

What's on?



Heritage Open Days return on 13–15 September and the following weekend. Details of local properties open and other events are in the Open Days leaflet and on the web at <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting/printable-area-lists/laa/Preston>. In the Preston area you can visit the mediaeval well shaft in Plau Gin House, Friargate; St Walburge's; St Michael's, Ashton; Kennington Primary Grade II listed, 'Bubble' School, Fulwood (Saturday 14 September, 10am–12 noon); Argyll Road Cleansing Depot (Sunday 15 September, tours 10am, 11am, 1pm); Preston Town Hall (Saturday 14 September, tours 10am and 11.30am); UCLan Special Collections, Askew House, Corporation Street (Saturday 14 September, 11am–3pm); and many other interesting sites. There are also walks and tours at Fishwick Bottoms Nature Reserve (Saturday 14 September); Avenham and Miller Parks (Sunday 15 September); Harris Museum Egyptian Balcony (14 and 18 September); Preston Bus Station (Saturday 14 September); Preston Cemetery (Sunday 15 September) and Moor Park (Saturday 14 September, walk 11.15am).

The Friends of Winckley Square have walks on Saturday 14 September (10 walks) and Sunday 15 September (7 walks). Details are also at <https://www.winckleysquarepreston.org/>. Preston Arts Festival sees more walks: on Wednesday 16 October Peter Wilkinson leads a walk *Preston it's a gas!* It starts at 11am in Winckley Square. On Tuesday 15 October, Steve Harrison leads a walk *From Fishergate to the Ribble*. Meet in Winckley Square gardens at 11am. Judy Beeston leads an *Edith Rigby trail* on Saturday 19 October at 10am, Winckley Square.

At the South Ribble Museum, Leyland, there are Saturday talks at 11am: 7 September (Colin Dickinson on *Thomas Mawson, garden designer*), 14 September (David Hunt – *1941 Worden Hall fire*), 21 September (Diana Winterbotham – *17th-century Lancashire*), 28 September (Stephen Sartin tours *Victorian Preston*). On Thursday 19 September at 2pm, David Hunt explores *Worden Hall and its park*. He also leads a walk on *Joseph Livesey's Preston*, as a Preston Arts Week event, from the Harris, Wednesday 2 October at 10.15am. On 20 September, from 10am to 4pm, the South Ribble Museum, Leyland, welcomes a one day pop-up touring life size model, called 'Hope', of a suffragette made from Lego bricks. It's part of a House of Commons touring Great War commemoration 'Never Such Innocence'.

Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane, offer a tour on Heritage Open Day, 14 September (10am–3.30pm). On 17 September, at 7pm, Professor Robert Poole is talking about the 1819 Peterloo massacre and its bicentenary commemorations. On Lancashire Day, Wednesday 27 November, Dr Colin Penny talks about 'Rogues, villains and scoundrels of Lancaster Castle' at 12.30pm. Pre-booking is essential.

The next Preston Historical Society talks are by Dr Trevor Kirkham (A ramble round a Civil War sampler) 7 October; Dr Caroline Alexander (The story of Horrockses Fashions and the Harris Museum & Art Gallery) 4 November; and Dr Fiona Edmonds (The strategic importance of the River Ribble in the early mediaeval period) 2 December.

Woolworths occupied the prime central location at 30–31 Fishergate now occupied by Next.

The Woolworth's branch in Preston was the second one to be opened in Britain after the first in Liverpool. Preston opened as early as 5 February 1910. Until 1922 it was at the corner of Cannon Street. The store moved to a purpose-built, Art Deco building, faced with white faience tiles, designed by William Priddle, Woolworth's company architect.

The photograph to the left shows how busy Woolies was in the 1960s. Many men wear ties, hats and polished shoes. Ladies are in sensible coats, although one sports a leather-looking coat. Straw shopping baskets are fashionable. One woman carries a woven 'hen basket' which were modish in the early 1960s after Brigitte Bardot was seen carrying one.

Source: www.wooliesbuildings.wordpress.com/2018/04/09/preston-store-2

Do you remember?



Woolworth's, Fishergate Preston, 1963.



Preston Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

PROMOTING THE STUDY OF LOCAL HISTORY IN PRESTON AND LANCASHIRE

Issue 10

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About the PHS

The aims and objectives of the Preston Historical Society are to promote the study of local history in Preston and Lancashire by way of social and natural history talks given by local historians and speakers, various events, and by using social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Meetings usually start at 7.15 pm on the first Monday of each month during the season. The seasonal membership subscription is £12.50.

Non-membership admission is £3.00 per visitor.

Contact PHS

Need to contact the PHS for information or to find out any last minute info?

You can now call the PHS on

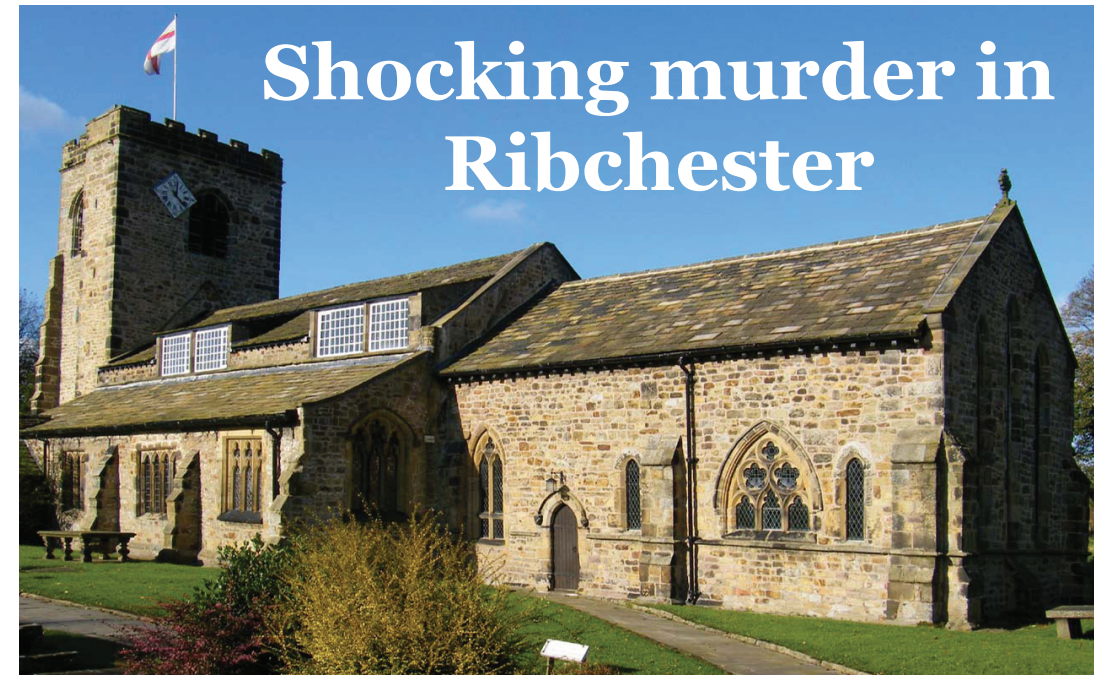
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COMING SOON

Monday
2 Sept 2019

The dreadful
murder of Ann
Walne, Ribchester

Speaker:
Sir Peter Openshaw



St Wilfrid's Church, Ribchester.

'Yesterday morning considerable painful excitement was caused at Ribchester by a rumour that an old woman had that morning been murdered in her own house. The report proved too true.

Near the Ribchester workhouse for 33 years resided Ann Walne, widow, aged 80 years, and much respected. She was a small farmer and beer seller. On Monday night a man who lived near to her, and who usually looked after the cattle, left her in the house about eight o'clock, and went home, she stating that as nothing was to do she would retire to bed. No one but herself slept in the house.

Yesterday (Tuesday) morning the man, as usual, a little after six o'clock, proceeded to the premises of the deceased. After foddering the cattle and cleaning the shippon, and the deceased not appearing, he proceeded to the house and knocked at the door, and continued knocking for a considerable length of time, and the old woman not answering, he proceeded home and acquainted his wife, thinking that something was amiss. He then proceeded to the

house of a neighbour of the name of John Pye, who accompanied him to the house of the old woman, and after knocking a short time and receiving no answer, they went to the back of the house, and found that one of the back windows had been forced out. Through it they went, and proceeded upstairs, and found the old woman laying on the bed, quite dead. Her hands were tied to the bedposts, and her mouth was gagged with a shawl. On examining the deceased a wound was found on her temple, which is supposed had been inflicted by the murderer with a churn handle which was in the room. The drawers had been rifled, and it is supposed that money had been taken, which she had provided to pay the rent yesterday.'

The Blackburn Standard, 12 November 1862.

If you wish to know what happened next, who were the perpetrators of this dreadful crime, and how Justice caught up with them all will be revealed in Sir Peter Openshaw's talk 'The Dreadful Murder of Ann Walne at the Joiner's Arms, Ribchester' on Monday 2 September 2019.

Friends of Winckley Square website now live

The informative and useful new website of the Friends of Winckley Square is now up and running at www.winckleysquarepreston.org. It has articles about famous people associated with the Square, news of events organised by the Friends, information about the gardens and their geography, and much more. The website is especially useful for local women's history. It's well worth a browse and bookmarking.



Nigel Morgan's thesis now online

An important 1980 thesis by the late Nigel Morgan is now available on Peter Smith's excellent Preston history website. It is about the social and political leadership in Preston 1820–1860. It's a rich source of interesting and useful information. You can read it at <https://prestonhistory.com/sources-2/social-and-political-leadership-in-preston-1820-60/>. Nigel Morgan's unpublished book about housing in nineteenth-century Preston have also been transcribed and posted at prestonhistory.com thanks to Peter Smith's exemplary industry and patience.

Some Winckley Square women

Agnes Stone-Roberts

Winckley Square may be seen as the symbol of the expanding upper middle class in Preston. Two hundred years ago the area in and around the Square housed some of Preston's leading families but, however picturesque the gardens were, the people in it were no more progressive than in any other area in England with their treatment of women. The education of women was very different from men's: for starters, many women did not get much schooling.

The formal education of the 'polite lady' was generally little more than music, literature, dancing, drawing and needlework. As the early Lancashire historian Peter Whittle said, they regarded '... all public and private schools as nurseries for men for the service of the church or state, and those for the softer sex as nurseries for piety and virtue.' So not only did the women's fathers (who in effect owned them) not give them an education that would enable them to survive on their own, when they got married, the bride and all her possessions were regarded as property of their husband. If a woman was unhappy in her marriage the only pathways tended to be: put up with it, or prepare to die a social death.

'I have learned the law respecting women, piecemeal, by suffering every one of its defects of protection' – this is what Mrs Caroline Norton, a novelist, poet and mother of three from London wrote to Queen Victoria after her husband treated her cruelly, publicly tried her for adultery, unjustly ruined her reputation, took her father's legacy, and deprived her of access to her three children; and despite all of this she was not allowed to obtain a divorce. Caroline used her skills and connections to fight back and her passionate campaigning contributed to the passing of the Custody of Infants Act of 1839, the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857, and the Married Women's Property Act of 1870. These laws, however, were too late or insufficient for many local women whose footsteps through Winckley Square I walk almost every day.



Engraving of Caroline Norton.



Portrait of Caroline Norton by Frank Stone.

Henrietta 'Minnie' Miller (1852–1926) of 5 Winckley Square was the eldest daughter of Thomas Miller the major shareholder of Horrocks's. Aged 20, she married Sutherland Dumbreck. Everything she previously owned, including the £30,000 (about £3.5m today) she inherited after her father's death in 1865, belonged to him. They had three children together but from the outset she was physically, verbally and emotionally abused, threatened and cheated on by her husband. The marriage lasted nine years until, though unusual, highly expensive and regarded as social suicide, she filed for a divorce, embracing the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857, advocated for by Caroline Norton. Though this act was a start, it was



Henrietta Miller.

by no means easy for women as they needed to prove adultery as well as another offence such as incest, cruelty, bigamy or desertion (a man, on the other hand, only needed to prove adultery to petition divorce). She listed adultery and cruelty – an action that took courage, family support and a respected and wealthy position in that period. Her divorce was heard and the final decree was granted on 12 November 1883. She married again two years later and lived happily in Sussex, but her marriage settlement from her first marriage was still active. Dumbreck, who remarried in 1896, was still reaping the benefits of her fortune. Although she petitioned the High Court for a change, she was unsuccessful and Minnie would continue to pay the costs out of her own settlement to the man who treated her brutally for just under a decade of her life.

Jacintha Hesketh (Major Thomas Hesketh's widow and mother of six) married Thomas Winckley in 1785. They had one daughter, Frances, born 1787. After they had married everything Jacintha possessed became the property of Thomas Winckley. The Winckley family name ended with Thomas Winckley, who died in 1794. When he died he left his wife only one house and the rest of his vast estate went to Frances. He also left over £2000 inheritance to his two illegitimate sons whom he had fathered before his marriage to Jacintha. Jacintha's five daughters, according to Frances Winckley's diary, were greatly disliked by him and lived separately from Frances. Her diary records that her mother's home 'was not a happy one'. Jacintha's daughters, whom we



Jacintha Hesketh.

would see as the rightful inheritors of the Hesketh/Winckley estate, were left with nothing when Winckley died. When Frances married John Shelley in 1807 (63 years before the passing of the Married Women's Property Act 1870) any money made by a woman either through a wage, from investment, by gift, or through inheritance automatically became the property of her husband. On Frances's marriage all of the Winckley estate became the property of the Shelley family. One property was sold to pay his gambling debts! The Married Women's Property Act of 1870 was too late for Jacintha Winckley and her daughters.

Other women were forced to adapt – take Elizabeth Swain for example. After her first husband died in June 1812, she went into trade with another woman Margaret Higham, as straw hat manufacturers; they were very successful and highly regarded. Almost twenty years later, immediately after her second marriage to John Swain in 1831, Elizabeth retired and moved into 29 Winckley Square. For most of their marriage John Swain did not live with his wife. When he died in the early 1850s he left her only £5 in his will and actually left several houses in Preston to his mistress. During this time Elizabeth was acquiring her own private income, though modest, from renting out her old bonnet shop and the house next door to her on Winckley Square. This meant by the time of her death she was able to live self-sufficiently. Elizabeth went to a great deal of trouble to make sure that her female relatives were not only left with a fair share of her estate in her will, but also, it was theirs and theirs alone. She did not want their share of her estate to be affected by the law that stated that when a woman was married her property then belonged to her husband – a law criticised and lobbied against by Caroline Norton.

Young women like me, who in the past were the main victims of these discriminatory laws, should be thankful that the laws have changed and for the bold women who helped it happen. We have a lot more freedom from the leash that marriage and divorce laws created for women just over a century ago.

New history boards



Two new history interpretation boards have been erected locally. Outside the Nuffield Health Leisure Centre at the Capitol Centre, Walton-le-Dale, there is a new display board describing the Roman camp which stood on the site for hundreds of years. It is only visible to car drivers approaching the Centre from the car park.

Another interesting sign is near the 'back door' of Preston railway station close to the car park. This describes the Jellicoe Express, the longest train service in Britain. It ran during the Great War from London Euston, via Preston, to Thurso at the north of Scotland, a journey of 707 miles taking about 22 hours. It is said to have been named after Admiral Sir John Jellicoe but, at the time, it was probably called the 'Naval Train' or, more realistically, 'The Misery'.