

Wilmslow Historical Society: Winter Newsletter 2022



Dear Wilmslow Historical Society Members

Your committee thought it was timely to share another newsletter to not only wish you a **Happy Christmas** but to keep you in the loop on various things that reflect the return to post-Covid normality!

Christmas Party: Nearly 60 of us gathered for the resurrection of our Christmas Social this week. A cunning quiz and a raffle kept us all entertained before, during and after an excellent meal. Definitely an event firmly fixed back into our annual programme.



Speakers: We have had the pleasure of the company of three excellent speakers so far for the 2022/23 season. Claire Moore's talk on the records and practices of the Quaker community locally and further afield was fascinating and insightful. The presentation certainly gave food for thought on how some past Wilmslow residents maintained and developed their faith and their places of worship in the area.



The Quaker Meeting House



Congleton Coins



Lydia Becker

We were also very grateful to Ian Doughty of Congleton Museum who was available at very short notice to entertain us with the stories of the Congleton Coin Hoards. How many of us were aware of them or of the Congleton museum itself? A possible venue for one of early group outings perhaps.

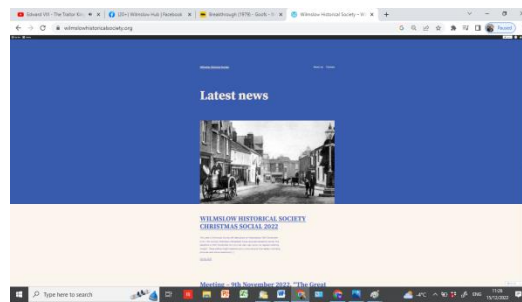
And then for November Joanna Williams returned with her new and superbly researched study of the indomitable Lydia Becker – another Manchester leader of thought and deed in the early phases of the battle for women's suffrage.

Looking forward: Next year we shall have a rich mix of Cheshire presentations and reflections on more recent events from the latter half of the last century. (See the programme for 2023 overleaf.)

The programme for 2023/24 is already nearly fully “cooked”. One evening will be “An Evening of Miscellany” with short presentations by members. We would like to make this a regular annual feature – so if you would like to share the results of your personal interest or research – please let us know and we will book you a slot – although it might be quite a way ahead!

Which brings us to our future need for someone to help us with the role of “Speaker Secretary” from next year to help us populate the programme for 2023/24. It could be you!! Alan is standing down after 12 years, though will be very supportive and available to make suggestions from time to time.

Going Digital! Many thanks go to Mike for joining the Committee and helping us set up our new website! Now to be found at <https://wilmslowhistoricalsociety.org/>



We plan that during the year ahead we will be able to place interesting “things” on the website and make it an active and interesting place where people both local and afar can learn and be entertained by historical articles, pictures and videos etc. This may include putting on some of our Zoom lectures from Covid times and making links to other “interesting” places such as the Wilmslow Hub and the Remembering Wilmslow Facebook pages.

If you have some research or pieces of Wilmslow memorabilia you would like to share – the website is just the place! It is your site.

This compliments the further work of Mike and Corey (our Treasurer) on establishing the ability for us to take membership applications and fees on-line for the first time this year. **Whilst** we know many members still prefer the tried and tested written application form and cheque, over 50 members did use the on-line payment method. This made the administration of the annual membership process much easier to handle – particularly given that bank branches in Wilmslow seem to be becoming part of the Town’s history in themselves!!

Archives and Research: In its some 55 years of existence, the Society has accumulated many documents, photographs and press cuttings and has produced some outstanding, and expertly researched publications. Many of these have been carefully looked after in attics and garages of past and present Committee members and others but are all on paper - they now lend themselves to further cataloguing with a view to us possibly listing digitally.

Several members have done sterling work in past years drawing together lists of what we have in the boxes and files. Now may be the time to design and populate a database where what we have can be searched digitally - perhaps via the website?

Could you or someone you know work with us to help build a database framework that others could then populate? Please get in touch.

Wider Activities: During this year, our Society has engaged in a number of activities that have raised our profile and provided several new areas of interest and research. These have included the highly successful history walks around the Town centre in which over 80 people took part.

Directly or indirectly this has opened up a new dialogue about gathering memories, pictures and records to recall Clegg's Department Store. Clegg's served Wilmslow for nigh on 100 years standing on the corner of Hawthorn Lane and Bank Square and was for many years probably the most celebrated shop in Wilmslow.



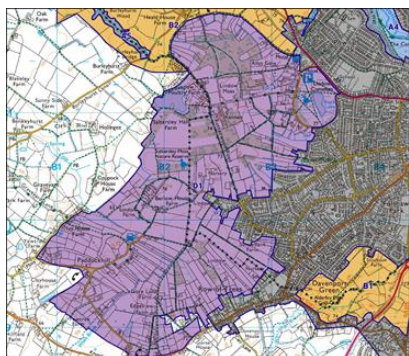
We are asking for your help to remember Clegg's department store. The Society was very pleased to be presented with the Clegg's company seal by Ann Rogerson, daughter of Joan Rogerson who for many years was the company accountant. This also prompted our archivist Jon Armstrong's latest regular, superb pieces in Inside Wilmslow magazine.

Jon Kelly is now leading a small Society team to write a history of Clegg's and they want to hear peoples' recollections of working or shopping there; perhaps dropping into the café for scones and cream or going down the stairs with the family to see Santa Clause at Christmas. Please let us have any memories you may have of working or shopping there

Walter Shields Clegg opened his store at the corner of Church Street and Hawthorn Lane in January 1881. Clegg specialised as an outfitter and soft furnisher but added a thriving funeral service business to the store, and was remarked by customers to be "very impressive in his frock coat and black silk hat". A customer could purchase silk at £0/1/11 per yard, and a gentleman could select from a range of shirts with prices up to almost £3 produced in-house by a team of their own seamstresses and tailors, some of whom lived above the shop with the Clegg family.

Lindow Moss: Major Wilmslow community efforts are afoot to secure Heritage Lottery Funds for a programme of work to improve the landscape, environment and history of the 74 hectares of Lindow Moss – stretching from Lindow Common to Moor Lane and the old Bird in Hand. The Historical Society has been invited to join the civic thinking with a view to being the source of supporting historical information in relation to subjects as wide as the bog bodies, peat extraction

back to mediaeval times, rifle ranges and the racecourse. Let us know in the New Year if you would like to be involved.



Lindow Moss

Alan Turing: Our other ongoing project is to work with our friends in Wilmslow Civic Trust to commemorate the life and time spent in Wilmslow by Alan Turing. Building on the public lecture last year - our stand at the Wilmslow nature festival, the sponsored Park Run and the commissioning of our portrait - the team are now working with an installation artist to organise a further "symposium" in 2023 from which we hope some tangible design ideas will start to emerge.



2023		
11 January	Stephen Shakeshaft	A tour around the old city centre of Chester
8 February	John Wallace	Overpaid and Over Here
8 March	Dave Walmsley	Post War Britain 1945-60, Politics and Society
12 April	Paul Newman	"Cheshire's Archives: a story shared"
10 May	David Briggs	Down the Rabbit Hole with the Hankinsons plus AGM

**Best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a
Prosperous New Year!**

Please make contact via: wilmslowhistoricalsociety@gmail.com or 01625 536909