

## HLHS Members Newsletter

March 2022

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We would like to hear from you! Please send any news, details of events and books, requests for information and comments that you think may be of interest to other Huddersfield Local History Society members to [publications@huddersfieldhistory.org.uk](mailto:publications@huddersfieldhistory.org.uk)



*undated photograph of a trolleybus on Kirkgate, with the Palace Theatre (right) and Southgate Hotel (background centre left)*

Welcome to our March 2022 newsletter - we hope you enjoy it. A theme running through it is the resumption of activities as we 'learn to live with Covid'. The next newsletter will appear towards the end of April.

*David Griffiths and Dave Pattern*

## **HLHS Committee**

### **Chair:**

Cyril Pearce

### **Vice-Chair:**

*vacant*

### **Secretary:**

Dave Pattern

### **Treasurer:**

Steve Challenger

### **Membership**

#### **Secretary:**

Val Davies

#### **Minutes**

#### **Secretary:**

Richard Hobson

### **Publications**

#### **Secretary:**

David Griffiths

#### **Publicity:**

Chris Verguson

### **Journal Editor:**

Robert Piggott

#### **Web Site:**

Dave Pattern

### **Other**

#### **Committee**

#### **Members:**

Janette Martin

Maureen Mitchell

Beverley Norris

*With the exception of  
our own web site,  
Huddersfield Local  
History Society is  
not responsible for the  
content of any web sites  
linked to  
in this newsletter.*

## **Our next talk – in person!**

No sooner had we announced in our recent members' letter that we would be meeting in **Huddersfield Town Hall** on **Monday 28 March (7.30 pm)** than our speaker, Dr Stephen Caunce, was forced to withdraw for unavoidable personal reasons. However, Steve Challenger has been able to step into the breach with a study of the men responsible for running Marsden Mechanics' Institute and their influence on the village and beyond in the 19th century. Since retirement from further education, Steve has been researching various aspects of Marsden life in the 19th century, and is currently the Society's Treasurer.

The meeting will be in the Reception Room, and we very much hope members will feel able to join us for the first time in over two years. With the demolition of the Market multi-storey car park, the Civic Centre car park in Albion St should be the best bet for free evening car parking.

## **Future meetings**

In April we will return to the University (room to be confirmed) for the annual Luddite Lecture, in partnership with the University. This year's Lecture, on **Monday 25 April** at 7.30pm, will be:

***Rise Now from Your Slumber: Peterloo, Song and Protest***  
- Dr Alison Morgan

Further meetings are scheduled as follows:

Monday 30 May: ***Celebrating 100 Years of the Tolson Memorial Museum, the museum of Huddersfield*** - Ann Denham

Monday 27 June: ***Walking round Wooldale – Glimpses into the history of a Holme Valley village*** – Pam Cooksey and Judith Barden

## Philip Jenkinson

Yet again we have to record with sadness the death of a Society member and contributor to local history. Active in numerous transport-related organisations, Philip was the author of *Sunbeams and Showers: Memories of Huddersfield Trolleybuses in the 1950s & 1960s*, and co-author of the Discover Huddersfield Transport Trail. His brief history of County Motors appeared in this newsletter in May 2021. In the activities which the Society initiated to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Huddersfield Corporation in 2018, he curated the transport section of the exhibition held at Heritage Quay. His expertise will be sorely missed.

## Local Studies Library opening times

Extended opening hours for Local Studies at Huddersfield Library are set out below. Advance appointments are no longer required, but can help the staff to prepare research material.



Estate Buildings, Railway St, Huddersfield © Kirklees Local Studies

### Kirklees Local Studies is open at Huddersfield Library

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9.30am-7:00pm	9.00am-5:00pm	CLOSED	9.00am-7:00pm	9.00am-5:00pm	9.30am-4:00pm

To talk to us or to book an appointment

please email [localstudies.library@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:localstudies.library@kirklees.gov.uk) or phone 01484 221000 ext 79753 ask for Local Studies

**We are: Kirklees Libraries. Local Studies**



## Discover Huddersfield back in business

With our recent letter, members will have received this year's brochure of Discover Huddersfield walks – no fewer than 20 of them, the largest programme yet. Just a reminder that **advance booking is now required for all walks**, with booking links appearing in the brochure and on the [Discover Huddersfield website](#). To receive an email reminder when booking opens for each walk (two weeks beforehand), you can join the mailing list by emailing [discoverhuddersfield@gmail.com](mailto:discoverhuddersfield@gmail.com)

## Return of the Family History Fair

After a two-year gap due to the Covid restrictions, Huddersfield & District Family History Society will be holding their Family and Local History Fair on Saturday 15 October at Cathedral House, Huddersfield. Save the date! - more details to follow.

## Creating Kirklees: 150 years of local democracy

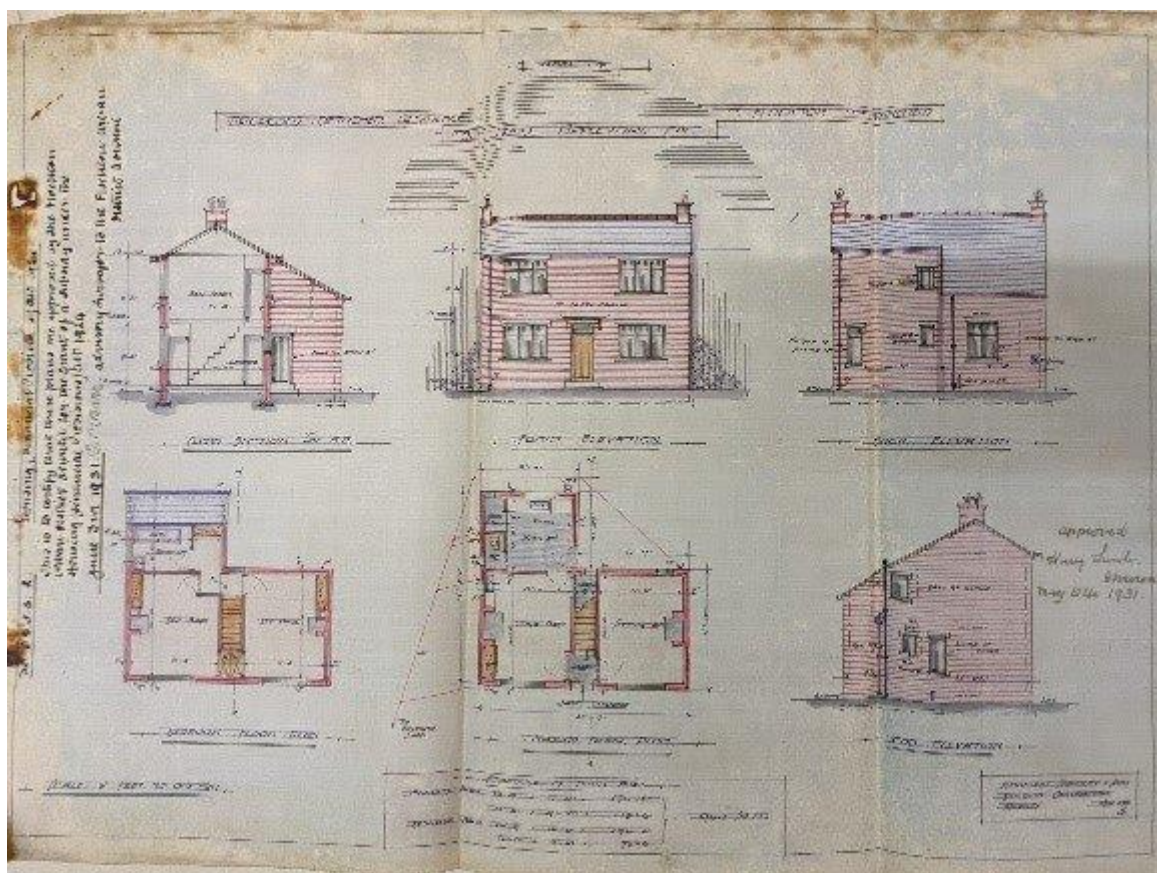
*As we've reported before, the Society is represented on the steering group of this project. An update from WYAS appears below.*



In August 2020 the Kirklees office of West Yorkshire Archive Service, with support from HLHS and other local societies, was successful in securing a £40,000 cataloguing grant as part of the Archives Revealed programme, run by the National Archives in partnership with The Pilgrim Trust and The Wolfson Foundation. The resulting

project; 'Creating Kirklees: 150 years of local democracy', aims to catalogue and celebrate the archives of the 11 local authorities that merged to form the Borough of Kirklees in 1974 and their predecessors, back to the 1820s.

After Covid-19 related delays the project got underway in August 2021. To date there has been significant progress in cataloguing the records of some of the smaller authorities which existed prior to 1938, when the first major amalgamation of local councils took place. These include places such as Honley, Lepton, Flockton, Kirkheaton, Thurstonland, Farnley Tyas, Golcar, Slaithwaite, Scammonden, Marsden and Skelmanthorpe. The records of these councils have been catalogued in full and will soon be available for researchers to search and request [via the online catalogue](#).



Within the collections catalogued so far we have made some wonderful discoveries including records relating to Belgian refugees housed locally during WWI; correspondence and case papers relating to WWI military tribunals; and plans, specifications and correspondence relating to innovative council housing schemes launched in the 1920s.

We have also located a large number of rate books and valuations, the earliest of which date from the early 1800s, which are likely to be a fantastic resource for family and local historians.



Since September 2021 a small but dedicated team of volunteers has been working hard on the project, helping to repackage and catalogue files dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries created by Huddersfield's borough engineer. These files contain a wealth of fascinating material relating to the history and development of Huddersfield.

Highlights include photographs showing Huddersfield war hospital at Royds Hall; posters, flyers and brochures advertising fireworks and decorations for the 1911 coronation celebrations; original plans of Huddersfield wholesale market built in 1888 (previously thought lost); and a wealth of information relating to the early development of new technologies such as electric lighting and the motor car.

The project will run until January 2023 and WYAS will post regular updates on our social media channels and blog detailing our progress.

## The Quarmby Clough Mill Disaster of 1922

Situated in the shadow of Nab End Tower at Longwood, just off a tight bend in the climb up Vicarage Road, is the former site of Quarmby Clough woollen mill.



(© Google Maps)

Although the mill is marked on the 1966 O.S. sheet, it was presumably disused at that time since it appears to be the mill used as a location in the second episode of the first season of *Last of the Summer Wine*, titled "Inventor of the 40-foot Ferret". From part way up the hillside, Compo is seen kicking a rusty barrel towards Clegg and Blamire, before all three go for a wander through the derelict and vandalised building whilst pontificating on workers' rights and whether or not God is a Tory.



*(screen captures from "Inventor of the 40-foot Ferret" © BBC)*

Tuesday 22 March 2022 is the centenary of just one of the many mill disasters that occurred in the local area and, sadly, it is one that claimed the lives of three employees:

- Annie Blacker (aged 23) – weaver of 26 Dowker Street, Milnbridge
- Ellen "Nellie" Keefe (25) – weaver of Yew Green, Lockwood
- Edwin Castle (38) – headler of 45 Beech Street, Paddock



*(photographic postcard showing the aftermath)*

Quarmby Clough was reportedly built as a single-storey dyeworks but had been enlarged in the early 1900s with the addition of two further floors – the extra weight being primarily supported by one of the dyeworks' inner walls. Ownership of the mill passed from Messrs. Hamer & Sons to Joseph Hoyle & Sons Ltd. in 1906.



At around 10:45 on the morning of 22 March 1922 there was a loud “crack like a cannon” as the old inner wall gave way and the floors above collapsed inwards.

Nellie Farrand, a weaver on one of the upper levels, lost her balance as the floor dropped and “machinery slid down in front her”. Her colleague, Nellie Bolton, also fell into the void but was able to make “her escape along the steam pipes to a part of the floor which had not collapsed”.

According to newspaper reports, there were nine workers on the top floor, although the only others who were named in the press were Lily Bradley and Emily Hancock. In total, eleven employees managed to escape from the rubble or were rescued alive.

In the ruins, they could hear Ellen “Nellie” Keefe calling out for help but sadly, by the time she was located, it was too late.

At the subsequent inquest, the usual verdict of “accidental deaths” was recorded. It was also noted that shortly before the collapse of the mill, victim Annie Blacker’s uncle, George Armitage Crumack of 27 Dowker Street, had been found dead in his bed.

The mill was soon rebuilt and later expanded.



*Newspaper photograph of Annie Blacker (1900-1922)*