

# Newsletter

## December 2018



Part of Manchester & Lancashire  
Family History Society

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### Branch News

#### GOOD NEWS!

We have managed to book the Education Suite at Gallery Oldham again up to June 2019, as work has not yet started on the refurbishment. Unfortunately, it is already booked for 9<sup>th</sup> February so the Oldham Committee have agreed that our **first meeting next year will be on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019** when David Muil, our Society Chairman, will present to us "Crooks and Coffin Ships Part 2".

**We hope this change of venue will encourage more of our members, and non-members, to attend.**

Please see Oldham website for more information  
<http://www.oldham.mlfhs.org.uk/>

#### A Message from the Society Chairman

I am delighted to hear that, after a protracted search, the Oldham Branch Committee has announced a successor to Chairman Rod Melton. I am confident that Linda Richardson will carry on the devoted work of her predecessors. Her specific task in the immediate term will be to steer the branch through a sharp decline caused by the enforced change of venue. I am sure that this is only temporary. Judging by the distribution list of the branch newsletter almost a quarter of MLFHS members profess a lasting interest in the research of Oldham ancestors. This bodes well for the future of the branch.

Linda will need the assistance of an energetic committee and the support of a large core of regular members attending the branch's programme of speakers, events and projects. Even with Linda on board, the present committee alone will find it hard to bring about the desired improvement and I would urge all those who can commit a little of their time and expertise to rally round and take on one

or other of the many tasks it takes to organise the branch activities.

On behalf of the Society Trustees, I thank Rod and the present committee for their sterling efforts to combat the decline in the branch's fortunes. I trust that with their support and that of others, Linda will be able to see some progress as 2019 advances. It is, after all, the bi-centenary year of the Peterloo Reform Meeting, an event with far-reaching consequences for the working man and woman – an event in which men, women and children from the Oldham district took part in massive numbers. The anniversary ought to be at the forefront of the Branch's timetable in the coming year.

I commend Linda Richardson to you and urge you to pledge as much support as you can to the efforts of her and the branch committee. I trust 2019 will bring better times to Oldham Branch,

Sincerely,  
David Muil

### **Newsletter**

There will be no newsletter next month but we hope to have one in February when we will give you more information about the meeting in March which will be in the **Education Suite, Gallery Oldham**.

We are also looking for a new newsletter editor as I am hoping to step down from this role. If you think you might be interested please e mail the oldham office [oldham@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:oldham@mlfhs.org.uk)

Sue Forshaw

### **Last Meeting**

#### **Saturday 10th November**

#### **Tracing My Grandfather**

#### **A presentation by Dr. Alan Crosby**

A life of secrets, drama, disappearance and discovery.

This was a fascinating story told to us by Alan about how he managed to piece together the story of his grandfather, George Crichton Stuart Crosby, known as Crichton, whom Alan's father never knew.

Alan has only been able to trace him in recent years thanks to the internet and a pile of letters found after his grandmother died.

Crichton met Alan's grandmother Nora when he was convalescing in the Palace Hotel, Buxton which was a military hospital during the First World War. Although he had been born in England Crichton had been living in Canada and so returned to Canada after 6 weeks of convalescing. Norah followed him back and they got married and had 2 children, one being Alan's father who was born in 1924.

However Crichton had an affair and embezzled money. He sent Norah back to England in 1925 with money obtained from her father. She never saw him again.

Alan used letters found in his grandmother's bureau and newspaper accounts in Canada and Australia as well as Australian military, marriage and death records to trace his father. He was also helped by the fact that, although Crichton changed his name to John Spencer, he kept the same date of birth and his initials within his new name - John C.S.Spencer.

Alan discovered that his grandfather had to flee from Canada to Australia. He also discovered that his father was a bigamist. However Crichton redeemed himself in Alan's eyes by serving in the Australian Medical Corps during the Second World War and by running an Aboriginal reserve in New South Wales.

Alan has also been able to meet his uncle - his father's brother, born 20 years after Alan's father, who lives in the Daintree Rainforest in Australia.

This was an excellent talk which showed how the family historian can be a detective.

## **Society News**

### **Saturday 12th January 2019, 10.30am: Beginners' Talk - Time to Start Your Family Tree - First Steps**

Leslie Turner will be talking about the basics of beginning your family history research along with mention of items you need to check along the way and the possible pitfalls and incorrect information you may find.

This meeting 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 on Eventbrite is required via the Society's Home Page. [www.mlfhs.org.uk](http://www.mlfhs.org.uk)

### **The Quarterly Meeting - Wednesday 16th January 2019**

To be held in the Performance Space, Manchester Central Library.

#### **10.30 am Sir Neville Cardus 1888 - 1975**

##### **Speaker: Chris O'Brien**

Sir Neville Cardus has an amazing life: born in Manchester, the son of a prostitute and unknown father, made his name with the Manchester Guardian and received a knighthood in 1967

12.00 noon Lunch

#### **1.00 pm The Boat Families of the Leeds - Liverpool Canal**

##### **Speaker: Bill Huyton**

Bill's talk gives an insight into the boat families who travelled upon and down the

Leeds - Liverpool Canal

### **Registration is essential**

To register, click the Eventbrite logo on our web page [www.mlfhs.org.uk](http://www.mlfhs.org.uk)

The meeting is **FREE** to paid up MLFHS members, but there is a charge of £3 (payable at time of booking for non-members. If, however, you decide to join MLFHS on the day this fee will be refunded

## **Local News**

### **Talks by Other Groups ( not part of our society)**

#### **Saddleworth Historical Society**

##### **Forgotten Men? Prisoners of War in the Great War**

Illustrated Presentation by Prof. Bob Moore at Saddleworth Museum on **Wednesday 5th December** at 7.30pm.  
non-members £3

#### **Chadderton Heritage**

##### **Audenshaw Heritage Walk**

We are pleased to welcome this evening Julie and Stephen Fisher from Audenshaw Local History Society...

The lounge of Chadderton Football Club on **Thursday 6th December** at 7.30 pm.

#### **Royton Local History Society**

##### **The Secret Heart of Manchester**

A talk by Geoff Scargill at Downey House, Church Street, Royton on **Monday 10th December** at 7.30pm

#### **Oldham Historical Research Group**

##### **The History of Hathershaw Hall**

A talk by Carl Gannon at Oldham Local Studies and Archives on **Wednesday 19th December** at 7pm

**Newsletter written by Sue Forshaw**

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