

Oldham and District Branch of the Manchester and
Lancashire Family History Society

Newsletter May 2017

oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk



Branch News

Last Meeting

We were very pleased to welcome Tony Foster, Vice-President of the Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society, to our meeting this month to give us an interesting presentation about the terrible Spanish flu pandemic.

Spanish Flu was a worldwide pandemic and resulted in 50 to 100 million deaths during 1918-1919. There were 228,000 deaths in the UK of which 611 deaths occurred in Oldham.

Tony used a variety of sources such as newspapers, MOH's reports and council minutes to illustrate how the Spanish flu pandemic affected the local communities of Lancashire.

It was named Spanish flu because it was reports from Spain which first hit the headlines as newspapers in other countries were censored due to war. However it's not believed that it began in Spain. One theory is that it began in Fort Riley army camp in America and that soldiers from there took it to France. Another is that it originated in France in 1916 and laid dormant. In the UK the disease was spread by soldiers returning from the war.

It came in three waves - the second wave being the most deadly in most places. In Oldham 103 people died in the first wave, 366 in the second wave and 142 in the third wave making a total of 611 for the outbreak in Oldham. At the end of 1918 the MOH's report for Rawtenstall reported more people dying than being born in the town that year.

People succumbed quickly. One example Tony gave was of young girl who one day was in normal good health but who died in the early evening of the next day. The cause of death was given as heart failure caused by severe influenza.

On 12th September 1918 Lloyd George, having received the freedom of the city of Manchester, was suddenly taken seriously ill and had to be nursed in the Town Hall until he was fit enough to return to London on 21st September still on respirator. His illness was kept secret to avoid alarm at a time of war.

James Niven, former MOH for Oldham, was the MOH for Manchester at this time. He is probably the first Medical Officer to enforce preventative measures to stop the spread of the disease resulting in the city from suffering a higher death toll. Measures were taken to combat the illness such as closing schools, cancelling political meetings and limiting theatre performances. Notices were issued on how to avoid catching the flu such as making sure rooms were well ventilated, avoiding crowds and spraying the nose and mouth.

Tony also showed us a variety of adverts for remedies which people could take such as Lemco and Evan's Pastilles. Another advert showed the Carbolic smoke ball. Other treatments were Dover's Powder, James's Powder and bleeding. There were 25 people at our meeting to hear this fascinating talk.

AGM

The following people were elected to the new committee:

Chair: Rod Melton

Secretary: Joan Secker-Wlodarczyk

Treasurer: Gill Melton

Committee : Susan Forshaw, Jennifer Lever, Joan Harrison, Carol Wells

We would like to thank Ian, for his work as treasurer, and Dorothy for all her work on the committee.

Next Meeting

May 13th - North Country Folklore - Peter Watson

This talk will look at some of the 'Folk-Learning' relating to healing, protection, the supernatural, popular beliefs and superstition. Peter lectures on social history, medieval history and popular culture and has been giving talks for 40 years. His particular interests are protective healing and image magic, and the uses of magical artefacts.

Held in the Education Suite, Gallery Oldham (a short walk from Oldham Central Metrolink Stop) at 2pm

Society News

Saturday 6th May 10.30am: Beginners' Talk - 19th and 20th Century Sources

The 19th century saw an explosion in the publication of material which can be of considerable value to family historians. In this session, John Marsden looks specifically at Newspapers, Trade Directories, Poll Books and Rate Books, examines the information they can provide and suggests where they might be located.

These talks are aimed at people new to family history research or those who simply wish to refresh their knowledge.

This talk will be held in the Performance Space at Manchester Central Library.

The talk is free to members. A fee of £3.00 will be charged to non-members but this is refundable if the individual joins the Society on the day of the talk.

Booking is required. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to book.

The Society Help Desk will be open after the event. The desk is located on the ground floor of Manchester Central Library on the far side of the main entrance.

Visit to Gorton Monastery, Gorton Lane, Manchester, M12 5WF Monday 8th May at 12 o'clock.

Price £8.40 (includes booking fee on Eventbrite)

The historic buildings were built between 1863 and 1872 by Franciscan monks

who had come to Manchester in 1861 to serve the local Catholic community. Designed by Edward Pugin, whose father helped design the houses of Parliament, Gorton Monastery is considered one of his finest masterpieces.

The Monastery is Grade II* listed and in the top 8% of buildings in England.

Our Visit

There will be a talk entitled "The Monastery Story" which tells the history of Gorton Monastery from the arrival of the first Friars in 1861 to the present day. Presented by one of the Monastery's experienced Trust team, it will explore some of the secrets of the building and its amazing story of survival against the odds. We will also have a talk from the Monastery's Archivist, Janet Wallwork, who will share a story about the saints and tell us all about her work.

There will also be an opportunity to look round the former church and friary and enjoy the gardens. Refreshments are also available to buy in the Friar's Pantry.

Directions:

By car from Manchester:

Take the A635 Ashton Old Road or A57 Hyde Road to the A1060 Inner Ring Road. Turn there following the brown tourist Monastery signs and look out for the green spire. Free parking

By bus :

The 205 bus from Manchester stops outside the Monastery.

Please book on eventbrite via the Society home page.

Saturday 20th May at 2.00pm Anglo - Scots Meeting

The Reivers: Survival, Terror and Politics in the Borders 1296-1610

A talk given by Andrew Lowes at Manchester Central Library.

Please book on Eventbrite

Local News

Talks by Other Groups (which are not part of our society)

Chadderton Historical Society

AGM

At Chadderton Football Club, Andrew Street at 7.30pm on **Thursday 4th May.**

Royton Local History Society

Three Oldham Bombs

A Talk by John Fidler at Downey House, Church Street, Royton at 7.30pm on **Monday 8th May.**

Saddleworth Historical Society and Friends of Castleshaw Roman Forts

Viking Age Gold and Silver in the North West

A talk by Professor James Graham-Campbell at Saddleworth Museum at 7.30pm

on **Wednesday 13th May.**

Oldham Historical Research Group

Remembered Still The Life of Samuel Laycock

A talk by Rita Vaughan at Oldham Local Studies and Archives at 7pm on **Wednesday 17th May.**

Moorside and District Historical Society

AGM followed by Times Past: Methodist Chapel, Part Two - updates and new material.

At St Thomas' Church Lounge, Moorside at 7.30 on **Monday 15th May**

Research News

Update from Lancashire Online Parish clerk

A number of records from our area have recently been added:

[Marriages 1892 to 1902 and Burials 1865 to 1874](#) from the Church of St Margaret of Antioch, Hollinwood

[Baptisms 1870 to 1874](#) from the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Patrick, Oldham

[Marriages 1898 to 1906](#) from the Church of St Thomas, Werneth, Oldham

WDYTYA Live

Handouts of the talks by speakers at WDYTA in Birmingham this year are available on the following website. The handouts go back to 2014.

<http://www.sog.org.uk/learn/who-do-you-think-you-are-live-2014-speakers-handouts/>

That's all for this month. We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter. Thank you to those of you who have been in contact with us.

We value your comments.

oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk

Sue Forshaw, Newsletter Editor

Assisted by Irene Whitby

