

Newsletter

November 2018



Part of Manchester & Lancashire
Family History Society

oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk

Branch News

We are pleased to announce that Linda Richardson has agreed to become Chairperson of the Oldham Branch. Linda has, for many years, been part of the team transcribing Births, Marriages and Deaths at Oldham Register Office. I will stay on the Oldham Committee as an ordinary member to assist Linda, at least until the AGM in April 2019. **This means that we will have a meeting on 9th February 2019** at the Civic Centre, Oldham (the long, low building at the bottom end of the Civic Centre car park) although we are not sure yet who the speaker will be. When we are we will send out a special newsletter to subscribers.

We have recently had two resignations from the Oldham Committee so are now short of three members and, consequently, would like some volunteers to become Committee Members. If you are interested please speak to us at our Oldham Meeting on 10th November or email us at oldham@mlfhs.org.uk. We would also appeal to members and non-members to come to our Oldham meetings, if possible, as numbers have decreased since we were forced to move away from Gallery Oldham.

Rod Melton

Oldham Branch Committee

Last Meeting

Saturday 13th October

Clarinda Rowbotham - Mossley Military Hospital WW1

An illustrated talk by Rita Vaughan

The Mossley Military Hospital was opened on 4th November 1914 in the Mechanics Institute. The lower floor had heating and sanitation so was very suitable for a hospital. It was run by the Mossley St. John Ambulance Brigade and had 10 beds at first, increasing as time went on. A horse-drawn ambulance would take patients from the station to the hospital. The standards of care were very high with special attention to nutrition. The soldiers wore a special uniform, called

convalescing blues, which were loose fitting and identified them as patients to prevent them from getting a white feather. The injuries treated at the hospital ranged from bullet and shrapnel injuries to frostbite and gas poisoning.

The Sister-in-Charge was Clarinda Rowbotham. Clarinda was a State Registered Nurse, a midwife and also the Lady Superintendent of the Mossley St. John Ambulance Brigade. She was the first school nurse in Mossley and she combined her duties as a school nurse with her unpaid work at the hospital. She was on duty at the hospital all day Saturday and Sunday and every evening. For her dedication and continuous voluntary work Clarinda was awarded the Royal Red Cross Medal 2nd Class, the St. John Service Medal and the Defence Medal for her civil defence work. She retired in 1948 and died in 1962. She is buried at St. George's Church, Mossley.

Rita has also researched the 42 nurse volunteers and some of the soldiers who were treated there. She has also researched soldiers from Mossley who served in the First World War. One soldier to be killed in action was Randolph Warhurst who was killed on 12th October 1918. He had been an active member of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and had himself volunteered at the hospital.

This was an excellent talk which was enjoyed by all.

Next Meeting

Saturday 10th November

Tracing My Grandfather

A presentation by Dr. Alan Crosby

A life of secrets, drama, disappearance and discovery.

Alan Crosby lives in Lancashire and is the editor of the Local Historian and a columnist for WDYTIA?

This meeting will start at 2.00 pm in The Lees Suite, Civic Centre, Oldham.

Free to members

Non-members £2.50

Free car parking on Oldham Civic car park for 3 hours but please get a ticket.

Please note: Santa and his reindeer will be parading through Oldham Town Centre on 10th November, starting at 1pm from Parliament Square, so if you are coming by car please allow extra time as you may have difficulty parking.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE BRANCH BY ATTENDING

Society News

Beginners' Talk: Irish and Scottish Research

Saturday 3rd November

10.30 AM

Free to members

Non-members £ 3.00

Central Library Manchester

The usual problem for those of us with Irish ancestors is the lack of information on the origin of our forebears, apart from 'born in Ireland' on a census return. This talk gives help and advice showing how to start your Irish research plus the various records which are available to help you locate that elusive place of birth.

Research into Scottish ancestors is also an area requiring a rather different approach. Ina Penneyston from the Society's Anglo-Scottish branch will aim to put beginners on the right path and look at the increasing amount of data that is available.

Please book on Eventbrite on the Society's Home Page.

Bolton Family History Society

Wednesday 7th November

7.30 pm

Protestation Oaths -- What were they and what can they tell us now?

Speaker: Tony Foster

Tony Foster, MA, Projects Co-ordinator for Lancs FHHS and a very popular speaker, will be making his annual visit.

Meeting starts at 7.30pm, Old Links Golf Club, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, BL1 5SU. Tea /Coffee will be available from 7.00pm

All MLFHS members are welcome to attend our meetings. Visitors are welcome to attend the meeting @ £3

Anglo-Scottish Branch Meeting

Saturday 17th November

2.00pm

Manchester Central Library -PS1

Ancestral Breakthroughs.

Members will be talking about their success in family research.

Local News

Annie Kenney Letter

Joan Secker-Wlodarczyk has told me that there is a letter from Annie Kenney to her sister on display in Gallery Oldham.

The letter was written in 1905 from the Pankhurst home in Nelson Street, Manchester to her sister, Nell, about Annie's release from Strangeways Prison where she had been imprisoned with Christobel Pankhurst. Nell later moved to Canada and the letter was recently discovered in the British Columbia Archives in Victoria, Canada.

It is on display until January.

Talks by Other Groups (not part of our society)

Chadderton Heritage

Sacrifice and Celebration

This Month we commemorate the centenary of the signing of the armistice in 1918, when the 'War to End All Wars' finally came to its end...

The lounge of Chadderton Football Club on **1st November** at 7.30 pm.

Saddleworth Historical Society

A Victorian Society : Oldham Photographic Society - the first 150 Years

Illustrated Presentation by Christine Widdall at Saddleworth Museum on **Wednesday 21st November** at 7.30pm.
non-members £3

Oldham Historical Research Group

The Women Who said "Yes!"- The first women to stand for Parliament in 1918

A talk by Dr Ali Ronan at Oldham Local Studies and Archives on **Wednesday 21st November** at 7pm

Other News

This article has been written by Sheila Goodyear.

December 1918 - The First Women to Stand for Parliamentary Election

The February 1918, 'Representation of the People' Act, extended the franchise to all men over the age of 21, and to servicemen age 19 or over. In addition, it was extended to include women age 30 years or more and who fulfilled specific criteria with regard to being householders in their own right or married to a householder.

This then opened up the question as to whether or not women should now be allowed to stand as candidates for election to Parliament ... they were already allowed to stand in local government elections.

Just in time for the December 1918 General Election, the Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act was rushed through, allowing women to stand for election to Parliament for the first time. In the next 3 short weeks, 17 women came forward to stand as candidates.

Ironically, any woman over age 21 could stand for election but, unless she fulfilled the criteria enabling a woman to vote, she couldn't even cast a vote for herself!

Only one woman was actually elected, and she was Constance, Countess Markievicz. She was elected as the Sinn Fein Member for St. Patrick's Division, Dublin. She ran her campaign from a prison cell in Holloway prison, where she was interned for her alleged part in the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916. She did not take up her seat at Westminster but subsequently took up her seat in the Irish Parliament (the Dail) which refused to recognise the authority of the British Parliament. Constance was the sister of Esther Gore-Booth, a Manchester suffragist and women's rights activist.

The other 16 women candidates have more or less slipped through the cracks of history but a small group of 5 researchers, in early 2018, decided to find out who they were and remember them in the centenary of women's suffrage. The results of their research, were exhibited at the People's History Museum, in Manchester, as *The Women who said , "Yes!"* and which ran from July into September 2018. The 5 Researchers were: Dr. Ali Ronan, Hilary Chuter, Lizzie Gent, Jane Ward and Jill Woodward.

In the 1910 General election, in Oldham, the registered electors had numbered 35,315, with an 86% turnout to vote on the day. The two Liberal candidates, Alfred Emmott and William Barton were both returned.

There would be no General Election held during the war ... a coalition government held office, firstly with Herbert H. Asquith as Prime Minister and then with David Lloyd George (from December 1916), both of whom were Liberals.

In the 1918 General Election the number of registered electors in Oldham had doubled. A substantial number would have been servicemen on active service away from home (including servicemen over the age of 19 who were registered for postal votes). However, thousands would be women, voting in their first election. The candidates returned were Edmund Bartley-Denniss (Conservative-Unionist) and William Barton (Liberal), both of whom held a Coalition Coupon which endorsed them as the official representatives of the Coalition Government in office.

In the vengeful weeks following the armistice (and before the Treaties ending the war were signed) the election candidates receiving an endorsement coupon, signed by David Lloyd George (Liberal) or by Bonar Law (Conservative/Unionist) could be deemed to have been true patriots during the war. Those not receiving a coupon could be perceived as having been anti-war or pacifists promoting a negotiated peace. The only woman to receive a coupon was Christabel Pankhurst who, along with her mother and her followers, actively promoted the war and campaigned to encourage enlistment and for women to fill their places in industry.

Below, listed, are the 17 women candidates:

1. Mrs. W.C. Anderson (nee Macarthur), Labour, Stourbridge
2. Margery Corbett Ashby, Liberal, candidate for Birmingham, Ladywood
3. Winifred Carney, Sinn Fein, candidate for Belfast Victoria
4. Mrs. Carruthers (Violet Markham), Independent, candidate for Mansfield
5. Charlotte Despard, Labour, candidate for Battersea South
6. Norah Dacre Fox (Noral Elam), Independent, candidate for Richmond
7. Alison Vickers Garland, Liberal, candidate for Portsmouth South
8. Janet McEwan, Independent, candidate for Enfield
9. Emmeline Pethick Lawrence, Labour, candidate for Manchester, Rusholme
10. Alice Lucas, Conservative, candidate for Portsmouth South.
11. Mrs. Hester Millicent Hughes Mackenzie, Labour, candidate for University of Wales.

12. Constance, Countess Markievicz (nee Gore-Booth), Sinn Fein, candidate for Dublin, St. Patrick's
13. Edith How Martyn, Independent, candidate for Hendon
14. Eunice Guthrie Murray, Independent, candidate for Glasgow Bridgeton
15. Christabel Pankhurst, Women's Party, candidate for Smethwick (endorsed by Lloyd George)
16. Emily Frost Phipps, Independent, candidate for Chelsea
17. Mrs. Rachel (Ray) Strachey, Independent, candidate for Brentford & Chiswick

from Sheila Goodyear

More information on each of the candidates is on the Oldham Historical Research Group website at :

<http://www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg/members/sheila/suffrage/1918-general-election.html>

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Researcher Dr. Ali Ronan will be our speaker at the Oldham Historical Research Group meeting, on Wednesday 21st November at 7pm, and give her talk **"The Women Who said "Yes!"- The first women to stand for Parliament in 1918"**

See our programme page:

All visitors are very welcome to join us for the meeting - there is no charge.

<http://www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg/page-newsletters.html>

(case sensitive)

Newsletter written by Sue Forshaw  
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