

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

Newsletter July 2017

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Branch News

Last Meeting

10th June - Skeletons in the Cupboard - Alan Morrison

Our speaker this month, Alan Morrison, first became interested in family history about fifty years ago when he was told that one of his ancestors was Danish. He explained how he went about trying to prove this was true as there didn't seem to be any Danish names in his family.

Alan then went on to detail the resources he used such as trade directories, lists of members' interests from family history societies, family photos, family bibles, census returns and professional directories. He also used the IGI index which is now Family Search. Most of all he talked to his relatives and collected family stories.

Family stories told him that his great grandfather, James Morrison, was an importer of potatoes to Manchester who had become bankrupt and had fled to America where Alan's grandfather, Lawrence, had been born to James and his wife Mary Thornley.

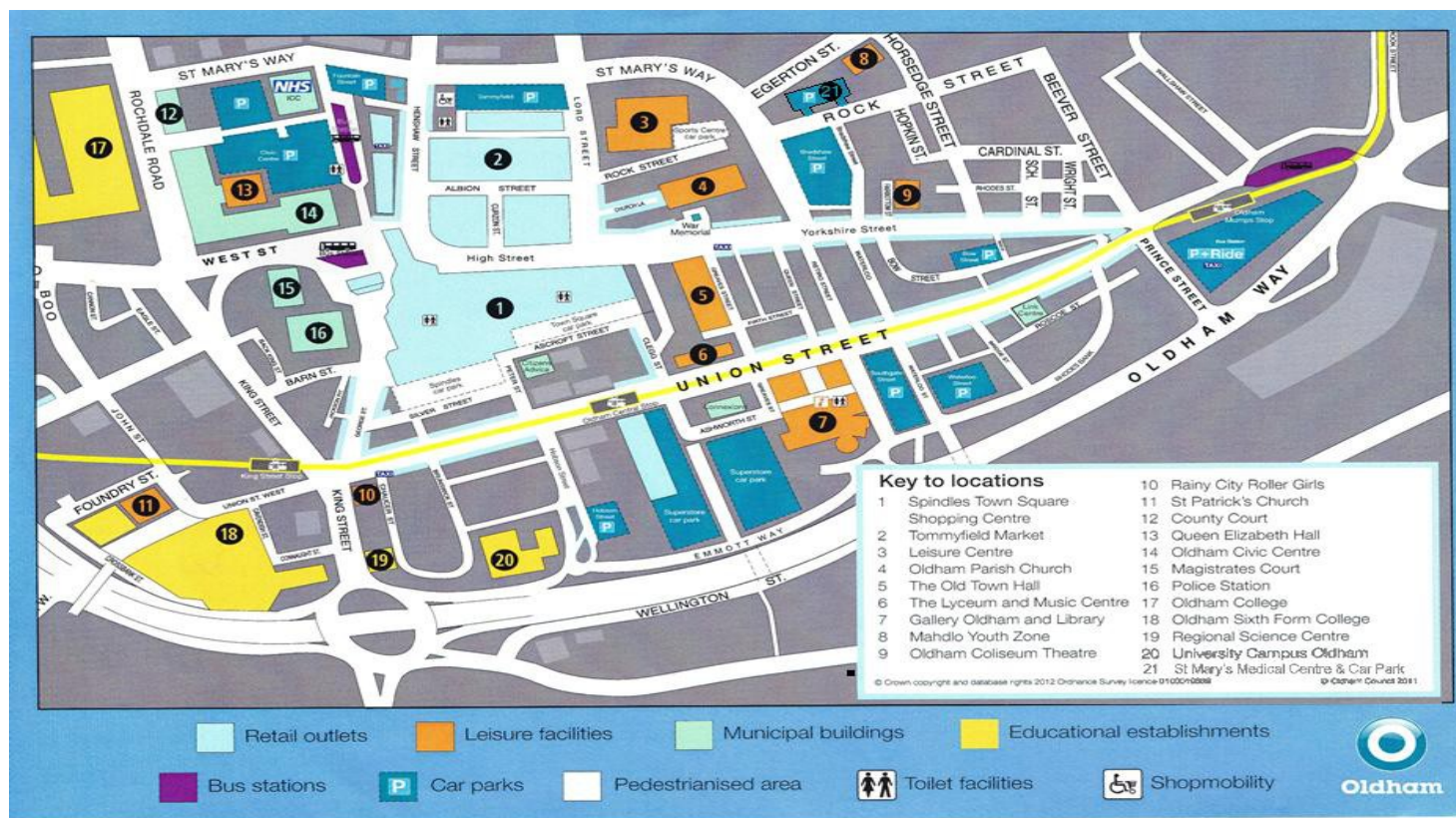
Alan searched for a marriage of James Morrison to Mary Thornley in about 1871 in Manchester but was unable to find it. His breakthrough came when looking at the 1881 census return for his ancestor Alpheus Thornley and realised that his daughter, Mary was living with the family as a married woman under the name of Mary Levy. He was then able to find her marriage to a Naphthaly Hirsch Levy in 1871. According to the 1871 census Naphtaly had been born in Schleswig Holstein, Prussia which was originally part of Denmark. Therefore Alan had proved the Danish connection and Naphtaly had changed his name to James Morrison in America.

This talk was thoroughly enjoyed by all and taught us a valuable lesson in how to be a family history detective to search for our elusive ancestors.

Future Meetings

There will be no meetings in July and August. The September and October meetings will be held at Mahdlo, Egerton Street, Oldham. (marked 8 on the map) The room we are meeting in has its own entrance on the Horsedge Street side and we are allowed to park in St. Mary's Medical Centre car park (no. 21 on the map) off Rock Street, which is almost back to back with Mahdlo.

Madhlo only has two disabled parking spaces in front of it on Egerton Street.



The next meeting will be on **Saturday 9th September** and will be a talk given by **Cpl Stewart Cook on the Third Battle of Ypres**

Stewart will be talking about if it was the Somme all over again? What was different? What were its aims and objectives? War in 1917 was changing; equipment, strategy and manpower.

14th October - Early Asylum Life - David Scrimgeour

This presentation is about mental asylum records. David realised some years ago that these records have the potential to enable family historians to explore an almost untapped source of first hand information about their ancestors. He explored the fascinating archived case notes of 11,500 patients admitted to the West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum, 1818-1869. What he found led to the publication of his first book: Proper People. Early Asylum Life in the Words of Those Who Were There. This illustrated presentation uses material from the archives to take the audience back in time to experience what life was really like for inmates in an early 19thC county asylum.

11th November - The National Memorial Arboretum - Peter Hardy

The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, which has 30,000 trees and 320 memorials across 150 acres and is a nationally-recognised centre of remembrance. Peter, a volunteer at the Arboretum for 9 years, will outline the history and development of the site and provide a visual tour of some of the memorials, explaining the symbolism and stories behind them and what they

represent.

We hope that we will have a larger audience because the speaker is from the National Arboretum and we would like to encourage you to bring your friends along.

Please note because the room at Mahdlo is not very big we have moved this meeting to the **Lees Suite at Oldham Civic Centre**, which will also be our venue for the whole of 2018. If you are not sure where the entrance is directions follows:

The entrance for the Civic Centre (marked 14 on the map) is to your left at the bottom end of the Car Park adjacent to the bus station, a long low building with a revolving and two disabled doors. If you go in one of these doors the security guard will direct you to the Lees Suite. There is also a ramp with a vehicle barrier leading to these doors from the bottom end of West Street. If you are coming by tram get off at King Street and walk along King Street and up West Street. (There is a drinks vending machine in the reception area which costs 30p per cup but does not give change and there is also water available in the Lees Suite).

Local News

Mayoral Sunday 21st May

On Sunday 21st May at 9-30am Gill and I met up near the Civic Hall to march, with others, the short distance along High Street to Oldham Parish Church led by a pipe band and the new mayor of Oldham Councillor Shadab Qumer. We were met by Rod and Joan Harrison as we entered the church, to represent the



M&LFHS Oldham Branch, at the annual Mayoral Sunday service.

Councillor Qumer took over the office of mayor from Councillor Derek Heffernan on Wednesday 17th May. He will be assisted during his year of office by his wife and his daughter who will share the Mayoress job and his chaplain, Imam Aakash Ahmed. His chosen charities are Maggie's Oldham, Ghazali Trust and Action Oldham Fund. After the church service, in which the Mayor became a Churchwarden, the procession marched back to the Civic Centre for tea and biscuits.

I'm sure you will all join with us in wishing him well, as he goes out in the coming year, as the ambassador for Oldham.

By Joan Secker-Wlodarczy

Sides of Silence: Remembering the Battle of the Somme

On Saturday 1st July 2017 Oldham Theatre Workshop in association with Oldham Local Studies and Archives will be performing their acclaimed immersive theatre experience "Sides of Silence: Remembering the Battle of the Somme."

The performance lasts about 45 minutes and will take place in the recently refurbished Egyptian Room of Oldham Town Hall, Greaves Street, Oldham. There will be three performances at 11am, 1pm and 3pm followed by refreshments.

Places are strictly limited so if you would like to take part in this unique event please book your place by contacting Oldham Local Studies and Archives, 84 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DN, Tel: 0161 770 4654; e-mail: archives@oldham.gov.uk

There will be a small charge of £2.00 payable on the day.

For more information see

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/press/article/1376/sides_of_silence_remembering_the_battle_of_the_somme

Mentioned in Who Do You Think You Are Magazine

Alan Crosby, who came to talk to us about the Poor Law, is a regular contributor to the WDYTIA magazine. In the July issue he talks about his visit to our meeting and describes the panoramic photograph of Oldham in the Naked Bean cafe.

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

Chadderton Historical Society

Local History Ramble: Retracing the Deluge-walking the route of a disastrous flood in the River Irk Valley from Streetbridge through to Mills Hill.

Meet at Victoria Street Car Park, Chadderton for transport at 7pm on **Thursday 6th July.**

Saddleworth Historical Society

Halifax Reformation Stories and the 1611 Bible

A talk by David Glover at Saddleworth Museum at 7.30pm on **Wednesday 12th July.**

Oldham Historical Research Group

Wheels in Oldham and Beyond

A talk by John Holmes at Oldham Local Studies and Archives at 7pm on **Wednesday 26th July.**

Moorside and District Historical Society

Miscellany

Up-dates on past meeting with new information.

Plans for Heritage Open Day in September.

At St Thomas' Church Lounge, Moorside at 7.30 on **Monday 17th July.**

Society News

Quarterly Meeting - 19th July

10.30 am to 3.30 pm

10.30 am **Caldwells Nurseries of Knutsford**

History of the nurseries, which operated for more than 200 years and supplied the local estates

12 noon Lunch

1.00 pm **The Working Class Movement Library**

Speaker:Royston Futter

Discover the stories of the working class people's struggles to be heard.

Registration is essential. To register, visit the [Eventbrite](#) booking page

Peterloo Project - A project to discover the stories of all the people who attended the Peterloo demonstration of 1819

Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society has launched a project to find the descendants of those attending the peaceful demonstration that has become known as the as the Peterloo Massacre. We want to record their stories as a lasting memorial to them. Please help us.

We have the kind permission of Dr. Michael Bush and his publishers, Carnegie Publishing, to use the list he compiled from seven resources to give a list of the injured. Also the kind permission of Peter Castree to use the list he has compiled. We have set up a web page at www.peterloo.mlfhs.org.uk together with a mail address of peterloo@mlfhs.org.uk. This project is to be launched on a worldwide basis and hope that you contribute to this project, we are looking to involve as many people as possible.

For further information please view the website www.peterloo.mlfhs.org.uk

Rod Melton will be attending Manchester Central Library each Tuesday between 10:30 and 15:00 please go to the Manchester and Lancashire Family History desk and ask for Rod and he will come down to see you.

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.

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Sue Forshaw, Newsletter Editor

Assisted by Irene Whitby