



Preston Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

PROMOTING THE STUDY OF LOCAL HISTORY IN PRESTON AND LANCASHIRE

Issue 26

Spring 2024

Support Your Local Archive!

At Preston Historical Society we understand the importance of Lancashire Archives in the collection and preservation of local history. We have, therefore, recently agreed to work with the Archives to inform you, our members, of exciting new developments at Bow Lane, and also how to make the most of the wonderful resources and facilities there.

What's New at Lancashire Archives & Local History?

Alex Miller, Archives & Resources Manager

The team and volunteers at Lancashire Archives & Local History have had a busy year in 2023, and there is much more to come in 2024. Whether you're new to the Archives or have used the service for years, we hope there is something that will be of interest, so do please come and pay us a visit!

The Archives searchroom space underwent a small reshuffle last year to better organise collections on open-access and to create our new exhibition space. Starting last summer with Shaping the Future: Lancashire Women's Lives 1950-1980, our programme will host two major displays annually with our next exhibition being a collaboration with the National Football Museum on Preston's football heroes. Researchers can now use the searchroom without an appointment. Just drop in to see us – although we do still recommend making an appointment if you want us to have collections ready in advance and to guarantee a searchroom space.

On open access you can now find a large range of trade directories, expanded book collections from the Lancashire Printed Collection, and additional newspaper collections. Logging on in the searchroom via one of our computers, or your own device, you can have free access to The British Newspaper Archive, Ancestry and Find My Past (including the 1921 Census). You can just drop in to use these resources.

In the year ahead, look out for the next edition of our new Lancashire local history magazine, Archives (back issues now online), some exciting news on the digitisation of more church records, and our expanding events programme. Our amazing

volunteers are working on a huge new project to index the county's poor law union minute books, wonderful sources filled with references to those in the care of some of the Lancashire Poor Law Unions from 1834 up to the 20th century.

Our collections stretch back across 900 years of Lancashire's history and are filled with stories about our shared heritage, just waiting to be discovered. We would love to see you at the Archives, whether you're interested in research, would like to volunteer, or are visiting to see an exhibition.

For regular updates you can sign up to receive our newsletter, News from the Archives, by contacting the team at archives@lancashire.gov.uk



We've also launched a new Facebook page. You can find out more at <https://www.facebook.com/lancsarchives>

About the PHS

Since 1948 the aim of the Society has been to promote the study of local history in Preston and Lancashire.

Talks are held in the Central Methodist Church, Lune Street. The annual member subscription is £15. Visitors pay £5 per talk. There are eight talks in each season.

NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

Contact PHS

General enquiries: stewart@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

Membership: patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk



www.facebook.com/prestonhistoricalsociety

www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

Lancashire Women Unite!

It is International Women's Day on 8 March 2024, so perhaps it is timely to look at the historic role of women in Lancashire over the last few centuries. In pre-industrial Lancashire the manufacture of cotton had been a domestic trade, where the men concentrated on weaving, and the wives, daughters, and unmarried women (i.e. the spinster) did the cleaning, carding, and spinning of the raw cotton. The wife was often an equal partner.

When industrialisation forced many cotton workers into the mills, a majority of them were women (A survey carried out in 1847* of all textile operatives showed that 97,855 males, and 122,937 females were employed in Lancashire).



Mary Fildes on the platform waving the Manchester Committee of Female Reformers; 'Flag of Liberty'



Preston Artist & suffragette Patti Mayor being arrested |Blog Preston

Equality in the political arena was a different story. After the Napoleonic Wars, when there was a burgeoning Radical movement, particularly around Manchester, men were organising clubs to debate and push for enfranchisement for the working man, while their wives took on a supporting but important role, often taking a lively part in speeches and debates. One of the most significant incidents for this movement was, undoubtedly 'Peterloo' when a huge peaceful gathering in St Peter's Square, Manchester, to demand full male suffrage was brutally suppressed by armed cavalry.

At this time the Manchester Committee of Female Reformers was so influential that their leader, Mary Fildes, was invited to ride in the procession alongside the star of the show, Preston MP Henry Hunt. When the Yeomanry charged the crowd with sabres drawn, the chances of injury were 2.8 times higher for women than for men. In the opinion of Richard Carlile, Radical journalist and Republican, the women were especially targeted, although other witnesses said there was no discrimination. It was clear, however, that the authorities and the mainstream press, in particular, loathed the female protesters.

Fildes' descendants, would become members of the British Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), the Suffragettes, founded in 1904 by Manchester-born Emmeline Pankhurst. The Suffragettes, amongst whom were Prestonians, Edith Rigby and Patti Mayor, believed that they could only achieve votes for women through campaigns of civil disobedience and damage to property. For this they were arrested and, when they refused to eat in prison, were brutally force-fed.

Initially, of course, their campaigns failed. After the First World War, however, when women had helped to

keep the wheels of industry turning whilst their menfolk were being slaughtered in the trenches, Parliament passed the Representation of the People Act 1918 which enfranchised women over the age of 30, who were ratepayers, or wives of ratepayers. This was seen as a triumph for the women's suffrage campaigns but it was not until 10 years later in 1928 that all women finally got the right to vote. This was, of course, not the end to the struggle for equality for women,. Over the last century there has been a gradual increase in the number of female MPs in the North West. Barbara Castle, MP for Blackburn (1945-1979) and a senior minister in Labour governments between 1968 and 1976; and Audrey Wise, Preston MP (1987-2000) have been notable in fighting the feminist corner, following in the pioneering footsteps of Mary Fildes, and Edith Rigby.



Audrey Wise protesting at the 1976 Grunwick Strike over discrimination and low pay for women

**The Statistical Companion 1850 –
T.C. Banfield Esq & C.R. Weld Esq*

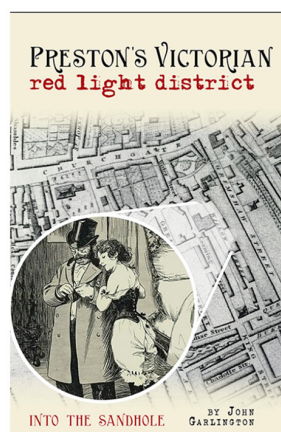


Barbara Castle (left) being shown the process of weaving cotton by Mrs Hindle during her visit to Horrockses Mill, Preston

BOOK NEWS

PRESTON'S VICTORIAN RED-LIGHT DISTRICT: INTO THE SANDHOLE

by John Garlington



The Sandhole was Preston's place of debauchery and shame. But Victorian moral values ensured that it never appeared on any town maps, and despite regular reports in the newspapers of the time, it doesn't even survive in folk memory. It is a part of Preston's history that had been completely lost. Until now.

Local author and historian, John Garlington, came to the Sandhole, metaphorically speaking, by accident, while researching his family history. After some hesitation, he decided to explore further, uncovering a world of poverty, desperation and cruelty, inhabited by those who never really had any chances in life. This carefully researched book is revealing, readable and important. Not to be missed.

Imprint: Palatine Books ISBN: 978-1-910837-47-4
Publication date: 24 Nov 2023

Pat Eves - Unsung Local Historian

On 28 November 2023 the Society received an email from Chris McCaffrey and Rachel Smith, asking us if we would be interested in a collection of historical artefacts and documents belonging to Rachel's parents, Pat and William Eves, who had been active committee members of the society between 2000 and 2012. Our policy is to accept all such donations on the principle that, no matter how commonplace or unexciting they may appear, amongst such collections real gems may be hidden. Such was the case here.

The collection consisted of two large plastic storage



PHS President David Hindle and Pete Wilkinson visit Pat Eves

boxes full of typical Preston memorabilia such as old Preston Guild and other historic jubilee event programmes, and two A3 document cases also full of similar documents. The rest of the collection was made up of books and pamphlets on different aspects of Preston's history, and folders containing a variety of photographs and other images. The pièce de résistance,

A Chronology of events in Preston at the time of the Industrial Revolution.

1674-75	-a warehouse was built by Preston Corporation for the employment of the poor in the woollen industry.
1723/5	-St. George's Chapel built.
1726	-from this year Preston races were run annually on the moor until they fell victim to the rivalry between the Corporation and the Derby interest from 1786-91 when the latter organised rival races on Fulwood Moor.
1732	-23/12/1732 Richard Arkwright born in Preston.
1741	-'The Journal' first Preston newspaper established
1755	-Penwortham Bridge opened
1759	-Shepherd's Library founded
1760	-plans put forward for the building of the Lancaster Canal to link Preston with the Leeds - Liverpool Canal.
1761	St. Mary's Catholic Church opened on Friargate Brow. From 1605, a little thatched cottage was used

Extract from Page 1 of Pat Eves' Chronology of Preston

however, is a ring binder containing a series of historical studies and analyses.

One of these works is 'A Chronology of events in Preston at the time of the Industrial Revolution' compiled by Pat Eves, containing entries which Pat considered to be salient points in Preston's history and listed in chronological order covering the period 1674-1906. This is a masterly piece of work produced after a great deal of research and demonstrates, not only, ex- history teacher Pat's knowledge and eye for detail, but also her presentation skills. It had been written on a typewriter, which, unlike a computer, left no margin for error. As Rachel Smith, Pat's daughter says, 'It was my mum who did the research on Preston. I remember it taking many hours of her time, but it was a thoroughly enjoyable pastime for her. As a former history teacher, my mum was extremely interested in unearthing Preston's history and sharing her many discoveries with her students.'

The figure above shows an extract from this history, but if you want to see the full history, you can go to Preston Historical Society's albums | Flickr (www.flickr.com/photos/preston_historical_society/albums/)

Wanted, Budding Historians

Do you, like Pat Eves, have a story from Preston's past that you want to share? Would you like to see it as an article in the pages of this newsletter or on the PHS website? If so, please send it as a Word document, no more than 500 words in length, with illustrations where possible, to stewart@prestonhistorysociety.org.uk. If you don't feel confident about your writing style, just include all the facts and any historic records (newspaper extracts, photographs etc) and one of our regular contributors will write the account on your behalf.

PHS Talks Spring 2024

25 Mar. 2024 ~ Helen Howell

Talk starts at 2.00pm

Notes for Women – Education and Opportunity at the Harris Institute during the First World.

8 April 2024 ~ Dave Canning

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission: from controversial beginnings to the 21st Century

13 May 2024 ~ Margaret Lambert

Annual General Meeting followed by talk on the history of Rufford Old Hall