

Issue 22

The Lostock Hall Magazine

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Welcome to the 22nd issue of The Lostock Hall Magazine. Our magazine is a collection of local history articles, photographs and memories 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', this month is the end chapter, with a new up to date ending that will be printed next month. More memory provoking articles by Tony Billington. 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 – Carting Turf on Farington Moss by Thomas Wade c.1869. By kind permission of Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston.

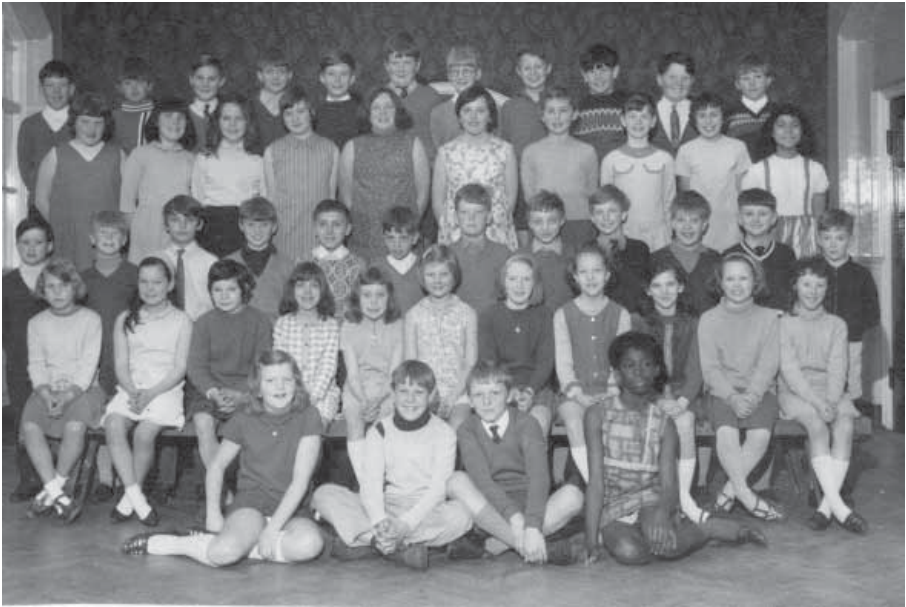
Editor Heather Crook 07733 321911
Roving Reporter Tony Billington 07794 016224
Email thelostockhallmagazine@gmail.com
121 Broad Oak Lane Penwortham PR1 0XA

**Email thelostockhallmagazine@gmail.com
121 Broad Oak Lane, Penwortham, PR1 0XA**

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Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



Lostock Hall Council School - Front Row – Jane Green, Malcolm Bradley, Stephen Napier, Janice Greaves. 1st Row – Shirley Rudman, Susan Fishwick, Diane Livesey. 2nd Row- Brian ?, Nigel Smith, Derek Sutton, Eddie Walker, Jeffs, David Clayton, Charles Bell, David Cross. 3rd Row – Ruth ?, Vicky Gardner, Kathryn Gould, Mandy ?. Back Row – Stuart Carr, Derek Goldthorpe, Geoffrey Thompson, John Lyon, Ian McClead, Ian Woodworth, David Oliver, ? Walker, Stephen Firth. Courtesy of Prof. John Lyon.



Lostock Hall Council School, summer of 1965 – outside the entrance to the 'Pre-fab' Class 7. Left to right Lynn Sutcliffe – Geoffrey Middleton – Melanie Taylor – Miss Shuttleworth holding Paul Smith – Yvonne Holmewood – Paul Whiteside – Gordon Thexton. Courtesy of Neil Grimshaw

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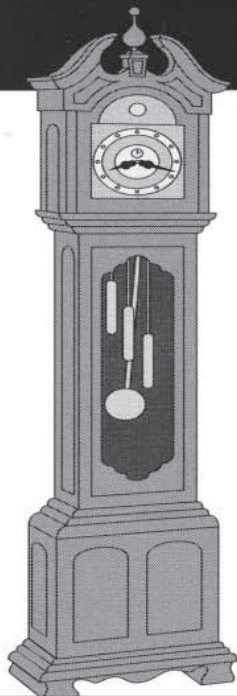
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Photographs from Lostock Hall Past

SALVATION ARMY COMES TO LOSTOCK HALL LABOUR CLUB

Mary Richardson, Margaret
Disley and Sheila Littlefair
Courtesy of Brian and Sheila
Littlefair



ST GERARDS ROUNDERS TEAM c. 1951/52 To the left of the photo would be the school and to the right Browndedge Rd. The small wall and hedge behind the girls hides the garden in the front of the presbytery. On the right through the hedge can be seen Nickson's shop on the corner of Wateringpool Lane. Back row- Mary Charnley, Alice Cartwright, Veronica Daly, Pat Curran, Betty Henrickson. Front row- Teresa Newton, Vivian Hollis, Margaret Billington. Kneeling – Hazel Emery. Courtesy of Margaret Cross

FRY INN

18 WATKIN LANE LOSTOCK HALL

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P20, FOUR LANE ENDS, WHY ?

Having lived in Lostock Hall all my life one question I have never heard the answer to or even had any form of explanation for is : -

Why did the P20 sometimes only go as far as the Four Lane Ends instead of to the Tardy Gate terminus in Jubilee Road ? It has always intrigued me and one of the principle reasons for this is that it seemed a hell of a long walk for a small child from firstly Moss Street and then even further from Avondale Drive in the early 50's. The Ribble Bus would turn round with great difficulty in Todd Lane South near the entrance to The Crescent or twist and turn into Todd Lane North and out again parking up eventually on Brownedge Road near the butchers. Does anyone know why the P20 service cut short at the Four Lane Ends on certain runs ? When the P20 went the whole hog to Jubilee Road next to the Pleasant Retreat we would get on the bus outside Charnley's shop opposite Moss Street and sometimes outside Nickson's shop at the corner of Wateringpool Lane when we moved to Avondale Drive. Everywhere seemed miles away when we were little kids with even 'littler' legs! Trainspotting at Flag Lane, Bee Lane (phew!), Farington (Croston Rd bridge) or even Todd Lane Junction (near the Hollows) seemed to be treks. Going to Dandy Brook or even further into the woods down School Lane and Stoney Lane seemed to take forever. Why do these 'treks' seem nothing nowadays to old fogies like myself ? Do dogs with short legs not need as long a walk as big dogs with longer legs? One thing I do know the answer to is that wherever we walked to in our younger days was a lot safer then than now. There was hardly any traffic to talk of compared to the 'racing circuits' that abound around Lostock Hall nowadays. Lostock Lane was a lot quieter for a start and it was a hop, skip and a jump from Dandy Bridge onto School Lane en route to Bluebell wood. Going to Farington trainspotting was also a lot safer as once we crossed Watkin Lane there was no Berry Street, Westfield or Wellfield to negotiate, just fields etc. Junction Hollows were reached via a far quieter Wateringpool Lane and Doodstone Nook whilst Leyland Road didn't offer as many dangers as it does today when on our way to Flag Lane and Bee Lane. They were great days even though we probably didn't appreciate them as much then as we do now. We couldn't comprehend the dramatic changes that have taken place around Lostock Hall area in the last 50 odd years. By the way does anyone know why the P20

Tony Billington

**Ribble Bus Photo
courtesy of
www.oldbusphotos.co.uk**



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Readers Comments

In response to the Moss's Mill Christmas Party photo of 1952, I am sending you a photo taken at Moss's Christmas Party. It took place at Worsley's Ballroom in Preston. The girl that I am dancing with is Doreen Cox, who was a weaver at Moss's at the time and she came from Whitestake. I was 16 years old at the time, and yes I was sweet, at least the mill girls thought at the time. Can anyone shed any light on who those weavers were on the Coronation photo of 1953. I only recognise Mrs Bollenberg and Harry Parker. Yours sincerely,
Harold Fazackerley.

Wesley House was also used by Dr Logan as a surgery during WW2 in between its life as a vicarage, parsonage, Private Hotel and Restaurant. **Anon.**

The photo of Sports Aid, Lostock Hall High School we can know let you know was – on the left Karen Clarke, middle Stuart Cunningham and on the right Helen Gibson. Helen got a best for cross country. **Mr Clarke**

Please find enclosed some photos (see Farington Endowed School photo) of St Pauls School, Farington. I'm not sure of most of the names but someone might recognise some people. I used to live in Coote Lane so have been interested to see the articles and names of past residents, just to put the record straight, the Shaw family we had a brother David born 1946. After I left school I worked at the Lostock Hall Spinning Co. Doreen Westwood and I started together. Yours truly, **E Holden nee Shaw.**

Recently Neil Grimshaw has emailed me some photographs here are a few memories he included. 'The shops at Four Lane Ends were forever changing hands (except Peggy Mercer's wool shop). Bob Watson had the PO before Raymond Birkbeck. Charles Robinson, then a chap called Patterson (who was almost certainly a relative of mine, though I didn't know it at the time) then Allan Heyworth (who met my Mum not long ago) had the butchers. The grocers were Deardens (whose 2 daughters are on one of the photos) then Duckworths, then Coars, then Simpsons then Norman Gill. Across the road Sylvester Birchby had the garage; Kelletts had a grocers cum newsagents before the Spar came along (Mr Kellett always had a cigar on the go). Charlie Robinson used to take me with him to the abattoir in Accrington, I would watch the sheep being killed with a knife. Marjorie Dearden, who used to take me to school, died of pneumonia aged 16 - she was an absolute angel. At the school I remember there was an air-raid siren right across the road in Avondale Drive. They used to test it now and again which was well spooky. Learning to read - you started on cards, then packets, then books and you got a clap from the whole school during assembly when you moved up a level. 'The Small Silver Bear Who Slid From The Sky' - the best book ever. I just had a peep at issue 5 where it states that Bert Dearden helped form LH Band. He was a merchant seaman and sailed on the Arctic convoys. He and Marjorie (senior) had the grocers shop for a while before moving across the road. Theirs was the house on the corner of Brownedge Road and Todd Lane South.' **Neil Grimshaw**

I remember going to the Brownies, in the mid sixties, at Lostock Hall Council School, they must have been attached to St James Church as we attended church parade there, once or twice I was chosen to carry the banner. Who were the ladies known as Snowy and Brown Owl? In Brownies each group were known as a six, and the names of some were Elves, Pixies and Fairies. I remember having to iron my own tie, it was a very complicated affair, even more so to manage to tie it. We did have fun and played many games. I learnt semaphore, though can't remember any now. How to tie knots, lay a table correctly and I think boil an egg! **Heather Crook**

Lostock Hall Football Club.

I have attached 2 photos which I thought might be of interest to readers of the magazine. The first Looking Back photo was featured in the LEP May 9th 2006. The second is a photo, from our family collection, of the team from the same era.

My dad, Jim Melling, lived in Wateringpool Lane with Mum, Mildred, and my grandparents, Albert and Isabella. Jim was the team captain and is featured with the cup, the mascot was my older brother, Jack. As we grew up Jack and I both attended St Gerards School and later the Catholic College.

I can date the final win very precisely as the 16th April 1952 as it was also the date of my birth at home, dad was allowed absence from the proceedings, but no doubt had reason for a double celebration. I think the opponents were English Martyrs, the league was the Preston and District Catholic League and the Cup Final was the Sergeant Cup. I have a vague memory that the score may have been 3 -1 and that it was played on Deepdale. I have a replica trophy at home which presumably was given to each of the players. The information for the Looking Back article was provided by my Uncle, Alf Cook, who was Mildred's younger brother and later moved next door to the Melling family. Alf talked with Jim to fill in the player details, all of whom he remembered. I can identify one of the club officials, second from the right is my grandad Albert in the natty jumper. Alan Melling identified in the photo was Dad's cousin. The players seem more or less the same on the second photo, the addition second from the left on the back row is Ken Wilcock, my godfather. Ken and Vera lived on Harold Terrace in the village, I think Mum and Vera may have worked together in the Lostock Hall Mill. Jim sadly died last year at the age of 94, to the end he maintained an avid interest in football. He always looked for the St Gerards result in the local paper and a few years ago Jack and I took him to watch a match on the pitch by the gasworks, where both he and grandad worked for many years. He was also a Liverpool and PNE supporter, and we regularly watched the Liverpool matches together on Sky, when he would bemoan the standard of passing and the tendency of overpaid footballers to roll around on the ground following the slightest contact, particularly in his opinion those from Chelsea! It wasn't like that in his days, the days of Tom Finney, Bill Shankly, Tommy Docherty etc.. He had, I guess like many local PNE fans, attended the final in 1954 and suffered the defeat at the hands of West Brom. I read the magazine with interest and I am sure Jim would have been pleased to see the team he loved and played for featured in an article. I have lived in Chorley for many years and inherited his love of the game, I too played at local level in the Chorley Sunday League, coincidentally in the same position of left back. I hope the photos stimulate some memories from other villagers and remind the team of their successful heritage.

Bernard Melling



**LOOKING
BACK**

Today's Looking Back features the committee and players of Lostock St Gerards, winners of an area cup final in 1952, as kindly provided by Lostock Hall reader Mr Cook. The players were (back row) John Robinson, Alan Melling, George Taylor, BJ Watson, Vincent Nickson. Front: Tom Jackson, Danny Ward, Les Woodruff, Jim Melling, Joe Parkinson and Gerry Lawson. The mascot was J Melling.



LOSTOCK HALL/FARINGTON CARRIAGE SHED

Lostock Hall Carriage Shed courtesy of Terry Campbell. Double-heading Class 50's approaching Farington Junction Signalbox towards Preston. In the background between the box and just beyond the pylon stretches Lostock Hall Carriage Shed. Above it can be seen Tardy Gate Mill Chimney.



The Lostock Hall/Farington Carriage Shed was an imposing sight in my youth stretching from the footpath (still in situ) next to the Croston Road overbridge for a distance of 660 feet to the L & Y railway line that ran parallel to Fairfield Street (and still does). As well as its imposing length, the shed stood 17ft 4in high from the top of the rails to the underside of the beams and was 41ft 6in wide. It had a glazed gable roof and three roads, which included inspection pits and drains. Because the shed was timber-made regulations deemed the walls to be 3ft 6in from the ground which gave easy access to young couples in the area to discover the delights of the opposite sex! Indeed many romances were built and demolished all on the same night! The carriages were seldom locked so were also a useful place to bed down for vagrants, 'dirty stop-outs', etc. The 'Coronation Scot' coaches were stored here for a short while following withdrawal from service in 1939.

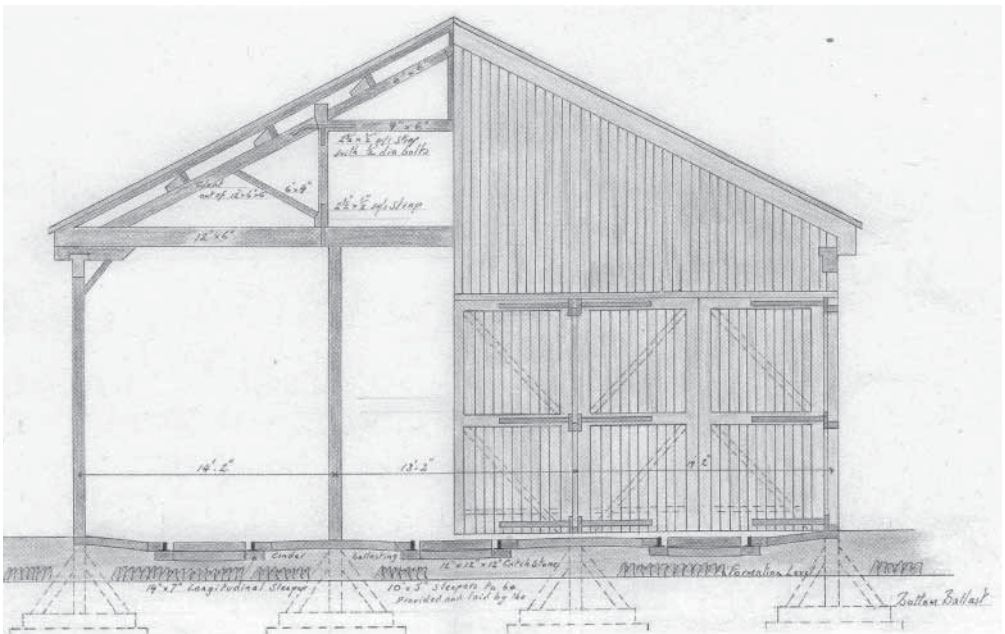
The Royal (or blue) train was also stabled here at times when not in use. Apparently one story goes that the Royal Train was taken out for a run to Horwich Loco Works and en route people were seen waving, bowing, doffing caps and anything else folk did when royalty was passing. This caused no end of amusement to the only 'celebs' on board, Driver and Fireman and bemused Guard! It is still difficult sometimes to imagine that such a monstrous structure ever existed now that the Wellfield Estate stands there instead. When we used to trainspot in the late 50's and early 60's on the concrete buttress and pipeline on Croston Road Railway Bridge we simply took it for granted that the Carriage Shed, Farington and Lostock Hall Railway Stations, Engine Shed and giant Coal Hopper, Lostock Hall Gas Works and the enormous Painters Sign would be there forever. Now all these local landmarks have been erased its sometimes difficult to imagine that they ever

existed. Ok the Wellfield Estate occupies part of the Carriage Shed site so progress in one way. Lostock Hall Railway Station was reopened on the otherside of Watkin Lane overbridge and the Gas Works site is set for development I believe. However, the site of the Engine Sheds and Coal Hopper wouldn't look out of place in Beirut, its now just an eyesore. You would have to look closely to see that Farington Railway Station once stood behind Kellet Acre.

Anyone moving into the Lostock Hall area in the last 30 or 40 years would have to see a photograph or go on hearsay to believe that any of these landmarks ever existed. However for people like myself, living and growing up in Lostock Hall, in the 40's, 50's and 60's these architectural treasures are still indelibly imprinted in our minds. Everyone of them was a landmark in its own right none more so than the once proud Carriage Shed. Buildings are turned to rubble. Memories live on forever.

Tony Billington

Plan of Shed from Bob Gregson's 'Lancashire and Yorkshire Railways Around Preston' book. ISBN No. 978 0 9565 1845 3



Carriage shed at Farington, Front elevation. (Author)

Memories of the Past by Jackie Stuart

After reading Tony Billington's 'More Moss Street Memories' and seeing the photograph with Lily Ramsbottom on, it provoked some memories of my own. Some are good ones and just a few are sad ones.

Some of the sad ones are seeing the Avondale Drive School closed. After being a pupil there and having worked there for over 30 years it just doesn't seem right to see it closed. Also the Methodist Church over the bridges being closed as a church and now being used as some kind of store depot. It is such a shame as it is the most beautiful church I have ever seen. Another loss which is also sad is the gasworks. That might sound daft to some people, but it was part of my childhood too. It also employed quite a few local people.

Going back to the photograph with Mrs Ramsbottom on, she and her husband ran the chemist as stated in Issue 21 at the corner of Brownedge Road and Watkin Lane. On the opposite corner was Livesey's Fish and Chip Shop. You could get a three penny mixture if you took your own dish. This was chips and mushy peas. If you were lucky you could also get a pennys worth of fish bits. The Chip Shop now forms part of the Tardy Gate Pub.

Going round the corner of Ramsbottoms's Chemist into Watkin Lane was a Mr Thomas Wadson and he was the clogger. Further down the road where the block of flats now stand was Marsden's Garage and next door to that was the Nat West bank. I think that it is now living accommodation. At the side of what was Dr Colin Thome's house was Clayton's coal yard. Sowerbutt's house was where the library is. Sowerbutts used to have peacocks in their back garden. They were so loud that you could hear them down St Cuthberts Road. Next door to Sowerbutts was Wesley House. This was really a vicarage built in 1903 for the vicar of St James Church. It looks a bit worse for wear at the moment. At the end of the terrace was Sowerbutt's shop. This is now a hair design shop.

On the other side of the road was the Labour Club, it is no longer there now. That brought back some good memories and some nasty ones too. Adjacent to the Labour Club was the Old Tea Room and the Victoria Pub. Down Victoria Street is the Victoria Chippy and on the corner of the street was H & G Wilde's Funeral Parlour. On the corner of Lindley Street was the old Post Office. Further on down at the corner of Sephton Street was Bleasdale's and several other shops including Clayton's Chemist, a tailors shop, I think the owner was called Mr German, and Shultz's shop was on the other corner and is now a bridal wear shop.

There were a few hairdressers and Barbers shops among them. But I cant quite remember the exact spot. The Co-Op used to be where the Estate Agents is now. On Croston Road where Lonsdale Chase is there was a tannery. Johnny

Gardner's Pie Shop was where Val Hughes is now. There was only one other shop then at the back of the Pleasant Retreat Pub. It was on the far corner and on Croston Road. I can't remember what the shop was, but I know that it was a shop belonging to one of my school friends.

I just remembered, Bleasdale's and Schultz's were grocery shops and so was Iddon's on the opposite corner to Johnny Gardner's. By the way if you wanted a pie from Johnny Gardner's it was advisable to order them, otherwise you would have to join a massive queue outside and hope to be lucky and get a pie. Does anyone remember that Mr Iddon had his own film projector. We used to go and watch them every Saturday night at the hall in St Gerards, and sometimes at a place in Bamber Bridge. Along the same line from Iddon's was Reynold's paper shop (newsagents) and a butchers shop where the dentist is. Bidwell's fishmonger, another newsagents, Jackson greengrocers, Harold Ball electrical shop and Tommy Balls Open All Hours shop and another shop at the corner of Coote Lane, plus Hettie Hyam's Wool Shop on the other corner of Coote Lane all made up what Tardy Gate and Lostock Hall was in the past. There was also doctors surgeries too.

Maybe this might jog other people's memories and they may remember some things that I have forgotten.

As mentioned above Harold Ball's shop was the place where you could rent a black and white television. It was there that my mum and dad rented their TV from. The shop is now St Catherines Charity Shop.

Tommy Balls shop was unbelievable. You could get all sorts of things there such as nails, screws, washers, dustbins, buckets, brushes, mops, and you could even get petrol because there were petrol pumps outside.

Opposite the shops and further down Leyland Road heading towards Penwortham was Jay's Orchard. Houses are there in its place now and it's called Marina Grove. Does anyone remember 'Yorkie'? He used to run the Lostock Hall Football Team. I knew him very well – he was my Dad.

Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



Passion Play performed in St Gerards School Hall c.1963/4

Pam Roberts is on the front left and Bernadette Clayton. Other names are Bill Brierley (Jesus) Anne Moran, Hazel ?, Jane Watson, Mary & Margaret Rogerson, Barbara Gornall, Sheila Redmond and Ruth Watson. Courtesy of Pam Roberts.

Moss's Christmas Party, Worsley's Ballroom Preston. The couple dancing are Harold Fazackerley and Doreen Cox. Courtesy of Harold Fazackerley (see Readers Comments)



PHOTOGRAPHS FROM LOSTOCK HALL PAST



Outside Robinson's Butchers Shop, Four Lane Ends (No. 139 Browndge Road) 1959/60. Left to right – Janet Heyes (No. 151) Margaret Robinson (No.139) Denise 'Poppy' Grimshaw (No. 143) Neil Grimshaw (No. 143) The chap in the window was called Dan.
 Courtesy of Neil Grimshaw

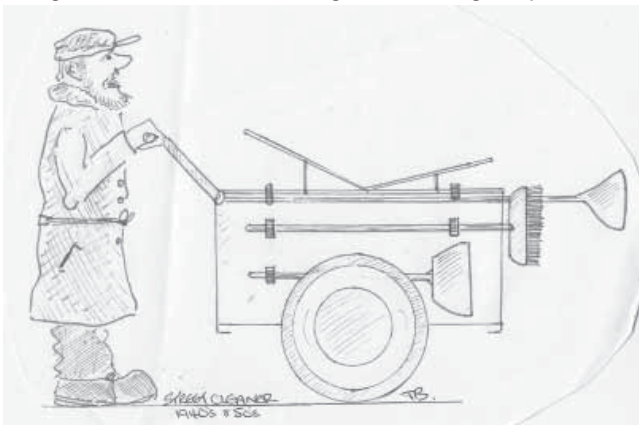


Farington Endowed (St Pauls Farington)
Farington Endowed School possibly early 50's. Back Row- Billy Howarth, ??, Bobby Mayor,???, Jack Brown, ? Parr. Middle Row – Pat Davis, Eunice Shaw, ?, Audrey Appleton, Margaret Wilson, Doreen Westwood, Mary Wilson, Kathleen Cottingham. Front Row – Barbara Taylor, ?, Marian Parker. Courtesy of Eunice Holden (nee Shaw)

ROAD SWEEPING HORSE WRANGLER (BILLY PARKINSON)

After the article in Issue 20 about Johnny Flanagan and his name being in local folk-lore another character from the same era was Billy Parkinson. Billy lived in Wilkinson Street (see Frank Melling's Wilky Street memories also in Issue 20) and was the local road-sweeper for the then Walton-Le-Dale Urban District Council. Prior to Billy cleaning the streets of Lostock Hall and beyond a two-man team were in operation. I'm led to believe that one member of the said team collapsed and possibly died in Browndge Road outside the property of Dr Sharples. Billy would be seen tramping the streets and roads of the village (yes, it was a small village in those days!) pushing the metal two-wheeled cart with its many 'gadgets' on board. Attached to the cart were a large brush, big shovel and an even bigger, longer drain cleaner. Two metal lids on top of the cart would conceal (when closed) two large dustbins. The cart could be propped up either way (see-saw style) when Billy took a well-earned rest and a chat with all and sundry to break up the monotony of the never-ending job of keeping 'Lostock and Tardy' tidy. Billy always wore a cap with the peak down, always had a chin full of whiskers and usually wore a long greyish black overall coat. Where did Billy keep his cart overnight? Surely he didn't traipse all the way to the Brig and back for it did he? Also, what did he do when the two bins on his cart were full? The local tip was near Tram Road and Hennel Lane not far from where the 'Welcome Inn' is nowadays. Did he walk all the way there and back every day? Surely not. Billy's horse wrangling escapade took place towards or after the end of the second world war. Apparently a gent was called up and needed somewhere to leave his horse. He must have gained permission to leave it on St Gerard's school field (pre the new school buildings now in situ). The horse had the freedom of the large field, which extended from the boundary of Lourdes Avenue to Wateringpool Lane and had St Gerrards Road on one side and the church and graveyard on the other. There was a water trough near the gate at Wateringpool Lane and the local kids would stroke its neck, pat its head and the more reckless would attempt to ride it unsuccessfully! The horse, a large black hunter type was nicknamed 'Dante', after the 1945 Derby winner of that name ridden by another Billy, Billy Nevett. Around this time some sort of Field Day was to take place on St Gerard's school field and it was decided that the temperamental beast would have to be found 'alternative' accommodation for the day. The church must have contacted the Council and Council employee Billy was designated with the unenviable task of escorting the horse to pastures new (at least for a few hours). The alternative accommodation was a field on Browndge Road next to the British Legion and in front of the large food storage depot. The field is now the site of the row of bungalows opposite Wateringpool Lane and the Presbytery. To say the task was a huge one would be an understatement. By the time Billy had 'roped' the horse and taken it from the school field to the other field it was probably time to take it back! It was probably Billy's first and only venture into the horse-wrangling business. Another great character from the not too distant past.

Tony Billington



Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



Lostock Hall St Gerards, Cubs and Scouts Summer Camp, Knaresborough, June 11th 1943. It is believed that Mr Gregson, who lived on Brownedge Rd next door to Margaret Lawrenson's bungalow, took the party to camp at Knaresborough on the back of his wagon. Working our way roughly from the extreme back row is Fr Gregory (parish priest), John Charnock and Tony Woodbridge,

we can find Victor Woodbridge, Bernard Sullivan, Billy Gallagher, Andrew Hughes, ? Livesey, Alan Culshaw, Gerard Porter, Terry McNulty and nearer the front are Frank Haydock, Bernard Billington (with boxing gloves), John Stuart, Ray Cartwright, Hughie Richardson, John Cleary, Dicky Billington, Terry Anyon, Tom Watson, Peter Dawson, Bernard Kitchen, ?,?, finally Tommy Baldwin. Courtesy of Tony Billington.

229 Brownedge Road, early 60's. Home of Eric and Alma Crook, which was demolished when the roundabout was built. In the front garden are Ted Preston, Lorraine, Heather and Wendy Crook. Next door at 'Karenza' lived Joe and Lilian Fisher and daughter Karen.



A TARDY GATE GIRL BY JACKIE STUART

Mum went into the hospice on the 8th September, the day before Stuart's 18th birthday. Sadly she died on Saturday 23rd. She had only been in there sixteen days, but it felt like a life time to me. It was so hard to go in day after day and see the deterioration, knowing there was nothing I could do. I wanted to stop it all. I wanted to put a pillow over her face. I wanted to stop the pain, but whose pain, hers or mine? Now the pain had stopped. The sense of tranquillity and peacefulness surrounded me. It felt really strange, but at the same time I could smile.

My nephew Martin and his wife Val came back to our house the night she died. They stayed with us until the early hours of Sunday morning. Derek had been giving me glasses of whisky and lemonade to help me relax. At 4 o'clock that morning I was crying my eyes out. I was 45 years old and both my parents were dead. I felt like I was an orphan. I was an orphan. The following afternoon my brother and his wife and I had to go and sort my mother's things out. On the Monday we had to go and register her death. On the way out of the Registry Office a gust of wind blew the Death Certificate out of my brother's hand into the car park below. We were chasing after it, when someone caught it for us. We started to laugh. Then my brother said 'She's having the last laugh on us'. I have said previously grief is a funny thing.

We had to carry out her wishes at the funeral. The only suitable date was the 28th September, my Dad's birthday. My brother had been away on holiday for fourteen of the sixteen days she had been in the hospice so most of the visiting had been done by me. Derek, Martin, Karen, Andrew, Helen and Stuart and some of my mother's neighbours went too. When I have said I instead of we that is the reason. We both agreed that the funeral should be carried out on my dad's birthday, so that is when it took place, then we all wished him a happy birthday.

Eleven months later Derek's Dad died. This was totally unexpected. He had gone into hospital with chest pains, but appeared to be improving. Suddenly he took a turn for the worst and died. Two deaths within eleven months of each other is quite hard to take. The following summer Derek, Jacqueline, Derek's Mum and I went on holiday to Wales. This is where Jacqueline rode her first pony. On our return she started riding lessons at Longton Equestrian Centre. This went on until after she left school. She then went to Myerscough College and gained a B'Tec Diploma in Equine Science. We had moved house again by then and we were now living in a two bedroomed bungalow in Lilac Avenue in Penwortham. Alison and Stuart had moved into a flat together the previous December.

In 1993 Lostock Hall Infant Department and the Junior Department amalgamated. I was against the amalgamation at the time. I was on the board of governors and the meetings became very heated. I felt I was under a great amount of stress. I was also going through the change of life, which proved very traumatic. I resigned from the governors after seven years service to try and cut the stress levels. I was also off work for several months. I could not cope with the panic attacks and the crying spasms that came upon me. I was a strong minded person and could not understand what was happening to me. Once I recognised how vulnerable I had become and accepted it, I was back on the upward climb again. The amalgamation was not a bad thing at all. My judgement had been badly flawed then, but it was understandable due to the circumstances at that time. Over the past few years the school has gone from strength to strength.

From the 1990's up to the present time there have been several changes in our lives, some good, some not so good. On the good side Derek and I celebrated 22 years of marriage. Helen got married and now has three children. A few years ago she went back to college and gained a B'Tec Diploma in Nursery Nursing, and now has a job in a local school. Stuart got married, then divorced, and then remarried and has children. He now works as a manager of a public house in Southport. Alison has two boys, but decided not to marry the father. I don't see any point anymore of marrying because you are pregnant. I did and look where it got me. She has gained several qualifications in Accountancy, Typing and Computers, but is in between jobs now. She is thinking of going into teaching. This is something I would not advise anyone to do these days. Teaching has changed so much while I have been at school. The amount of extra time and paper work is tremendous. But Alison would really make a good teacher. She has the brains to do it. Jacqueline has a good job working in a chemist. She is in the process of gaining a qualification as a Counter Assistant. I hope that she will go further and become a Pharmaceutical Dispenser. Derek has had a couple of spells in hospital. First with double pneumonia, then the following year he had deep vein thrombosis. He has to take warfarin (rat poison) for the rest of his life. I started having black outs again. This time I had to have scans on my brain, and 'YES' they did find one. I was diagnosed with syncopated Epilepsy. I always knew I had music in my soul, but I didn't think it was jazz. Looking back it appears there has been a lot of down turns. I must have kicked somebody's cat somewhere along the line.

I am still working at Lostock Hall Community Primary School and I am now in my 25th year. I feel that I am giving back to the community what the community gave to me. I hope that I am fit and well enough to carry on working for several years yet. I have started doing things for charity now. My first book 'A History of Lostock Hall, Tardy Gate and Farington' raised money for St Catherine's Hospice and for the school. Recently I helped my nephew Martin raise money for disabled children in the community. I feel that I have a lot to give and hope to raise more money for charity in the near future.

Through all these experiences I have kept my sense of humour. You cannot afford to let things get you down. Everything I have experienced has made me the person that I am. I have changed, but I hope it is for the better.

The villages have changed considerably too. They no longer resemble villages, they are more like towns, and they are mainly residential. The variety of shops is quite extensive compared to the early years. There are no factories, no mills, no railway to speak of, no Dick Kerr's or Leyland Motors as it was. All of these industries helped create the areas we live in today. Nowadays with almost everyone owning a car, a high proportion of residents commute to work. Yet Tardy Gate is still a place. A place that I feel privileged to have been born in, and be part of. A Tardy Gate person. Forever 'A Tardy Gate Girl'.

THE END

Editor's note. As it is quite a few years since Jackie wrote this ending to her book, she has kindly written an up to date ending which we will print next month.

A big thank you to Jackie for allowing us to publish her book in the magazine.

I know many people will miss reading The Tardy Gate Girl's monthly instalments – Jackie will continue to write articles for the magazine in the future.

Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



Farington St Pauls May Queen c.1954. Who are the three lovely ladies ? Keith Bretherton and Pete Tomlinson at the front. Courtesy of Pete Tomlinson



Lostock Hall Pram Race c. 1980's. Pete Tomlinson and the late Ray McGarry. Courtesy of Pete Tomlinson



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