



Preston Historical Society

# NEWSLETTER

PROMOTING THE STUDY OF LOCAL HISTORY IN PRESTON AND LANCASHIRE

Issue 27

Summer 2024

## We Loved Them, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah !

### The Beatles in Lancashire – by David Hindle

At the start of the swinging 1960s, thousands of young people drooled over a new generation of pop singers. Legendary names included Elvis Presley, Johnnie Ray, Lonnie Donegan and his skiffle group, Tommy Steel, Cliff Richards and, of course, the Beatles. Thus, changes in entertainment and culture spelled the end of the variety theatres and music hall.

In 1957 a local pop group called The Quarrymen played the Liverpool Empire theatre. They returned in 1959, having changed their name to 'Johnny and the Moondogs.' They appeared at the Empire again in 1962, now named The Beatles. Affectionately known by their fans as 'the fab four' the group played the Empire for the last time on 5 December 1965.

On 26 October 1962, the same relatively unknown pop group from Liverpool was booked by Vin Sumner to appear along with Mike Berry and the Outlaws at the Public Hall in Preston. The occasion was the Fulwood Grasshopper's Rugby Club dance; the Beatles were paid just £18 in total. Their first single 'From me to You' had just been released and tickets, as the image on page two shows, cost six shillings (30 pence). They even returned to the Public Hall the following year on 13 September 1963, for another gig; this time to wide acclaim. After the show, Paul McCartney drove to the Imperial Ballroom in Nelson, 25 miles from Preston, to be part of the judging panel for the Miss Imperial contest 1963



John Lennon singing. The Beatles 1963 concert: John Lennon on stage in front of the circle arches at Preston Public Hall (L.E.P.)



Beatles at Public Hall  
Original ticket to the 1963  
Beatles' gig (Preston Digital  
Archive)

### About PHS

PHS promotes the study of local history in Preston and Lancashire through a programme of talks given by local historians. We have an exciting programme of talks for 2024 -25. Summer guided walks are free to members and £5 to visitors.

Membership expires in May 2024. Please renew membership in May if you wish to take advantage of the free walks. Talks are held in the Central Methodist Church, Lune St. The annual member subscription is £20.00. Visitors £5.00 per talk.

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### Contact PHS

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# We Loved Them, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah !

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The Beatles travelled Lancashire extensively from 1961 to late 1964 performing gigs at Preston Public Hall, Fleetwood Marine Hall, Morecambe Floral Hall, in Wigan and Nelson and at Blackburn's King George's Hall on 9 June, 1963 where they co - starred with Roy Orbison.

The group played more than forty times in Lancashire, and during 1963 alone appeared 23 times at various venues.

At Blackpool they topped the bill at the Queen's Variety Theatre, where they had to be lowered into the theatre through a trap door on the roof to avoid the screaming fans blocking the entrances. They were also top of the bill on 18 July 1964 at the lavish ABC Theatre, Blackpool, now demolished. A more usual haunt of the Beatles was Southport, where they appeared at the Kingsway Club, as well as the Odeon Cinema about twelve times between March 1961, and October 1963. In their native Liverpool they made several appearances at the Liverpool Empire; the rest as they say is history. However, what is not generally known is that the Beatles once spent a night at a friend's house in Skeffington Road, Preston, when their van broke down following a gig.

*Right: The Beatles at the Preston Grasshoppers' Rugby Club dance, 1962 (L.E.P.)*

PUBLIC HALL, LUNE STREET, PRESTON  
The Preston Grasshoppers Rugby F.C.

Present the **1962 Rock & Beat Spectacular**

Featuring- The Top H.M.V. Recording Star  
**MIKE** Tribute to **BERRY** Buddy Holly

**FIRST VISIT TO PRESTON** **The Outlaws**

**AND MERSEYSIDES TOP COMBO** **The Beatles**

THE NORTH'S TOP BIG BAND *The Syd Munson Orchestra*

|                     |                        |                   |                       |
|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| FRIDAY<br>26th OCT. | Licensed<br><b>BAR</b> | Running<br>Buffet | Tickets<br><b>6'.</b> |
| 8pm to 2am          |                        | Late Transport    |                       |

# A Black History of Preston

*by Stewart Turner and Clinton Smith*

## Part 2 - The Windrush Generation and Beyond



*JALGOS cricket team*

When the Jalgos Cricket Club was formed in 1962 (see above), it became a focal point for the Caribbean community in Preston, a place that they could call their own. This event, however, needs to be set against the struggles of this community since the passing of the British Nationality Act of 1948 which stated that 'Commonwealth citizens could freely enter the UK'. The act was passed, partly, in response to a shortage of labour in vital industries in post-war Britain. Thus,



*Clinton Smith (Photography by tony@prestonblackhistorygroup)*

when the Windrush passenger ship docked at Tilbury that year with 1027, mostly male, passengers on board, they became known as the first of the ‘Windrush Generation.’ In fact, only 800\* of these gave their place of origin as the Caribbean.

At first, the destination for most of these was London and other major cities, but soon a substantial community was growing in Preston, and with it, problems of ‘race relations.’ During the Second World War, the people of



*Enjoying the carnival*

Bamber Bridge had made the black American GIs feel very welcome; their tolerance and friendliness in sharp contrast to the white US Army officers whose ‘Jim Crow’ attitude shocked the locals, and caused the Battle of Bamber Bridge in 1943. A decade later, however, the ‘No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish’ mentality had replaced this tolerance in many big cities, and Preston was not immune to this.

Gladstone Afflick, who came to England as a seventeen year old from Jamaica, recalls how ‘young West Indian guys couldn’t go into the pubs in town without a confrontation.... There was about five pubs along Friargate, before the Ring Road ... no black guys could go in the likes of the Black Horse, and the Waterloo, the National Front headquarters, that used to be. You could go into a fight seven days a week, if you wanted to by just walking into town. The only place we could go without any harassment was the public baths, in winter, when it was covered over into a dance floor.’

This, of course, was always a problem when there were groups of young men with time on their hands. The Jalgos Sports and Social Club, therefore, was one way of unifying the Caribbean Community, and providing a safe environment during this time. Not only that, but when Jalgos joined the Preston and District Cricket League, and a Jalgos Football team was formed, slowly, any animosity and racism on the sports field was replaced by respect (on the whole) and acceptance.

Acceptance was slow in coming, however, and by 1975, institutions such as Preston Dockers’ Labour Club

still practised a colour bar, refusing admission to Ivor Brown and Tony Sherrington, which was upheld by five Law Lords, despite a County Court judge and the Court of Appeal finding in favour of the Race Relations Board appeal. The injustice of this case felt by Tony Sherrington was increased because he was an ‘associate’ of the Working Men’s Club and Institute Union (CIU) #. He was born in Preston in 1944, the son of a Black American GI and a white English woman, had lived in Preston all his life, and was a member of Preston’s Meadow Street Labour Club. Society has changed a great deal since these times, but Clinton Smith, chair of Preston Black History Group (see above), recounted in a 2023 talk to Preston Historical Society, how he was asked to leave a Preston pub because of his colour.

On the positive side however, in 1974, local Prestonians with origins in St Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica and other Caribbean islands, founded Preston Carnival as an annual event from participants in the 1972 Preston Guild. It is the largest and longest-running cultural celebration in Preston outside the Preston Guild, attracting tens of thousands of visitors each year. And in 2012 ‘Auntie’ Elaine Marshall (see below) became the first Caribbean person to be elected an honorary Guild burgess. All this is a long way from the dark days after the arrival of the Windrush.



*Elaine Marshall with her award*

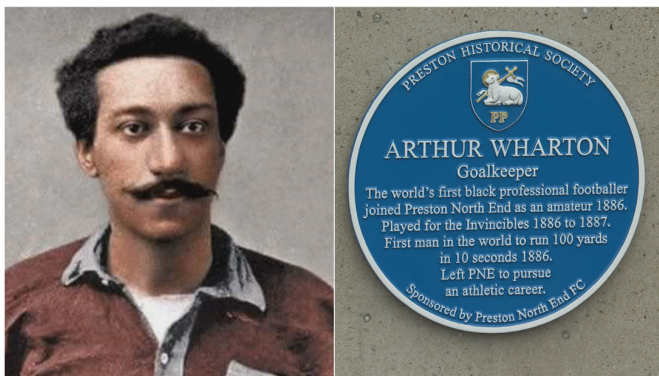
*\*Although the official figures are 800 passengers, there is no breakdown about how many were black West Indians. Clinton Smith of Preston Black History Group states : “we accept that there were just short of 500 black passengers, which leaves only approximately 527 others.”*

*# The CIU, established in June 1862 was a non-political federation of over 1600 clubs.*

# Arthur Wharton – A PNE Legend Celebrated

On 29 March this year a blue plaque to the first black professional footballer, Arthur Wharton, was unveiled at Preston North End’s Deepdale ground. Arthur signed for the club as an amateur in 1886. He played in goal and was part of the side which reached the semi-finals of the FA Cup in 1887. But Arthur was more than just a goalkeeper. In a wide-ranging career he was a boxer, a cricketer, a rugby player, and, in 1886, set a record for the 100 yards sprint – clocking a time of just 10 seconds. Arthur was hailed as the fastest man in the world!

Preston North End stated, ‘as part of our ‘Invincibles’



Arthur Wharton (Photo courtesy of PNE and Arthur Wharton Foundation)



Shaun Campbell with Deepdale Community Primary School children who gave a poetry reading

Project, and in collaboration with the Preston Historical Society, we are extremely proud of our link to Arthur, and the Blue Plaque is a way of displaying that connection and of showing how important it is to us and our community’. The day’s events were a collaboration between a number of organisations, including Preston North End’s Community and Education Trust, Preston Historical Society, and The Arthur Wharton Foundation. The latter is the brainchild of Shaun Campbell, founder of this foundation, who gave truly inspiring addresses, both at the unveiling of the plaque, and in the following event, explaining that the ethos of the foundation is ‘to impact the hearts and minds of a generation through education and events aimed at promoting equality and diversity’. Other organisations present were Preston Black History Group, Windrush Initiatives CIC, and Preston Windrush Generation. Also present were Arthur Wharton’s granddaughter, great-grandson, and great-great-granddaughter, making the day a true family and community affair.

## PHS PROGRAMME OF TALKS 2024

The new season of eight talks has an exciting programme included in the membership fee of £20. Visitors pay £5 each talk. Talks take place on the 2nd Monday of the month between September to May (excluding January)

9 September 2024

*Restoring Preston Basin: from coal carrier to carbon store?*  
Daniel Crowther

14 October 2024

*The role of Preston in the development of the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*  
Martin Cook

11 November 2024

*New Poor Law in Preston, with a focus on the long running dispute over the union workhouse between 1837 and 1865*  
Dr. Lewis Darwen

9 December 2024

*Crossing the Ribble: The Preston to Walton Summit ‘Old Tram Road’*  
Nigel Hardacre

The following summer guided walks are included in the membership fee, OR £5 to visitors.

Members must renew by 13 May 2024, at the last talk of the season, to take advantage of these walks. They can book a place on these walks at the same time. Places can also be booked by emailing committee member Judi Castley at [jcastley47@outlook.com](mailto:jcastley47@outlook.com). Places are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment!

## PHS Programme of Summer 2024 Guided Walks

| Date          | Event   | Meeting details   |
|---------------|---|---|
| Wed 22nd May  | A Historical Walk around Hurst Grange Park, Penwortham – guide Pete Wilkinson | Meet at the Café in the park, 1.00pm (parking in cemetery car park, Hill Road)            |
| Sat 13th July | Redscar Memorial Walk, with David Hindle                                      | Meet at Crematorium car park 2.00 p.m.  |
| Sun 21st July | PHS Preston Cemetery Walk – guide Pete Wilkinson                              | Meet by cemetery gates -corner of Blackpool Road/New Hall Lane (limited parking) - 2.00pm |
| Sun 25th Aug  | The Romans in Walton-le-Dale: The Archaeological evidence, with David Hunt    | Meet at St.Leonard’s church, Church Brow, Walton-le-Dale 2.00pm                           |