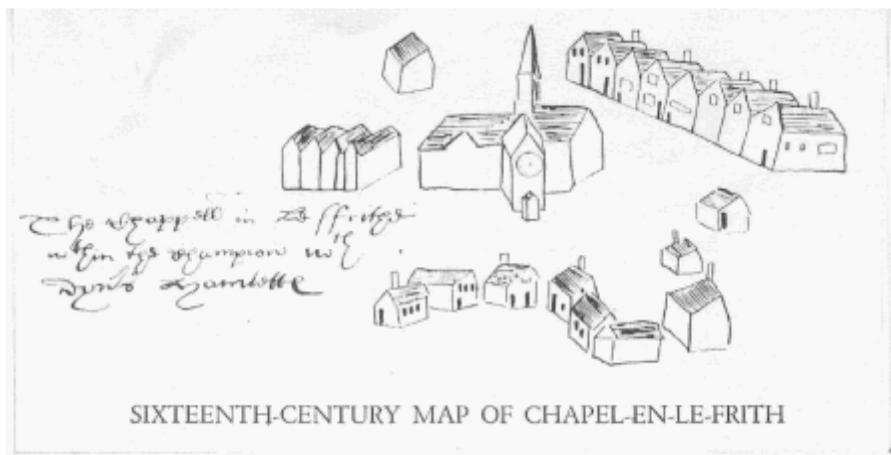


New Mills

Local History Society

Newsletter



Edition 26

Spring 2001

SPRING PROGRAMME 2001

Fri. 12th January
GWENDA CULKIN & BARBARA MATTHEWS
"The Nesbit Connection"

Fri. 9th February
FRANCES WORSLEY
"The Talk of the Wash-house"
(Public Wash-houses in Manchester)

Fri. 9th March
HOWARD SMITH
"Finding the Way Across the Peak"

Fri. 6th April
SONIAPREECE
"Stainsby Mill"

Fri. 11th. May
A.G.M.
BASIL JEUDA
"The Anderton Boat Lift, Past and Present"

COMMITTEE 2000-2001

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Vice-Chairman	BARBARA MATTHEWS	
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A WALK AROUND CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH

8th September 2000 - Mike Smith

The autumn session opened with an illustrated tour around Chapel-en-le-Frith under the guidance of Mike Smith. Mike who is Chair of the Parish Council claimed that Chapel was one of the Peak District's best kept secrets.

The town has a large concentration of halls and our tour began at Ford Hall and nearby Slack Hall. Moving into Chapel's main street there were several buildings of interest, in particular the Hearse House dated 1818. We were encouraged to visit this building which now houses the visitor centre which is run by Chapel Amenities Society. The street also contained some interesting shop fronts, however Mike admitted that 28% of the shops were empty. The council was planning to make the street more pedestrian friendly by resurfacing pavements and adding street furniture. 12,000 people shop at Safeway supermarket weekly and many local businesses were now benefiting from this. The tour moved into the old town around the Market Place, Chapel's 'hidden gem' with its Market Cross, War Memorial, stocks and Victorian horse trough. Eleven pubs once operated in the square, an indication of the town's importance on the stage coaching routes. Established in 1225, the church sits at the top of Church Brow, a steep cobbled street that our guide considered a more appropriate and authentic setting for the Hovis advert than the one used by the advertisers.

Transport had played a large part in the history of Chapel. A steep inclined plane once carried the Peak Forest Tramway into the town. During the railway age two great curved viaducts were constructed over the Black Brook valley. We were given a potted history of Ferodo, now owned by the American company Federal Mogul. The Chapel bypass, which opened in 1987, is reputed to be the most expensive four-mile stretch of road in Europe.

Mike Smith's lecture was particularly interesting, because he not only gave us the usual history lesson, but also brought the story of Chapel-en-le-Frith right up to date.

Barbara Matthews

The Spirit of the High Peak by Mike Smith, published by Landmark Publishing Ltd., price £19.95, is now available. The book is crammed full of photographs of local people, events and scenes both old and new taken around the High Peak. A great millennium souvenir.

A SIMPLE CROSS OF CORNISH GRANITE

13th October 2000 - Tony Catchpole

Keith Holford was unable to come to give us his talk, but made amends by suggesting Tony Catchpole as an alternative. We acted on Keith's advice and were not disappointed.

Like most other places, Hollingworth, a small village near Hadfield, has a war memorial erected to honour its dead of two world wars. Tony Catchpole, who grew up in Hollingworth, conceived the idea of researching the memorial, together with the life and death experiences of those it commemorated.

In the first months following the end of the first world war various schemes were proposed in Hollingworth to establish a fitting memorial to its dead heroes: a bandstand: a public park: a bowling green. All such notions proved beyond the capacity of this tiny settlement, composed almost entirely of textile workers of modest means. Indeed, it was eight years after the end of the war before the granite cross with its list of forty names was finally erected and unveiled.

By researching local newspapers, visiting war cemeteries in France and Belgium, consulting the descendants of the families involved and investigating official

sources of information in record offices and military museums, Tony Catchpole has been able to gather an impressive amount of biographical detail on those commemorated: not only the forty victims of World War One, but also the 13 names added at the close of World War Two.

The final achievement of this enterprising local historian is a book giving a fully-illustrated account of his findings. Intended to be a model for others embarking on similar research and entitled "A Simple Cross of Cornish Granite," died as the monument that inspired it.

Ron Weston

NINETY YEARS OF AVIATION IN MANCHESTER

10th November 2000 - Alan Scholefield

Mankind has long held a deep desire to emulate the birds - witness the Greek myth of Daedalus and Icarus - and it seems odd that it should be prosaic Manchester of all places where such romantic dreams at last took wing. But this was the case: Within months of the historic flights of the Wright Brothers and Bleriot, planes were being built and flown in the Manchester area.

With the help of his remarkable collection of early photos on slide, aviation historian Alan Scholefield gave us a graphic account of the pioneering days of aircraft invention and manufacture in Manchester, beginning with A.V. Roe. As early as 1911, Roe was building aircraft and flying them from an airfield at Trafford Park, then still a rural area. World War One did much to stimulate aircraft development and production. A new airfield was installed in Alexandra Park and a factory at Heaton Moor produced de Havillands and the Handley-Page bombers. The latter were used immediately after the war to inaugurate the first air transport service, flying between Cricklewood and Alexandra Park. Regular passenger flights soon followed: in 1922 a six-seater bi-plane shuttled between Alexander Park and Croyden, connecting with cross-Channel services. In 1924, the airport at Alexandra Park closed and the nation's first municipal airport at Barton on Chat Moss was opened. This was a truly pioneering enterprise from which the present airport at Ringway eventually evolved.

Our speaker made it clear that the success of Manchester airport, the third largest in Britain, was due in his opinion to the fact that it was owned, developed and directed by local authorities. Civic pride in these achievements was, in his view, fully justified, a matter that was sometimes overlooked when opposition to the building of a new terminal or a second runway was being publicised.

The contrasts between the pioneering days of aviation and those of recent decades, with the advent of jet propulsion and supersonic flight, were well-documented by our speaker. His comprehensive grasp of his subject was much appreciated by an audience which was in turn praised by the speaker for its degree of interest and understanding.

Ron Weston

TITHE MAPS OF LONGDENDALE

8th December 2000 - Bill Johnson

From time immemorial the church had collected its own taxes, the tithe, independently of the state. Originally, this had been a tax rendered in kind - so much corn, so many lambs. for example - but by the beginning of the nineteenth century, with only a small minority of people engaged in agriculture, this system had become obsolete. The Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 substituted a money rent based on a formula derived from the average price of agricultural commodities, with commissioners appointed to arrange and oversee the assessments. This involved making accurate surveys of land and property in most parishes, establishing owners and occupiers and recording who should legally receive the tithe. Now the tithes have passed away, but the tithe maps, often the earliest accurate survey of a parish, together with the tithe apportionment, is an invaluable legacy to the local historian.

For Bill Johnson, the redrawing of the tithe maps of all the parishes in Longdendale on A1 sheets, hand colouring them and embellishing them with contemporary scenes has been a labour of love. His detailed study of the maps and awards has revealed many interesting facets of information for local and family historians. A particularly rewarding exercise has been to combine the information regarding the inhabitants of Longdendale revealed in the tithe surveys with the enumerators' returns for the 1841 and 1851 censuses; as he said, "It brings these people to life." In New Mills this exercise has been completed for two of our hamlets, Ollersett and Thornsett.

Bill Johnson's map display attracted general attention and much admiration. He is to be congratulated on making such a valuable contribution to our understanding of the history of Longdendale. At present his maps are being made available on computer and their contents analysed for graphic display. This will be an invaluable resource in future study.

Ron Weston.

Visit to The Museum of Hatting, Stockport.

Eighteen members went on a very enjoyable evening visit to the recently opened Hatting Museum on 24 October 2000. The Museum opened earlier this year and has been designed and set out to a high, modern standard.

It was soon noticeable that there was a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere with the standard being set by the friendly Staff. We were taken on a conducted tour by a member of Staff who was very pleasant and knowledgeable. We followed the process of hat making from catching the rabbit to producing the finished hat. Various processes were demonstrated and machinery started up.

The second part of the visit was to the very interesting display gallery where we saw a wide variety of hats and materials together with further displays to do with the historical background.

The visit finished with a stop for tea/coffee and biscuits in a very pleasant cafe area which is open for light meals during the day. It was generally agreed that this had been a most enjoyable visit.

John Humphreys.

“The Nesbit Connection”; Edith Nesbit Literary Trail.

Those looking forward to the talk on 12th January will no doubt wish to obtain a copy of the booklet outlining the Edith Nesbit Literary Trail produced by Gwenda Culkin and Barbara Matthews of New Mills Library. Details of the walk are clearly described with the aid of an annotated map. It is a well-written piece of research illustrated by informative photos. Copies may be obtained at New Mills Library, price £1.

Are you good at crosswords?

ACROSS

- 1&21** New Mills' claim to fame
- 8** Large tub for holding liquids, which may be taxed
- 9** A recent local archaeological event
- 11** Small foodstore in C19 and early C20 houses
- 12** A railway which formerly ran through New Mills Central
- 14** Unfriendly competitor
- 17** Whatever you think, about it
- 19** In short, look for a state in USA, Dad, each year
- 20** Small deer
- 21** See 1 across
- 24** Several of these were recently stolen from High Lea Park
- 26** Indefinite article
- 27** Type of map, in brief
- 29** Bridge, river, road, side or valley
- 30** Knockout
- 32** See 38 across
- 34** In short, where in New Mills information is on tap
- 36** See 42 across
- 38,32&7 down** Grade 2* listed building 40 Is the European Community a district in London?
- 41** The tune is all about us
- 42&36** Historic building, maybe doomed to demolition

DOWN

- 1** Site of 9 across
- 2** Frequent visitors to mills in the first half of the C20
- 3** The night before the event
- 4** Often seen working on the canal prior to World War 11
- 5** National Trust
- 6** New Mills prior to 1974
- 7** See 38 across
- 10** First 2 initials of official opener of 1 & 21
- 13** Remain and support
- 15** Old fashioned girl's name
- 16** How you get to know
- 18** This river flows far from New Mills. Try Italy
- 19** Legendary fauna of Ollersett Moor
- 22** Available at New Mills' many hostelrys
- 23** Goyt, Midshires or Pennine
- 25** Behold
- 28** Used by winter sports enthusiasts, but it may be eaten
- 31** Ancient documents may be written in this
- 33** Vein of metal ore found in some parts of the Peak District
- 35** Initially our representative at Mat lock
- 36** Performed by many students in their 'year out'
- 37** May be seen in Buxton, Hay or Ross
- 39** May live in the Sett or Goyt, but not, we hope, in New Mills homes

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42											

answers on back page

Following are extracts from an article in the High Peak Reporter dated 29 December 1900 entitled THE END OF THE CENTURY.

At the termination of each year it is the custom, honored by long observance, to pass in review some of some of the more important occurrences of the past twelve months. The year of grace 1900 has not only a record of its own, but it is the closing year of a century, and that century demands even more attention.

The twentieth century will have its own wonders, but it cannot easily beat the good old nineteenth century in the momentous character of its new discoveries.

The improvements in weapons of war due to the present century have immeasurably outstripped the sum total of all prior improvements. The rapidity and range of firing cannot now be materially improved upon. For all practical purposes the rifle has reached finality, for it carries much further than the eye can discern an enemy, and shoots oftener than one can aim. The steam engine may not have reached the utmost possible limit of perfection, but the nineteenth century has not left very much to be discovered by the twentieth in that respect. The century that witnessed the construction of railways has brought them already to such perfection that not much more is to be got out of that idea. In the domain of electricity there is certainly greater scope for development, but already the nineteenth century has taken off the cream: We have enjoyed the use of the electric telegraph for about half a century; the telephone has come later; electric cars are fast becoming common in every town and city. The twentieth century will no doubt see an enormous extension in the use of electricity, but the nineteenth century will have made all the important discoveries, and have only left it to the twentieth century to enter into the beneficent harvest for which it has sown. We are apt to suppose the twentieth century is sure to go on as the nineteenth century has done, making more and more momentous discoveries every decade; it may not be so. Mankind may rest for a few centuries, content with the full enjoyment of what has already been achieved.

Flying in the air appears to be the only new problem that is yet hovering as it were on the verge of solution, and we may leave it to the twentieth century to find out what great practical utility there will be in the discovery when it is effected.

In December 1900 the Library committee decided to recommend that the council increase the salary of the Librarian of New Mills Library from £10 to £15 a year. This was due to the fact that the number of borrowers had reached 365.

Barbara Matthews

MEN OF PROPERTY

The Bowers and the Newtons in New Mills

by
Ron Weston



NEW MILLS HISTORY NOTES No. 28

New Mills Local History Society

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the Bowers of Torr Top pioneered industrial development in the Torrs. During the fifty years that followed, Buckley Bower of Aspenshaw was instrumental in transforming the landscape of Thornsett. The marriage in 1782 of his daughter Lucy to Robert Newton, an attorney of Stockport, led to changes in the appearance of Ollersett that lend a distinctive character to this hamlet to this day.

This A5 booklet has 68 pages, including 5 maps and 3 family trees showing connections between the Bowers of Torr Top and Aspenshaw, Buckleys of Aspenshaw, Penneys of Knutsford, Newtons of Stockport and Taylors of Duckinfield. Price £3-25. Copies available from R.Weston. 'The Thorns.' Laneside Road, NEW MILLS, High Peak. SK22 4LU. Tel.01663 744838.

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27	28		O		O		29	O	Y	T			
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36	I	E	37		38	O	R	39	R		40	C	
S			Y			D		41	I	R			
42	L	L	E	R	S	E	T	T					

ACROSS

1&21 Millennium Walkway **8** Vat/V.A.T. **9** Dig **11** Larder **12** LMS
14 Rival **17** Opinion **19** Pa. (Pennsylvania)/Pa/p.a. (per annum)
20 Roe **21** See 1 across **24** Slab **26** An **27** OS (Ordnance Survey)
29 Goyt **30** KO **32** See 38 across **34** HC (Heritage Centre/Hot&Cold)
36 See 42 across **38, 32&7** down Torr Vale Mill **40** EC **41** Air
42&36 Ollersett View

DOWN

1 Mellor **2** Lorries **3** Eve **4** Narrowboat **5** NT **6** UD (Urban District)
7 See 38 across **10** G M (Doughty) **13** Stay **15** Ina **16** Ask **18** P0
19 Panther **22** Lager **23** Way **25** Lo **28** Ski/Ski yoghourt
31 OE (Old English) **33** Lode **35** CC (County Councillor)
36 VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) **37** (River) Wye **39** Rat