

The Lostock Hall Magazine

Issue 20

The Footballing Entrepreneur
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Our initial goal of collecting over 13,000 images before the commencement of Preston Guild 2012 has been met, but we need your help to expand the collection even more. So, cap in hand, like Oliver Twist, we humbly ask for more.

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Read on !

1. If you have the ability to scan them to your computer, you can send them to our email address as attachments (300 dpi. Photo quality please) to prestondigitalarchive@hotmail.com
2. For the technically among us you can mail material to our local address. We will make copies and return them to you (at our cost) Our mailing address is as follows
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Please remember to include a return address.
3. For heavier/bulky items such as postcard collection etc. one of our local volunteers may be able to pick up and collect or scan on site. Please let us know your preference. (Call us on 07733 321911)

So what are we looking for, obviously photographs form the core of our collection, images of commercial or industrial activity, lost streets and buildings, social activity and gatherings etc. We love to receive post cards, especially RP-PPC (Real Photo Picture Post Cards) Ephemera covers a broad spectrum of items and would include such items as theatre programmes, invitations, magazine articles, old advertisements and newspaper cuttings, also old church magazines.

At present the upper date range is 1990.

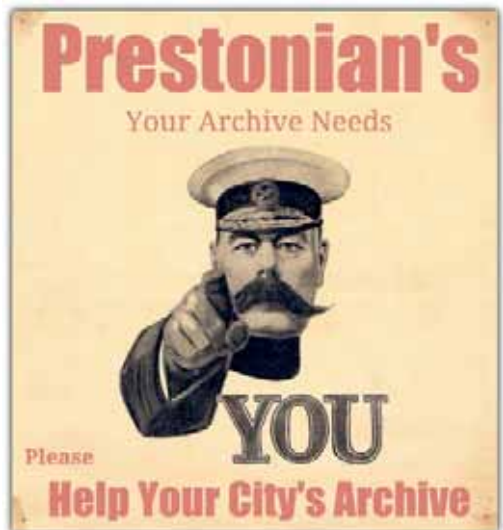
We also try and confine the general geographical area to Preston, Penwortham, Fulwood, Grimsargh, Walton le Dale, Bamber Bridge and Lostock Hall.

Finally we welcome any suggestions you might have for improving our archive. You can see our archive on Flickr, to date we have received over 3,000,000 views, with an average daily count of +8000.

Thankyou for your interest and hopefully support.

Also a big thankyou to all Preston Digital Archive viewers.

Regards from Barney
Preston Digital Archive





Welcome to the 20th issue of The Lostock Hall Magazine and all the very best for Christmas and New Year. Our magazine is a collection of local history articles relating to the area. Many thanks to all our contributors and readers. Our thanks to Penwortham Priory Academy who support us by printing and formatting the magazine. Please support our local advertisers without them we could not produce our magazine. **A copy of each issue will be kept in the Lancashire Records Office.** Jackie Stuart has kindly allowed us to serialise her book entitled 'A Tardy Gate Girl'. Contributions from Tony Billington, Bill Brierley, Brian Whittle and Frank Melling. A big thankyou to everyone who has sent in photos we will include them in the magazines as soon as we can.

We are also collecting material for Preston Remembers and the South Ribble Remembrance Archive 1914-1918, which will include anything relating to World War One in our area. A photo, document, a memory, etc.

If you are able to support us by advertising in our very popular magazine, please do get in touch, without our advertisers we cannot produce the magazine, please support them whenever you can.

If you have any memories you would like to submit to the magazine for publication, please do contact me, or our roving reporter – Tony Billington, especially memories from our older residents, because once the memories are gone they are lost forever. We can call at your home or speak to you on the telephone if you wish us to write down your memories. Copies of the magazine will always be available at Lostock Hall Library on Watkin Lane. Contact me to have your own copy delivered each month or to receive it by email.

Front Cover image – by The Lostock Hall Magazine, showing the new bridge on School Lane which was recently opened.

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PHOTOS FROM LOSTOCK HALL PAST



Wesley House, Watkin Lane in its former glory. It was built in 1903 by St James Church to be used as a vicarage/parsonage. Around 1930 it was sold by the Church, over the years it has been used as a hotel and restaurant. It now stands derelict next to Lostock Hall library. The fence in the foreground once belonged to Sowerbutt's cottage. Courtesy of Marty Hopkirk.



Lostock Hall Farm ? – This photo showing a milk cart is from Preston Digital Archive. The photo is believed to be in Lostock Hall or Bamber Bridge. If you recognise the people or buildings please would you get in touch.

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NEWS OF THE WORLD BOWLING TOURNAMENT

The News of the World Bowling Tournament was held at the Railway Hotel in Lostock Hall from 1948 – 1954. This tournament was second only to the 'Waterloo' Tournament in Blackpool. 1024 bowlers entered at 2/6 entry fee. The matches started in early June and the Final day was on the first Saturday of Preston Holidays. Only two bowlers from Lostock Hall ever got anywhere. Danny Patients reached the last 16 the Friday night before the Final Day. He lived in Ward Street, 1952 or 53. Billy Wiggans from Wateringpool Lane reached the last 8 on Finals day but lost in the last 8 in 1948. During the early rounds it was 6d to go and watch. But ! as young lads if one would mark a card, Tommy Latham, organiser, let us on for free. I would usually go on with Roy Sutton and Stan Flanagan. And If your bowler won both his games, he might give you 2d. Wow ! Happy Days. Bowlers played twice each night. On Final Saturday the two measurers, were Harry Charnley and Alf (Gunner) Greenwood. The first prize was £200 for the winner, £100 for the runner up, semifinalists £40, last 8 £20, last 16 £10, last 32 £5, last 64 £2, and the last 128 £1. Some £760 total prize money. The winner got the trophy for twelve months, a replica trophy to keep and the final was played with a new jack, which the winner also kept.

Now and finally the winners.

1948 George (Plim) Southworth – Euxton

1949 W. Cook – Bolton

1950 Tommy Freeman – Wigan

1951 H. (Lol) Thompson – St Helens

1952 Harry Rutter – Wigan

1953 Jerry Cornwell – Chorley

1954 William (Billy) Chorlton – Billinge

Incidentally, in 1945 W. Cook beat Albert Ringrose of Bradford, known as Ringy. He was that era's equivalent of today's Brian Duncan. Some bowler. When 'Ringy' played in the early rounds up to 50/60 spectators would turn up. Sadly, I never marked his scorecard.

Written by Brian Whittle

DO YOU REMEMBER ?

The winter of 1947 was very cold and very frosty for a long time.

Who, besides myself, remembers playing ice hockey (sort of) on the frozen River Lostock, in front of South View ? With our best clog skater, 'Swiggy', ie. Jimmy Swindlehurst. You skated with the inside part of your clog coker, and could he move!

Also, in the dip in the corner of the field where the Leyland Motors clock was. If any girl could catch 'Swiggy' he would give them a pull round the dip.

Does anyone remember with your sledge sliding down the hill on Baxter's Farm, on Todd Lane South, adjacent to 'Dandy Bridge'.

Also, skating on Dick Rawcliffe's pit, on Old School Lane, where we would take a candle in a jam jar, tied at the neck with a string for a handle. We put all our jars round the pit to light it up, but it didn't really work. Yes, all this was really good fun.

How many of you learnt to swim at the 'Rat Bend' ? On the corner of the Spinning Company Field after school in the summer. Quite a few, I'll bet. Youngsters would come from all over the village. I ask ! What price memories ?

Do you remember ?

Brian Whittle

FRY INN

18 WATKIN LANE LOSTOCK HALL

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PHOTOS FROM LOSTOCK HALL PAST



Another Elephant 1942. The photo was kindly provided by Mavis Walmsley (nee Parkinson) whose father Bob was a driver for Newsham's Tan Yard in Lostock Hall. Bob used to collect animals, mainly horses from farms for slaughtering, usually sick or injured. He had collected this elephant from Blackpool and on his way called to show his daughter and son at their home in Croston Road, Lostock Hall, where he was parked up for about half an hour. It drew a crowd of most of the local children in Farington. The photo was taken in Preston behind the former Workhouse at the junction of Sharoe Green Lane and what is today Bhailok Square. We have been told that Jack Newsham had a slaughterhouse near here and it supplied his horse meat shop, used mostly by the Belgium refugees during the war, at 54 Church Street, the only horse meat butcher listed in the town.



Lostock Hall Labour Club (possibly at New Year) Tony Stokes, Mary Richardson, Sheila Littlefair, Belle Hamilton and Margaret Disley. Courtesy of Brian and Sheila Littlefair.

Lostock Hall Council School 1961 courtesy of Frank Melling

We have had such a response with missing names that we have decided to reprint the photo. New names included are from Gillian Rimmer (nee Howitt) and Jeff Thomas. A couple we are not absolutely sure of, have a question mark next to them.

Left to Right - Front Row – 1 Stephen Catterall, 2 Rodney Bone, 3 Kenneth Jones, 4 David Norris, 5 Roy Maddock, 6 David Black, 7 Alan Eachus, 8 Stephen Eachus, 9 Lindsay Whewell, 10 Philip Mears, 11 Larry Tugwell, 12 Terry Morris.

2nd Row – 1 Hazel Duckworth, 2 Vicki King ? (whose family owned Kings butchers), 3 Rose Gallagher, 4 Margaret Pickles, 5 Babara Dawson, 6 Joan Nelson, 7 Susan Harrison, 8 Janice Molyneaux, 9 Margaret Walker, 10 Angela Smith, 11Glynis Robinson, 12 Brenda Knowles, 13 Susan Leithgoe, 14 Linda Williams, 15 Marilyn Robinson, 16 Muriel Dobson.

3rd Row - 1?, 2 David Kershaw ?, 3 Colin Tongue, 4 Billy Neville, 5 Kenny Dixon ?, 6 John Bennett, 7?, 8 Frank Beardsworth, 9 Stephen Eccles, 10?, 11 Frank Parker, 12 Jeff Thomas, 13 David Chapman, 14?, 15 Owen Forrest (whose Dad and Uncle were previously teachers at the school).

4th Row – 1 Carol Chadwick, 2 Moyra Mount (whose Dad had newsagent in Tardy Gate), 3Eileen Jackson, 4 Susan Trenchard, 5 Barbara Hicks, 6 Gillian Howitt, 7 Kathleen Isles, 8 Janet Wilkinson (whose Dad was vicar of St James Church at the time) , 9 Eleanor Parkinson, 10 Myra Riley, 11 Carol Dixon, 12 Marion Walters.

5th Row – 1 Neil Waring, 2 Barry Challinor, 3 Maldwyn Pickard, 4 John Bentham, 5 Noel Taylor, 6?, 7 Derek Morris, 8 Ian Stothert, 9 David Roberts.

Back Row- 1 Brian Ross, 2 Brian Jones, 3 James Byrne, 4 Ronnie Forshaw, 5 Robert Barlow, 6 Frank Melling, 7 Alfie Emery, 8 Brent Taberner, 9?, 10 Christopher Lee.



WILKY STREET



I think I can add a little more weight to the stories that Tony [Tony Billington] wrote in Issue's 18 & 19. He mentioned the skirmishes we used to have as youngsters [pre-teenagers!] in and around Wilkinson St, which turned out to be short-lived battles that seemed serious at the time. Thankfully they were caused by nothing more than overblown childish ego's ending in no one taking the glory and mercifully little or no injuries. More interestingly, I can confirm that the 'plots' across from Wilky St did house Tommy Parr & The Holland family [Mr & Mrs, Sheila & Keith, I think!]. We used to build 'dens' and 'bonfires' on there in readiness for Nov 5th long before the new estate was built but sometimes they were burnt down before the event arrived. One year the smoke and flames were that ferocious that the fire brigade had to be called out to extinguish the fire. Never did find out who the arsonist/s were!!

I include an interesting photo [taken from No.6 Wilky St] that confirms Tony's memory of the two said houses. In it you will see 2 children playing which I believe are my younger brother and sister, Christopher & Susan Melling.

Tony also mentioned that No.2 Wilky St used to be a shop - this is correct, as my Great Grandfather used it for bicycle repairs until he got too old to manage it. If my memory serves me right the residents of Wilky St were at that time [late 50's early 60's] as follows:-

No.2 - Brian & Iris Melling, with children Frank, Susan & Christopher.

No.4 - Billy Wilding and wife Gertrude [Gertie, died somewhere around that period of time!]

No.6 - Mr & Mrs David Gregg [Cliff Fazackerley's Grandparents].

No.8 - Mr & Mrs Parkinson.

No.10 - Joe & Joyce Roberts with children David & Janet.

No.12 - Mrs & Mrs Marsden [house later acquired by Mrs Geddes]

My father was at that time working for either British Rail as a 'firemen' and/or a wagon driver for Jack Whittle who owned 'Whitfire Firelighters'. I think my mother did part-time for the 'Golden Glow' nut factory in Bamber Bridge. Billy Wilding used to drive for 'Ribble' buses and frequently parked 'double-deckers' in our street. Dave Gregg was a great old chap who used to lift off the drain covers for us to retrieve any coins that may have rolled down there. He was also an expert in catching 'moles' and used to hang their skins out to dry! Joe Roberts worked for 'Wimpey' builders as a carpenter, later becoming a site foreman / manager. Alas some of these people are no longer with us but I have very fond memories of growing up with all these varied characters!

By Frank Melling



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The War and Lostock Hall: January 1915 and the Fairclough Family

By Bill Brierley

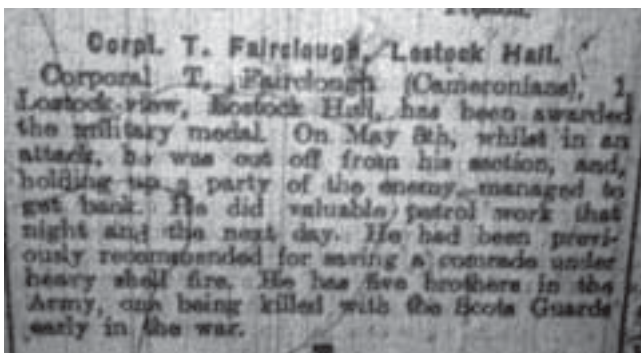
By January 1915, the War had reached its first stalemate. The British and French had managed to halt the initial German advance and begun to force them back, but now both sides were entrenched and conditions during the winter became appalling. On some days it was 'All Quiet on the Western Front', but some days were murderous; such a day was 25 January 1915. Recruits had been arriving from England to reinforce the British Expeditionary Force and a group of men from Lostock Hall, Farington and Leyland arrived to join 1st Battalion Scots Guards on 14 January and were immediately sent to the front line. The new draft included William Collinge (who turned 21 on 13 Jan), and Robert Holmes, from Leyland, Harold Southworth from Farington, and James Fairclough from Lostock Hall. 1/Scots Guards had been in France since October 1914, and in January 1915 they were in the trenches near Cuinchy in northern France. This area known as 'The Brickstacks' sat on a flat piece of land between the towns of Béthune and La Bassée and here the front line did not move for most of the War. Both sides were fully entrenched. The trenches by now were knee-deep in mud and water and infested with rats. The Battalion's War Diary says: At 6.30am (on 25 January) a German deserter reported that an attack was going to be made in half an hour, bombardment first and then our trenches were to be blown in by previously made mines. After an hour all happened as the deserter had said. The Germans first shelled and then got out of their trenches and attacked and then threw bombs in, got to the lip of the parapet and shot down into the trenches. The Germans afterwards swarmed up to the 'keep' where Major Romilly was. There they were checked and held. All four local men were in a trench which was blown up by a German mine. They were either instantly killed or buried alive. Their bodies were not recovered at the time and so they lay 'in some corner of a foreign field that is forever England'. They had been in France for just 11 days before they were killed. The bodies of Robert Holmes and William Collinge were discovered by a farmer ploughing his fields some time after the War, and they were re-buried side-by-side in the Canadian Cemetery near Arras. The other men's' bodies were never found and they are commemorated on the memorial at Le Touret.

James Fairclough was one of six brothers from Lostock Hall who all enlisted for service in the War. His parents were James Fairclough and Alice Ellen Fairclough (née Cornwell) (both b. 1860 or 1861) and they lived at 1 Lostock View, Lostock Hall. James (senior) was a spinner in the cotton mill. He and Alice married on Christmas Day 1880 and had 8 children, 7 of whom survived infancy. Thomas b. 1883, William b. 1886, Alice b. 1889, James b. 1891, Albert b. 1892, John b. 1895, and George b. 1897. Their youngest son, Edward b. 1899, died in 1910. All the boys in the family were cotton spinners, Alice was a card room hand.



Thomas, the oldest of the boys, married Mary Durham in 1904,

whereupon they moved to 13 Lostock View where they lodged with Mary's father Richard. The 1911 Census says that in the interim period they had 4 children 3 of whom died. Although one child is still alive, s/he is not listed as living with the parents at the time of the Census. Thomas enlisted in 9/Cameronians Scottish Rifles



and served in France from 3 October 1915 (his brother James had already been killed). He was promoted to L/Cpl then Cpl. In May 1918, Thomas was engaged in action during which he displayed conspicuous bravery for which he was awarded the Military Medal. The award was reported in the Preston Guardian at the time.

His brother William married Margaret Hodson in 1912 and they lived at 17 Lostock View. He enlisted with 12 Battalion King's Liverpool Regiment at Southport/Seaforth on 5 Sep 1914. From his military records (which have survived) we know that he was 5ft 4in tall and weighed 110lbs (a fraction under 8st). He was initially passed as fit for service but was shortly afterwards (23 Sep) discharged as being 'not likely to become an efficient soldier' under King's Regulations para 392.iii.(c) as a result of a 35% disablement (not specified). He was given a gratuity of £5 for his service. Although he never served abroad, William did nevertheless enlist and was discharged due to sickness and he has a medal card to record his service. It is likely that he qualified for the King's Silver War Badge, which was awarded to all of those military personnel who had served at home or overseas during the war, and who had been discharged from the army under King's Regulations. Although instituted in 1916 it was also awarded in retrospect.



Albert, John and George all also served in the Army. It seems that Albert was enlisted in the Artillery in 1915 and his younger brothers John and George enlisted later, but we have no firm data about this. Tom, Albert, John and George Fairclough all survived the War. Perhaps you are a descendant and have some information you would like to share? If so, please get in touch.



THE FOOTBALLING ENTREPRENEUR

For many people living in Tardy Gate and Lostock Hall over 40 years ago or more a regular and welcome sight was a cream coloured 3 wheeler van with a distinctive sounding horn. Johnny Flanagan was the local ice-cream seller long before Mr Whippy and other 'imposters' delivering their wares to the sound of Greensleeves and other non-dulcet tones. We always knew Johnny for his delicious home-made ice-cream and teddie lollies etc but how many of us knew he was a very accomplished footballer as well? I didn't and I dare say most of my friends in the late 50's and early 60's didn't either. To us, the great unwashed, living in Avondale Drive when it was part of Walton-le-Dale Urban District Council, and not the present regime, Johnny was the messiah who arrived in his 3 wheeled chariot nearly every night after tea-time to deliver his many delicacies which included choc ices on sticks, teddy bear lollies of varying fruity flavours, wafers, cornets and for the more affluent amongst us, his prized '99' cone. I only managed a '99' on a couple of occasions I can remember. One was at the charity cricket match on Moss's Cricket ground on Coote Lane in the late 50's (see Issue 16) when a Giant West Indian test cricketer bought several of us a '99' each at Johnny's van at the side of the pitch. Thanks again, Tom Dewdney! Johnny would hurtle down the bridges, into Moss Lane and then into Avondale Drive announcing his arrival with a long honk of his klaxon-style horn. We'd all rush into our homes, abandoning the game of football or cricket taking place in the street or the World War II battle around the institute to cadge the 3 old pence to buy a cider teddy bear etc. I wonder if John Wayne stopped the advance on IWO JIMA when the ice-cream turned up! Johnny had 2 stops down our street, outside French's at No. 28 and Burgess's at No. 6 before turning right up Brownedge Road to cheer up some other kids lives for a brief time. Some down Avondale Drive never got the money to buy anything so were reduced to asking for any broken wafer biscuits. I'm certain Johnny used to break some up deliberately prior to setting off from home. Anyone attending 'Tardy Gate' pictures on a Saturday night in the Turner Memorial Hall (now Parochial Centre) would rush to the cloakroom during the interval where Johnny would be selling his specially wrapped ices (minus wafer). Johnny's enterprising nature and desire to please took him all over. If there was an event taking place the cream coloured van would be there. Apparently during the war and afterwards Johnny had a motor/sidecar combination to 'Stop me and buy one!'



According to Wikipedia 'Jack Flanagan' was born on 3rd Feb 1902 and died on 4th May 1989, aged 87. This is corroborated by the details on John (Johnny) Flanagan's gravestone in St Gerard's churchyard. Jack Flanagan, footballer and centre forward certainly travelled around in the North West during his career. The journeyman had a spell at Manchester United without breaking into the first XI followed by spells at Chorley (twice), Tranmere Rovers, Barrow, Wigan Borough (pre-Athletic?) Lancaster City (twice), Burscough, Stalybridge Celtic, Rhyl and finally Leyland Motors. His most successful days were at Tranmere Rovers where he netted 43 goals in 67 games between 1926 and July 1929. Did he replace the legendary Dixie Dean, who left Rovers in 1925 to find everlasting fame with Everton (and England). Jack netted a hat-trick on his first team debut on 6th Nov 1926 against Wigan Borough and netted two more trebles in his Rovers career. Unfortunately he broke his collar bone in the opening match of the 1927/28 season. When he recovered he was unable to gain his place in the side until young 'Pongo' Waring was transferred to Aston Villa to become a star in his own right. 'Jack' had a fair zip of pace, but was also, befitting a man 5'10" tall, very accomplished in the air. If Johnny 'Jack' was as good a footballer as he was at making and selling ice-cream, he must have been one hell of a player. In the 50's and early 60's he brought a ray of sunshine to everyone in his 3 wheeled van. Another great character from Lostock Hall past.

Tony Billington

Footnote. Peter Vickers remembers buying a tuppenny lolly of Johnny and paying with a penny, a halfpenny and two farthings, Johnny looked at them, smiled, and chucked them in his tin! Photos and player information was kindly provided by Tony Coombes, at Tranmere Rovers FC. The team photo is from the 1926/27 season.



PHOTOS FROM LOSTOCK HALL PAST



Walton-le-Dale County Secondary School 1st year Football team 1963/64. This team was unbeaten in that year and included a number of Lostock Hall lads including myself. (The lads from Lostock Hall are in capitals). The team names being back row Peter Smith, Alan Wright, Richard Theaker, **TOM NAYLOR**, **TONY DIXON**, Barrie Dixon, John Gregson. Middle Row **ALAN NUTTER**, **ALAN EMERY**, Mr Topping, **DAVID SMITH**, **FRED BENNETT**. Front row **JOHN HORNBY**, **MARTIN NELSON** & Bill Will. Courtesy of Fred Bennett



Thomas Moss Tardy Gate Mill, Coote Lane, Coronation Celebrations 1953. Louisa Bollenberg (nee Parker) is 1st lady on the left standing. Harry Parker next to her is her father. Courtesy of Mr and Mrs Bollenberg.

READERS COMMENTS

Hello, I read most of your magazines and spotted a photo of a group of chaps in The Vic, one of the unknown chaps behind Colin Schofield is my late father Fred Bennett. He was a 'tackler' or overlooker at Thomas Moss & Sons for a large number of years and we lived next to the red bridge at 187 Brownedge Road.

A lot of the memories Tony Billington writes about especially about Flag Lane and Todd Lane ring bells with me and that Council School down Avondale Drive. Lads in my year and various football teams were Tony Dixon, Alan Emery, John Hornby and Martin Nelson.

Regards

Fred Bennett (jnr)

We have been asked a few times when or why Jubilee Road was so named. We are presuming it was named in honour of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, her Golden Jubilee celebrating 50 years was in 1887 and her Diamond Jubilee (60 years) followed in 1897. Please contact us if you can shed any light on this subject or have any information.

Lostock Hall under 12's early 1980's courtesy of Jack Taylor



LOSTOCK HALL under 12s footballers all received mementos for their efforts in last season's Supplementary Cup competition, when they finished runners-up to an Euxton side.

The presentations were made at Lostock Hall Conservative Club.

On the left of the picture is team manager

Mr. Ian Stothart, with his assistant Mr. Bob Topping on the extreme right.

Members of the team which finished fifth in the Central Lancs Junior League are: Craig Gardiner, Ian Kay, Stephen Grimes, Paul Green, Ian Keighley, Christopher Campbell, Andrew Stothart, Warren Ward, Mark Duffell, Scott Taylor, Mark Johnstone, Jason Hardman, and Lee Roberts. (561D).

PHOTOS FROM LOSTOCK HALL PAST



The Victoria Hotel 1950. Courtesy of Gerry Abram, Deryck and Vera Kirkham. My parents and maternal grandparent ran this hotel from 1939 to 1953.

Victoria Hotel Pool Team 'B' Trophy Winners c. 1979/80? Back row - Phil ?, Steve Price, Phil Jeffes, Paul Doolan, Barry Greene and Billy Dawson. Front Row – Alistair McWilliam and Jimmy Halpin (with shield). Courtesy of Gerry Abram. Autographed message on photo cover from Steve Davis 'To The Victoria Pool Team, Don't miss the Black!'

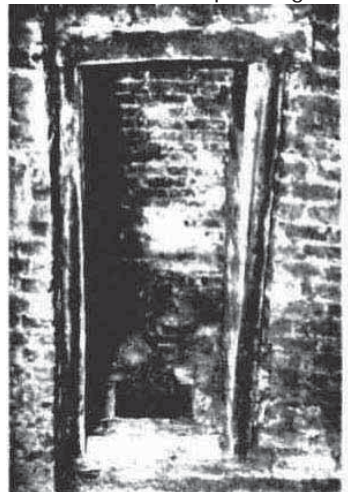


TODD HALL GIVES UP ITS SECRETS (1938) CUPBOARD WITH FALSE BACK LEADS TO A DARK CELL – HIDING PLACE OF 17th CENTURY PRIESTS.

Bare bricked and mysterious with two tall poplars before its sober Jacobean front. Todd Hall faces the lane named after it in Lostock Hall near Preston. It is one of Lancashire's mystery houses. For centuries its yellow, narrow stone windows have looked over the flat landscape around it, and no one has guessed, or, it appears, even suspected, the secrets of its thick walls and dark cupboards, which I am able to reveal exclusively in this article. They were discovered last week by Mr ACM Lillie, the Bamber Bridge architect, who is restoring the house.

TEN YEARS SILENCE. Except for the birds that sing under the heavy flagged, mossy roof, this 17th century house has stood silent and empty for more than 10 years, and the semi-detached houses and bungalows that have been built around it only seem to have strengthened the spell of its age. The main door protected by a stone porch is studded with rusty iron. The latch scrapes on the wood and the hinges complain as it creaks open into a small vestibule leading to the dining room. One of the Jacobean windows breaks the dimness of the room and shows a massive oak beam running over an open brick fire-place which recedes into the back wall. On the right of the ingle is a small square recess with shelves fitted into it. Behind this apparent innocent, though picturesque structure, is the centuries old secrets of Todd Hall. After careful use of a tape measure, Mr Lillie, who was planning to restore the house for a Chorley solicitor, became suspicious of what appeared to be a disparity between the depth of the wall and the depth of the ingle. Workmen began knocking down the wall to confirm the abnormal thickness of the brickwork which the tape measure indicated. To their amazement, after the first few bricks their pickaxes slipped into a cavity. They ripped down a section of the wall to the floor, and found themselves looking into the entrance of a dark cell. Striking matches they stepped inside. They were behind the ingle in a narrow, small room. They were possibly for centuries, the first men to enter what had all the evidence of a priest's hiding place.

RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY. These secret rooms, which are a feature of many old Lancashire houses, were made during the period of religious bigotry in England when the Catholics were hounded and persecuted for their faith. Queen Elizabeth was responsible for a more stringent application of the existing prohibition, and penalties against Catholics in the 16th century and even later, when Todd Hall was built (1630) ten years after the Guy Fawkes affair, the hunting and punishing of Catholics was as fierce as ever. Priests were sheltered in large houses and retired into their hiding places when searchers were in the area. The 'cupboard' in the ingle of Todd Hall has a false back, and makes an easy communication with the hiding place behind it. A brick shaft, wide enough for a man to climb through, has been built in the hiding place and



The cupboard entrance to the priest's hiding place.

leads, it was found, into a large cupboard in a bedroom on the first floor. No doubt this cupboard was used as a wardrobe, and the false floorboards have been so cleverly made that, even bared, they yield no clue of their real purpose. They lift up easily and allow quick access to the shaft dropping down into the hiding place. SECRETS UNBETRAYED. Many of these secret hiding places were made by Nicholas Owen, who served his apprenticeship as a mason and carpenter before he became a Jesuit priest. Owen travelled by day but his real work was done at night. By the glow of his lantern he built hiding places that remained undiscovered for centuries after he had laid down his tools. Expert carpenters and masons used to accompany the pursuivants, as the priest hunters were called to pit their detective skill against Owen's genius for deception. He died after appalling torture in the Tower his lips closed, his friends and secrets unbetrayered. Although the ingule of Todd Hall was probably built many years after his death, the ingenuity of this newly discovered hiding place suggests the influence of his methods. A section of the wall at the back of the hole obviously juts out from the main line of the design outside, but inspection satisfies one that this space can be accounted for by the receding ingule in the dining room. I walked with Mr Lillie through the back door with what I thought was an accurate impression of the depth of the ingule, and a few moments later made a mental comparison with the wall outside. I could have been sure that no space behind the ingule and the back wall was possible. A DECOY HOLE. Another discovery made a few days later was a 'decoy hole'. These decoy holes were built so that they were not quite perfect enough to elude the thumping staves, sensitive fingers and prying eyes of the hunters. They were always empty of course, and were built with the purpose of persuading the pursuivants that they had found the only hiding place (empty) and that there was no use in continuing the search of that house. Hiding places and decoy holes in many old halls and manor houses have been bricked up by imaginative owners who were fearful of giving family ghosts too much licence. Shortly after the discovery of the decoy hole workmen chipping off old plaster above the mantelpiece in the bedroom where the entrance to the hiding place had been found saw traces of colour on their chisels. They stopped hammering and carefully peeling off the remaining plaster found a faintly coloured picture appearing on a dullish white background. Mr WN Simm, the deputy art curator of the Preston Art Gallery, who also came to the Hall, is trying to trace the history and significance of the strange picture, which appears to represent a crudely-drawn Christ with the two Marys on each side of him.



The strange picture found hanging over a mantelpiece in one of the bedrooms, and discovered under a layer of plaster.

30 TON ROOF. My second visit to Todd Hall was with a Lancashire Daily Post camera man. We were both wearing, well at least clean suits. We came out with the pictures you see on this page looking as though we had been cleaning the chimneys. Most of the ceilings have been stripped to the rafters, and to get correct camera elevations we balanced on dusty oak beams with drops of 10 to 20 feet below. All the workmen had left, and the rain was blown by a blastering wind through the pane less windows. The thick walls of the Hall show their age and seem to sag under the heavy roof. Mr Lillie tells me this roof is made of stone flags and weighs from 25 to 30 tons ! Lancashire has many old buildings like Todd Hall. with their concealed traps, false cupboards and hiding places. They are mystery houses. Their secrets come to light after centuries, and their histories, for the most part, have been lost in the dark age of intolerance and religious persecution. E.L.G. Lancashire Daily Post 20th May 1938

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LOSTOCK LIBRARY PAST AND PRESENT

If you lived in Avondale Drive, Moss Lane, Wilkinson Street and even Moss Street in the late 50's and early 60's you had the only 'library' for miles on your doorstep. In those days the 'library' was in the Council School on Avondale Drive, a couple of evenings a week, if I remember rightly. Lostock Hall was in a stage of development in those days expanding quite rapidly in all directions towards Penwortham, Brownedge and Walton-le-Dale.

The entrance to the 'library' was from Moss Lane. The gate was left open into the school yard to allow access. This meant we could 'legally' play football in the school yard without being arrested by the local plod, Stan Jackson. You could access the 'library' through the door on the Moss Lane side of the school. You would pass through the cloakroom and into the hall where Andy Little's mum would attend to your every need as librarian. She was a lovely lady and must have had the patience of a saint as we were an unruly bunch, each one of us vying for 'idiot of the year' with our many antics and escapades. Our favourite trick was to clock some unsuspecting old dear coming into the library. We would 'abandon' our game of footy and dash into the cloakroom which had hooks either side of the walkway into the library. If anyone remembers the film 'Kes' where Billy Casper hid from his brute of a brother, Judd, after failing to put on a winning bet for him you'll know what happened next. We would hang, bat-like, upside down from the hooks inside a coat and wait for the poor old lass to appear and then in harmony shriek like rabid crows ! Thankfully they were tough old birds in those days and no one died of a heart attack. A swift prod of a walking stick or umbrella would send a would-be bat crashing downwards onto the bench below. Into the new decade, all this was about to change. Apparently during the late 50's and early 60's plans were being hatched to construct a purpose built library facility in the ever expanding 'building site' of Lostock Hall. The site chosen was on Watkin Lane next to the 'pad' which ran past the Con club to Brownedge Road.

Sowerbutt's cottage had stood here for many years. Their shop opposite Victoria Street was the site of a notorious murder in 1967. Construction of the library took place between 1961/62 and was officially opened by Sir Harry Pilkington on January 28th 1963. There was divided opinion in Lostock Hall at the time as there was a campaign to have a swimming pool from old and young alike but this was brushed under the carpet and Bamber Bridge and Leyland got them instead. The new library consisted of two separate buildings which were divided by a central garden area. The garden area was roofed in the 1980's to provide a much larger reference library area with the original reference area being turned into a private office area for staff. In about 1999 subsidence problems were found and later rectified.

Over the 50 years later and even though Lostock Hall was developed beyond all recognition due to building and demolition we still haven't got a swimming pool

and continue to travel to Bamber Bridge, Penwortham and Leyland and Preston to have a dip and teach the kids to swim. Another one they got wrong!

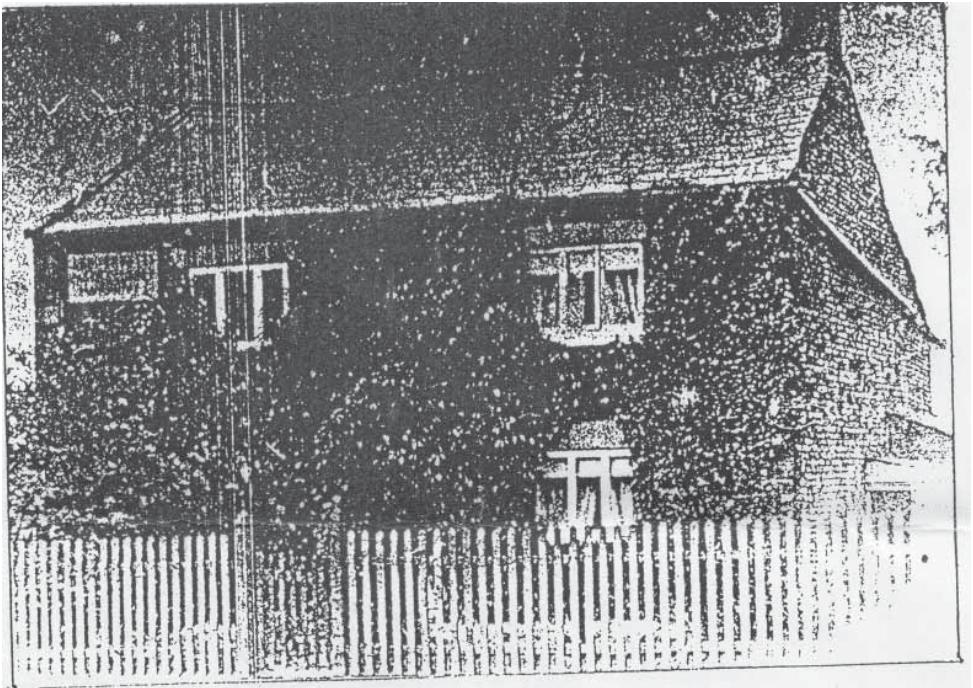
Lostock Hall Library has been well used by countless children and adults over the years and each month you are able to obtain copies of the Lostock Hall Magazine from them.

By Tony Billington.

Mrs Little (librarian when the library was in Lostock Hall School) courtesy of Mr Mrs Bollenburg

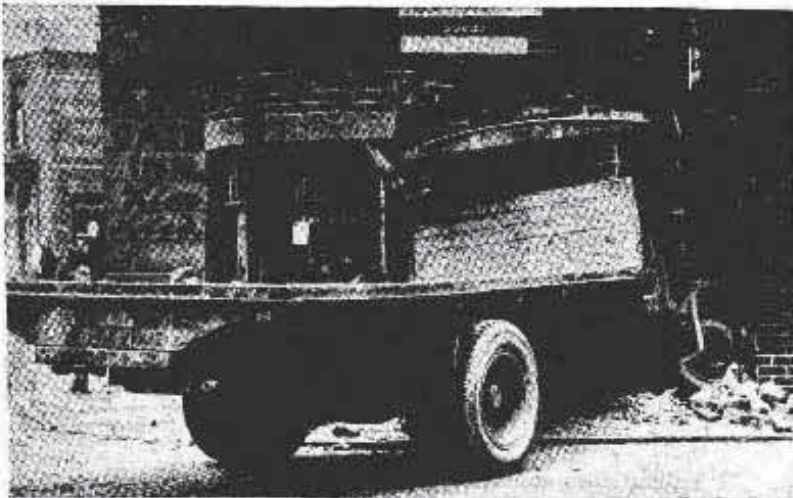


Sowerbutts Cottage which stood on the site of Lostock Hall Library courtesy of South Ribble District Libraries



Lostock Hall Sports Club

Preston Company's Sports Pavilion (at Lostock Hall) The opening of the new sports pavilion at The Preston Gas Company Social and Athletic Club at Lostock Hall by Mrs Tagg, wife of Mr Samuel Tagg, engineer and manager of the company who is seen on the left. Also in the group are Mrs Hannibal and Messrs WL Heald, (works engineer), J McCann, (chairman of the club) CC Barber (distribution engineer), SG Deavin (accountant) and R Taylor (treasurer of the club).
Lancashire Daily Post
16th July
1934
Does anyone know anything about this club ?



The lorry which crashed into Tandy Gate Inn and a shop at the corner of the Leyland main road and Brownes Road early this morning. The driver escaped unhurt.
Photo: "The Lancashire Daily Post."

PHOTOS FROM LOSTOCK HALL PAST



Lostock Hall Council School c.1955

Margaret Heyes nee Sowerby is 4th from the left on the front row.
Courtesy of Margaret Heyes



Farington Endowed School c. 1919

Tom (Thomas) Keefe is on the 2nd row from the top 2nd from the right, the little one with the cheeky grin. Courtesy of Betty Mansfield (nee Keefe)

A TARDY GATE GIRL by Jackie Stuart

For the next fortnight the police and fireman were on duty day and night. Everybody in the street became friendly with them all. We would make them drinks and let them use the bathroom. One morning there was a scuffle outside between some of Attwater's men and some plain clothes policemen. All the neighbours were out watching and wondering what was going on. One of the policemen who we had got to know, asked Derek if he could put this metal thing behind our garden wall. We were sat on the wall at the time watching the argument going on. After a while Attwater's men got into a lorry and sped off with the plain clothes police chasing after them. Then the policeman came back to reclaim the metal thing behind our wall, which turned out to be an air duct and that was what they had been arguing about. We had actually been sat there watching the scuffle go on not knowing that the air duct was behind us. Three months later I had another black out. I had gone out for a drink with Derek, his brother Tommy and his wife Doreen, and Doreen's mum and dad. I had drunk half a lager and lime and a sweet martini and lemonade. The doctor was called out this time. He said that I had a drink problem. This really angered Derek and it angered me too. I didn't want to have that on my medical records. It would look like I was an alcoholic. I wanted a second opinion. So we paid to have a specialist see me. He was a senior mortician from Sharoe Green Hospital. I kept thinking what on earth could a mortician do. Would I end up stuffed and embalmed? He was such a clever man and so courteous too. He could tell me things about myself which I knew but no one else did. He thought I was suffering from a toxin reaction to tampons, and he advised me to stop using them. Oh I didn't tell you about the first time I used one, did I? I was about 15 at the time, and Pat my sister in law had rung up to school to ask me to go and look after the children while she cleared up after a flood at their home. When I arrived I told Pat that I needed some sanitary protection. She gave me a Tampax. I didn't like these things at all. They were very uncomfortable and I couldn't sit down properly. Pat noticed this and asked me if I had taken the outer cardboard covering off. Well, of course I said Yes, then I made a hasty retreat to the toilet to put matters right. Well I didn't know did I, I had never used one before. Anyway, back to the plot, I did as the specialist advised and everything seemed to settle down. He did suggest that maybe I was going through an early menopause, and that if I wanted any more children, not to leave it too long.

The following summer I found out that I was pregnant with my fourth child. During the October of that year the River Ribble threatened to break it's banks. Everyone was outside watching the river. As much furniture as possible was raised above floor level. Neighbours were helping each other to make sandbags. Everyone was in fits of laughter when the council lorry tipped a load of sand and then the next rush of water washed it all away. The next high tide was in the early hours of the morning. Nearly all the men stayed up to see if it would come over the top. Thankfully it didn't, but it was a very near thing. I gave birth to my fourth child a daughter on Monday 2nd March 1981, at 9.05 at night. Derek was there for the birth. She weighed 7lb 12oz and was the spitting image of her dad. I remember saying to his mother that if she said she could see anything of me in her, she was lying. Derek wanted to call her after me, so her name is Jacqueline Ann. She had to have a second name the same as the others. We only stayed in hospital 48 hours, and then we went home. I had taken maternity leave so was able to return to work when Jacqueline was 3 months old, and my mum looked after her for me. Ever since we had moved into Gaskell Road my mother stayed with us every weekend. She had to sleep on the settee in the living room. Normally my mother never slept with her wig on, but my children had never seen her without her hair, so she brought an old wig to sleep in. This was called her sleeping head. One morning Alison went into the front room to wake my mother up. Her wig must have come off during the night and it was sat on the arm of the settee. Alison

thought it was my mother's head. Suddenly she shouted 'Oh, nana, I thought you were over here, but you're over there, your sleeping heads come off !'. It didn't phase her at all. When my mother came in to tell me and Derek we just laughed.

Jacqueline was the only one of my children who somehow appeared to know about my mother's wig. She would drop things out of her pram and when my mother bent down to pick them up she would yank the wig off her head. There were quite a few funny incidents which made us all laugh at times. One time I was back combing my mother's hair prior to going to a wedding. My nephew Andrew arrived to pick her up then suddenly said out loud, 'Auntie Jacqueline' I looked up at him, then down at my mother. I had got carried away doing her hair and hadn't realised it was 2 inches above her head. I just said 'Sorry Mum I had better put your head back on'. Other times people have held the door open and accidentally knocked her wig off. We always ended up laughing about it though.

That Christmas Eve Jacqueline started walking. She really surprised us, as she was only nine and a half months old. Stuart had started walking at ten and a half months and Alison had followed Helen and started at eleven months to the day. We had bought Jacqueline a baby walker which did come in handy anyway.

The following summer we went on a caravan holiday to the Lake District. When we arrived it was misty and drizzling with rain. The caravan was painted green and situated in an orchard. It didn't look very inviting at all. There were other caravans and a holiday cottage as well. The following day the sun shone and everything looked much better. We got to know the farmer and his wife and the people in the cottage. Some of the farmer's fields needed harvesting, but he couldn't get anyone to help. In the evenings, Derek, Helen, Stuart, Alison and the two children from the cottage and their dad, helped the farmer out. At midnight the farmer's wife would come to the barn with food and drinks for everyone. It was a real party atmosphere. It was not the normal type of holiday, but it was a good one all the same.

In the autumn of 1982 Helen left home. She went to live with her Dad. This really gutted me but I had to let her do it. She came back home again at Christmas. With the best will in the world you cannot protect your children from the side effects of divorce. I did my best to make everything easy for them and to make access to their dad as normal as possible. Bernard was their dad and nothing would ever change that. Sometimes though, doing your best is not enough.

In September 1983 Stuart followed Helen to Lostock Hall High School. Alison then followed on two years later.

In between these two years I had to appear in court again. This time the maintenance payments were dropped to 5p a year. Bernard was now out of work so was unable to pay anything. This meant I had to apply for Family Credit again.

Helen had now left school and had started a confectionary course at the Blackpool and Fylde College studying for her City and Guilds diploma. With being on Family Credit again I was able to get a grant and a travel pass to help with the expenses.

In February 1985, I started having problems with my eyesight again. My left eye had suddenly gone into tunnel vision. What a weird experience that is. One minute you can see everything quite clearly and the next you appear to be looking down a long tube with no vision at all either side. I had to go to hospital to have it checked. It was discovered that I had only partial sight in my left eye. I needed to have an operation as soon as a suitable donor could be found. On the 20th November I had a corneal graft operation. My eye stay closed for nearly three months. It would open occasionally at night. Derek used to joke about it and say that I must have been given an owl's eye. When it did open properly, I was surprised at the brightness of colours. I hadn't realised it, but I had been walking around in a grey fog for years. The operation was a success thankfully, but now I had the same problem in my right eye.

More next month

Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



Tardy Gate R.C. Rounders Team 1949. Back row – Sheila Wrennalls, Margaret Gregson, Sheila Thorp. Front Row – Sheila Green, Audrey Anyon, Cath Sharples, Kathleen Sargeant, Brenda Finnigan and Margaret Parr (kneeling). Courtesy of Margaret Parr.

Farington Station c. 1960

2-6-0 6PSF 42765 passing
an almost demolished
Farington Station.
Courtesy of Dave Ellithorn



Ian Wilde

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