the cost involved in transferring Martha Clegg to the Lunatic Asylum**

For relief to fill the bed	00	0	6
p ^r . Relief to Martha Clegg	00	6	0
For going to Hockley Hill to nurse her	00	0	9
going to the Lunatic Hospital to have	00	0	9
her taken in	00	0	9
p ^r . for bringing her to my house two men	00	0	6
p ^r . for a bed at the said Hospital	00	8	6
for a pair of stockings for her	00	1	3
our trouble and expence of taking	00	6	8
her to the Lunatic Hospital	00	6	8
for keeping her at my house 42 Days	00	3	0
for a cap and handkerchief for her	00	1	4

The Bandstand, Victoria Park, Denton



To the citizens of Denton, our bandstand is a very important structure and well deserves its status of a Grade II listed building. Over the years, it has been the means of providing a great deal of pleasure to many local people. Although its appearance and condition have varied between many successive bouts of renovation, it has always remained in regular service and, in recent years, has contributed to the park's entry in the 'Britain in Bloom' competition.

Since, however, the very function of the bandstand is to create a venue for the bands, its story cannot be told without mention of the many bands which have played on it over the years. Although it was not built until the early 1900s, the need for a bandstand existed long before then.

Denton's very first band was formed in 1818 and began playing in public for various celebrations. The townspeople, and especially the hatter Joseph Howard, had subscribed generously to the appeal for funds. They were able to buy a set of instruments, music paper and instruction books for a grand total of £210. The big drum was duly painted with the title 'Haughton & Denton Band'. Haughton, however, was at that time, a separate town and the Dentonians, who outnumbered the Haughtonians, objected to this and so the name was eventually changed to '**Denton & Haughton Band**'. It was very popular and played for many years. Up until 1869, it led the Saint Lawrence's Sunday School Scholars' Walk at Whitsuntide.

But since 1859 it had a rival. This was the Baxendale's Band, named after their small factory at the top of Taylor Lane. As they went from strength to strength, they had to move their headquarters;

first to the Bowling Green Inn and then to their own Band Institute on Ashton Road. They needed a new name and so they called themselves the **Denton Original Band**. This distinguished it from the **Denton & Haughton Band** and indicated that it was the **original** 'all Denton band'. As its popularity grew, it eventually eclipsed its old rival. Its greatest achievement came in 1900 when it won £75 and the 'One Thousand Guinea Challenge Cup' at Crystal Palace, having competed against entrants from all over Great Britain and the continent. There was much rejoicing in Denton at the time and this was the first band to play on our new bandstand in about 1908.

The band had many assignments and a new custom started in 1900. Whenever a member left the band to go and fight for his country, he was given a great 'send-off'. He was marched from his home to Denton Station by the entire band and a procession of well-wishers. The band played patriotic marches and hundreds of people turned out to watch.

In the early 1900s, the hatting industries presented the band with a beautifully crafted mace which was proudly carried by the drum major when marching. The top of the mace was adorned with a model of a bowler hat to symbolize what Denton was famous for. Over the years, the mace led many processions but, alas, the mace is now lost.

By 1919, when they celebrated their Diamond Jubilee, they were meeting in a dining room at the Market Place but moved later to the King's Head and then in 1973 to Denton Cricket Club on Egerton Street.

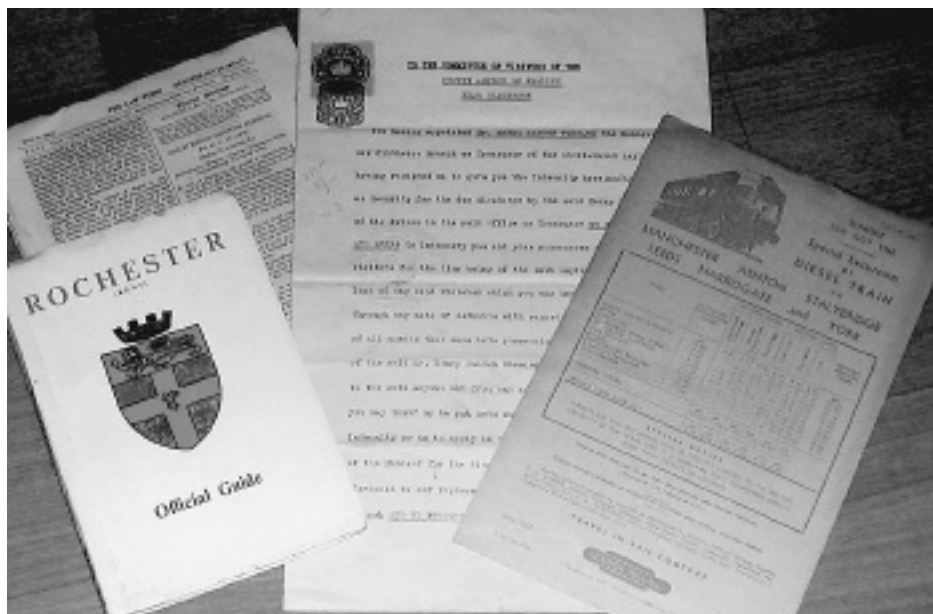
In 1979, following a fire in their bandroom, the band folded but, from this, came the **Crown Point Band** and the **Oldham Batteries Band**. The latter name was derived from their venue which was Oldham Batteries' Sports and Social Club but, as some members came from the former band, it soon regained its title of the **Denton Original Band**. In the 1990s, it again reformed and adopted the title of **Denton Brass**. This is still with us today and they practise in their room at the Silver Springs Hotel, Ashton Road.

In addition to the local bands, many others from all parts of the UK have played on our bandstand over the years, and still do. They cover all types; such as military bands and especially colliery bands. Before World War II, brass band concerts took place there every Sunday afternoon and evening during the summer months. Listening was free but there was a collection box there if anyone wanted to give anything. But people had to pay the park attendant if they sat down on the folding seats provided. Since there were no transistor radios or televisions in those days, these bands were popular with old and young alike as they provided virtually the only music most people ever heard. Every town was proud of its bandstand and almost every park had one. In the 1920s, when my parents were in their teens, they regularly used to listen to the bands and dance to them.

Thanks to Tameside Council, our popular bandstand has once again been restored to its former glory. The restoration work, which included repainting, re-roofing and new steps, was completed in spring 2007. Hopefully, bands will continue to play there regularly throughout each summer.

Frank Brown
Denton Local History Society

The World's Biggest Junk Shop or a Resource for Local Historians?



Sources available to historians - both academic and amateur - have expanded enormously since Lord Acton, Cambridge professor of modern history, declared in 1896, 'nearly all the evidence that will ever appear is accessible now'. The late-Victorian age of 'history' - limited to the study of diplomatic, governmental and constitutional topics - has long since passed. Today's historical scope is far wider - embracing social, cultural, local and family history. Not only have the subjects of research and interpretation grown enormously, there has also been a huge growth in the sources historians use. Documents containing 'facts' - such as census returns and workhouse registers - are supplemented by a great variety of other sources including cartoons, photographs, films, songs, poetry, oral testimony and assorted ephemera. Many of these are particularly useful to social, local and family historians, as the official record of the 'common people' is often quite sparse.

Fortunately this type of resource has been acquired by both local and national archive collections; nonetheless a great deal of material is still lying around in cupboards, filing cabinets and shoeboxes. Traditionally the second-hand bookshop has been a potential treasure trove for historians. More recently the charity shop and car boot sale have proved their worth. These were joined by another potential source, with the establishment of the internet auction site Ebay in 1995. Might this development offer sources of use to historians in general and Tameside in particular? Or is it just a glorified junk shop of the information and communication technology age?

A fairly cursory - about one hour - search of the UK Ebay website (www.ebay.co.uk) was conducted when researching this article. It quickly located about seventy items, relating to the Tameside area and of potential interest to local historians. (This figure excludes items less than thirty years old.) Items found included postcards, personal letters, photographs (prints, slides and negatives), railway tickets, legal agreements, football programmes, large-scale maps, rule books, timetables, commemorative brochures and miscellaneous non-document artefacts such as a local brewery glass bottle.

Amongst this miscellany several items were potentially of significant interest. One was a photograph (not postcard) of a charabanc and passengers outside the Riding Street Irish Club in Hyde. Another was a detailed nineteenth-century plan (at a scale of 1 inch to 20 yards) of Park Bridge station on the Oldham, Ashton and Guide Bridge Railway. Also of potential interest was a handwritten 1902 letter/invoice issued by shopkeeper Wm Lomas Jr of 62 Stockport Road and Pottinger Street. Of more recent provenance, and potentially of interest to transport and social historians, was the *SELNEC Ashton and Stalybridge District Timetable* dating from 1972.

It is not the purpose of this article to explain how Ebay functions, except to say that it is similar to a conventional auction. (The Ebay website contains detailed guidance.) Of course the 'value' of items is highly subjective. Items that were free when first created (e.g. leaflets and beer mats) sometimes open with quite high starting prices, therefore it is important to remember that Ebay is a market in which individuals and businesses sell to make a profit. Nonetheless many items start with an opening price of less than £1. Consequently some sell at low prices, while others (solely as a result of competitive bidding) can become very expensive. Aside from a cash value, items may possess a value by association or representation. As Rachel Cornes, social history curator at Ashton's Portland Basin Museum, remarked to the *Glossop Chronicle*:

"Sometimes objects might not appear to be very exciting at first glance. But when you understand the story behind them it completely changes your perception."

Indeed, the museum's 'The object of my affection' exhibition (until 10 May 2007) illustrates this point. Some items auctioned on Ebay may, therefore, be useful to historians seeking to unravel the historical story.

The world's biggest junk shop or a resource for local historians? Arguably Ebay may well be both. It will never be an alternative or substitute for local studies archives and county record offices or for major collections such as the British Library, National Archives or Bodleian Library. Researchers cannot rely upon it to deliver any given item, at any particular time or at an acceptable price. However, it has the potential to be a useful *complementary* resource. It cannot give us 'history' but it may be the location of elusive primary sources upon which we develop our historical narratives and interpretations.

The illustration shows a selection of items the author acquired through Ebay. From left to right: *Rochester Official Guide* (1958), extract from the *Law Times*, (Stalybridge Election Petition report, 1869), Manchester and County Bank signed and sealed indemnity relating to the County Asylum at Whalley (1915), British Railways excursion leaflet (serving Ashton and Stalybridge, 1962).

Bob Hayes

Built to Last – the Theatre Royal Hyde

Have you ever considered that many of our threatened, local historic buildings are only in their second or third generation of service? The Theatre Royal Hyde, for instance, opened in 1902; served its first generation of customers for up to eighty years, during which time they met a great many stars such as Laurel and Hardy. They formed their own amateur societies and cinema came along too. With reduction in working hours throughout the 20th century, the population enjoyed increased leisure and learning time and crime on the street was reduced.

Continuing to serve just two more generations the Theatre Royal followed seven other theatres and cinemas of Hyde, by ceasing live performances in 1974 and ceasing to show films in 1992. When the old Hyde Town Council approved plans and paid for it to be built, alongside all the other facilities such as the Town Baths, they surely wished it a much longer life.

It was a forward-looking theatre, licensed for much more than the usual playhouses of the time, with all the facilities required to take it into the future, such as the second largest stage in the country (still there), a vast fly gallery (still there) and the most cleverly styled auditorium, both for sound and sightline of the entire stage (still there). The dressing rooms even had hot and cold water, which the newspaper report of the time found the most amazing feature of all.

The theatre's architects were Campbell and Horsley of Manchester and little seems to be known of them, except that they did design one other theatre, in Eccles, with a similar red brick façade, which recently had no trouble in achieving spotlisting, in spite of many more changes over the years. A visit to Hyde's fly gallery reveals an unusual style of theatre architecture, which they were possibly putting on trial, to make the most use of the flying space. It would also appear that the massive steel girders they used were of an earlier date, possibly retrieved from Hyde Foundry. These giants have held the theatre up from the start and only their complete removal could change this.

Many people never noticed, throughout decades of going to the Theatre Royal, that the ceiling is blue and gilt and, though they might have said the balcony frontages were red, did they ever notice the intricate plasterwork, or the artwork of the proscenium arch? After the theatre's closure people thought the interior would have been removed eliminating any chance of return to its original purpose. When, however, a few passers by chanced to look inside, upon finding the doors open one day, they discovered a time warp. Hardly anything had been touched and any dry rot had been kept at bay by the caretaker's daily visit, which allowed in a draught of fresh air.

Immediately a committee was formed and, with the help of the Victorian Society and English Heritage, the building was listed. The group formed a company, Theatre Royal Onward (TRO) and registered as a charity. This enabled them to apply for a grant from the Architectural Heritage Fund for a feasibility study and the Theatres' Trust also commissioned a technical survey. Unfortunately, in their sixth year TRO missed an opportunity to purchase, when the building sold at auction, for a sum beyond their means, to a development company. However,

the company seemed unaware of the interest of the Theatres' Trust and the solid interior condition of the theatre. As yet no planning applications have been placed before the Council for change of use. While the matter is hanging like this, TRO are allowed by the Charity Commission to continue campaigning and fundraising but we can only wait to see what the owner's next step may be. A detailed feasibility study has been completed and for the meantime the building was advertised for letting, at a price that put people off, so it could be said no one wanted it.

So, what does the future hold?

On the plus side it could be life and brightness restored to Hyde, with one of its most historic and interesting buildings restored for the community's use—in line with the current government's and Tameside MBC's current push towards more art and culture for the nation and their admission that we are lacking in this. It also fits in with their work on crime prevention and the use of the night-time economy. This is now the only building in a state of wreck and disuse, in a town which has had millions spent on other restoration projects, a bus station and a Police Station. Let's make Hyde buzz again.

On a more sombre side the theatre could join those blank, unused patches of ground once occupied by Hyde's Olympic size swimming pool and its facilities for youth and education, such as the Hyde Lads' Club and Mechanics' Institute. What a great mistake that would be.

If you want to take action to prevent such waste and decay add your name to the membership of Theatre Royal Onward, Hyde. It is a well-known fact that when theatres in similar situations have found themselves able to open and admit volunteers—when the public see scaffolding erected—membership can increase by a thousand in the space of one day. People do not realise that their names need to be added to the list in the earlier stages, to show local authorities and funders that they support the aims. So please join now, so your views will not be ignored. A current survey has revealed the uses people would like to be made available at the theatre, what they would pay, how often they would visit. Please take time to download the form from the website: www.theatreroyalhyde.org.uk

Spare this little bit of your time and the resurrection of the area's best theatre can be a possibility, as has been proved in other areas. Recently an owner in Southsea gave up and sold the theatre to the local action group for £10! Since the 1960s, 85 per cent of Britain's theatres have closed. Act quickly and save yours now.

Muriel Nichols
Theatre Royal Onward, Hyde

Visit to the Plymouth Grove Home of William and Elizabeth Gaskell Tuesday 9 May 2006



Fifty three assorted ladies and gentlemen from the Forum finally went on our planned visit. We were slightly delayed, due to our missing Hyde correspondent, who was eventually found on location at Ashton Bus Station.

The poor old house looked sadly neglected, but we received a very warm welcome from the ladies of the Gaskell Society.

During coffee we were allowed to look around and, apart from the fireplaces, all the original features remain. Mr Rose made straight for William Gaskell's study. We were then treated to a slide show and lecture about the house and Gaskell family.

Elizabeth Stevenson was born in London and her mother died when she was just a baby. She later settled with her Aunt Lumb in Knutsford - marrying William, she moved to live at Dover Street just slightly south of Manchester. The Gaskells moved into this house in 1849. We were shown a slide of a fancy dress ball in Manchester in 1828, at which a Miss Stevenson was present. The ladies from the Gaskell Society like to speculate that Elizabeth is in the picture.

We were shown a picture of the room we were in circa 1890: the first from a series of photographs taken by one of her daughters (Marianne?). The escritoire in the picture is now in Manchester Art Gallery. The grand piano where Charles Hallé taught the girls to play was also in the photograph.

Janet Allen (Chairwoman of the Society) went on to give a brief discussion of Elizabeth's works – pausing when she came to **North & South**, as she phrased it, on a rather dishy gentleman (from the recent TV adaptation).

The Gaskell family continued to live in the house until 1913, when it was bought by a family called Hope. It is only by virtue of it being a Grade II* listed building that it escaped the general demolition of the area in the 1950s. After the Hope family left, the house was acquired by Manchester University who owned it for 30 years to use as their International Centre.

In 2004 it was acquired by Manchester Historic Buildings Trust. It will cost approximately £2,000,000 to restore. The lottery could donate one million and £400,000 had already been promised from other sources. The rest will have to be found by fundraising.

After a wonderful lunch and home made cakes provided by the ladies, we then continued on our way to Knutsford to meet the Reverend Alex Bradley from the Unitarian Church and Joan Leach from the Gaskell Society, for a tour round the town.

By this time the sun was beating down and we were all very hot. We were met by Joan Leach whose megaphone seemed to be running out of batteries, not helped by the fact that we were just under the flight path for Manchester Airport.

We were shown the site of Knutsford Gaol (one of my ancestors, another Hyde gentleman, had been incarcerated there for a time). Then around all the various sites and houses associated with the characters from **Cranford**, then finally to the Unitarian Chapel.

Reverend Bradley gave us a short history of the Unitarian Church, one of the earliest in the country. We were shown Mrs Gaskell's grave and wandered around the well kept chapel yard.



Our party split at this time with some of us going on to visit Aunt Lumb's house where Elizabeth grew up. The house is lovely, with a very large and twisted tree, but no flowers in the garden. It is obviously a family home with a rather friendly dog who decided to leave his mark on one of our party. This huge tree would have been in the garden when Elizabeth lived there. What a wonderful tree for children to play in.

We finally managed to buy a bottled drink on the long haul back to the coach, no time to sit down anywhere because it was leaving at four o'clock.

Apart from the heat and thirst it was a wonderful day. Many thanks to Harry Lever for his idea for the trip and to Dawn Buckle and Christine Clough for organising it. Also very many thanks to the ladies of The Gaskell Society and to the Reverend Alex Bradley for making us feel so welcome.

For a large selection of photographs from this visit please visit the Forum website at:

<http://www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk/gaskell.htm>

Gay Oliver - on behalf of the Forum

A Droylsden Poem

Th'owd folk caw'd it 'Drylesden'
When th' Square Folt were on view,
An' the' Worlds End were a gradely walk,
Reight up, past th' Castle Schoo',
Joe Beswick were in power then,
John Greenup, Howarth Kay,
An' the Council Office were the Institute –
But that's a bye-gone day.
S.W.

'The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it.'

Oscar Wilde - playwright

'There is no history of mankind, there are only many histories of all kinds of aspects of human life.

'Karl Popper – philosopher

Bob Hayes

Mottram Aeroplane Sensation Charge Investigated at Chester Assizes Verdict of 'Not Guilty' Applauded in Court

Following an enquiry from Pat Cunningham, a prolific writer of books on aircraft crash sites, I started to research this unusual case of a de Havilland bomber which came down undamaged but with engine failure and landed in a field on the Mudd in Mottram on 18th January 1919. The original hearing was held at Dukinfield Police Court led by the Mayor Councillor J Cooke JP.

Frank James, the accused, was committed to Chester Assizes on 25th February 1919. The following is the report in the ***North Cheshire Herald*** of the case:

"There was applause in Court when the result—a verdict of not guilty and an acquittal of the Mottram aeroplane case was announced at the Chester Assizes last week. The case, in which considerable interest had been aroused, opened on Wednesday and the hearing was not concluded until late in the afternoon of the following day. Frank James, of the Lower Mudd farm, Mottram was charged with having stolen thirty gallons of petrol, the property of His Majesty's Government, and with having committed malicious damage to an aeroplane of the value of £2,000, also the Government's property. Mr Jones, barrister and Mr Sutton, barrister (instructed by Mr Allen Howard, Clerk to the Justices at Dukinfield) conducted the prosecution and Mr Austin Jones, barrister instructed Mr H Bostock, solicitor, Hyde who appeared for the accused. Extensive details of the case were published in our columns several weeks ago, following the hearing at Dukinfield Police Court.

All the evidence given at the Dukinfield Court was repeated and some additional evidence was called by the prosecution. From the proceedings it appeared that 2nd Lieut. Robson, who was flying an aeroplane on the 18th January, through engine trouble, alighted in a field at Mottram of which the prisoner's father is tenant. The guards placed in charge of the aeroplane left it and went to the farmhouse of Mr Roebuck. During their absences the aeroplane was fired and was burnt away. Prisoner sustained burns and he admitted that he had gone near to the plane; while a spanner, alleged to be his property was found near the machine; a storm lamp, belonging to the prisoner, was found underneath the engine of the aeroplane.

Put briefly, prisoner's version of what happened is that coming out of the shippon just after midnight, he saw a glare in the sky and ran in that direction, when he found the plane was all ablaze; also that, there being a slight breeze in his direction, flames caught his long coat and he got burned, after which he went to the farm where the guards were and told them it was on fire. He denied that the spanner was his property; as to the storm lamp, he said he had it in his hands, and that when his coat caught fire he threw the lamp down in order to take off his coat and put the fire out. What became of the lamp, he did not know. He denied having done anything to the aeroplane or to the petrol.

The jury retired and after being absent sometime returned and announced that they found the accused not guilty on both charges; and he was accordingly discharged."

Bill Johnson
Longdendale Heritage Trust

The Hyde War Memorial Trust

A BRIEF HISTORY



In 1920, following a public appeal which raised over £14,000, the War Memorial Committee of Hyde Borough Council purchased Lower Higham Farm and all its land. Following the purchase a scheme was put forward to protect the land forever for the health and well being of the community, a lasting tribute to the 710 men from this area who perished in the Great War of 1914 to 1918. On the site known as Hackingknife, at a cost of £2,000, Hyde's main war memorial was officially unveiled on the 25th June 1921. The land and farm are now held in trust by the Hyde War Memorial Trust.

In 2001, a 'Garden of Remembrance' was created to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Hyde war memorial unveiling ceremony of 1921.

Following the Remembrance Day Service at the Cenotaph, the 'Garden of Remembrance' was officially opened by Mr H.R.Husband, Trust Archivist, on behalf of Mrs M. Eddowes (Chairman) and members of the Trust.

PEACE DAY SERVICE

As required by the Hyde War Memorial Trust Deed, this Trust is to lay a wreath of poppies at the Cenotaph on Werneth Low, in memory of the 710 men of this Borough who gave their lives in the Great War of 1914—1918. The Peace Day Service is held each year on the Sunday nearest 28th June, which is the anniversary of the Peace Treaty of Versailles. A wreath is now also laid in the Garden of Remembrance in honour and memory of those who gave their lives in later conflicts.

Hyde War Memorial Trustees and the Country Park Rangers consider it a great honour to remember those men and women who have given their lives in all conflicts in order to bring freedom.



Lest We Forget
 In this place of peace ...
 Reflect on the wars that have brought such sorrow.
 Remember those who died. Those who suffer, those who mourn.
 We inherit the benefits of such sacrifice.
 May we be thankful,
 And in our lives work for justice and peace.

Marjorie Minister
Hyde War Memorial Trust

‘Teds of the River Bank’

Barbara and Terry Harding of Stalybridge design and make artistic teddy bears and own a collection of various bears, the earliest dating back to about 1917.

The collection includes Oliver, a Merrythought bear, seven feet tall in his hat, who used to stand outside the Teddy Bear shop in the Royal Exchange, dressed in a guardsman's uniform. He survived being blown up by the IRA and now is dressed as a policeman. In the collection are also an early Winnie the Pooh, Nelson, Polly and gollies.

The museum is open by appointment on Fridays.
Telephone 0161 303 0011 for an appointment
Find out more at: www.tedsoftheriverbank.com

Dukinfield Old Chapel Unitarians Celebrate 300 Years



Three hundred years ago in 1707, building began on the first dissenting chapel, specifically erected for public worship, in what is now, Tameside. The Duckenfield Puritan family of Dukinfield Old Hall already had a family chapel attached to their home. Sir Robert Dukinfield leased the land, on top of what became known as Chapel Hill, to the dissenting congregation that had grown up around the ministry of the Rev. Samuel Angier. The land was, according to custom, on a lease of three lifetimes (renewable) at an annual rent of 'sixpence if demanded'.

After the ejection of 1662, when two thousand ministers refused to accept the Act of Uniformity, Rev. Samuel Angier joined his uncle Rev. John Angier, one of the few non-conformist clergy allowed to retain his living, at Denton Chapel, now St Lawrence's. Rev. Samuel Angier came to live in Dukinfield, then a small hamlet, and was known to conduct services from 1681. Around him gathered a small group who called themselves Protestant Presbyterians. Such gatherings were illegal and they worshipped in a barn, believed to be in the Yew Tree Lane area of Dukinfield from 1686. If the authorities came looking, a barn could quickly be turned back to its work-a-day purpose.

The first chapel, a much more modest affair than the Victorian Gothic building on the site now, was meeting house in style. Similar dissenting chapels can be found at Knutsford, Dean Rowe and Macclesfield. The chapel at Dukinfield became known as 'The White Chapel' or 'Th'Owd Chapel' and was built from materials supplied by the Duckenfield family. Hickey (page 29), describes the chapel thus:

"Of oblong form, the Chapel ran north to south, parallel with the road, and the main entrances were at either end. Projecting at the centre of the front was an extension with separate doorways leading to the gallery and the belfry, the latter an octagonal turret surmounted by a weather vane. Over these doors were the circular windows and in the pediment was a large clock. The floor of the chapel was a level, hard clay which had to be strewn with rushes in winter. At the back of the chapel, in the centre of the east wall, was a wooden pulpit. On either side the rows of pews faced each other. The vestry and the Singing Gallery were at the north end."

An organ was added to this gallery in 1816 to replace a small orchestra and in 1823 a new vestry was built, a semi-circular extension to the east behind the pulpit.

The first service was held on 26th August 1708 when Rev. Samuel Angier preached a thanksgiving sermon for the British forces' victory over the French army in Oudenarde in East

Flanders. Over the years the beliefs of the congregation have changed from Presbyterianism, through Arianism to, in the 19th century, Unitarianism. The present congregation is affiliated to the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.

The first chapel building lasted 132 years. Its condition was causing concern in 1838 and a building committee was formed to plan a new and bigger building to house a growing and influential congregation. Before they had completed their deliberations a terrible storm damaged the chapel beyond repair. On the site, on top of Chapel Hill, rose the present magnificent building, opening in 1840 (see front cover), that adds so much to the town's architecture and which the smaller congregation of today has the dubious pleasure of maintaining.

Dawn Buckle **Friends of Old Chapel**

References:

Doel DC (Undated) *Old Chapel and the Unitarian Story*; Lindsey Press: London.

Hickey JE (1948) *A Short History of the Dukinfield Old Chapel*.

Gordon A (1896) *Historical Account of Dukinfield Chapel*.

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Goodbye!

We are very sorry to be losing Michael Keane who has been Archivist in Tameside since 2001. He and his wife are moving back to Ireland with their two young girls. Michael came to us straight from finishing his archive qualification in Dublin but he had had a misspent youth as a musician and working in a family business and so had plenty of useful skills!



Many archivists find it hard to adapt to working in a combined local studies and archives service, but Michael's flexible attitude meant he fitted in from the beginning. We will really miss his calming influence and his way with people, especially his humour. The move to the new building was largely accomplished through his meticulous planning which has led to all the heavily used material being readily to hand (and all the local authority collections stored in alphabetical order – a librarian's dream!). No matter how stressed the rest of us got during the move Michael was always relaxed. We will also miss the never ending supply of chocolate on his desk!

Anne especially will miss having a man to harass!

Alice Lock
Tameside Local Studies Library



The Mayalls of Mossley



John and George Mayall were the sons of Samson Mayall (1779-1860) of Earnshawhead, Saddleworth, who came from a family of yeoman clothiers. **John** (born 1803) worked in a woollen mill from the age of six before moving to work in a cotton mill, where he rose through the ranks of employment from piecer to minder to overlooker and finally held a management position.

His brother **George** was born in 1807, and in 1819, after Peterloo and believing England was finished for ever, father Samson went to the U.S.A. leaving 15 year old John to provide and care for his mother, brother George and two sisters. Another possible reason for Samson's defection was perhaps that he was influenced by the fact that a near relative, Samuel Mayall, had already successfully established himself in mills in Rhode Island and Maine. (In 1832, after 14 years, John and George paid their father's passage home having strong feelings that their parents should not be apart at this time in their old age.)

In 1824, at twenty one, **John** married Elizabeth Winterbottom and, in the same year, went into partnership with his brother George. John and Elizabeth went on to have five children - Miles, John Jnr, William, Samuel and Henry. Elizabeth died in 1860, and in 1863 John re-married to Sarah Lees.

John and his family lived at **Whitehall Farm** (where Mossley Station is today). In 1848 he sold the land to the railway company London and North Western Railway, lending the company the £1,600 asking price. The money had to be paid back over three years at 5 per cent interest. John also secured from the deal all the valuable building material from the farm and other buildings on the site. What an astute businessman!

By 1860, John had built **Highfield House** costing £6,000 (His brother George had no such frugal intentions when he came to have built his residence Whitehall).

The railway connection gave the Mayalls unrivalled access to Manchester and Liverpool. The imported cotton came into the port of Liverpool and then by rail to the cotton mills of Mossley. The finished products from the mills were then taken by rail to many destinations.

The Mayalls' cotton empire started with their partnership with both brothers only very young men of 21 and 17. By 1846, the two brothers went their separate ways, parting amicably. George retained Queen Street and Victoria Mills and later built Brookbottom in 1871. John kept ownership of Bottoms (their first mill together) and Scout Mill. These were followed over the period 1846-1889 by Britannia, Longlands (now housing Emmaus since 1996), River, and South End.



George started the building of his residence (**Whitehall**) in 1861 and by 1864 the building had already cost £60,000 when he announced that he had stopped counting! The house was built and furnished in the finest fashion, but it was noted that it was a great show of wealth rather than an appreciation of the arts. Sadly, his wife Esther died before the house was completed and George went on to marry his second wife, Sarah, living at Whitehall until he retired to Southport in 1868 after having spent such a short time in his mansion. George died in 1883 and his son, Edmund Lees Mayall lived in the house until he died in 1877 aged 36. Afterwards, his widow lived on at the hall until her death in 1882. For several years the hall remained empty and after Mossley was given borough status in 1885, the hall was bought in 1890/1 for £4,000 and became Mossley Town Hall in 1892.

The effect of the Mayall industries had played no small part in the growth of Mossley's population and workforce - it is significant to note that the town's population in 1841 was 1,500 and by 1867 had risen to 14,000.

John Mayall was a man of some social conscience, being financially involved, with his brother George and with George Lawton in the building of Abney Congregational Church. Prior to the church being built, worshippers were given temporary accommodation in his factory to hold their meetings. During the years of ownership, John had 300/400 terraced cottages built for his workers, plus several shops (Manchester Road), a bank and the inevitable licensed premises -namely the Britannia and the Commercial (Public Houses). The extent of the Mayall estate was vast and this can be appreciated on viewing the auction papers for the sale of all these premises in 1932.

John and George invested funds in many national enterprises - banks, railways, harbour boards - all expected to give profitable returns. The brothers obviously made use of their many business connections, 'deals' were done and the business thrived for the two brothers. By 1876 John owned more spindles than any other private cotton spinning company in the world. On his death, **The Reporter** noted that 'Mossley had lost both its founder and generous benefactor'.

John had a 50 per cent share in the ship 'John Mayall' and a 60 per cent share in the ship 'Rosalie', built in Maine and Quebec respectively. These vessels worked the Gulf ports, India and Liverpool carrying cotton, mixed cargoes and a small number of passengers on occasions. Both ships were sold on in the 1870s.

In 1874 John, who had earlier business connections with the railway company, had a locomotive named after him - 'John Mayall Snr'. Later, in 1913, another locomotive 'John Mayall Jnr' was named after his son. John retired in 1872 and gifted his properties to his five sons, which could have contributed to the later failure of the business with resources shared amongst so many members of the family. John died aged 73 in Southport and George, who had now retired to Buxton, died in 1883.

George had two sons - George Jnr. and James Hervey. It was reported that there were some tragic deaths in the next generation. From records held locally, there is no information about the following generations, but certainly the family has continued, but their details are not widely known.

This is such a brief history of these men of Mossley. So much has been written and I acknowledge the use of facts and information gleaned from other publications, in particular having access to T. Eckersley's document of 1991.

Marie Clues

Mossley Civic Society/Industrial Heritage Centre

Unveiling of the Mill Girl Bronze Statue at Mossley

The statue is called 'The Mill Girl' and is one of a number of different statues that Tameside Council has commissioned. This one is outside the George Lawton Hall on Stamford Street in Mossley.

The lady in a white coat next to the statue is Gina Smith who used to work at the Albion Mill which used to stand on that site. Next to her is Councillor Jackie Lane, the project Head of Heritage and Tourism who made the opening speech. The Mayor, Councillor Margaret Sidebottom, was also in attendance on the day.

The sculptor, John Cox, told me that he did his research for the design at the Mossley Industrial Heritage Centre in the Emmaus Mossley mill. The baskets are based on one which is in the Heritage Centre and the appearance of the clothing was taken from photographs there. The girl is sorting bobbins of cotton. There were a number of ex-mill girls in attendance who were known to the Mossley Civic Society.



Richard Darlington
Emmaus, Mossley

Belgian Refugee Monument in Audenshaw Cemetery

At the end of the Audenshaw Remembrance Sunday ceremony, 12th November last it was a bitterly cold wet and blustery afternoon. Member of our society Eddie Hanmer brought to the attention of the committee members present the fact that there was a monument in the cemetery recording a rather sad story of the deaths of two small children. The pair were in fact Belgian refugees, brought to this country by their parents who were fleeing the Germans, at this time. The time in history to which I refer is the First World War, 1914-1918. After our initial search of the grounds, we did find what we were looking for sited right at the back of the cemetery. This monument is a large stone cross approximately five feet high, seated on a bed of concrete and bricks. On the front of the cross written in English and on the reverse side written in French is the inscription, which tells the visitor the story of the deceased children whose lives were to be cut all too short, forever now to lie in a cold grave in the grounds of Audenshaw cemetery.



We did photograph the grave and the inscription was transcribed;

*"In Memory Of
Rachel Carlens
Aged One Year
Who died at the Belgian
Refugee home Manchester Road
Audenshaw 15th November 1914*

This stone was erected by the committee of the above home to commemorate the death of this child whose parents fled with her and other refugees from their home and country to escape the cruelties of the German Army on the occasion of the invasion of Belgium and the wanton destruction of life and property by the Germans during the Great War

Also Achille George Carlens her brother aged 14 months who died March 14th 1917"

Where in Belgium did they flee from? Which house on Manchester Road was at that point in time used as a refugee home? Have you any old photographs which may help?

If anyone reading this article can come forward with any information I would be more than happy to hear from you.

Julie Fisher
Audenshaw Local History Society

The Heritage Map of Gee Cross

The map was compiled by the Gee Cross and District Women's Institute as part of their Millennium Celebration project. The artwork and layout are by Lesley Bardsley, a local artist. An enlarged map is displayed at the corner of School Lane, Gee Cross.

A short trail and potted history of Gee Cross

Methodist Chapel – Stockport Road.

Early Wesleyan Methodists of Gee Cross worshipped in a building known as 'the Square'. The membership increased and in 1882 the present chapel was built.

The Big Tree

The old tree may have marked the unofficial boundary between Hyde and Gee Cross. It was cut down in 1934 and a new tree was planted in 1983.

Holy Trinity Church

In 1860 a school/church was built and still continues to the present time. In 1873 the foundation stone of Holy Trinity Church was laid. A tower was added to the church in 1904.

The Cenotaph

Following a public appeal, the War Memorial Committee of Hyde Borough Council purchased Lower Higham Farm and all its land, as a lasting tribute to all the men of the area who perished in the Great War 1914-1918. The Cenotaph, Hyde's main war memorial, was officially unveiled on the 25th June 1921.

The Visitors' Centre

Previously Lower Higham Farm, now the Werneth Low Country Park Visitors' Centre.

The Stocks in Hyde Chapel Graveyard

Probably erected during the reign of Queen Anne in or around 1712, and restored to their original design in the year 2000.

The Boundary Stone

Situated on the main road through the village, it marks the boundary between the townships of Hyde and Werneth.

Hyde Chapel

The original building of 1708 was altered in 1767 and replaced by the present chapel in 1848.

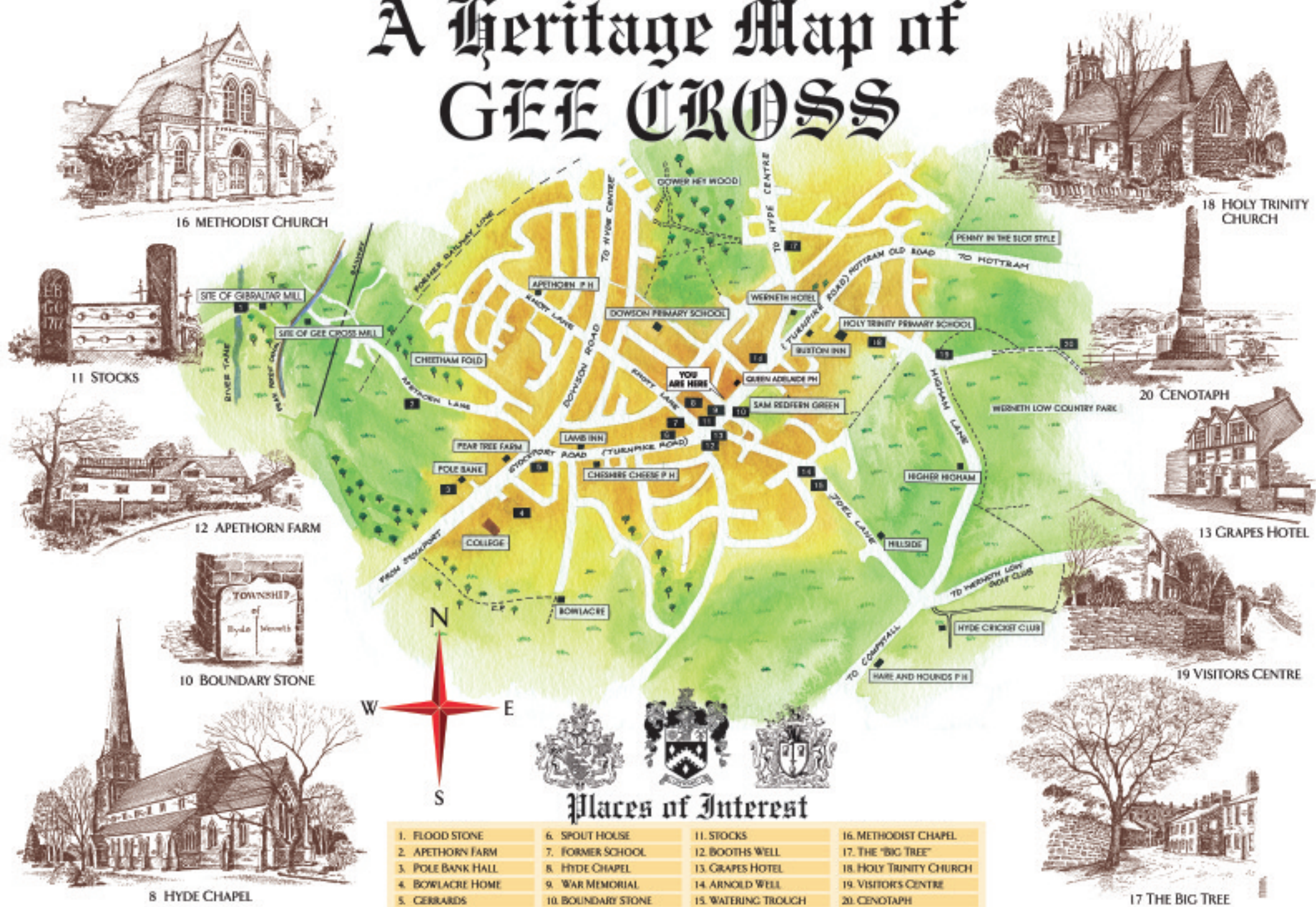
The Grapes Hotel

Stands on the site of the original Grapes Inn, dating back to around 1777.

Marjorie Minister

Gee Cross and District WI NB See Map Overleaf

A Heritage Map of GEE CROSS



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Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 3LX

Tel: 01457 833631

Parkbridge Heritage Centre

Visitors' Centre
The Stables
Park Bridge
Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 8AQ

Tel: 0161 330 9613

Stalybridge Historical Society

Peter Schofield
23 Beaufort Road
Ashton OL6 6PJ

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Tameside Archaeological Society

Archivist: Steven Milne steven@milne48.freemove.co.uk
13 Pothill Square
Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 9JY

Tel: 0161 330 2918

www.tas-archaeology.org.uk

Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre

Librarian: Alice Lock
Central Library
Old Street
Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 7SG

Tel: 0161 342 4242

localstudies.library@tameside.gov.uk

Tameside Museums & Galleries Service

Emma Varnam
Portland Basin Museum
Heritage Wharf
Ashton-under-Lyne OL7 0QA

Tel: 0161 343 2878

portlandbasin@tameside.gov.uk

www.tameside.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries

Teds of the Riverbank

www.teds of the riverbank.com

Tel: 0161 303 0011

Theatre Royal Onward, Hyde

Muriel Nichols
412 Mottram Road
Hyde
Cheshire SK14 3BP
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Tel: 0161 368 4938

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University of Manchester Archaeological Unit

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Field Archaeology Centre,
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Wooden Canal Boat Society

5 Oaken Clough Terrace,
Ashton-under-Lyne OL7 9NY e-mail: antonb@clara.net

Tel: 0161 330 2315

Friends of Ashton Parish Church

The first stage of the restoration of the mosaic floor has now been completed. This is the area from the west end up to the three decker pulpit. Missing tiles have been replaced, in what was a time consuming exercise carried out by specialist contractors. Other tiles were re-laid and the whole area cleaned, bringing it back to the original glory of when it was laid in the 1880s. The division between the two stages can be clearly seen. Work on the second stage will commence when church funding becomes available.

A discovery has been made at the Tameside Local Studies and Archives Library of a parish boundary map dating back to 1857 with connections to John Ross Coulthart who was a churchwarden at the time. The map could prove to be very interesting in that it will allow comparisons to be made between the present boundaries and those of the 19th century, since when fourteen new parishes have been created out of the ancient parish. The Friends hope to make this map part of our Heritage Weekend Exhibition.

Manchester Archives and Local Studies are compiling a list of evidence of early Black and Asian presence in the Manchester area. There is a grave of a black man in the parish church graveyard, although the inscription is badly worn, a record was made when the by-pass was created in the 1970s. Readers may be interested in the inscription which is as follows:

*"Here was interred the body of
Augustin Leonard
A Blackman
A native of the Island of
Martinique who died in this
Town April 2nd 1793 Aged 42
He was a faithful servant
An affectionate husband
Sincere friend
And cheerful companion."*

We are always looking for new members and invite you to become a Friend of Ashton Parish Church by joining us in helping to maintain and beautify this wonderful Grade I place of worship which is part of our heritage.

To join, pick up a form from church, or download one from the Forum website: **www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk** or apply to our Secretary, Mrs J Currie, 27 Rushmere, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 9EB Tel 0161 330 5829.

For Guided Tours of the church contact

Mr Alan F Bacon, 17 St Christophers Avenue, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 9DT Tel: 0161 330 5829.

Alan F Bacon

Church Historian - Friends of Ashton Parish Church

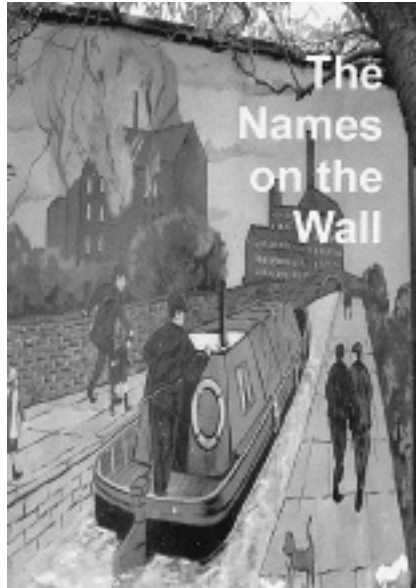
The Names on the Wall

The Names on the Wall is a fictionalized account of the Ashton Munitions Explosion which took place on 13th June 1917. It was written as a result of research undertaken as part of the Behaviour Educational Support Team (BEST) involvement with St Peter's School, Ashton-under-Lyne where the commemorative plaque is to be found.

There are well documented benefits to people having feelings of affiliation and belonging to their community. One aspect of this can grow from seeing how their own personal history and the history of the area are interwoven.

Michael Keane from Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre was instrumental in helping with the research.

The next part of the project is to work with the education department of Oldham Coliseum to adapt the story into a musical.



Beth Williams has worked as an educational psychologist since 1987 and with BEST since its inception in April 2005.

The pictures included in the book are published with the agreement of Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre.

In researching this story we read:

- newspapers of the time
- letters sent by people to request financial support from the fund
- school logs from St Peter's and West End schools, Ashton-under-Lyne
- government report (acquired from the National Archives)
- parish records from St Peter's church
- relevant death certificates

In all of this research we were unable to ascertain how Sarah Ann Higginson died. She is not listed in the official list of the dead given to the coroner, neither is her family listed as receiving support from the fund for a funeral. She is not listed amongst the injured taken to any of

the number of hospitals used following the incident although another child named Clifford Higginson is. The names of the children who died are not recorded in the school logs. She does not appear in the baptismal or burial records for the church nor in national death certificate records.

Consequently the exact manner and time of Sarah Ann Higginson's death remains unknown and the inclusion of her name on the plaque on the wall remains a mystery.

Beth Williams

Answers to Church quiz on page 5

1. Mottram parish church.
2. St Lawrence's Church, Denton.
3. St Gabriel's Ashton-under-Lyne; St Raphael's Stalybridge; St Michael's Mottram.
4. Dowson Road, Hyde.
5. Nazarene Church, Ashton-under-Lyne.
6. St Michael's Ashton-under-Lyne.
7. Emmaus.
8. St Paul's Stalybridge.
9. Fairfield Moravian Chapel.
10. Albion United Reformed Church Ashton-under-Lyne.
11. Haughton Green Two Trees Lane Methodist Chapel.
12. Joseph Rayner Stephens.
13. Mary Moffat, née Smith, of Plantation Farm, Dukinfield.
14. Red Hall Methodist Chapel Audenshaw.
15. Beatrix Potter's parents were married and buried there.

The History Man Neil Richardson (1948 – 2006)



Why 'the history man'? It was a title given to Neil Richardson by the **Manchester Evening News** in an article on his publishing breakthrough in local history. There was Neil, holding his first three publications; two Salford pub books written by himself, Tony Flynn and Alan Gall and – to my surprise – ***The History of the Pubs of Denton and Haughton*** by Frank Rhodes.

I had first met Neil some time before, after reading his first Salford pub book and thinking 'a man after my own heart. He likes pubs and history, can't be bad'. I phoned Neil and said I had put together a history of the local pubs and would he like to have a look, leading me to take my manuscript to Stylo Signs which fronted Neil's publishing (he originally did shop signs) and sign writing business.

In the rear of his shop stood the equivalent of Alan Turing's first computer in the guise of a large photocopying

machine. 'Hold this paper for me a minute, would you?' I had known Neil approximately five minutes and here we were working together as though he had known me for years. That was Neil; the most amicable man I had ever come across. I left the manuscript with Neil and the following day I had a phone call to say he didn't want to change anything and was going to press. His wife, Sue, had proof read it also. That was 1983.

As they say, 'from humble beginnings ...', Neil's publishing career flourished. He gave the ordinary man in the street an outlet to publish his memories from ***Where's m' chunks*** to ***The History of Wythenshawe*** and onwards. Where else could you get a title like that and read every word in awe?

I like to think of Neil and (not forgetting his wife) Sue - as a team, both loving their work. When the titles kept on coming, Neil would send me a cheque for royalties and, twenty-three years on, with a note saying 'still selling', which endeared me to him.

I saw Neil, not long before he took ill, in Salford Library where Jill Cronin and I were doing research and where Neil was tucked away delving into files and photographs, which I suspect he loved as much as I do. I introduced Jill to Neil who, in turn, asked about my health. I was not to know that Neil was probably ill at the time, but that was Neil.

You could call him a people's champion but I think he would like to be remembered as an ordinary run-of-the-mill man who enjoyed whatever he did. He had the ability to give so much pleasure to countless numbers of people who found their lives touched by him.

Neil will always be remembered as a person who gave so much and asked for so little in return and, to Sue, I would like to thank you for being part of Neil's life and so much of ours. To me, and so many others, Neil will always be 'The History Man'. And the rest is history.

Frank Rhodes

Copies of local Tameside books published by Neil Richardson are available to purchase from:

Tameside Local Studies Library:


www.tameside.gov.uk/leisure/new/lh23.htm

Portland Basin Museum:

www.tameside.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries/portlandbasin.htm

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Of Grave Concern



Many people will consider visiting graveyards a rather morbid interest, but it is surprising, whilst at the same time not forgetting the tragedies, what interesting stories lie behind some of the inscriptions. Probably the two most well known graves in the locality are to be found in Mottram Parish churchyard and Saddleworth churchyard (St Chad's).

The gravestone at **Mottram** is in memory of Lewis Brierley who was killed on 3rd October 1827 aged 15, by a kick from his father's horse. His body was taken by the Resurrectionists (body-snatchers) and the epitaph reads:

*"Tho once beneath the ground his corpse was laid
For use of surgeons it was thence convey'd
Vain was the scheme to hide the impious theft
The body taken, shroud and coffin left.
Ye wretches who pursue this barb'rous trade
Your corpses in turn may be convey'd
Like his to some unfeeling surgeon's room
Nor can they justly meet a better doom."*

The **Saddleworth** gravestone describes the murder at the Moorcock Inn (on the Holmfirth Road) of Bill o'Jack's (the father and landlord) and Tom o'Bill's (the son). They were both found dying at the inn after being brutally beaten. The huge gravestone lies flat on the ground in the south-west corner of the churchyard and the following words and verses are chiselled in the stone:

"HERE lie the dreadfully bruised and lacerated bodies of William Bradbury and Thomas, his son, both of Greenfield, who were together savagely murdered in an unusually horrid manner, on Monday night, April 2nd 1832, William being 84 and Thomas 46 years old.

*Throughout the land wherever news is read,
Intelligence of their sad end has spread,
Those now who talk of far-famed Greenfield hills,
Will think of Bill o'Jack's and Tom o'Bill's.
Such interest did their tragic end excite,
That ere they were removed from human sight,
Thousands on thousands came to see,
The bloody scene of the catastrophe,
One house, one business, and one bed,
And one most shocking death they had,
One funeral came, one inquest past,
And now one grave they have at last."*

A most poignant gravestone can be found in Christ Church graveyard, **Friezland**. It gives details of a family of ten who were killed when the chimney of the Royal George Mill 'fell upon their dwelling'. After the list of ages and names of the family is the following inscription:

*"They were lovely and pleasant in their lives
and in their death were not divided
Watch ye therefore for ye know not
When the master of the house cometh
At even or at midnight or at cock crow in the morning."*

Another two graves, maybe less known, can be found in St John's Churchyard, **Hurst**, Ashton-under-Lyne. There is a single gravestone inscribed on both sides commemorating two police constables and their families.

One side is inscribed in memory of William Jump who died 28th June 1862 aged 30 years.

The police were on patrol at the local brickworks after union brick-makers had caused trouble. Non-union members had been employed and the union men were trampling on the drying bricks and scattering needles in the clay. At two o'clock in the morning of Saturday, 28th June 1862, near the farm, about 300 or 400 yards from the Old Ball Inn, Smallshaw, Police Constable William Jump and Sergeant George Harrop were on duty. They were met by seven or eight men, masked and armed with bludgeons and firearms, one of whom fired two shots and killed Police Constable Jump. Several other shots were fired, wounding Police Sergeant Harrop.

The reverse side of the gravestone also relates to the demise of a young policeman. He died 10th November 1860 aged 29 years and his wife died six days before him. It appears his wife never recovered after the birth of her baby. James Donaldson had, in spite of a severe cold and his police duties, looked after his wife and baby. Fever set in due to lack of rest, excitement of the birth and grief at the death of his wife. He left three young children, the youngest only a few days old.

This last piece of information was gleaned from the 17th November 1860 edition of ***The Ashton Reporter***.

Anne Wadsworth
Ashton-under-Lyne Civic Society

Who was Lewis Brierley and where was he buried?

James Brierley was a woollen manufacturer who had an only son called Lewis. One day this boy was accidentally killed when a horse kicked him. James Brierley had a very close friend, a Mr Hollingworth and he offered to allow young Lewis's body to be buried in his own family grave at Mottram Church. On the day of the funeral, for some strange reason, the grave was not ready and so Lewis was interred in another grave that had been dug in the churchyard.

Mrs Brierley was too ill to attend the funeral of her son and, when told of the circumstances of the interment, she was more than convinced it was the intention of someone to 'snatch' the body. James Brierley went many times to his son's grave just to ease the mind of his sick wife but he never saw any signs of it having been interfered with but, nevertheless, Mrs Brierley continued to believe that her son's body had been stolen.

Mrs Brierley died about six months after him and for some unknown reason James Brierley had a new grave dug for his wife. After the interment the grave was duly filled in and then it was decided that the grave of young Lewis should be opened. Mr Brierley and some of his friends lifted out the coffin and on opening it found nothing but the shroud. Grief-stricken though he was, Brierley took the empty coffin and exhibited it on the steps of the 'Crown Pole'.

On the Sunday morning he took it home and kept it until he died in 1853 and was buried in it in the burial ground of the Baptist Chapel at Stalybridge. He had the following inscription cut in the gravestone of his son in Mottram Churchyard:

*"In memory of Lewis, son of James and Mary Brierley of Valley Mill
Who died October 3rd 1827, in the 15th year of his age,
Tho once beneath the ground his corpse laid,
For use of surgeons it was then convey'd,
Vain was the scheme to hide the impious theft,
The body taken, shroud and coffin left,
Ye wretches who pursue this barb'rous trade,
Your corpses in turn may be convey'd,
Like his, to some unfeeling surgeon's room,
Nor can they justly meet a better doom."*

This is the story of the empty grave in Mottram Churchyard.

Harry Lever

Marriage Vows from a 15th Century York Manual

I take the N. to my wedded wyf, to have and to holde, fro this day forward, for bettere for wors,
for richere for pourer [one manuscript adds 'for fayrere for fowlere'], in sycknesse and in hele,
tyl dethe us depart, if holy chyrche it woll ordeyne, and therto y plight the my trouthe.

I take the N to my wedded housbonde, to have and to holde, fro this day forward, for better for
wors, for richer for pourer, in syckness and in hele, to be bonere and boxsom, in bedde and atte
bord, tyll dethe us departe, if holy chyrche it wol ordeyne, and therto I plight the my trouthe.

Park Bridge Remembered

Skilled hammer men

White-hot iron from the furnaces in the Top Forge was hammered into a rough shape under a steam hammer. The hammer driver controlled the hammer from a high seat and the shingler manipulated the pile of iron under the hammer with a large pair of box tongs. Work on the steam hammer was hard and dangerous. Only the skill and dexterity of the hammer man and driver prevented serious injury or death. One hammer man was so skilled that he won many a pound from unsuspecting visitors by a most daring feat. This consisted of placing a watch on the anvil of the hammer and then releasing the hammer with all its power, 4,000 lbs per square inch, to come crashing down, only to be stopped dead when virtually touching the face of the watch.



Shingler Arthur Roberts and hammer driver Victor Gee work the steam hammer in 1925

Joe Foster remembered a shingler he knew.

"Tommy Harrop from Hurst was a shingler before the Second World War. He was a gentle giant of a man, over six feet tall and well built, about 17-18 stone, his leather belt under his belly. We could always tell when he was around by the clank, clank, clank of his shingler's boots that he wore over his clogs and the attached metal leggings, that came up to his knees. He had a leather brat or pinny and his own flat cloth cap protected his head from the shower of sparks from the white hot metal as it was beaten under the massive steam hammer. He used a pair of tongs to turn the metal about and protected his hands from the heat with hand rags. All the furnacemen used hand rags, squares of sacking, cut from old flour and sugar bags that were bought in bales for the purpose. They used to have two or three pairs on the go at once. As one pair got hot they were thrown down and a cold pair of rags picked up. Rollermen wore brats made out of sacking with bits of string tied to the corners."

Park Bridge Today

Very little now remains of the top forge at Park Bridge and yet information staff at the Heritage Centre realised that something was needed at the site to remind people of the area's industrial past. The chance arose to acquire a forging hammer, a perfect example of what was once a dynamic manufacturing technique used at the forge.

The Rigby overhung air operated forging hammer is based on the James Nasmyth design, developed with Robert Stephenson of the steam era, and an improved patent by William Rigby in 1855. Originally constructed by R.G. Ross and Son of Glasgow, it ended its working life at Eyres Forge, Manchester. From here it was cleaned, renovated and prepared for reassembly by Forge Tech Services, Ashton-u-Lyne, and, with the help of Hanlon and Wright Ltd, was transported with some careful cross country manoeuvrings to the site at Park Bridge.

The impressive 10 feet tall hammer now stands proud in the peaceful countryside surroundings of the Medlock Valley, a fitting monument to the area's industrial heritage.



The steam hammer in position

Park Bridge Remembered (see review page 60) was published in November 2006 by the Tameside Countryside Service. It is a personal insight into the daily life at Park Bridge Ironworks and village told by people who lived and worked there. It was compiled by Wendy Squirrell who worked at Park Bridge Heritage Centre as an Information Officer. It is available at the countryside centres and libraries, priced £8.50 or by mail order at £9.50. Contact Park Bridge Heritage Centre on 0161 330 9613 or,

visit the website: www.tameside.gov.uk/countryside

Samuel Eaton 1597-1665 - First Congregational Chapel in England

Samuel Eaton, the son of Richard Eaton, vicar of Great Budworth, was a prolific pamphleteer and a contentious activist in litigation and the **first** nonconformist minister in Cheshire. He was educated at Oxford and took orders under the Church of England but soon dissented about certain ceremonies. He first went as minister to West Kirby on the Wirral, but was suspended by Bishop Bridgeman in 1631, taken prisoner by Bishop Laud and imprisoned at Newgate. He fled to Holland after his release.

Meanwhile in 1624 John Davenport had just been elected to serve as minister at St Stephen's Church, Coleman Street, London. Davenport was born in 1597 and baptized by Richard Eaton at Coventry 9th April 1597. Before he could take up his post he was accused of Puritanism by King James I, which he denied at the time. About 1630 Theophilus Eaton, a wealthy merchant, son of Richard and brother to Samuel took over a house in Swanne Alley, off Coleman Street in London. He had served as Deputy Governor of the Eastland Company at Elbing. The group received a grant of territory from the Council for New England and as 'The Gov. and Co. of the Massachusetts Bay Company in New England', received a charter from the crown.

To escape the increasing disapproval of the Crown, Davenport fled to Amsterdam in the November of 1633, where the group organized their move to the New World. The group included: John and Elizabeth Davenport; Theophilus Eaton, his second wife Anne Eaton the daughter of George Lloyd, Bishop of Chester, and widow of Thomas Yale; old Mrs Eaton, his mother; his brothers Samuel and Nathaniel Eaton; Mary Eaton, the daughter of his first wife; Samuel, Theophilus and Hannah, the children of his second wife Anne; David and Thomas Yale, the children of Anne Eaton by her former marriage; Edward Hopkins, who on the 5th September 1631 had married Anne Yale at St. Antholin's in London; and Richard Malbon, a kinsman of Theophilus Eaton. Also many inhabitants of the parish of St Stephen and others (probably from the neighbourhood, but not members of St Stephen's).

The group chartered the 'Hector' of London and on the 26th June 1637, John Winthrop recorded the arrival of the group from London at Boston. On arrival in Massachusetts, Davenport was chosen to be a magistrate. The Massachusetts planters made strong efforts to retain the party, who were gentlemen of wealth and character. The general court offered them whatever place they might choose, and the inhabitants of Newbury agreed to give up that town to them but they determined to found a distinct colony. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1637, Theophilus Eaton, with a few friends, carefully explored the Connecticut coast, and finally selected a place called Quinnipiac, where the colony settled in March 1638. In November Theophilus Eaton was one of those who contracted with the Indians for the sale of lands, the price being thirteen English coats. On 4th June 1639, he was one of the 'seven pillars' selected to form a government for the colony. He was chosen as its first governor, and continued in that office until his death. Apparently he was "a handsome and commanding figure, and although strict and severe in religious matters, he was affable and courteous."



The group made their roots in New Haven just one year after the wars of the English against the Pequot Indians, where Uncas, the leader of the Mohegan tribe, had helped the English. Uncas was immortalized in literature in, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 1826, by the American writer James Fenimore Cooper.

Within the year, the colonists established a precise nine square town plan; it has since been named among America's earliest and most important urban designs. The one and a half square mile tract was set on a diagonal axis and fitted snugly between West and Mill Creeks at the harbour's mouth. Individual plots (see illustration), sized according to shareholders' wealth and social standing filled the surrounding squares. The settlers reserved the centre square for common use. The names are very hard to read, but I do have a transcription of all of them and can be contacted via:

dukinfield@fhsc.org.uk



- (A) The residence of Theophilus Eaton
- (B) The residence of Samuel Eaton

Nathaniel Eaton came to New England in 1637 with his brothers and was appointed the first professor of the school which later became Harvard University. He was, however, the black sheep of the family, deceived the people who appointed him and was said to have been more fitting to be the master at Bridewell than at a college. He was an exceptional scholar himself and made many more but was notorious for his greed and cruelty. His pupils complained of bad food and ill treatment and in September 1639, after beating his usher with a cudgel, he was removed from his post. He fled to Virginia leaving debts amounting to £1,000 and was excommunicated by the Cambridge churches. He returned to England in 1645, eventually dying in a debtors' prison.

In New England Samuel Eaton was educated at Harvard. He came to live at New Haven next to his brother Theophilus and acted as assistant to John Davenport. He returned to England in 1640 just in time for the Civil War. Whilst he was preaching a fiery sermon at Chester, he came to the notice of Colonel Robert Dukinfield, puritan and staunch republican, who immediately put at his disposal the small family chapel attached to Dukinfield Hall.

This late sixteenth or early seventeenth century chapel was built on the site of an earlier private chapel of the Dukinfield family, licensed by the Bishop of Lichfield in 1398. Here, Eaton organized a Congregational Church, probably before the end of 1640, or early in 1641, this being the **'first Independent Church visible and framed that was set up in England'**. It was organized with Eaton as teacher and Thomas Taylor, Vicar of Hemel Hempstead as pastor.

With Robert Dukinfield's help he was also made chaplain to the garrison at Chester, but on his return to Dukinfield, found that the chapel had fallen into the hands of a group of so-called 'gifted brethren'. Eaton found it impossible to restore order and withdrew to Stockport where he preached at the Grammar School.

After the Restoration in 1662, he was again excommunicated, silenced and forced to move. He continued to preach in private and was imprisoned several times more. Finally, he died on the 25th January 1664/5 and was buried at Denton Chapel. The registers at Stockport record the burial of 'Samuel Eaton of Bredburie, Minister'. His widow died 30th March 1681 'dyed at Stopport, buried at Denton 2nd April 1681'.



The shored up ruins of Old Hall Chapel, Dukinfield

2007 The Year of Stalybridge Anniversaries

The year 2007 marks a series of significant anniversaries in Stalybridge. In March **1857 Stalybridge achieved borough status**, ten years after Ashton. The first elections were held in May and for the first time the town had a mayor, six aldermen and eighteen councillors, its own police force and magistrates and a coat-of-arms! The borough boundary embraced land on both sides of the river, from three parishes, and was deemed to be all in Cheshire and so the County boundary was no longer the river Tame but the Cock Brook, running through what later became Stamford Park. Ten years later the town, along with Dukinfield was granted its own MP. Civic pride meant that the fiftieth and the hundredth anniversaries of borough status were celebrated with processions, fireworks and other events. In 1957 a handsome Centenary Volume was published by the council. It remains a prime source for the history of the town.

It may be that the prospect of the Jubilee in 1907 was the spur to Samuel Hill to write a history of his native town. ***Bygone Stalybridge*** was published at the end of the year and on page 329 there is a list of the twenty one councillors (all men) who held the office of Mayor during the first fifty years, although there is little in the book about the Council and its activities. After a hundred years Hill's book is still valuable and interesting to read, perhaps because he concentrates on people.

Hill devotes four pages of his book to the story of John Buckley, a Stalybridge soldier who was stationed in Delhi in 1857 at the time of the Indian Mutiny. He showed great bravery in defending the magazine in Delhi and managed to escape although his wife and family were all killed. On his return to England he was awarded the VC by Queen Victoria.

2007 also marks the **75th anniversary of the Astley-Cheetham art gallery**. The Stalybridge mill owner J.F. Cheetham had built the library in Stalybridge, opened in 1901, and left instructions in his will that his considerable art collection should pass to the Council on the death of his sister Agnes, who lived with him at Eastwood, the family home. Cheetham died in 1916 but Agnes lived on until 1931. The transfer of the paintings then took place and became the nucleus of the gallery collection, displayed on the upper floor of the library. It was opened in June 1932, the only public gallery in what was to become Tameside. On the same day **Cheetham Park** was opened. Again it had been given to the town in Cheetham's will but only after the death of Agnes Cheetham.

Alan Rose
Stalybridge Historical Society

Early Population Surveys of Denton & Haughton

1655 40 Poor Rate Payers in the town

1714 the number of families in the township was 44 of which 10 were Presbyterians.

1774 families had increased to 116 - 597 persons, 111 houses, 243 were under 15, 61 above fifty, 17 above 60, 15 above 70 and 6 above 80.

Gay Oliver

Park Bridge, a Lancashire Industrial Village

Park Bridge lies at the foot of the Pennines, with Hartshead Pike as its landmark (thought to have been there since the 1500s or before, firstly as a wooden tower and then, over the years, re-built in stone as it remains to this day).

The village was a small quiet hamlet until, with the coming of the railway in 1861, the industrial revolution, and the building of the ironworks by Samuel Lees, the village grew. When Samuel died in 1804, his widow, left with six young children, took over the running of the works. This was a very unusual thing for a woman to do in those days, and, for almost 200 years, it was a thriving business known as 'Hannah Lees & Sons'. In its heyday, over 800 people were employed; in fact the ironworks **was** the village. The Lees family built an institute, school, church and terraced cottages for their workers, and a gas plant to provide lighting. The ironworks closed in 1963.

In 1928 there was a great occasion in the village when Henry Ford came from America and took away our Newcomen Engine, known as 'Fairbottom Bobs'. It had been used for pumping water from the small coal and cannel mines in the Fairbottom area. It was one of the first atmospheric pump engines in the world, and is now reassembled in Henry Ford's museum at Detroit, Michigan. What a day it must have been for everyone in the village!

Park Bridge was a happy place in the 1930s and 40s – the village teams of billiards, darts and bowls used to entertain visitors from the leagues. A great day was the Sunday school's annual trips to the seaside. Almost all the villagers boarded the train at Park Bridge Station, with their sandwiches, bottles of pop, clean faces, shoes and best clothes, to return at the end of the day tired, dirty and happy.

Whit Friday was when St James Church, Fairbottom Chapel and Alt Chapel walked, each with their beautifully embroidered banners, carried on poles by two of the strongest young men. Hymns were sung at every farm and hamlet, and the walks finished at Westerhill House, the home of Mr and Mrs Lowther Lees, who would come out and sing with us and, after handing a donation to each church leader, would thank us all for coming.

As children we played around the lamp at night and watched the men working in the forge through the iron grills. It was lovely and warm on cold winter nights and the men would throw sparks up at us from their red-hot tongs. They rolled out the iron 'pigs' into long lengths for the little steam engines, Pegasus and Orion, to take up to the main railway line.

The village had characters too numerous to mention. One was an old man with a donkey and cart, who used to collect rags in exchange for donkey-stones. He wasn't always kind to the donkey, and a strict church lady, Emily Sharratt, would chastise him when she saw him beating it to get up the rocky road. He was heard on one occasion saying to the donkey, 'Wait till I get thee past Mrs Sharratt's!' Always after that, when he was coming, all the children would shout, 'Wait till I get thee past Mrs Sharratt's'. It seemed to shame him into putting a stop to the beatings!

Another character was my Uncle Jack. He was a bachelor, the works electrician, and the only one with any money to spare. As it was his birthday on 5th November, he used to buy a box of fireworks and fix up a holder on a clothes stump. The cry would go up, 'Jack Holt's settin' his fireworks off,' and all the women and children would come and gather round the stump for the display. Afterwards, the women would go into Jack's house and were treated to demerara rum and lemon till all hours. My mother would excuse the performance, as Jack had been born on 5th November 'He likes to be out in thunderstorms for the same reason,' she said! One woman, Mrs Lowe, made huge potato pies and we went with our own plates at a penny a time.

The Lees family owned another large residence, Dean House, near the works, with lovely spacious grounds where, every summer, we had a Rose Queen festival. A platform was erected on the lawn, where we had the crowning of the new Queen. Each Queen had her retinue of six train-bearers, girls, and two cushion bearers, boys, who carried the crowns. We had coconut shies, football games, races, and a housey-housey stall operated by Frank Yates, wearing his silk topper and tails. We finished the day with tea in the schoolroom, starting with the hymn 'Be present at our table, Lord' – the children waiting impatiently for grace to be said before we dared start eating. It all ended when war broke out in 1939, never to start again!

We were never bored in those days: there was always something going on in the schoolroom, dances, magic lantern shows and concerts. Every year the younger mothers and fathers put on an operetta. They spent weeks rehearsing and making scenery and costumes. It really was quite a show, and people came on the train from Ashton and Oldham to see it. I can remember 'Floradora' and one or two Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. These also ended with the war, and the world became a different place.

Not many of us are left to remember Park Bridge as it was. The old cottages are all 'done up' and occupied by workers from the towns. There is no school or church, but the institute remains as a social centre, now with a licensed bar, snooker room, darts and card room. Also it is the polling station where we vote.

The Tameside Wardens have their Countryside Activities Centre at Dean House stables, and each year they invite all the old residents of Park Bridge to meet each other and reminisce of old days. The Wardens have revived the village. They have many old artefacts and photos of the ironworks, forgemen and past scholars. So, I'm pleased to say, the village did not die with the closure of the railway and ironworks and still remains much as it was, a living relic of its industrial past.

Mavis Defley

History on Your Doorstep

A Peculiar Marriage at Mottram Parish Church

Daniel Broadbent of this Parish **aged 23**, married Martha Cheetham of the parish **aged 83** by Licence 9th Marth 1780. Daniel signed his name, but Martha left her mark

Park Bridge Excavations, June to July 2006

Further archaeological research was undertaken at Park Bridge in 2006 on the site of the Top Forge. The aim of this work was to establish the internal layout of this building. To that end three large areas were stripped, in total around 250 metres square. These were designed in part to analyse several features uncovered in 2005 that were believed to relate to the furnaces within the Top Forge that included a possible ball furnace. Also map evidence indicated that there were possible engines or power systems that may lie within the eastern part of the made car park.



The excavations at Park Bridge were normally restricted to community involvement. This year, however, ten students from the University of Manchester were to participate as part of the Vocational Skills course. Consequently it was possible to evaluate a much larger area of the Top Forge.

Five trenches were opened: one in the car park (TI), one along the eastern perimeter of the main forge (TII), one along the southern perimeter of the Top Forge (TIII), one placed roughly central to the forge (TIV) and a final one within the planted area near to where the possible ball furnace was excavated in 2005 (TV).

Trench I

This revealed a brick platform within a cut feature that was cut into the natural bedrock. At this stage this feature is of indeterminable origin.

Trench II

The main feature in this trench that was opened to locate possible chimneys and connected flue systems, was the eastern brick perimeter wall of the Top Forge. Other features included:

- A large stone capped drain/flue that ran from the northern end to the approximate centre where an opening was discovered.
- Two large sandstone machine beds were also revealed approximately five metres from the wall.
- At the southern end were several perpendicular brick features one of which contained a large diameter (40cm) cast iron pipe that appeared to descend through the ground about 1.5m where it is possible it was a drain leading to the river.

Trench III

- A rail system at the south western end.
- Several brick built machine beds.
- A series of capped drains.

Trench IV

- A brick foundation containing some fire bricks that was possibly a furnace.
- Three concrete and brick structures that contained RSJ stanchions.
- A possible flue system with a square brick chimney base within two metres of the possible furnace.

Trench V

- A brick lined flue system with square brick possible chimney that appeared similar to and was possibly connected to that found in Trench IV. This feature was within two metres of the possible ball furnace that contained a large amount of slag

When analysed it will be possible to compare this site with other similar sites.

Mike Nevell

University of Manchester Archaeological Unit

Toffee Nostalgia

I can remember the days long before Z-bars when we had Tommy Todd rock and real Kendal Mints. Toffees look like Kendal Mints but that taste is not there. Then many toffees are not what they look like these days. I can remember when chocolate was chocolate.

Just take a flake and break it in half: nothing to it you say. Well now the old original flake if you tried to break it or dropped it on the floor it shattered into a million pieces. As to the taste, well that is long gone with progress and profit being more important than the genuine article.

Real toffee used to be made on Hyde Market by 'Nightingales'. They had two shops in the town. They made Godley Rock, Mint Rock, Clove Drops, Aniseed Drops, Cough Drops, Mint Candy, Treacle Toffee, Nut Brittle and a host of other toffees.

The smell of all this used to fill the air on a Saturday night up to 10 o'clock, which was the time he packed up. You might still get some toffees that go under the above names but that smell and all those tastes are long gone with the old Nightingale and his Primus stove.

"Taste and try before you buy, you cannot buy better, home-made treacle toffee," was his cry. He just used sugar, butter and the genuine oils. The day of the industrial chemist had yet to come.

Harry Lever

Stalybridge – 90 years ago from the Stalybridge Reporter

The new separation rates for the families of serving men caused distress, as the disparity between the help for soldiers' and sailors' wives was controversial: A private's wife without children was allowed 12/-, a sailor's wife was allowed 6/-: A private's wife with 7 children was allowed 40/-, a sailor's wife was allowed 28/-.

Local gardeners, and those who intended to be so, prepared for the new allotments throughout the borough. By February, Stalybridge had been allocated 20 acres. By March, there were 30 allotments in Carrbrook, and 40 in Millbrook: they were handed over on March 18th.

September was noted for terrible rain storms. Corn sheaves were standing in inches of rain, wire worms infested potato fields, and root crops were destroyed.

Mr Harold Feber of the Navy League travelled through the town giving talks on 'Germany's Preparation for the Great Day': it was illustrated with lantern slides.

Stalybridge Council presented prizes and Certificates of Merit to children who had put in full school attendance. There were ten from Millbrook and two from Buckton Vale. Jack Higgins was given a medallion as he had not missed a day for five years.

- Tuberculosis was taking its toll in both town and villages.
- Infant mortality remained the highest in the country.
- February saw an 'Arctic Snap'. The temperature in the park fell to 30 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Ice set hard in Stamford Park lake, and children enjoyed skating.
- Millbrook school closed as it had run out of coke for heating.
- A dreadful blizzard struck in December. Telegraph poles were brought down in Carrbrook.

Juvenile crime had increased. *A severe lack of parental control* was blamed. In 1915, 24 boys and one girl were prosecuted. At least ten more youngsters were charged in 1917. Sunday music had been stopped in 1916, and it was claimed that *rowdiness had practically ceased*.

A charabanc full of German POWs was brought daily from Handforth Prison Camp, Cheshire, to stack coal at Carrbrook Printworks.

Charles Henry Miller was killed at Hyde & Co Woollen Mill when he was caught in the revolving shaft. The inquest found *accidental death*, and the firm expressed its condolences to the mother. Case closed.

- The age exemption for military service was revised to 31.
- 10 per cent more sugar was made available for everyone on rations in March.
- Potatoes were in short supply. By the end of March, there were fights in Stalybridge Market Hall as women tried to buy potatoes for their families.
- The Co-op dividend would be 2/9 in the pound for grocery, and 6d for butchery.
- The cost of shaving was increased by 2d.

- The Joint Board offered a war bonus of 6/6 to any women who would apply for a job as conductress.
- Pensioners would get an increase of 2/6 a week.
- By October, wages for tramways workers would be increased: to 12/- for men and 9/- for women.

29th May was celebrated as Royal Oak Day, and Millbrook's pub chimney was dressed in branches gathered from the Brushes Valley. Children not wearing a sprig of oak leaves risked being beaten round the village by children carrying bunches of light twigs.

Many families were affected by the Ashton munitions explosion, suffering loss and damage to their property.

The Wakes' Holidays for school children were increased by four weeks. Post Offices would be closed for at least two days in the week 23 – 28 July.

Millbrook trail hunt was cancelled for the second year in succession.

Stalybridge was to get a motorised fire engine at a cost of £1,400-£1,500 to replace the horse drawn one.

Kathryn Booth – Millbrook

NB There were twenty shillings or 240 pennies to the pound in pre-decimal currency and today 5 pence equals one old shilling.



Micawber and Me

Are you a Mr Micawber at heart, hopefully confident that something, sometime, somewhere will eventually turn up? Then take heart. Nigh on 30 years ago in a Sheffield junk shop, bordering on the antique, but with a little more dust, I purchased two framed testimonials to a Charles Buck, one dated 1889, the other 1893. Both are colourful Victorian graphic works of art, for my part there is no direct personal family interest. The first describes Charles Buck as being a Detective Inspector of Police in the Borough of Stockport, Cheshire, moving on to be the first Chief Constable of Margate, Kent, in 1889. The other chronicles his moving from Margate in 1893 to the post of Chief Constable at Rochdale, Lancashire.

There for the foresaid years, the matter and the testimonials rested, I vaguely thought, but didn't pursue the inclination, that there might be a loose family link with a Stockport sportswear firm that traded under the name of 'Bukta.' Nike and Adidas were names for the future, the name 'Buck,' also fell into that category. Over the passage of time, the testimonials moved on and along different walls in the house, the only movement of note in the intervening years.

The Stockport Testimonial, dated 11th March 1889, amongst other wordage, describes Charles Buck as having 'served in the rank of Detective Inspector for 12 years, with ability, courtesy, courage, esteem and to have materially assisted in the prevention and detection of crime', signed Thomas Mair Staples Lt Colonel Chief Constable.

The Margate Testimonial was presented by the Mayor to Charles Buck in the Town Hall on 11th July 1893. It is both eloquent and considerably more verbose — 'The inhabitants of Margate desire to show our appreciation of the straight forward manner in which you have carried out your duties — during five years that you held that important post — your unvarying courtesy and goodwill to all classes — we shall be deprived of your valuable services — best wishes for your future welfare and success — we beg you accept this purse of money as a token of our esteem and respect — that you are able to look upon your residence in Margate with satisfaction and pleasure.' Appended underneath, in alphabetical order, are the names of over 160 Margate worthies and businesses.

Several hundred moons were then to pass. Towards the end of 2006 I was working, as a volunteer, on the indexing of the birth, death and marriage Registers held at the High Peak Register Office. The 1918 Death Register for Glossop, Derbyshire, recorded the death of a William Buck, retired police inspector, age 77 years. This was when the first Mr Micawber moment materialised; I could not pass the Buck on this one.

Headlong, delving into the various available census returns brought up the earthly progress of both the recently discovered William, and the long established Charles. * The 1841 census showed that William, shown as two yrs old, living with his parents at Booth Street, Dukinfield, Cheshire, his father, occupation 'wool hatter' is named William. By 1851 the Bucks had moved to High Street, Dukinfield, and William, age given now as 11 years, was working as a 'cotton piecer.' By 1861, William, 21 yrs of age, has left home and had married Julia Caroline Mort at

Barton upon Irwell, Lancashire, where they were both employed, porter and cook respectively, at the Union Workhouse. Later, by chance, the 'porter' part was to become part of what I dubbed 'Micawber and Me', a now rapidly developing story of the extended Buck family.

By 1871, William, Julia and family have moved yet again, this time to Wakefield Road, Stalybridge, William is now listed as 'Inspector of Police', whilst his son, 'Testimonial' Charles, 13 years, is employed as a 'bobbin turner.' In 1881, the family have now moved to Mersey Street, Stockport, William is now a widower and both, Superintendent of the Stockport Fire Brigade and a Police Inspector, while Charles, age now given as 22 years, has entered the Stockport ranks, as a 'Police Constable.'

In 1889, Charles, now Chief Constable at Margate, marries Harriet Munday early in the same year at All Saints, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport. They are shown to be living at Helena Street, Margate in 1891 and have a daughter named Bertha. By 1901, William is listed as retired and living with his daughter Emma Jane's family in Glossop, Derbyshire. Charles having moved to Rochdale in 1893 dies there in 1898, while by 1901 his widow Harriet, together with his daughter Bertha, are now shown to be living at Stockport with the family of Harriet's married sister.

Armed with this copious census information, by the end of 2006, using both the Tameside Metropolitan Borough family history research centre at 'Setantii' and the free Cheshire BMD internet sources, William and Charles were found to be just a small part of the 'roots and branch' Buck family, other members being continually added to the fold. As yet, the five years that Charles Buck spent as the Chief Constable of Margate is unresearched, approaches were made to the Kent Police Museum, but without success.

Then Mr Micawber struck again. William's stated employment in 1861, 'Porter, Union Workhouse' puzzled me, I could not fully comprehend the 1871 quantum leap from menial post (my assessment) to the profession of policeman. My previous puzzlement on this post, was answered by chance in January 2007. Browsing through some exchange magazines, ultimately destined for the monthly meetings of the Glossop and High Peak Branch, was the May/June 2006 issue of ***The New Zealand Genealogist***.

* A Meg Sutton's, great grandfather John Massey, before he emigrated to New Zealand in 1863, had been the porter at the Ashbourne Union Workhouse, Derbyshire. Meg had thoroughly researched the information on the history of 'The English poor law and the workhouse', this she sent to her third cousin living in NZ. This same cousin thought this personal research deserved a wider audience, hence the article in 'The N.Z. Genealogist.'

The standard duties of a workhouse porter were longer than your average arm, a selection follows:

'To keep the gate and stop access to any unauthorised person, either going in or out. To keep a book in which he shall enter the name and business of everyone entering or leaving the workhouse. To receive all the paupers who apply and present themselves for admission to the workhouse. To examine all parcels and goods entering the workhouse, to prevent the admission of spirituous and

fermented liquors, or articles contrary to law. To search all male paupers entering or leaving the workhouse suspected of having possession of the above. To call the matron to search any female paupers suspected in possession of the above. To lock all the outer doors, take all the keys to the master at 9 p.m. each night. To receive all the same keys at 6 a.m. every morning. To assist the master and matron in enforcing strict obedience at all times in the workhouse. To inform the master of all the things affecting both the security and order of the workhouse.'

There is no mention of when brows could, or, could not be mopped!

The High Peak BDM indexing went mundanely on as before, until late January 2007 when the Buxton Birth Registers for 1926 and 1928 each recorded a Buck birth, the father — William Samuel Buck, occupation — **policeman**.

Since 1841, the extended Buck family have lived within the boundaries of Ashton, Dukinfield, Hyde, Stalybridge, Stockport and Glossop; there must be surviving relatives living in these areas who can add further interesting information on the family.

Sources * and **. The May/June 2006 issue of ***The New Zealand Genealogist***'.

Courtesy of Alice Lock, Archivist, photographed copies of both the Charles Buck Testimonials are deposited at the Tameside Local Studies and Archive Centre, Old Street, Ashton- under- Lyne.

Keith Holford
Derbyshire Family History Society

History Alive Tameside by post

Copies of *HAT* are available by post. Please complete the address form (or a photocopy) and enclose a £1.50 cheque or postal order – payable to 'Tameside Local History Forum' – to cover post, packing and administration.

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Post code:.....

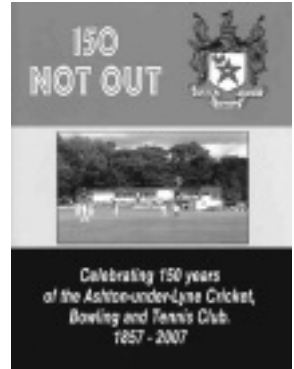
Send to: **HAT by Post**
218 Newmarket Road, ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE OL7 9JW.

Book Reviews

150 Not Out: Philip & David Williams
for Ashton-under-Lyne Cricket Club. 2006 47pp £5.

The colourful cover of this book invites you to pick it up and open it. Inside you will find not just the history of Ashton-under-Lyne cricket club, but also that of the bowling and tennis clubs. Covering the years 1857- 2007 this book contains also a timeline and lists of the professional players. The text is illustrated by photographs of players and teams and line drawings and also includes adverts to offset its costs.

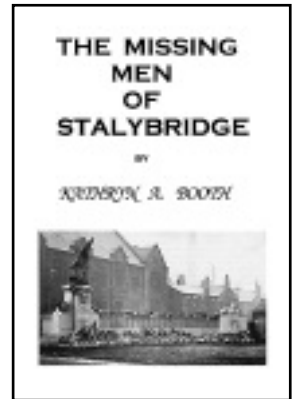
Copies are available at the Local History Studies Library in Ashton.



The Missing Men of Stalybridge: Kathryn A Booth,
Volume 10 in the History on Your Doorstep series published by Tameside and the University of Manchester Archaeology Unit. 2006 52pp £2.50

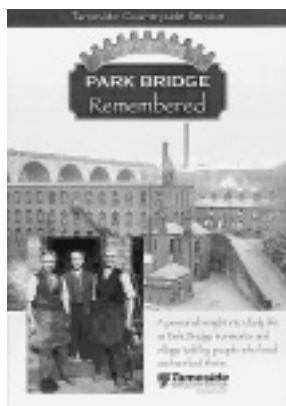
This is the result of detailed research by Kate and her determination to ensure that these missing names have a memorial. She has found numerous soldiers, whose names are not recorded on the Stalybridge war memorial or in the rolls of honour. This book encompasses the wider Stalybridge area including Carrbrook and Millbrook. She gives a thumb-nail sketch of each soldier in alphabetical order, plus an index of names at the back. Some soldiers have a photograph but the quality of the photographs sadly does not do justice to Kate's hard work. This is an important piece of research, which could lead to other areas in Tameside having a similar survey.

Copies available from Kate on 0161 338 3078 or from the Local History Studies Library. All proceeds go towards these soldiers' memorial.



Jill Cronin

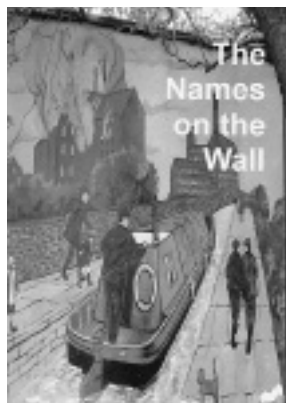
Park Bridge Remembered : compiled by Wendy Squirrell,
Tameside Countryside Service. 2006 44pp A4 £8.50



During her time as Information Officer at Park Bridge Heritage Centre, Wendy Squirrell gathered many reminiscences of the ironworks and the village in the years before the closure in 1963. This splendid book is a collection of these memories, carefully arranged and illustrated by a fine array of photographs. We are taken through the many processes at the ironworks, the work at the cotton mill and the railway before a survey of aspects of the village: the church, the school, shops, social activities and the impact of World War Two. What really distinguishes the book is the high quality of the layout and design. Each section has been thoughtfully assembled and beautifully printed, so that each page is a visual delight as well as a wonderful collection of memories, some funny, some sad, which recall a world long gone. The ironworks was a man's world, harsh and dangerous. Women worked in the offices and as servants for the Lees family at the

'big house'. Both men and women shared in the social life of this close-knit community. It is all reflected in this elegant publication.

The Names on the Wall: by Beth Williams
Tameside MBC. 2006 67pp £5.00



The one tangible memory of the Ashton Munitions Explosion in 1917 is the memorial plaque in St Peter's School, Ashton to the seven children killed on that dreadful afternoon. There is as yet no memorial to the forty adults who also lost their lives in the William Street explosion. Beth Williams became aware of the memorial during support team involvement at the school and has produced this fictionalized account to raise funds towards a public memorial. A musical adapted from the story is projected to be performed at Oldham Coliseum. The booklet is an engaging read and deserves a wide readership. One mystery remains—the name Sarah Ann Higginson appears on the memorial plaque but so far no information about her has been traced.

Hannah Maria Mitchell: Radical Suffragist. Her Life and Writings

Compiled by Bill Johnson. 2006 61pp £3.00

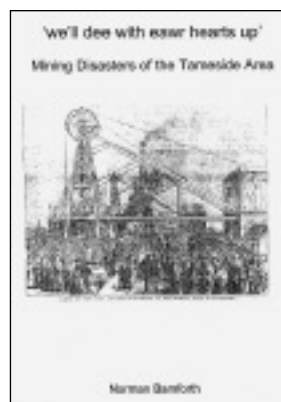
Hannah Mitchell (1872-1956) was an early member of the labour and women's suffrage movements. Her husband came from Stalybridge and for ten years they lived in Elizabeth Street, Ashton before moving to Manchester, where Hannah served on the City Council. Her vivid autobiography, aptly titled *The Hard Way Up* is long out of print and so Bill Johnson's tribute is timely. It consists of a short biography by her grandson, Geoffrey Mitchell, followed by a selection of the articles and dialect sketches that she wrote in later life, concluding with a letter to Geoffrey and her obituary from the ***Manchester Guardian***. The illustrations add to the attractiveness of this tribute to a most remarkable woman.



We'll dee with eawr hearts up: Mining Disasters of the Tameside Area by Norman Bamforth. 2006 85pp A4 £5.00

'The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there,'- LP Hartley's famous line could not be better illustrated than in this account of the six major mining explosions in Tameside between 1842 and 1889, in which 225 miners lost their lives. Health and safety issues were ignored; the management of the Astley Deep Pit in Dukinfield were, in effect, guilty of corporate manslaughter and the bereaved families had to depend on charity to survive.

Each disaster is carefully described, beginning with Flowery Field Colliery (1842) and concluding with the Hyde Lane Colliery explosion in January 1889; we are given a table setting out the names, ages and addresses of the victims in each case. Finally there is an account of the 'Glass House Fold Adventure', when in 1910 two toddlers fell 35 feet down an old colliery shaft in Denton and lived to tell the tale after 16 hours in the dark.



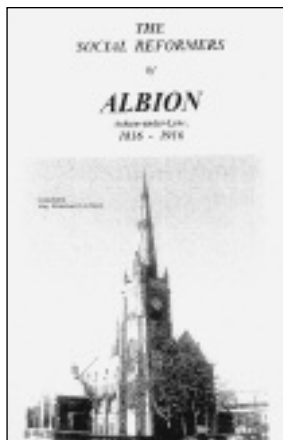
Mr Bamforth has given us an excellent piece of research, rounded off with a glossary and bibliography. The coal which powered Tameside's industrial revolution was obtained at an immense human cost. In these pages that cost is spelled out in some detail.

Alan Rose

Electric Edwardians: the story of the Mitchell and Kenyon collection, Vanessa Toulmin, BFI Publishing, 189 x 246mm 2006 308pp £17.99.

Though this book is profusely illustrated, it is not merely a 'coffee table' album: it is a detailed analysis of the films rescued by Blackburn businessman Peter Worden. (The collection is more properly known as the Peter Worden Mitchell and Kenyon Collection.) The collection's coverage includes locations in Britain and Ireland and has much of local interest from Tameside (Ashton-under-Lyne, Droylsden, Mossley and Stalybridge) and its immediate environs (East Manchester, Oldham and Stockport). The book is the result of ten years research that involved identifying the date and location of some 800 reels of nitrate film. The author examines how and why the films were made, explaining they were not candid shots - films were planned and many were well-choreographed. Chapters cover topics including leisure, city life, work and militarism. Illustrated throughout with black and white stills from the films, there are also illustrations (many in colour) of posters advertising the screenings. Two filmographies - one by subject and one by location - and a detailed index ensure readers are able to readily identify subjects of interest. Toulmin notes in her foreword, '[the collection] gives us a new perspective on an era that has been written about largely from the viewpoint of politics and privilege'. Indeed the Peter Worden Mitchell and Kenyon Collection opens a window revealing fascinating aspects of working-class life a century ago - and this book admirably explores and explains the context. Highly recommended.

The social reformers of Albion: Ashton-under-Lyne 1816—1916 by Mary Whitehead, Tameside MBC & the University of Manchester, 2006 A4 102pp £5



This is the eleventh volume in the 'History in your own words' series'. Mary Whitehead's work is a compilation of documentary sources accompanied by a narrative. The author notes that her original intention was to produce an account of benefactors of the Albion Congregational Church. However, as she undertook research it became evident many benefactors were also committed to social reform, and thus the present volume evolved. Eighteen chapters examine a variety of individuals and families. A summary of the life and achievement of each is provided, supported by quotes from contemporary sources. Amongst the most interesting for this reviewer were Bertha Mason and her support for women's suffrage and a fascinating quote from a letter by the Reverend Jonathan Sutcliffe, written within days of the Peterloo Massacre. In it he observed, '... we expect nothing but revolution ... it is certainly impossible for the poor to exist as wages are so very low ...' This is a useful introduction to the

links between philanthropy and the politics of social reform evident amongst leading figures in the Albion congregation. It is also pleasing to see that - despite the huge growth in internet publishing - local historians and publishers continue to produce printed works.

Bob Hayes

Denton Links the History of Denton Golf Club: by Alan Ward

Published in 2006 £10.00

Alan Ward was born in Denton and became a Denton Golf Club member in 1964. The book was written as a prologue to the Club's Centenary in 2009. It is of particular interest to the golfing membership since it is a comprehensive history of the Club from its foundation in 1909. Written in an attractive A4 format, the book contains 100 pages of text and over 150 photographs in black/white and colour. The subject matter covers both the geography and history of the 177 acres of land (leased by Manchester Corporation Waterworks) on which the golf course was built. Salient features along its boundary and within the course itself are described including Nico Ditch, Dodgeleach Brook and Cornhill Lane. The effect on the Club of the Kingswater Park proposal and the intrusion of the M60 Denton/Middleton Motorway are highlighted. Many other items of historical interest are portrayed including the bombing of the clubhouse in October 1940. Aerial photographs of the course can be seen at various stages of the Club's history. For the members there are many special items of interest, all of which have contributed to making Denton Golf Club one of the finest in the area. Without doubt, this interesting and well presented book is a must for all Golf Club members and anyone else interested in local history.

This book can be obtained from the Golf Club, Manchester Road, Denton, Thackeray's Book Shop, Crown Point or directly from the author (336-0101)

Dr F N Valdez

(Honorary Member, Past Captain, Past President Denton GC)



Articles from the Ashton Reporter

BATHING: Its Many Sided Virtues. (*Ashton Reporter* 1899)

With very many people there is no other object in taking a bath than cleanliness. Those who hold this view are not likely to be very lavish in their baths. So long as they keep clean they are satisfied. This is a very limited appreciation of the advantages of water and plenty of it. Of course, bathing is first of all for cleanliness, but it is far more valuable for its good effects upon the skin, the circulation, and the nutrition. It affords an excellent stimulation for the skin, improving the tone of its minute network of vessels, increasing the excretion which is carried on by its glands, and thus relieving the kidneys and the liver of much of their work. Bathing acts as an additional stimulus to the circulation by causing the blood to flow more thoroughly through all the organs of the body as well as through the minute blood-vessels of the skin itself. It improves nutrition, by causing a more rapid removal of the waste products from the system. One of the most invigorating forms of bathing is the cold sponge bath taken in the



morning before breakfast. Persons whose systems do not react readily after such a bath (such as the very young or the very old) or those who are seriously weakened by disease should not practise it before breakfast. For a person of average health, however, the early cold bath is an excellent tonic. After a cold sponge bath of short duration there is a feeling of well-being and exhilaration. The whole frame is refreshed. The mental faculties are cleared; the muscles seem strengthened. There is a desire for both manual and mental work. There is also a feeling of warmth, due to the dilation of the blood-vessels of the skin after the contraction caused by the cold water. The exhilaration and warmth of the cold sponge bath can be increased by drying and rubbing the body with a rough towel. Care should always be taken not to have the bath too prolonged or of a temperature so low as to prevent the reactionary dilation of the vessels of the skin. If the cold sponge bath is taken regularly the blood vessels of the skin are trained to contract and relax easily and there is therefore comparatively little liability to catch cold. A good way to become accustomed to the cold sponge bath is to begin with water which is tepid and gradually reduce the temperature until absolutely cold water can be borne and enjoyed.

How to Travel (Ashton Reporter 1885)



Hurry to or from trains should in all cases be avoided. It is dangerous to the healthy, habitual traveller as well as to the invalid. Many a one has suffered permanent dilation of the heart in hurrying to catch a train; many a one has dropped down dead from the same cause. Hurrying in catching trains tends to weakness of the nervous system, to indigestion, and to heart disease, to say nothing from the risk of catching cold from sitting down in the carriage heated, in cases where the person has to walk quickly instead of riding. For a large number of different kinds of complaints change of air and scene is prescribed for patients. As long journeys have to be made in railway carriages, it behoves the invalid, therefore to look well after his comforts in travelling, and not to neglect the slightest protection to make the journey easy. Let him not run – rather I should let *her* not run; for ladies are more apt to err in this way than gentlemen – let her not, then, fidget and worry herself a week beforehand, thinking of the journey, the perils of the road, including the fatigue. Once on board and settled, invalids never fail to be quite astonished at the strength they possess, and at “how well they bear the journey.” This is very pleasant, but I am sorry to tell them that their strength in nine cases out of ten is more apparent than real, and is due to their commencing action on the train of which I have already spoken. For railway travelling has a numbing, I had almost said a narcotising, effect upon the senses. From this semi-lethargy the patient awakes next day and it is very agreeable while it lasts. These people who have business in the city, but go home every night in the country to dine and to sleep, have only themselves to blame if they do not derive more harm from that mode of life than staying constantly in town. Those not accustomed to railway journeys, the rhythm, the rattle, and dust are very fatiguing but the constant traveller soon gets over this. It is often, if not always, a matter of moment for the invalid to get over the journey as quickly as possible. Fast trains, however, are certainly the most fatiguing, so if time can be spared, the invalid should adopt the slower method of progression.

Mary Whitehead

**DUKINFIELD UNITARIANS AT OLD CHAPEL
CELEBRATE THE 300th ANNIVERSARY
OF THEIR FIRST CHAPEL
1707-2007**



Minister: Rev Dr D V Marshall BTh BD MA DMin MPhil

EVENTS DURING 2007

Friday 27 April 7.30pm: *St George's Day Concert by the Adamson Band*

Sunday 6 May 2.30pm: *Historic Pageant
written by Minister Emeritus Rev Dr D C Doel*

Sunday 27 May 9.15am: *Dukinfield Whitsuntide Walks
with President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and
Free Christian Churches, Rev Celia Midgley*

Friday/Saturday/Sunday 15/16/17 June: *Flower Festival
in conjunction with congregations in the East Cheshire Union of Unitarian
and Free Christian Churches*

Friday 6 July 7.30pm: *Concert by the Yew Tree Singers*

Sunday 15 July 10.45am: *Joint Morning Service with New Chapel
Denton and others followed by Celebration Lunch at Alma Lodge,
Stockport*

Saturday and Sunday 8/9 September: *Heritage Open Day
exhibits, slide show, organ music*

Sunday 30 September 2.30pm: *Harvest Service*

Sunday 23 December 6.00pm: *Candlelight Service
presenting aspects of our history through the centuries*



Photograph on the back cover is the impressive West Window at Old Chapel designed by F Comere and J Capronnier of Brussels

