



## Wigan Local History & Heritage Society

### **Minutes of the Members Meeting held on Monday 21st February 2022 via Zoom at 7 :00 pm**

#### **1. Number of Members present and Apologies for absence.**

14 members were present, and apologies were received from: Rita Fell, John Gostelow, Eileen Walsh, Andy Kenyon, Peter Fleetwood, Andrew Wilson, Pam Thomas

#### **2. Minutes of previous meeting January 2022.**

These were unanimously agreed as an accurate account of the meeting.

Proposed by David Fox

Seconded by Andy Lomax

#### **3. Matters Arising:**

Action Points:

2 ongoing: from November:

#### **November AP2. Draw up a draft list for suitable video equipment**

**List of equipment drawn up totalling £367. Asked to revise up to the awarded total of £500 to include a GoPro camera for guided walks etc. -Christian F.**

**Completed:** Christian ordered and paid for the equipment to record presentations and a 'go-pro camera'. It all came in at just under £500. A date for a training session is still to be agreed to enable any members willing to set up the recording equipment ready for a presentation. Christian will continue to edit the recordings and upload to WLHHS Talks Channel on YouTube.

**November AP5. Draft a letter to be submitted to Wigan Council requesting that WLHHS be actively involved in the process regarding the disposal and re-siting of the heritage assets from the Galleries complex - Derek W Completed.**

**Update:** A letter requesting WLHHS to be recognized as community stakeholders, and to be actively involved in consultations regarding the disposal and resiting of the heritage assets from the Galleries Complex and Market, was sent via email to the Conservation Officer Ian Rowan, it was also copied to the Chief Executive and Council Leader. It is very disappointing that the email has not been acknowledged. Following a discussion on next steps it was agreed that the Secretary should politely write again on behalf of the Chair, reminding the Council of the request for involvement.

One further action point from December was ongoing: **Dec AP8. Draw up list of heritage assets which may be contained in the workshops and stables up for auction by Canal and Rivers Trust -Neil L**

**Update:** stating online it has been purchased prior to auction. Neil to update as it unfolds.

#### **8 Action Points from January meeting:**

All completed except **AP5, AP6, AP7, AP8** which are still ongoing:

**Jan AP5 – Tribute to Wigan Cotton Workers Art - Photos emailed to Neil Harris along with details and dimensions. No response and it needs resolving before Dereks' planned visit to the UK in May – Neil to chase up.**



## **Wigan Local History & Heritage Society**

**Jan AP6 – Visit to Wigan Council Archive Storage Facility.**

**Andy/Jim will set up the first visit. Andy will correspond with Archives to set a date for an online talk by Louisa Atahari.**

**Jan AP7 – Investigate the feasibility of a members only area on the website. – early investigations looking good. Secretary to write to members asking what they would like to see in a member only area on the website.**

**Jan AP8 – Article for WLHHS website Ancient and Loyal – posted on site – To mark the centenary in April, Derek will draft an article for publication in local press – Jim M to circulate.**

**Feb AP1 - Suggest an appropriate date and time for a training session on recording presentations to take place – David Fox**

**Feb AP2 – Secretary to politely write again on behalf of the Chair, reminding the Council of the correspondence re. Galleries assets - Clare K.**

**Feb AP3 - Secretary to write to members asking what they would like to see in a member only area on the website. – Clare K**

### **4. Eckersley Mill. - Andy Lomax**

A local Wigan Firm - Heaton Group have been contacted as the new owners of the site.

Mills at the North - A Zoom meeting 11am 18<sup>th</sup> January took place between Anthony Lowe and Andy who has offered to put together a package of resources telling the story of the Mills. He will also share it with the Heaton Group who are interested in its rich heritage.

### **5. Treasurer update and subscriptions**

£200 paid by Cultural Consortium for the attendance at meetings of WLHHS representative is still outstanding.

Following payment by 61 members for annual subscriptions, subscription payments paid out to: Zoom (monthly subscription), Lancashire Local History Federation and the British Association for Local History, the purchase of recording equipment, the treasurer reported that the bank account is in credit by approx. £600.

10 members are yet to pay their subscription fee.

**Feb AP4 - Secretary to write to the 10 members regarding overdue payments. - Clare K**

### **6. At Risk Building of the Month**

Peter suggested we feature the Pagefield Building for the March At Risk Building. Secretary will feature it on social media.

Further information is available on Wigan Buildings website

FB Post - At Risk Building of the Month, March:



## Wigan Local History & Heritage Society

Continuing our series on Heritage Buildings At Risk.

Wigan has so many fine historic, heritage buildings. Most of the time, people walk by on their day-to-day business and are unaware of the history attached to these.

Over the years property and buildings have not been maintained and sadly, many are now in the category 'At Risk' Our March spotlight is on a once famous Mill in the town, locally known as the Pagefield Building.

It is a Grade II listed Building

Built in 1865 at a reputed cost of £150,000, the design was reproduced in the USA.

Originally Gidlow Mill, to the north of Mesnes Park, was built in 1865 to designs by George Woodhouse for John Rylands and was once the centre of his extensive business. It replaced an earlier mill. The complex includes the spinning mill, weaving sheds engine house and chimney.

The mill is constructed in red brick with details in blue and white brick which was unusual for its date. Its roof has multiple ridges covered in Welsh slate. Its floors were supported on cast iron columns. The mill was of fireproof construction. Cotton was received into the upper levels of the spinning mill and progressed downwards in contrast to other mills.

People

John Rylands died at his home, Longford Hall, on 11 December 1888, at the age of 87 and was survived by his third wife Enriqueta who inherited the bulk of his estate valued at £2,574,922, greater than that left by any other cotton manufacturer to that time.

Rylands's widow erected in Manchester a permanent memorial of her husband in the John Rylands Library. In 1901, Mrs Rylands paid £155,000 for more than 6,000 manuscripts owned by James Lindsay, 26th Earl of Crawford of Haigh Hall.

In 1865 the Earl of Derby travelling north by train through Wigan praised the Mill "as a pleasure to the eye to rest on, so well has architectural effect has been studied in its construction.

Enriqueta Augustus Rylands (1843-1908)

The Life of John Rylands 3rd wife - responsible for the John Rylands Library in memory of her husband.

<https://static.s123-cdn-static-d.com/.../normal...>

October 2016. The building has been vandalised and is in a very poor state, negotiations between Wigan Council and the owners are currently taking place to establish a long term solution.

For more information:

Gidlow Mill - Excellent document with a comprehensive history with lots of information.

<https://andrejamarkova.wixsite.com/johnry.../gidlow-works...>

Document and pics from the Wigan Buildings Preservation Society website, which is an excellent resource for anyone interested in the architecture and history of Wigan Buildings:

<https://www.wiganbuildings.co.uk/index.php>

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## Wigan Local History & Heritage Society

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Total reach

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0

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Total impressions

**2444**

Organic impressions

0

Paid impressions

The meeting then looked at recently taken photographs of Grimes Arcade, both inside and out. Which were taken on a preliminary visit to the site by Neil and Jim. They reported that the generally the structure is fine and is of strong construction. However, it needs to be brought up to a good standard for sustainability. It is exciting to find that the original wooden slat shutters have survived. The Grimes Music Warehouse appears to have been an open fronted building with a unique roller shuttered entrance.

### 7. Presentations and Talks:

WLHHS is now able to record live presentations and it will also be possible to present a talk to a live audience delivered via Zoom and shown on the large screen. David F has kindly offered to take the lead on helping to set up the equipment.

The secretary noted that we will also require a dedicated laptop as part of the equipment, and as the WLHHS laptop is currently required for use with the scanner do we need to purchase a

second laptop for presentation purposes?

The secretary kindly offered to loan a laptop until the time the Society can purchase one.



## Wigan Local History & Heritage Society

A Calendar of Speakers for 2021-2022 was discussed:

Nov 21- Sir Francis Sharp Powell Election Scandal – D R Simpson

Dec 21- Christmas Quiz and Party

Jan 22 – Was Wigan Coccium? A History of Roman Wigan – Ian Miller

Feb 22 – The Most calamitous of Times: Wigan During the English Civil Wars – Jim Meehan.

March 22 – Cinemas of Wigan – John Gostelow

April 22 – Reflections of a Wiganer in Exile – John Richardson

May 22 – Northerners – Brian Groome

June 22 – Pony Dick and Winstanley Hall – Derek Winstanley

July 22

August 22

September 22 - King Street, The Street That Was, A virtual tour– KSHAZ Working Group

November 22 – The River Douglas – TBA (Neil and Paul?)

December 22 – Christmas Quiz and Party

We still need to agree a speaker for July and August, the following themes were suggested:

The Development of Wigan Hall – Phil Clarke – Jan T to enquire.

The Temperance Movement in Wigan,

Old industries of Wigan – Bell making, Pewter, clockmaking

Mills of Wigan

Royal Visits to Wigan

If anyone would like to volunteer this will be very welcome.

### 8. Working Group Reports:

Projects, Archives and Training: No report

Cultural Consortium: No report

KS HAZ The Street That Was:

TDR Heritage has kindly offered to deliver a series of training sessions to WLHHS members. The first 2, Uncovering Research Online and Have A Go will be delivered via Zoom in March. Followed by a further session, 'Training the Trainer' date to be arranged.

Jim M kindly offered to coordinate these and correspond with TDR and Heritage England.

### 9. Social Media Reports – Clare: No report

### 10. Any other Business

Save The Field: Andy L gave an update on this

Sadly, Independent Councillor for Hindley Green, Paul Maiden has prematurely passed away.



## **Wigan Local History & Heritage Society**

Jim M gave an update on the old gravestone of a dog in danger of being washed into a stream. It was recovered and has been placed in Woodlands, a privately owned cemetery.

### **11. Date and time of next meeting:**

1. Presentation Meeting: March 14<sup>th</sup> 7pm at Real Crafty – Cinemas of Wigan – John Gostelow.

2. Members Meeting: Monday March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm via Zoom