



# HOLCOMBE MOOR HERITAGE GROUP

Winter Newsletter

## Members Meal—Friday 8th March 2019

It is a tradition of the Group to have an evening out at a restaurant for Members and Friends of the Group before the start of the new dig season. This will enable Members and Friends to meet each other and hopefully provide Friends of the Group the opportunity to consider becoming members. Consequently we are extending an invitation to you, plus a partner or guest, to join us on Friday, 8th March 2019 at the Al Bosco Restaurant, Robin Rd, Summerseat, Bury BL9 5QP Tel 01706 823021, 7 pm for 7.30 pm. The menu is on the restaurant's web site <http://alboscocoristorante.co.uk/menu/> (not to be confused with the Lunch and Mid Week menu). If you are able to join us, please email Rick ([rikbragg@gmail.com](mailto:rikbragg@gmail.com)) with the names of both yourself and your guest or partner, together with your choices (listed separately) from the menu by Sunday, 3rd March. Unfortunately each person will have to pay for their meal and drinks. We look forward to seeing as many members as possible there. During the meal the opportunity will be taken to bring you up to date with the results of last year's dig, items which have arisen since the end of last year's dig and this year's planned work scope.

## Talk Report

On Wednesday 30th January 2019 Professor Richard Horrocks of Bolton University gave a talk entitled "The Flax Mills of James Kay of Turton Tower, which was a sequel to the talk he presented to the Group last year. Richard explained that James Kay and his flax mills have been largely forgotten in England, but he is remembered in Northern Ireland. James Kay was born in Entwistle in 1774. As a young man he experimented with machines using different drafting rollers to make the ultimate flax fibres. His invention revolutionised flax production and he licensed the system to other companies. He moved to Preston in 1800 and opened a cotton spinning mill with a Mr Watson and then built a mill in around 1817 in Marsh Lane. This mill was still in existence in 1894, but is now under the A59, with no evidence remaining of it today. In 1825 Kay purchased a mill in Penny Bridge, Ulveston, which was located near the coast and was probably used to produce linen to make sails for boats. In 1890, the mill was still on the map as "Flax mill (disused). Today the mill cottages are still there, but the mill is gone. James Kay's most important mill was the Pendleton Flax Mill in Salford, which was built between 1825 and 1829, but this is the mill we know the least about. It was still being used in 1849, but had closed down by 1884, like most of the flax mills in England. It is now covered by the Albion Industrial Estate. Kay also had The Old Linen Mill in Bolton, between Bridge Street and Bark Street in 1822. This mill employed 480 people. It became Brooks and Smith in 1836 and closed in 1844 due to a boiler explosion. The mill was demolished in the 1980s and is now underneath Debenhams! Through his inventions and mills James Kay became wealthy enough to buy Turton Tower in 1835 and he has left an important legacy. He saved the Irish Linen industry and invented the wet spinning process which is the basis of modern flax spinning techniques. Thanks go to Richard for his very interesting and informative talk.



## **Annual General Meeting**

Our AGM was held on Tuesday 12th February at the Shoulder of Mutton in Holcombe. Members heard review of the year from committee members and plans for 2019 were outlined. Thank you to those members who attended the meeting.

Keep up to date with the latest news and upcoming events by visiting our website.

[www.holcombemoorheritagegroup.org](http://www.holcombemoorheritagegroup.org)

## Our Final Winter Talk

“Excavating Early Steam Engines around Manchester” by Dr Mike Nevell (Head of Archaeology, Salford University) on 27th February 2019. This is the talk that was postponed last year due to bad weather on the evening of the talk.

*The talk will be held at Greenmount Cricket Club and begins at 7.30pm*

*Admission £3, includes refreshments. Raffle and bar available.*

### Dry Stone Wall Project

Our project to record the location of the different types of dry stone wall in the Holcombe Valley is continuing. The walls have been located and photographed and their locations have been plotted on a map. We hope to produce a small booklet of our findings in the near future. Information about this project can also be found on our website.

### *History Group*

*The history group organises trips to various archives and libraries to continue to find out more information about the Holcombe Valley. If you would be interested in taking part in one of these visits, please email Margaret (maggbragg@gmail.com) for further details.*

### Excavation Plans for 2019

This year we intend to continue our work investigating Cinder Hill field, which is where we were working last year. We are hoping to find another bloomery furnace, and hopefully some more dating evidence. We intend to use one weekend and some Thursdays each month. The first dig day is Thursday 14th March, which will be used to position the new trenches and prepare the site. The first weekend dig will be March 16th and 17th when we plan to remove the turf. Please keep an eye on the event page of our website for details of further digs. Non-members are welcome to join us for a “taster” dig day, but places must be booked in advance, due to access issues through the MOD camp.

### **Membership Benefits**

What are the benefits of being a member of HMHG?

- Invitations to talks
- Free places on ‘Walk n Talks’.
- Able to partake in dig days
- Being able to visit archives with other group members
- Able to attend member’s meetings
- Able to attend Member/s meal
- Able to attend AGM
- Access to HMHG archive
- Newsletters
- Dig updates
- Accompanied access to MOD land
- Support with own research

To join us please contact Elaine, our membership secretary by email; hmhg\_membership@btinternet.com

### Moor Holcombe Memories Project

We are continuing with our project to collect memories of the Holcombe area from local people or people who used to live in the area. We would love to hear from anyone who would like to contribute a memory to this project. We intend to hold a Memories event and document drop-in sometime during 2019. please see our website for further details and to read some of the memories we have already collected.

We are on social media. Keep up to date with the latest news on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Holcombe Moor Heritage Group



@HolcombeMoor



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