

Issue 97  
July 2025

# The Ormskirk and District Family Historian

The Magazine of the  
Ormskirk and District  
Family History Society

45TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR . 45TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

# *The ODFHS Useful Information Page*

**Ormskirk and District Family History Society was inaugurated in 1980.**

*Registered Charity (No. 1004895). Member of the Family History Federation.*

## ADDRESS FOR ALL CORRESPONDENCE

Ormskirk & District Family History Society

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Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/OrmskirkDistrictFamilyHistorySociety/](https://www.facebook.com/OrmskirkDistrictFamilyHistorySociety/)

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## *Could You Contribute To Our Magazine?*

Articles for the Ormskirk and District Family Historian are always welcome. If you'd like to send something for publication, please contact the Editor using the e-mail or postal address above. We will do our best to look after all items (and will return them on request) but we suggest that you retain any original documents.

# *The Ormskirk and District Family Historian*

## *Issue 97 - July 2025*

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*"Not to know what happened before we were born is to remain perpetually a child. For what is the worth of a human life unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the recording of history."* - Cicero (106-143BC)

sent in by Jean Haikalis (1946-2017)

# *View From The Chair*

I begin my welcome to this Magazine in a state of anticipation; I'm just weeks away from becoming an aunty for the first time. It's all the more peculiar because my aunty (Dad's eldest sister) recently became a great-grandma for the fourth time; I call this phenomenon the "generation slide" - perhaps you've come across something similar in your own family trees? It's strange to think that these tiny new "twigs" will almost certainly be here to see the dawn of the twenty-second century.

Perhaps today's babies will look back and marvel that many of us still used paper diaries and calendars in the 2020s? Then again, they may curse us for forgetting to print our digital photos when the laptops and smartphones we store them on become obsolete and inaccessible! It's impossible to know which aspects of twenty-first century life will interest our descendants . . . but it's fascinating to wonder.

Sometimes, the passage of time brings sadness; it certainly did at ODFHS this January, when we lost June Dean-Golics, a stalwart member of the Society, and a veritable mine of information about the personalities of West Lancashire's past. Always happy to share her memories of the local past, June was so keen to remain involved with ODFHS as she reached her late eighties that she even bought a tablet so she could join our Zoom committee meetings. She will be very much missed, and my particular thanks go to Pam Richardson for her contribution to June's obituary on page 6.

As we have lost June, it's good to report that we're hoping to welcome Geraldene Hayes as a co-opted member of our Executive Committee. New faces often bring new ideas and new energy, and I have no doubt that Geraldene's knowledge and experience as a long-term member of the Ormskirk Community Partnership will be invaluable to us. I also hope that those of you who had chance to cast your AGM votes via the website found this new facility useful; all credit goes to Alan Cooper and Keith Broadbent for liaising over this. After all, we may as well make modern technology work to our advantage.



Behind the scenes, life at ODFHS is the usual whirl of activity. April saw us exploring agricultural history at the Museum of Rural Lancashire's Anvil Day, before May quickly filled up with VE Day anniversary celebrations (an excellent report can be found on pgs.39 to 41), a new outing for our boat families talk during the Friends of Parbold Library's Heritage Month, and a return visit to Ormskirk's Mediaeval Weekend. If you need more than a flavour of the latter event, we've produced a short YouTube video, simply titled, "*Ormskirk Mediaeval Weekend 2025*" - this one even includes background music!

Regrettably, a lack of space forces us to defer the full AGM report until Issue 98, but we did follow the "official" business with a series of presentations themed around our crowdfunded *Landmarks of West Lancashire* publication, just days before our final video update on the project was added to YouTube. A fitting way to end a challenge that enabled us to share some local "hidden history"; yet again, the fact that 301 digital editions of *Landmarks of West Lancashire* and 1035 of *Lost Buildings of West Lancashire* had been downloaded by the end of May 2025 only proves (to me, at least) that technology has an essential place at ODFHS!

Some things, however, always need a human touch. As we go to press, a panel of enthusiastic volunteers are judging entries for our 45th anniversary competition - and enjoying the stories that inspired you to write about your research discoveries. I'm certain that at least a few submissions will appear in future Magazines, and (as Editor) I must thank our entrants for providing such interesting content; you're inspiring me to make time to write about my own research . . . if I can only decide where to start!

Whatever you're researching this summer (whether online, in the local archives, or perhaps on a visit to a place familiar to your ancestors), I hope it adds an extra "something" to your family tree - and, in the meantime, I also hope you enjoy the World War Two themed content of Issue 97!

Kate Hurst  
June 2025

# Obituary - June Dean-Golics

## 16 June 1934 - 24 January 2025

*It is with great sadness that we announce the death of June Dean-Golics, a long-time member of the Society, and also a member of our Executive Committee, on 24 January 2025, aged 90. We know that many within ODFHS have fond memories of June, and particular thanks are due to Pam Richardson for her contributions to the following tribute:*

I got to know June Dean-Golics when I joined ODFHS in around 2000, and loved chatting to her about Ormskirk in past times. I first saw her on a trip to a family history show at Llandudno, during the 1990s. Born June Forshaw on 16 June 1934, she was related to many prominent local families. Her grandfather, who owned Bath Springs Brewery, told her that he had buried his best horse on land behind the brewery; today, houses stand on the same site.

June was brought up in Station Road, Ormskirk, and attended Derby Street School. She told me that, when her mother kept asking if she had made any friends at school, she replied "Yes, a fairy"; every time her mother asked, she always gave the same answer. One day her mother turned up at the school to see for herself, and saw June come out with a little girl dressed in rags; this was June's "fairy", but her mother took a different view, removed June from Derby Street and sent her to a private school.

After training as a nurse, June worked at Ormskirk Hospital, and later Southport Hospital. Following her retirement, she joined the hospital's League of Friends, and assisted with their annual fundraising garden parties. I think she continued until Covid-19 put a halt to the League's activities.

June was a member of ODFHS from its inception, and remembered the early meetings, held at the home of Ron and Mary Janes in Wigan Road, Ormskirk. She joined the Executive Committee early on, and only "officially" retired at our 2024 AGM, a few weeks before her ninetieth birthday; she was still a co-opted member

when she died. Before the pandemic, she helped out at many of Society events, including Dig Up Your Roots In West Lancashire, in October 2019, and was only too happy to share her memories of the Society in an interview, published in our March 2015 magazine. She had a good memory, and liked to come along to our Help Desks in Ormskirk Library, enjoying chatting to me - and any visitors - about the town as it was in the 1940s and 1950s. She remembered a bomb being dropped in Yew Tree Road, and a brothel, which she said was on Southport Road. She loved to chat about anything!

In her final few years, June's mobility was very poor, making it difficult for her to get out of the house unaided; nevertheless, she remained keen to be involved with ODFHS. She often rang me to ask about the Society and its members, and even got her family to buy a tablet so that she could join our Zoom committee meetings.

## *ODFHS Project in "Archives" Magazine*

The latest edition of *Archives* magazine, Lancashire Archives' local history publication, contains a contribution about the ODFHS "Sharing People's History of West Lancashire" project, following its development from the initial idea to share material from our archive, to the launch of the second title, *Family History and the Landmarks of West Lancashire*, at Ormskirk Library in January 2025. The stories of some of the lost buildings and landmarks featured in the books are told along the way. Although printed copies of the books were snapped up soon after publication, they remain available as digital downloads from our website:

<https://www.odfhs.website/index.php/downloads>

Issue six of *Archives* magazine will be on sale in all Lancashire Libraries and Lancashire Archives from 2 June 2025, priced £3.00. Further details and selected back copies are on the Lancashire Archives website <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office/archives-magazine/>

## *Out and About with ODFHS*

Our 45th anniversary year has brought us such a busy spring, taking us from the Anvil Day at the Museum of Rural Lancashire in Scarisbrick on 25 April, to a trip to Parbold Library on 1 May, and a couple of days at the Ormskirk Mediaeval Festival soon afterwards. Space doesn't permit a full report on each event in this Magazine, but we hope you'll enjoy this brief overview of what we've been up to!



*The ODFHS team at the Museum of Rural Lancashire's Anvil Day. Our display boards were themed around local farms, agriculture and the Women's Land Army*



*(left) Lathom Park Trust's display featured an 1875 poster for a sale of farm stock; (right) vintage tractors and cars proved a big attraction for many visitors*



*(left) Parbold Library's local heritage display; (above right) ODFHS boat families display on 1 May 2025; our talk on the same theme was enjoyed by an interested audience*



*(right) The first of a series of themed displays in Ormskirk Church; this one explores the changing face of the building*



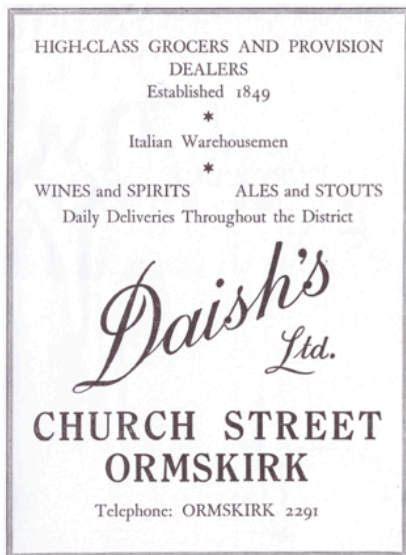
*(above left) Historia Normannis re-enactors hear grievances at their "court"; (above right) Lesley Holmes and Norma Gregson at the Ormskirk Mediaeval Festival*

# *In Conversation with Nigel Daish of Daish's Ltd, Church Street, Ormskirk*

Memories of Church Street, Ormskirk between the late 1940s and the 1960s

I was born in December 1942, Ormskirk was a lovely town when I was growing up, you should have seen it 60 years ago, Mum used to say you have everything you could want in town. I worked at Daish's until it closed in 1973.

Going up further you had Mr. Haydock's betting shop next to Daish's Ltd. Then eventually you came to a pub which is still there today. Ashcroft's was on Church Street, I had my hair cut there – men went downstairs and ladies went upstairs – it was a family firm.



*Daish's Ltd. was on Church Street,  
opposite Scott's butchers.  
It dated back to 1845.*

Mansergh's on Church Street sold old fashioned iron goods, pans and that sort of thing. I used to go in that shop.

*Ashcroft's Hairstylists, at 2 Church Street,  
were in business from 1948.*



# What's Coming Up?

Summer/Autumn 2025

## Face-to-Face Meetings and Events

- |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12 July 2025      | ODFHS hopes to attend Parbold Village Show, Alder Lane Playing Field, Parbold. 12-5p.m. This year's theme is "250 years of Parbold's Canal Heritage". £4 entry; children admitted free of charge. |
| 13 July 2025      | ODFHS will attend the Ormskirk Gingerbread Festival. 11a.m. to 4p.m. Ormskirk Town Centre.                                                                                                        |
| 23 July 2025      | <b>Down My Way - Emma Vickers, Burscough's Community Hero - Her Songs, Stories and Humour</b><br>by Peter and Barbara Snape                                                                       |
| 27 August 2025    | <b>The Lathom Almonry</b> by Dot Broady-Hawkes                                                                                                                                                    |
| 24 September 2025 | <b>The Derby Cinema Restoration Project</b><br>by Kevin Whittaker                                                                                                                                 |
| 22 October 2025   | <b>A Day Out with Mona</b> by Dennis Walton                                                                                                                                                       |

*Our in-person talks are held at the Guide HQ, Moorgate, Ormskirk, and begin at 7.30p.m.*

*All welcome; non-members are requested to make a £2 donation. Refreshments available.*

*Please see [www.odfhs.website](http://www.odfhs.website) for any changes to our programme.*

## Zoom Meetings

- |                  |                                                           |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 14 August 2025   | <b>ZOOM Family History Chat</b> 6p.m. (provisional date)  |
| 13 November 2025 | <b>ZOOM Family History Chat</b> 12p.m. (provisional date) |

**For access details for our Zoom meetings, please contact Kate Hurst  
(ODFHS Chair) at [chairman@odfhs.email](mailto:chairman@odfhs.email)**

# Ormskirk and District Family History Society

## Income and Expenditure 2024/2025

| <u>Income</u>                           | <i>Notes *</i> | 2024-25         | 2023-24         |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Subscriptions Received                  |                | 2126.85         | 2487.17         |
| less pre-paid subscriptions for 2025/26 |                | <u>- 704.40</u> | <u>-1087.17</u> |
| Subscriptions for current year          |                | 1422.45         | 1400.00         |
| Sale of Publications                    | 1              | 409.39          | 727.00          |
| Sale of CDs and DVDs                    |                | 226.57          | 241.09          |
| Visitors at Meetings                    |                | 178.00          | 101.00          |
| Refreshments                            |                | 115.80          | 184.00          |
| Donations/Grants                        | 2              | 718.49          | 575.75          |
| Magazine Adverts                        | 3              | 24.00           | 12.00           |
| SpaceHive Project Income                | 4              | 0.00            | 2901.78         |
| Heritage Action Zone                    | 5              | 0.00            | 500.00          |
| Talks by ODFHS Speakers                 | 6              | 316.00          | 35.00           |
| Outside Events                          | 7              | 0.00            | 0.00            |
| Miscellaneous                           | 8              | 0.00            | 0.01            |
| HMRC Gift Aid                           | 9              | 466.36          | 0.00            |
| Bank Interest                           |                | <u>0.00</u>     | <u>0.00</u>     |
|                                         |                | 3877.06         | 6677.87         |

| <u>Expenditure</u>         | <i>Notes *</i> | 2024-25 | 2023-24 |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|
| General Admin              | 10             | 793.27  | 1060.36 |
| Chair's Expenses           |                | 94.54   | 126.77  |
| Treasurer's Expenses       |                | 0.00    | 0.00    |
| Magazine Editor's Expenses |                | 21.58   | 0.00    |
| Guide Hut Rental           | 11             | 210.00  | 188.00  |
| Scout Hall Rental          |                | 650.00  | 650.00  |

|                                     |    |                  |                 |
|-------------------------------------|----|------------------|-----------------|
| Postages                            |    | 268.81           | 325.12          |
| Speakers and Visit Expenses         |    | 130.00           | 60.00           |
| Refreshments                        |    | 72.75            | 28.02           |
| Magazine Printing                   | 12 | 798.00           | 1185.00         |
| Library Archive Purchases           | 13 | 396.77           | 723.68          |
| Equipment                           | 14 | 1419.61          | 100.80          |
| Booking Fees                        |    | 0.00             | 0.00            |
| Outside Events                      | 15 | 51.50            | 84.00           |
| SpaceHive Project                   | 4  | 2055.65          | 856.62          |
| Heritage Action Zone                | 5  | <u>0.00</u>      | <u>352.85</u>   |
|                                     |    | £6962.48         | £5741.22        |
| Surplus or Deficit (-) for the year |    | <u>-£3085.42</u> | <u>£ 936.65</u> |

#### Balance Sheet

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| General funds at 1 April 2024     | £18849.13        |
| Add Surplus/Deficit               | - 3085.42        |
| Add back pre-payments for 2024/25 | 704.10           |
| As per Bank Statement 00064       | £16468.11        |
| Add Cash in Hand                  | <u>15.42</u>     |
| Balance of Funds                  | <u>£16483.53</u> |

#### Cash in Hand Year End Balances re. 2024/25 carried forward to 2025/26

|                                   |                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Treasurer's Petty Cash Float      | £15.42 (no change from last year) plus: -<br>0 x Ordinary First Class Stamp<br>3 x Ordinary Second Class Stamp |
| General Float for Use in Meetings | £12.00                                                                                                         |

## Notes

- 1     *A Slice of Gingerbread* (ASOG): £327.51. *The Man Who Wasn't There*: £60.49; miscellaneous: £21.39.
- 2     Includes Eric Wright Fund £500 for purchase of laptop, raffle £50 and other miscellaneous: £168.49.
- 3     Some advertising revenue still owed will be received in 2025-26.
- 4     All income from the SpaceHive project was received in 2023/24, but expenses were spread across 2023/24 and 2024/25. The small net overspend was more than offset by increased Gift Aid claims worth £181.
- 5     Line included for previous year's data only.
- 6     Seven paid talks given through 2024-25.
- 7     Recategorisation: Mediaeval Weekend and Open Day takings, included in other categories (donations/publications/CD sales).
- 8     Recategorisation: Raffle (net £50) at November 2024 meeting included in donations.
- 9     HMRC further Gift Aid payment for donations and memberships after 3 March 2024 will be received in 2025-26. The 2024-25 claim has been deliberately delayed to encompass the dates of most 2025-26 membership renewals.
- 10    Includes 1 extraordinary item: reprinting of ASOG book £95.50.
- 11    Guide Hut rental increased to cover higher electricity charges.
- 12    2024-25 covers the standard 3 x magazine printing costs; 2023-24 covered 4 x costs (effect of late invoice from previous year).
- 13    Budget £400. Previous year included £343.00 display equipment (partially offset by Rotary Club grant) and £100 book stock for sale.
- 14    Includes new laptop and software £981.29 (partially funded by Eric Wright grant of £500), and open day equipment, £198.50.
- 15    Expenses for UK Family History Societies exhibition at York.

# *ODFHS Treasurer's AGM Report 2024/25*

In last year's report I anticipated that, if trends continued, overall funds at the end of 2024-25 would be approximately equal to the April 2023 level. In fact, the end of year figure of £16,483.53 shows a small decrease of £357.20 over the two year period, which is due to two prime causes:

- 1) We decided to buy a new laptop, as our existing one was bought second-hand nine years ago, and there was an opportunity to get roughly half of the cost covered by a grant from the Eric Wright Fund. The net effect of that purchase was -£481.29.
- 2) We took an active decision to delay the Gift Aid application until after the bulk of membership renewals are received. The next Gift Aid claim is currently worth around £418 and will increase as more renewals come in.

All of the costs of the crowdfunded (and Council-matched) SpaceHive project have now been accrued. Total funding was £2901.78, received in the 2023-24 period, and our full costs over the two-year 2023-25 period were £2912.27, so a very small overspend of £10.49, which was more than offset by the increase in Gift Aid claim opportunities because of the project, which were worth £181.

In conclusion, ODFHS is in a stable financial situation. Our bank balance remains very healthy, standing at £16,484 at year end (31 March 2025), and the 2024-25 accounts have been audited by our long-standing auditor, Ian White.

Colin MacDonald  
May 2025

# Talk Reports

## 26 February 2025 - The Ormskirk Gingerbread Ladies by Kathryn MacDonald

Kathryn MacDonald expanded our understanding of the Ormskirk gingerbread story with a vivid account of the characters involved. Our town was an early entrant to the story of gingerbread; while several other towns had a claim to nineteenth century fame, Kathryn had found a reference to Ormskirk gingerbread as early as 1732.

Places with a gingerbread tradition were often northern, with women mostly at the forefront of production and sales. The gingerbread ladies, each selling their own family's recipe, were a common factor in traditional dress, as were the traditions of a closely guarded secret recipe.

Factors distinguishing Ormskirk's record were the longevity of the tradition (we're still gingerbread producers today) and the number of different families involved - the Fyles, Rimmers, Shaws, Orritts, Gregorys and Mawdsleys all featured. We were delighted that a descendant of the Fyles family, one of our members, was able to join us, with a generous supply of home-baked Fyles family recipe gingerbread biscuits. They were greatly appreciated by members!

The 1800s were the high point for Ormskirk gingerbread. In 1829, the Court Leet caused much concern when it moved the longstanding market pitches of the gingerbread sellers to an unfavourable new site, indicating that the sale of gingerbread was well established by then.

Ormskirk was a busy stagecoach stop (with fifty coaches a day at one point) and the appealing sight of the traditionally dressed ladies, in starched white aprons, small feathered hats and shawls, would have made a warm welcome for passengers - and an excellent invitation to purchase. Certainly it appears that the ladies took full advantage of such trading opportunities - apparently it was a regular occurrence to

see them going to the coaches to pass wares through the window, or waiting outside with their gingerbread for the doors to open. With the coming of the railways, the ladies congregated on the platforms as trains approached, especially as Ormskirk was known as a 'comfort stop' where passengers would alight.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the local news sheet 'Gingerbread' (featured in an ODFHS talk last year) flourished for a few years; the choice of this title for a magazine focussing on Ormskirk events must mean that the town was known to be strongly connected with gingerbread.

The tradition was still going strong into the twentieth century; Church Street emerged as a site of permanent shops and tearooms supplying gingerbread, the railway station continued to provide good opportunities for sales to travellers, and cycling clubs called in at Ormskirk for fuelling stops. It's recorded that the ladies travelled to the Liverpool docks to sell their gingerbread to departing passengers on ocean liners, and to Altcar to sell to the crowds for the hare-coursing.

Coming right up to the present, Kathryn listed a few ways that the confection has been promoted in recent years:

- the enormous efforts of the Ormskirk Community Partnership, who have done so much to highlight the town's gingerbread history and organise the hugely successful Ormskirk Gingerbread Festival in July - and they are also responsible for the cheerful gingerbread men to be seen around the town drawing attention to local businesses as well as interpretation boards telling the gingerbread story located in an alleyway off Moor Street (next to Clark's shoe shop)
- national media attention including radio, podcasts and TV, most recently the Hairy Bikers and Mr. Thompson's ginger biscuits
- the restaurant Moor Hall in Aughton, rated highly among UK restaurants with its three Michelin stars, featuring Ormskirk gingerbread ice cream on its menu
- the planters on Aughton Street, with their images of gingerbread men
- pictures in Wetherspoons, illustrating Ormskirk's gingerbread connection
- "A Slice of Gingerbread - Ormskirk Gingerbread Sellers", our own ODFHS publication which can be purchased via the ODFHS website or Parish Chest



Kathryn concluded by noting that there were many loose ends to be followed up in her research into the historic and ongoing gingerbread story, so we can expect to hear more! Her talk was detailed and intricately-researched, but also an entertaining, vividly illustrated and absorbing account of Ormskirk's famous product.

*Talk report by Julie Broadbent.*

## **26 March 2025 - The 1911 Enumerator's Walk by Norma Gregson**

Norma Gregson's warmly delivered, deeply researched talk gave a great evening's entertainment and an impressive demonstration of how much we can learn from our own home territory. The Enumerator's Walk was based on Norma's own home ground - she's lived there for more than seventy years.

The three mile stretch that the 1911 census enumerator took on 2 April that year covered the distance from the top of Aughton Moss to the boundary with Bickerstaffe, before finishing back in Aughton. The talk followed that enumerator's journey, with Long Lane at its heart, through local and national history; the Civil War skirmish at Trenchfield, the nineteenth century farms welcoming seasonal Irish workers, the opening of the quarry, the coming of the railway, the building of large and small houses, the development of new nineteenth century settlements around the ancient village of Aughton, the changes in the early twentieth century. Evocative period picture postcards, old photos, her own present-day photos and the 1909 street map of Aughton illustrated her presentation.

Norma's explanation of how her project began will be familiar to many - her family history research into her great-aunt Sarah Ann, born in Liverpool, had come to a dead end. But in the 1911 census Norma found Sarah Ann living as a General Servant at Red Beech House, Long Lane, near Norma's own home in Aughton, so she dashed round to look at the outside of the house. She was noticed by the owner and invited in to chat. Learning about that house, and understanding more about her great-aunt's experience there, was the basis for her interest in the houses

of Long Lane.

A huge store of information came from years of online research, but also from her local knowledge, including many conversations with homeowners sharing their own findings. As a result, the census records came to life; the naval captain who chose a site for his house because of its fine view of the Mersey: the house (originally called Sea View) which changed its name when the view was blocked by new buildings: the relics of Civil War soldiers hurriedly abandoned at Aughton Moss Mill as the enemy approached: the small boy who progressed through Merchant Taylors and Liverpool University and became an Orthopaedic Surgeon in the USA in Boston and New York: Ellen Swindells with her horse and carriage, Thomas Woodcock 'The Sprout King' at Moss End Farm out in the country, whose daughter Kitty had two paintings shown at the National Gallery - right up to the present, when some lovely old houses are being demolished to make way for new-builds and the demands of twenty-first century families.

Two large files of material had resulted, crammed with Norma's detailed research which she invited the audience to consult. Records of lost work occupations emerged; Green Grocer, Jobbing Gardener, Cotton Salesman, Auxiliary Cowboy, Gardener for Lawn Tennis, Cotton Broker, Corn Merchant Cashier, Quarry Rockman, Railway Guard, Signaller, Engine Cleaner, Stock Exchange Clerk, and many others. The many Liverpool city jobs were made possible by the railway, which - in turn - had depended on stone from Sandfield Quarry. As new houses were built for these commuters, developments like Town Green and Granville Park took shape with shops, pubs and churches to form the new communities. It was fascinating to interpret the process of community development through the base data of the 1911 census.

As often as she could, Norma had found old photos of the houses, which were enhanced by her own contemporary photos, showing how the houses look now - or what remains instead. It was striking to consider how magnificent some of those houses would have looked when newly built in the open fields of Aughton.

Questions and comments from the audience reflected that Norma had really struck

a chord with members; they responded to her commitment and initiative by sharing their own experiences and memories. Topics included servants - how many there were, the great amount of housework before automation, and where they were accommodated; a long-serving Irish farm worker, still making the trip for summer work every year within living memory, and reminiscences of Aughton in days gone by.

There were congratulations on her work, questions about how long it had all taken (two and a half years to finalise 'The Enumerator's Walk', but many more years building up the background knowledge), and interest how she had kept it all going. Her reply? 'Well, it just gets you!'

*Talk report by Julie Broadbent.*

### **23 April 2025 - Celebrating VE Day: Remembering Our World Wars**

Our April meeting was our own commemoration of the Second World War, to mark the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, 8th May 1945. ODFHS had asked for volunteer members to bring their personal or family stories of the war to a special meeting, and those who came forward did a sterling job. Their talks, together with Kathryn McDonald's evocative displays, resulted in a unique evening.



## *Ormskirk and District Comrades Roll of Honour 1939-1945*

Charlie **AMES**, L/Cpl, 72 Tipper Coy RASC, d. 10 Jul 1943 age 23, near Cassino, Italy.  
Walter **ARDERN**, Sgt. Obs. RAF, d. 17 Jun 1940, at sea - SS *Lancastria* bound for England.  
Herbert Reginald **ASHCROFT**, RAOC, d. 5 Jul 1941 age 23, at sea - SS *Anselm*.  
George **BAILEY**, 158 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 20 Feb 1944, age 21, shot down over Germany.  
John Rowland **SCHOFIELD MC**, Lt. RE, d. 6 Apr 1943 age 22, Tunisia.  
John **BALL**, 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. Border Regt., d. 21 May 1944 age 29, Burma.  
James W **BANKS**, Asst. Stewd. (Merchant Navy), d. 6 Dec 1943 age 65, MV *Apapa*, bur.  
Ormskirk Parish Church  
Abel **BARTON**, Flt Sgt RAFVR, d. 22 Feb 1945 age 24, flying accident, bur. St. Paul's  
Church, Skelmersdale  
James **BENNETT**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Lancs Fusiliers, d. 7 Aug 1943, Sicily, Italy.  
William **BERKLEY**, Pte. Pioneer Corps, d. 10 May 1945 age 42, Germany.  
Kenneth Peter **BERRY**, Radio Off. Mer. Navy, d. 28 Nov 1940 age 30, at sea - SS *St. Elwyn*  
William **BERRY**, RA, d. 8 Apr 1944 age 36, bur Ormskirk St Anne's RC Church.  
William Thomas **BEVAN**, Capt., d. 25 Sep 1941 in Ormskirk Military Hospital.  
Henry **BIRCH**, Pte, Queen's Royal Regt, d. 25 Sep 1943.  
William **BIRCH**, d. 16 Jul 1944 in Normandy, bur Ormskirk Parish Church.  
William **BIRCHALL**, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Royal Ulster Rifles, d. 14 Apr 1945, aged 34, near Argentina,  
Italy.  
George M **BLUNDELL**, Capt. 1st Bn. Parachute Regt., d. 20 Sep 1944 near Arnhem,  
Netherlands.  
Thomas **BRACEGIRDLE**, LAC 2839 Sqn RAFVR, d. 23 Jan 1945, bur. Ormskirk St  
Anne's RC Ch.  
William Ernest **BRADLEY**, Gdsmn. Scots Guards, d. 11 Sep 1943 Italy.  
John **BRADY**, RN - HMS *President III*, d. 28 Dec 1942 at sea - SS *Empire Shackleton*  
Wilfred **BROOKES**, 78 Sqn RAFVR, d. 2 Jun 1942 aged 28, Netherlands.  
Thomas **BROSNAN**, d. 9 Nov 1942.  
William Henry **BROWN**, AC RAFVR, d. 4 Jul 1942, Khartoum, Sudan.  
George Edward **BURROWS**, Cpl. East Lancs. Regt., d. 24 Feb 1944 age 27, Burma  
Graham C **BUSH**, d. 29 Aug 1942  
John Victor **CAUNCE**, 4 Maritime Regt. RA, d. 15 Jan 1942 aged 27, at sea  
William R. **CLAYTON**  
Harold **CLEGG**, Purser Merchant Navy, d. 2 Jul 1940, at sea, SS *Arandora Star*

Leonard James Frost **COLLINS**, d. 9 Feb 1945.

Norman **COOKSON**, Fus. 8<sup>th</sup> Bn. Lancs. Fusiliers, d. 7 May 1944, Burma.

John **CROMPTON**, Tpr. Royal Dragoon Gds. RAC, d. 23 Sep 1944 age 22, Netherlands.

Walter **DANN**, AB RN, d. 13 Nov 1946, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church

Henry Clifford **DAVIES**, LCpl. 250<sup>th</sup> Airborne RASC, d. 22 Sep 1944 age 29, nr Arnhem, Netherlands.

William E **DAVIES**, d. 7 Aug 1947.

Charles Alfred **DAY**, LCpl. 710 Artisan Wks. Coy. RE, d. 8 Sep 1944 age 30, Normandy, France.

Gordon Kennedy **DEAN**, Sgt. 156 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 16 Apr 1943 age 20, near Reims, France.

Geoffrey Knowles **DEARDEN**, RAFVR, d. 17 Feb 1943 age 21.

John P **DOLAN**, RASC, d. 16 Jan 1945, Thailand.

Alfred Segar **DRAPER**, Sgt. RAFVR, d. 30 May 1942, bur. St. Michael's Church, Aughton

James **DRAPER**, Flt. Sgt. 10 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 6 Jan 1945 age 23.

Henry Vincent **EASTHAM**, Cpl. RAFVR.

J H **EDDON**, Pte., d. 9 May 1945, bur Ormskirk Parish Church

Hugh Gregory **EDGE**, Sgt. 39 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 15 Jun 1942, Egypt.

Harry **FARRINGTON**, CSM 924 Trans. Coy. RE, d. 10 Aug 1946 age 43, near Hamburg, Germany.

Robert **FELTON**, Sgt. Loyal North Lancs Regt., d. 27 Aug 1944 age 27.

Lesley **FINCH**, RAFVR, d. 31 Dec 1943 age 23, Sicily, Italy.

Henry Lancelot **FREEMAN**, Lt. RHA, d. 30 Jan 1944, North Africa.

Charles **GALVIN**, Stoker RN, d. 17 Jun 1943, bur. St. Anne's RC Church, Ormskirk

John **GASKELL**, 62 Tank Regt. RA, d. 8 Jul 1944 age 24, Normandy, France.

Catherine **GIBBONS**, Pte. Australian Territorial Service, d. 6 Jan 1944, bur. St. Anne's RC Church, Ormskirk

Joseph Patrick **GIBBONS**, d. 7 Dec 1942 age 19, at sea.

T. J. **GIBNEY**, Fus. 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Royal Inniskillen Regt, d. 13 Dec 1940, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church

Alexander **GIBSON**, L/Cpl., South Staffs. Regt., d. 8 Jul 1944 age 19, Normandy, France

Frank **GILL**, RAFVR, d. 12 Mar 1945 age 21.

William **GRADY**, 70 Field Regt. RA. d. 5 Mar 1943, Algeria

Richard **GREGORY**, Pte., d. 2 Sep 1944 age 29, Italy

Alan **GRICE**, 106 (Lancs. Hussars) Lt. AA Regt. RA, d. 26 Apr 1941, Greece

William GUY, Sgt., d. 17 Feb 1943, Kenya

J R HARRISON, Pte. 7<sup>th</sup> Bn. South Staffs Regt., d. 9 Aug 1944 age 24, Normandy, France.

Richard HASKAYNE, RA, d. 12 Jun 1944, Libya.

Glynn James HESKETH, Irish Guards, d. 11 Aug 1944, Normandy, France

Walter James HIGNETT, Lancs Fusiliers, d. 13 May 1944 age 27, India

Edward Clarke HOLCROFT, RHA, d. 13 Jun 1942, Egypt

Thomas B R HORROCKS, Sgt. 218 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 14 Aug 1944 age 20, nr Aachen, Netherlands

John HOUGHTON, 49 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 21 Nov 1944, Germany

Thomas S HOUGHTON

William HULME, REME, d.16 Feb 1946 age 27, Israel

Eric JOHNSON, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Lancs Fusiliers, d. 3 Jul 1944, near Bari, Italy

Thomas JONES, AC RAFVR, d. 18 Dec 1940, bombing raid on Sheffield, UK

Joseph JUMP, Sgt. RAOC, d. 17 Jun 1940 age 21, Ile de Re, France

James KEATING, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Manchester Regt., d. 31 Jan 1942, Singapore

John KELLY, d. 28 Jan 1942

Thomas LATHAM, Pte. 6<sup>th</sup> Bn. South. Lancs. Regt., d. 11 May 1945 age 48, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church

Richard Edward LEA, Sgt 254 Sqn. RAF, d. 19 Jul 1941 age 18, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church

J LEES, Sgt RA, d. 25 Jan 1940, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church

John A LOCKWOOD-BUNCE, Sub. Lt. RNVR HMS *Quebec*, d. 19 Jul 1943 age 23, Sicily, Italy.

William Ernest MARSH, Flg Off RAFVR, d. 6 Feb 1944 age 27, Egypt.

John Francis MARSDEN, Capt, d. 7 Oct 1947 age 47, bur. St. Anne's RC Church, Ormskirk

James MAWDSLEY, civilian, d. 31 Dec 1940 age 54, in Railway Goods Yard, Liverpool

George McLOUGHLIN, d. 11 Aug 1944, Normandy, France

Arthur R MOORCROFT, Steward RN, d 13 Feb 1944, at sea - HM Trawler Cap D'Antifer

William J MOORCROFT, Flt. Lt. 115 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 13 Jul 1943 age 22, Belgium

John N C MORRIS, Ord. Telegrapher RN, d. 8 Nov 1942 age 32, at sea - HMS *Walney*

R A MORRISON, Capt. Army Educ. Corps, d 14 Jan 1941, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church

James NIGHTINGALE, Loyal North Lancs Regt., d. 30 Apr 1943 age 20, Tunisia

Joseph Donald ORMESHER, WO RAFVR, d. 11 May 1945, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church

Charles **PIGDON**, Plt. Off. 11 Sqn RAF, d 21 May 1943 age 33, Bangladesh  
Donald Ellis **PRICE**, Fus. 1<sup>st</sup> Bn Lancs Fusiliers, d. 4 Jun 1944 age 27, Burma  
Wilfred John **PYE**, 117 Sqn. RAFVR, d 27 Dec 1942 age 20, Tunisia  
Joseph **QUINN**, Pioneer Corps, d. 27 Mar 1946 age 41, bur. St. Anne's RC Church, Ormskirk  
Eric Beresford **RIDING**, Surg. Lt. RNVR, d. 19 Dec 1941 age 27, at sea - HMS *Neptune*  
Peter **RILEY**, Asst. Butcher Merchant Navy, d. 16 Jan 1941 age 18, at sea - SS *Oropesa*  
John **ROUGHLEY**, Sgt. Obs. 83 Sqn. RAFVR, d. 18 Jun 1943 age 21, bur. St. James' Church, Westhead  
Samuel Alvin **RODGERS**, 66 Sqn. RAFVR d. 21 May 1944 age 23.  
James Herbert **ROWLANDS**, Sgt. RAFVR, d. 15 May 1942 age 33.  
John Eason **SHARPLEY**, Fly. Sgt. 100 Sqn RAFVR, d. 1 Jul 1944, Loire, France  
F W **SMALES**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt South Lancs Regt, d. 30 Oct 1941, bur. Ormskirk Parish Church  
Thomas **STAIT**, Pte. 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Bn Border Regt, d. 10 Jul 1943, near Cassino, Italy  
Cyril **SEDDON**, Sgt. RAFVR, d. 29 Dec 1943 age 22, Germany  
Albert James Walker **STEAD**, RNVR HMS GosV1, d. 2 Nov 1941, Egypt  
Benjamin Herbert **STOCKLEY**, d. 11 Jan 1945, Egypt  
Richard **STRINGFELLOW**, Plt Off 104 Sqn RAFVR, d. 28 Jun 1942 Egypt  
William **SUMNER**, Plt Off RAFVR, d. 22 May 1944 age 21, India  
Ernest **TABARN**, Merchant Navy, d. 12 Sep 1942, at sea - SS *Laconia*  
Richard Kenneth **TAYLOR**, L Cpl Corps of Military Police, d. 24 Jan 1944, Iraq  
Peter Wood **TORR**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt LNL, d. 26 Feb 1942 age 26, Singapore  
Bernard **TURNER**, 9<sup>th</sup> Bn. Durham Light Infantry, d. 9 Aug 1943, Sicily, Italy  
Richard **TURNER**, RN, d. 16 Jul 1940, at sea; HMS *Imogen*  
Geoffrey Berkeley **TURNOCK**, RA, d. 6 Oct 1942, bur. Duke Street, Cemetery, Southport  
Robert Edward **TWIST**, Cpl. Lancs. Fusiliers, d. 2 Aug 1944, aged 25, Normandy, France  
Thomas **TYRER**, 106 anti-Tank Regt. RA, d. 8 Aug 1943, Egypt  
John Joseph **WALKER**, L Cpl RAOC, d. 3 Dec 1942 age 22, Thailand  
Edward **WALSH**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Indian Div Royal Corps of Signals, d. 25 May 1944, Burma  
William **WALSH**, RE, d. 17 Jun 1940, Dunkirk, France  
Francis William **WEBSTER**, Sgt. 138 Sqn .RAFVR, d. 23 Feb 1945, Denmark  
James Francis **WELLS**, RA, d. 1 Dec 1941, Egypt  
William **WILDING**, 14<sup>th</sup> Bn. Sherwood Foresters, d. 12 Mar 1944 aged 26, Anzio, Italy  
Frank **WOOSNAM**, LAC RAF, d. 2 Oct 1943 aged 24, India  
Bernard Joseph **WRIGHT**, RN, d. 13 Mar 1943, at sea - HMS *Victory III*



Keith Broadbent introduced, linked and concluded the evening. The presenters, in addition to Keith, were Teresa Williams, Dennis Walton, Rose Halsall (guest presenting the wartime story of member Phil Ball's relation, as he lives in Guernsey), Jenny Walton, and Dot Broady-Hawkes.

Firstly, Teresa gave us two contrasting stories of war experience, which had inspired two evocative poems that she read aloud to us. The first related to the wartime experience of her grandfather-in-law Eric Williams, an accountant with British Gas working in Birmingham, and also a volunteer night-time fire warden.

Eric was on duty in October 1940, high on a rooftop on a terrible night when the city was hit by a hugely destructive air raid. Teresa's poem, with its images of bombs raining down and the city lit up like funeral pyres vividly conveyed Eric's incredibly dangerous position during the raid and his remarkable courage.



*Eric Williams*

Her second poem 'Storks', offered something completely different. It was a lovely evocation of storks taking off, soaring from their nests in the evening light in the



Rhine Valley, close to the German border. It came from the story of Teresa's holiday in Alsace, where she visited Riquewihr and saw the museum marking the Maginot Line. She talked about the annual celebrations in France to honour two British pilots who were shot down near Vias, a small coastal town where her brother now lives.



Photos from the recent commemoration included the mayor and representatives from overseas. In wartime, that area was a borderland that armies fought over, but now it is a peaceful landscape where the storks fly safely. The image is a lasting reminder of the peace that those young men who lost their lives believed worth fighting for.

Dennis followed with 'Charlie's War', the story of his father Charles Harold Walton, with a series of photos that made his talk so vivid.

Before the war Charlie was a van lad, then a laundry van driver, and his wartime job in the Army Ordnance Corps was as driver/mechanic for a Mobile Laundry Unit - vital support for soldiers at the front, bringing them clean clothes and washing facilities, an invaluable boost to morale. We saw Charlie and his two best friends in the laundry unit, and Dennis told us that, although Charlie had never mentioned his friends by name after the



*Charles "Charlie" Harold Walton*

war, he had called his sons, Dennis and his brother Michael, after them - which Dennis never knew until researching his father's wartime story. We understood what the gesture meant, in tribute to that tight-knit group.

Next, there was a dreadful story of how the laundry unit van had been due to drive forward over the next piece of land but was delayed; another van took its place. Horribly, that vehicle



*Charlie Walton on his  
wedding day*

was blown up; the land it had driven over was actually a minefield. Dennis

reflected that he wouldn't have been with us to tell the story, except for this.

Finally we saw Charlie's war service record (demobbed on 7 December 1946) and his wedding photo (Dennis had worked out that Charlie must have been married in his smart demob suit). Charlie's cheerful face and his son's engaging presentation made it an engrossing story with a happy ending.



*Charlie Walton with his Mobile  
Laundry Unit comrades*

Rose Halsall, Chairman of Ormskirk School Foundation Trust (formerly Ormskirk Grammar School Foundation Trust) told us of the loss of Lancaster bomber pilot Flight Lieutenant William James Moorcroft and how its long aftermath continues so many years later. Rose had been drawn especially to William's story as a result of her involvement with the Foundation Trust.



*Flight Lieutenant William James Moorcroft*

Firstly, Rose told us of William's life before the war - a former pupil of Ormskirk Grammar School, brought up on a farm at Clieves Hill, Aughton, and engaged to Laura. We saw photos of him in cricket kit and RAF uniform, looking like the hero of a wartime film; Rose thought that Steven Spielberg would be a good choice to make it. However, on July 13, 1943, William's plane was shot down over Belgium, and the entire crew lost their lives in a fatal crash in the Ardennes.

Rose showed us a fragment from the mountain that the plane had crashed into, given to her by the villagers of nearby Les Hayons - collected as part of their long-term commitment to honouring the memory of the crash. They buried the remains of the crew in the village cemetery, in graves that were at first unmarked to avoid German attention but now have the familiar Commonwealth gravestones.



*The site of the fatal plane crash*

After the war, the village continued to mark the anniversary of the plane crash with memorial ceremonies through the years. In 2013, through Rose's contact with the village, she was invited to attend the 70th anniversary commemoration. She told us of the solemn ceremony at the site of the crash, now with an impressive memorial stone, attended by veterans and current RAF personnel, with regimental flags flying. A commemorative fly past and the Last Post honoured the crew.



*The memorial at Les Hayons*

Rose illustrated her talk with a vivid range of images including maps, photos, records, and letters, giving us a deep understanding of her story. We in the audience had to absolutely agree with Rose's final comment - 'What a story!'

Jenny told us of a completely different experience - her story of Karl, a German prisoner of war who had come to be a great family friend over the years. Karl had said very little about the war, but Jenny remembered that when he was once asked



*Jenny's mother*

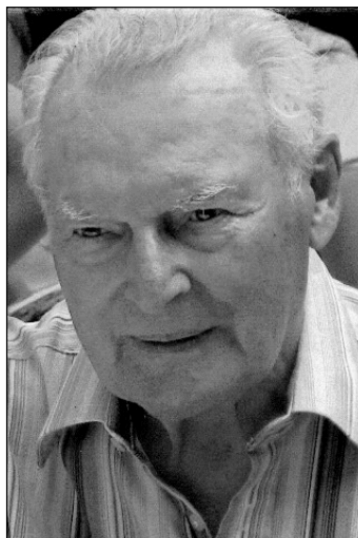
why he had fought for Germany, he replied that he had no choice - he would have been killed otherwise.

A blacksmith before the war, Karl became a land worker as a prisoner of war in England, meeting first Jenny's father (a conscientious objector, whose war effort was working with German prisoners of war) and then his family - a firm friendship grew up. On returning to Germany after the war, he found that the partition of Berlin had taken place, meaning that his home was now in East Berlin, in the Russian sector. Karl's wife taught herself Russian to cope with

the new life, while Karl taught his blacksmithing trade at a local technical college.

Jenny's mother kept in touch with Karl in Germany, and after she died Jenny maintained the contact. After the Berlin Wall fell in 1990, Jenny and family flew to Berlin to meet Karl again, along with his wife Lydia. Karl pointed out the former HQ of the Stasi (the East German secret police), and Jenny wondered whether they had a file on him, and another on her as a regular correspondent with one of their citizens.

Their Christmas cards and letters were always discreet on political issues, as it was well known that letters were scrutinised.



*Karl, aged ninety*

Jenny's photo of Karl aged 90 showed us the good man that she had told us of so clearly. His death at the age of 92 was a real loss - he had been a very, very good friend of Jenny's, and a great part of her life. It was heartwarming to hear of this warm and lifelong friendship between a German prisoner of war in North Lancashire and two generations of an English family over so many years.



Dot's presentation was a recital of the complete Ormskirk Comrades Roll of Honour, commemorating those killed in the war. With the lights dimmed in the room, and screen showing a scene from HMS Ringtail in August 1945, the audience heard the long list of the war dead in complete silence.

It really brought home the enormous loss suffered by that small community, and so many others. A list of all those names is given on pages 19 to 22. For reasons of space, it wasn't possible to include every detail in the magazine, but because of the significance of the whole record, the complete Roll of Honour that Dot read to us has been added to the website; <https://www.odfhs.website/index.php/login-logout/resources/22-public/499-1939-45-roll-of-honour>

Finally, Keith gave us a much-needed humorous uplift with his discovery that 1940s teenage boys from his school in Manchester came to Ormskirk for their war effort!



In the Manchester Grammar School archives, he had found records of the boys cycling thirty miles along the East Lancs Road to spend the summer in camp, for weeks of picking peas and potatoes. We heard indignant and humorous complaints about the hard bicycle journey, but also their commitment to the work, which was essential as so many of our agricultural workers were away at war. Keith's account reinforced much of what we know of the attitudes of that wartime generation.

The audience was moved, gripped and entertained by the wartime experiences of people, just like us, facing circumstances almost unimaginable today; it was a memorable occasion to mark this great anniversary. The evening ended with an image of a Union Flag which was known to have been flying on VE Day in 1945 and which still flies today on occasions – Lest We Forget!



*This flag was waving in Burscough on VE Day in 1945. It is seen here, blowing in the wind to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day on 8 May 2020.*

## *Members' Interests Directory*

The Members' Interests Directory has been updated, and the latest version is now available in the Members' area of the ODFHS website. The following members' interests have been added to the Directory since the last update, with authority to include the member's name and interests in the magazine:

- *Alison Ackland* - HALTON, HOLCROFT and STURGESS
- *Susan Carroll* - BALL, BALSHAW, NEALE, RICE, UNDERWOOD and WATKINSON
- *Heather Cooper* - JOHNSON and WRIGHT
- *Emma Davison* - GLEDHILL and SMITHSON
- *John Ewbank* - FYLES, HARDMAN, PEET and PIMBLETT
- *Carolyn Gander* - ARNOLD, REID, THOMPSON and TROUGHTON
- *Daryl Harriott* - HARRIOTT
- *Keith Howard* - ALTY, BERKELY, FARRINGTON, HOWARD and SPURR

- *Percival Jones* - BRAMWELL and WEBSTER
- *Pat Lucas* - CAUNCE
- *Jeff Naylor* - CROSSLEY
- *Anne Pennington* - ALLEN, BALMER, BICKERSTAFFE, HURST, KENYON and KERSHAW
- *Pauline Rimmer* - PEET
- *Dennis and Jenny Walton* - RAWLINSON

## *Membership Renewals for 2025/26*

Membership renewals for 2025/26 were due by 31 March 2025. A big thank you to all of you who have already renewed. At the time of writing, our paid-up membership for 2025/26 is about 120, which means about 70 have yet to renew; by the time you read this, all should have received a reminder. Membership fees for 2025/26 are unchanged from 2024/25, i.e.

- |                                                     |        |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------|
| • UK and Worldwide membership with digital magazine | £11.00 |
| • UK membership with postal magazine                | £15.00 |
| • Worldwide membership with postal magazine         | £20.00 |

The simplest way to renew is via the online renewal form on the ODFHS website: [www.odfhs.website/index.php/membership/22-public/438-online-membership-form](http://www.odfhs.website/index.php/membership/22-public/438-online-membership-form)

Online payments via PayPal and Parish Chest are available. Payment by bank transfer and cheque are also available. Renewal may also be made in person at a monthly meeting, where cash payment is also available.

In accordance with ODFHS policy, the published Directory contains only the



# *Warning From Black-Out Offenders*

*Ormskirk Advertiser, 12 September 1940*

There were several cases of black-out offences, and Mr. HESFORD said that in these days the black-out is more important than ever, and those people who are so inconsiderate for the safety of themselves and their neighbours will, in future, if found guilty, be much more severely dealt with than they have been in the past.

A case against James BRIGHOUSE (45) of 40, Scarisbrick-street, Ormskirk, was dismissed. A Reserve Constable said that during an air raid warning he saw a light shining from the window of a house in Scarisbrick-street, Ormskirk. The Constable said that he saw the light from Green-lane.

William COOKSON, of Trevor-road, Burscough, was fined £1 for having an unobscured light in the house. It was stated that there was a blue curtain over the window which did not effectively black-out the window.

John R. SPENCER, 64, Calder-avenue, Ormskirk, was fined 25/-. It was stated that the light could be seen from Ryburn-road.

John ALEXANDER, Red Cat-lane, Burscough, was fined 15/-. It was stated that the light did not effectively black-out the window.

Edith OWEN, Moss-road, Halsall, was fined 15/-. The evidence showed that the light came from a garage. The defendant was garaging her car, and the light was seen some distance away by a Southport constable.

Dorothy TRAFFORD, 183 Wigan-road, Ormskirk, was fined 20/- and 5/- costs for having lights unobscured.

Lily PHEASANT, 11 Berry-street, Skelmersdale, was fined £1 for a similar offence.

Joseph GRAYSON, the licensee of the Hen and Chickens, Melling, was fined 20/- and 6/9 costs. Defendant said that a lavatory light had been left on.

Elsie IDDON, Carr Cross, Scarisbrick, was fined 15/-. Defendant said that her daughter left the light on.

Clara McDONALD, 60, Liverpool-road, South, Maghull, was fined 15/-. It was stated that the curtains were inefficient.

### A PEST TO THE POLICE.

Henry WARRILOW, living in a caravan off Segars-lane, Halsall, was fined £2 for showing a light from a caravan, and £2 for displaying a light in a bell tent. He was also ordered to pay 14/2 costs. It was stated that there was a light showing in the caravan and also in a bell tent. There was also a coal fire in the camp. P.C. SISMEY said that the defendant was a pest to the police. He turned the lights off when the police called, but they had seen them switched on after the police had left.

Thomas MOLYNEUX, 22, Southport-road, Lydiate, was fined £1 and 13/6 costs. It was stated that Molyneux was aggressive and wanted to fight.

Robt. C. MARSH, of Wigan-road, Ormskirk, was fined 10/-. The evidence showed that Mr. MARSH was out, and the door had to be forced to put the light out. Mr. A.V. CUNLIFFE said that when Mr. MARSH was going out he went round the lights to see that they were out. However, Mr. MARSH's son went upstairs and left the light on. It was not a direct light, but it was shining through a bedroom. Mr. MARSH expressed sincere regret.

A case against John HUSSEY, of County-road, Ormskirk, was dismissed. A special constable said that he saw a light from a house in County-road, Ormskirk, when he was on duty in Grimshaw-lane, Ormskirk. He went to the house, but he only saw the defendant's wife the next day.

Jack SHAW Council Houses, Liverpool-road, Bickerstaffe, was fined 10/-. It was

stated that the window was covered with a pink curtain, which was not a good black-out.

#### SHOP LIGHTS LEFT.

W.G. BALMFORTH, of Aughton-street, Ormskirk, was fined 15/- and 14/- costs for a black-out offence. Mr. I.G.W. NEWINGTON, who appeared for the defendant, said that someone had left the shop, thinking that someone else was on the premises. The lights of the shop were left on, and the shop door was not locked up.

George F. PACEY, "Avalon", Liverpool-road, Lydiate, was fined 20/- and 11/9 costs for a similar offence.

William E.G. CLARKE, licensee of the Railway Hotel, Skelmersdale, was fined £1. Pol. Sergt. ALMOND said that he had warned the defendant twice. Mr. A.V. CUNLIFFE said that the defendant had decided not to use the light, rather than black-out the window. Unfortunately the light was used, and it could be seen through the window.

William NELSON, 134, Sandy-lane, Skelmersdale, was fined £1. Reserve P.C. Young said that the curtain was not a proper "black-out".

#### A WARNING TO FARMERS.

James MERCER, of Mickering Farm, Aughton, was fined 10/- for leaving a fire burning in a field. P.S. PROCTER said that he received a complaint about a fire in a field at Mickering-lane, Aughton, and when he got there the auxiliary fire services were in attendance. There was an air raid warning on at the time. Defendant said that he had spent a long time trying to smother the fire out. He left a man to watch it, but it flared up again, and the fire brigade had to be summoned to put the fire out. The Chairman said that this was the first case of the kind, and the Bench would deal with the defendant leniently. If farmers make fires they must be sufficiently small that they will have burned out at night.

#### BLIND PRODUCED IN COURT.

Henry John RIDING, of Greetby Hill, Ormskirk, pleaded not guilty to having an unobscured light in a bedroom. P.C. CRABTREE said that the blind was drawn,

but from fifty yards he could see the shape of the electric light globe. Mr. A.V. CUNLIFFE produced a special "black-out" blind which had been used in the bedroom. He had used it for twelve months without complaint. It was a case which might not have been brought. The police could have dealt with the case by a warning. Mr. RIDING said that the blind had been in use nearly twelve months, and had there been any complaint he would have done everything possible to remedy it. Mr. HESFORD said that this was a border line case, and defendant would be dismissed under the Probation of Offenders' Act.

Ellen Hesketh BANKS, of Liverpool-road, Aughton, was fined 15/- and 10/- witness's expenses. It was stated that there was no black-out curtains on the windows, and there had been an air raid warning on that night. Defendant said she agreed to take in two Norwegian boys, and they arrived before she had time to black-out the room. She told the lodgers not to use the light on that night, and she would get it blacked-out the following day.

William HOWE, of Southport-road, Ormskirk, was fined 15/- and 10/- witness expenses. Defendant said he was very sorry. He had been on Home Guard duty, and was very tired when he went to bed. He had ply-wood "black-out," shutters, but forgot to put this up.

Henry BLUNDELL, of Plex Moss-lane, Halsall, was fined 20/-, and 10/- costs. In a letter defendant said that he did not think the light came from his house.

Eric WINROW, of Field-street, Skelmersdale, was fined 10/- and 2/10 expenses. A Reserve Constable said that defendant was not in at the time. The light was half-turned on. Defendant said that the light had been left on all day from six o'clock in the morning, and he had not noticed it. His wife was not well, and he had lighted the gas to get her a drink before going out early that morning.

#### HAS BOUGHT SHUTTERS.

William H. SNAPE, grocer, of Burscough-street, Ormskirk, was fined 15/- for permitting an unobscured light in his shop. Mr. A.V. CUNLIFFE said that Mr. SNAPE had now got shutters up.

John FIELDING, (33) of Liverpool-road, North, Burscough, was fined 10/- for driving a car in Liverpool-road, Burscough, without a taxation licence.

John H. VAUGHAN (33), was fined 20/- for driving a car with unauthorised side lamps along Liverpool-road, Burscough.

Thomas FLEMING, Altcar-lane, Lydiate, was fined 15/- for riding a pedal cycle without front or rear lights.

## *Ormskirk Parish Church Victory Sunday*

### *Ormskirk Advertiser, 10 May 1945*

|              |   |                                       |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 8a.m.        |   | Holy Communion.                       |
| 10.30 a.m.   | } |                                       |
| and 6.30p.m. | } | Services of Thanksgiving for Victory. |

At these Services the whole Church will be open to the public. The official printed forms of services will be provided.

3p.m.                      Victory Thanksgiving Parade Service of Official Bodies.  
When the Parade is seated any further accommodation  
will be open to the public.

The Thankofferings throughout the day will be equally divided between the Archbishops' Fund for the Christian Churches in liberated Europe, and our own Bishop's Fund for the new Churches in this diocese.

# *VE Day - 80th Anniversary in Ormskirk*

## *report by Julie Broadbent*

The 80th anniversary commemoration of VE Day is the major UK heritage event of 2025. It was a privilege for ODFHS to contribute to local events marking the commemoration, including our own April meeting (reported in this Magazine) and also West Lancashire Borough Council's special event at Ormskirk Market, on 8 May 2025, the actual anniversary of VE Day.



*Dot and Kathryn at the VE Day event*

On a lovely sunny day, ODFHS shared a market stand with Lathom Park Trust. Masterminded by Kathryn MacDonald and Dot Broady-Hawkes, the eye-catching red gazebo near the Clock Tower was packed with red, white and blue bunting, Union Jacks, photographs, wartime memorabilia (including an authentic gas mask), newspaper records, and features including the Women's Land Army and local war heroes, personal war accounts of local people and the Ormskirk

Comrades' Roll of Honour. Our stand was immediately opposite the site of the old Kings Arms, where the Ormskirk crowds came to celebrate on VE Day (it's now the 1960s building which houses the Woodland Hospice and Boots).

It was a busy day with cheerful crowds, including many who had come especially for the occasion. We were entertained with evocative wartime songs sung by Lucy Barlow, and treated to delicious fairy cakes decorated with VE Day emblems, donated to the WLBC event by Mr. Thompson's Bakery (of Hairy Bikers fame), which we gave out on our stall. There was a reading from the Clock Tower by the

We enjoyed the company of all the market-goers who came to look at our displays and share their own stories. Among them were two people who remembered being at the Ormskirk VE Day 1945 celebrations - it was a real thrill for us to meet them. The Mayor, Julian Finch, read from Winston Churchill's victory address on VE Day, followed by the national two minutes' silence at 12 noon.



Rita Leatherbarrow (nee Cottam) told us that she was 11 on VE Day and lived at Primrose Hill, Asmall Lane, where a nearby wartime landmine once blew out all the family's windows. She walked into Ormskirk with her family for the VE Day celebrations, and remembers standing by the Drill Hall (now the Civic) and a great atmosphere. A few years later Rita's wedding reception was in the Guide Hut on Moorgate, where our ODFHS monthly meetings now take place!

Don Feeley was our second visitor who remembered VE Day. He was then only four years old - his fifth birthday was just a week later.

He saw Ormskirk's celebrations from a window recess at the front of what was then the Midland Bank (now closed), where his father had lifted him up for a better view.



From further afield, we had a visit from 92-year-old twins Audrey and Beryl; born Townsend, they grew up in Park Avenue, Golborne, Warrington. They remember the evening of VE Day as their father let them go out to join in the celebrations in nearby Helen Street, and they did not get back until midnight. They commented that they were "*never not hungry*" during the war and in the years afterwards when food was still rationed.





*(left) Dot Broady-Hawkes and Kathryn MacDonald with the ODFHS displays  
(below) Councillor Julian Finch with Geraldine, and singer Lucy Barlow*

It was a great day, and we felt that family history was very much part of it as people reflected so much on their own memories.

Several potential members took away lots of ODFHS material or made plans to visit our monthly family history desk at Ormskirk Library, and it was good to be a part of the latest chapter of the town's history.



*(left to right) Kathryn MacDonald, Councillor Julian Finch (Mayor of West Lancashire), Mrs. Mary Finch (Mayoress) and Dot Broady-Hawkes at the VE Day event*



## Lathom Park Trust

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- Lathom and the Stanleys
- The Siege of Lathom
- Lathom House 1725-1925

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## FAMILY HISTORY KATE HURST

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# Society Facilities

## Research Library

Located in the Scout Hall, Wigan Road, Ormskirk, a short walk from the bus and railway stations, and local car parks. The Research Library is open by appointment; please contact Kathryn MacDonald at [librarianodfhs@gmail.com](mailto:librarianodfhs@gmail.com) if you would like to arrange a visit.

## Ormskirk Library Help Desk

Our Help Desk at Ormskirk Library, Burscough Street, Ormskirk runs from 10.30am to around 11.30a.m. on the first Monday of each month (except UK Bank Holidays).

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*Covering the Sixteen  
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of Western Lancashire*



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