

Comings and Goings

Over the past year the Society's committee has seen a number of changes. Those standing down are as follows and we are very grateful to them for the time they have given to PHS over many years:



Mike Turner has been a member since 2008 and our Treasurer for the last ten years., during which time he has done so much to further the aims of the Society. He says 'The PHS has played a big part in my life which I hope to enjoy in my retirement'. In recognition of his service to the Society, the committee voted unanimously to make Mike a Lifetime Member.



Dave Canning has been a committee member for five years, and our Secretary for 15 months. He has also been instrumental in reviewing our constitution, and instigating a Risk Assessment policy for Society walks and other events. We have yet to appoint a replacement.



Merry Christmas,
we look forward to seeing you in 2024

David Hindle a member for 21 years, is standing down as Chair of the committee after fifteen years in the combined role of Chair and President. He has also been Speakers' Secretary during that time. He will continue as the Society's President.



75th Jubilee Celebration Mugs

A limited number of Jubilee mugs was produced to celebrate 75 years of PHS. If you would like one reserving please contact

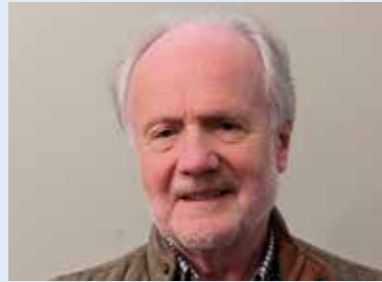
patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

You will also be able to purchase one at the monthly talks , at the bargain price of £5.



We still need more volunteers to make the PHS experience even better for our members and visitors. If you are interested contact patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org or ring **017813 213 629** to chat about how you might get involved.

We would like to welcome the following new committee members:



Richard Ainscough has rejoined the committee and been voted in as Chair.



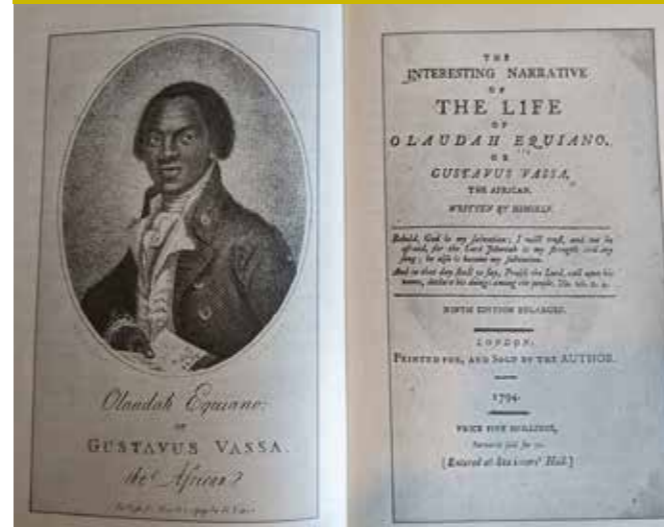
Leslie Scoble is replacing Mike Turner as Treasurer.



Peter Smith is also joining the committee and will be contributing to the newsletter and Website.



A Black History of Preston



From the Penguin Classics edition of his biography *Olaudah Equiano (1745 –1797) an Igbo (Ibo) enslaved for 10 years , he not only bought his own freedom through his skill as a sailor, but educated himself and wrote his own biography as part of an English anti-slavery campaign*

Part 1 – Slavery

In a history of the African Caribbean community in Preston, the period that has become known as the post -war 'Windrush Generation' is often considered to be the starting point. But the following account from Jack Hepworth and Alan Rice's Introduction to the book, "England is My Home"- Windrush Lives in Lancashire' takes us back over 250 years to give a totally different perspective.

'On 10 September 1765, the following runaway advert appeared in the St. James's Chronicle:

RUN away from the house of the Rev- Mr. Clarkson, Rector of Heysham, near Lancaster, early in the morning of Monday the 26th of August last, a Negro Boy, of the Ebo Country, slender made, about five foot three Inches high, his Left Knee bending inwards, which makes him ha[l]t, a small Lump on his Forehead, with his Country Marks on his Temples; had on, when eloped, a blue Jacket, a grey Waistcoat, and Leather Breeches; he speaks broad Lancashire Dialect.¹

About the PHS

This is the last Newsletter in our Diamond Anniversary year. Since 1948 the aim of the Society has been to promote the study of local history in Preston and Lancashire. 75 years is quite an achievement! Let's hope it continues long enough to celebrate its sesquicentennial anniversary with our descendants in 2098. Talks are held in the Central Methodist Church, Lune Street. The annual member subscription is £15.00. Visitors pay £5.00 per talk. There are eight talks in each season. **NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME**

This fascinating advertisement details the ethnicity of the boy as being Ibo1 and describes distinguishing marks from scarification that suggests he is African born. Escaping in his servant's clothes, he is distinctive and potentially easily spotted, but in London what might give him away most is his broad Lancashire dialect. This detail highlights the significant time the boy had spent amongst Lancashire folk and how he has adapted so much that his English is shaped, not by his Colonial background, but his Lancashire home. There might have been a few Black individuals in Lancashire in the 1760s but already some of them were putting down truly local roots. The recovery of such important lives from the depths of the archives enables narratives to emerge that deepen our understanding of the importance of slavery and a Black presence to fully understanding provincial British culture throughout the region. This crucially shows that Black individuals are constantly being unearthed in Lancashire creating new narratives that disrupt monocultural myths.²

¹In Preston itself there is evidence of a minor slave trade, with five vessels taking part in the Transatlantic trade from Preston and the Fylde coast in the 1750s. On 25 June 1756 there was advertised for sale at Preston:

The good snow (see below) or vessel called the Blossom, Samuel Gawith commander, burthen 100 tons more or less, built at Preston, and has been one voyage only (on the coast of Africa), a very strong and tight vessel of proper dimensions and every way compleat for the Slave Trade... The vessel and her materials may be viewed at Lytham in the River Ribble where she now lies.³

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PHS Talks Winter 2024

5 Feb. 2024 ~ Dr Alan Crosby
The Complicated Life of Francis Sleddon (1771-1852): Preston Machinery Maker and Cotton Spinner

4 Mar. 2024 ~ Prof Robert Poole
The Preston Lockout 1853-4

25 Mar. 2024 ~ Helen Howell
Notes for Women – Education and Opportunity at the Harris Institute during the First World.

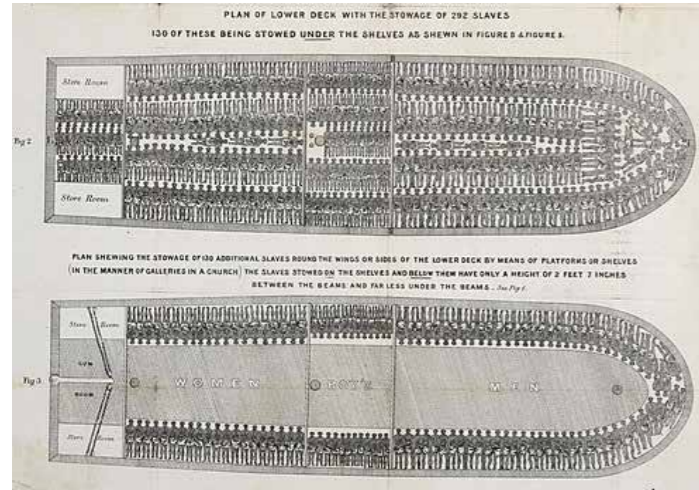
Contact PHS

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 www.facebook.com/prestonhistoricalsociety
www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

A Black History of Preston

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According to Lloyds List, in 1755 the ship had landed 131 enslaved Africans in Barbados. Long before the Windrush then, when Bajans came to Preston, Prestonians were shamefully involved in transporting enslaved Africans to the island.



An 18th century Snow Slaver, its fine lines above board belie its inhumane cargo below decks

¹ The Igbo, sometimes referred to as Ibo, are one of the largest single ethnic groups in Africa. Most Igbo speakers are based in southeastern Nigeria, - www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/igbo_peopl

An Important Donation to the Society's Archives

In August 2023 Dave and Jackie Waring, of Greasby in Wirral, donated a significant historic artefact to the PHS archive collection. It is a Victorian display case, produced for Horrockses, Miller & Co, one of Preston's oldest and foremost cotton manufactures, containing a number of items relating to the cotton-making process. These include a cotton boll (the protective case, around the cotton seeds), a hank of raw cotton, a skein of spun cotton, and a shuttle used in the weaving process.

The name Horrockses has always been associated with Preston so PHS was especially pleased to accept this display case for our archive.

Display cases like this were produced and distributed by the company to help market the Horrockses brand and would have taken pride of place in all the top London and provincial department stores, as well as overseas.

Horrockses, Miller & Co. changed their name to Horrockses, Crewdson & Co in 1887. so our case must therefore predate this change.

You will see from the picture (right) that it is in need of some TLC!

Peter Wilkinson, PHS archivist.



Just One Cornetto – Preston's First Ice Cream Sellers

In the Sicilian capital Palermo, one of the hottest places in Italy, there is a street called Vicolo Del Neve (literally Snow Alley). The name derives from the fact that, as early as the 17th century, it was the home of warehouses that stored snow and ice transported during the winter from nearby mountains. They were specially designed to stop the snow melting, even during the summer. The snow and ice were used to preserve foodstuffs such as meat and fish, but it also enabled the manufacture of the increasingly popular dessert, Gelato (Ice Cream).

Experts may argue about who invented ice cream, but there is no doubt that, from being a treat for the rich, it had, by the 18th century, become a hit with all classes around the Mediterranean. In England, the first person recorded as making and selling ice cream on the streets was from Switzerland. Carlo Gatti set up his first stand outside Charing Cross station in 1851. He sold scoops in shells for one penny. The game-changer, however, was when Agnes Marshall, the Nigella Lawson of her day, helped to popularize ice cream in cones, and patented and manufactured an ice cream maker in 1888.

Victorian Britain fell in love with ice creams, and who better to sell it on the streets than Italian immigrants who had tasted it at home? At first these, often impoverished, Italian men, looking for a better life were concentrated around London and other big ports, but it wasn't long before they began to sell their ice cream further afield.

In 1892 there is just one Ice Merchant recorded in Barratt's Preston Business Directory, one John Hillidge. By 1895, among the occupants of 'Syke Hill' we find Toscani, F'

Frd fish dlr at no. 2, and in the alphabetical residents section, 'Toscani, Fazzi, ice cream dealer' recorded at both 129 Ribbleton Lane, and 2 Syke Hill. These entries refer to 'Narciso Fazzi', born in 1869 in Cune, a small village near Lucca in Tuscany.



Narciso Fazzi, date unknown

Preston wasn't Narciso's first port of call in England. According to his great grand-daughter, Jeanne Didsbury, the first mention of Narciso in this country is on the 1881 census, which shows him living at 5 Spring Place, Liverpool, with several other Italians, including his elder brother, Tedice. It is likely that they would have come over together. The area around Spring Place is known as Liverpool's 'Little Italy'. By 1891 the family had moved to Gloucester where Tedice was involved in ice cream wars and was even shot at! Perhaps Preston was a safe haven in comparison.

By 1901, the year when Narciso married his second wife, Maria Agnes Santi, there were eight ice cream dealers in Preston, of whom six, including Narciso, were Italian. In 1907, three of the four listed ice cream dealers were Italian. However in the 1921 census, Narciso was described as a 'Restaurant Keeper, living at 134 Church Street, a fish and chip restaurant and, what would be called today, 'takeaway' establishment. When he died the following year, leaving Maria Agnes and six children, the golden age of Italian ice cream dealers in Preston seemed to be over.



Maria Agnes Fazzi

With many thanks to Jeanne Didsbury, and Linda Fazzi, Great Granddaughters, and Jacqueline Crowther, Granddaughter of

Narciso Fazzi, without whom this history could never have been told.