



HISTORY OF SANDBACH

PART 3 = G to P.

Compiled by Stewart Green © From 2013 to date.
 (Including information from publications by the Sandbach History Society)

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SANDBACH HISTORY PART 3 = G to P

#HG

- Gandey's Circus
- Garden Trail
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#HH

- Hackney's Road Haulage
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- The Hill / Leonard Cheshire Home
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- Hollies (Wesley Avenue)
- Home Guard
- Houndings Lane or Hownings Lane (Coldmoss Heath)
- Hope Street (Number 11)
- Hungerford Café and Shops

#HI

- None

#HJ

- C M Jefferies and Company Ltd

#HK

- None

#HL

- H J Lea and Sons Ltd
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#HG.

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GANDEY'S CIRCUS HISTORY

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The founder of Gandey's Circus, (Robert) Bob Gandey was born in 1894. But our story goes back to his parents who were also in the entertainment industry.

The Gandey family started out in show business as variety artists with the "Bostock and Womwell Circus" (Frank Bostock .b. 1866 .D. 1912) in the late 1800's where they performed as "The Montana's" with their "Western games and pastimes" act. They were also known as the Colorado Troupe and performed again with

a western style act dressing up as cowboys and performing rope spinning, whips and they had an educated pony that could count as well as a stubborn mule. Another touring show they worked in was the (William F Cody) "Buffalo Bill Wild West Show", which at one point in 1904 had 800 people in the cast with 500 horses when it visited Bedford Street, Crewe for the week of the 30 September (1904).

In 1903, Bob Gandey now at the age of nine started training ponies with "Lord George Sanger's Circus" (Lord George Sanger .b. 23 Dec 1825 Newbury, Berkshire / .D. 28 Nov 1911 – Murdered in East Finchley) for the wage of one shilling a week.

In 1909 now 15, Bob joined the American Touring Show "Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show" and "Colonel Cummings Golden West Show" with one of his performances at the Earl's Court Exhibition in 1909.

Between 1910 and 1920 Bob performed as Arthur Jack and Robert Gandey (The Colorado Kid) in "Gandey's Comedy Circus", with mules and ponies.

In 1911, Bob met Rose from Brighton who was performing at the Marina, Lowestoff and they started to date.

A year later in 1912 the couple married in Manchester with the bride and groom arriving at the registry office on horseback. This was also the time that Rose joined the families "Montana Troupe" which toured the Moss Empire Circuit of theatres with Bob Gandey and his horse "Snowball".

In 1916 not only was the war on but it was an eventful time for the family as Rose and Bob had a son called Phillip Gandey known as Joe and as soon as he was old enough, he was brought into the act. Joe would later become a clown (Jo-Jo) and run the Circus.

During the First World War the "Gandey's Circus" was performing in a number of Variety shows around the country and by 1917-18, Bob Gandey had a small tent of his own which he toured with his growing family.

Sometime in the 1920's the family were appearing in Pantomime and were travelling down the A50 through Arclid and Brereton when they broke down. Unfortunately, their vehicle needed parts before it could continue on its journey and so the Gandey family looked for a place to stay until they arrived.

They found a building up for sale and on enquiry with the farmer who owned it they were allowed to rent it. They liked the area so much that they decided to put down roots in Brereton and have remained as a family there from that time to date.

One of their first performances after they had settled in Cheshire was at Congleton Park.

In 1922, Robert Gandey (Bob) was part of the "North Western Troupe of Cowboys of Colorado" and again toured the theatres of the UK.

The performers started to appear in outdoor events at various fairgrounds as a sideshow with the posters proclaiming that the "Gandey's Comedy Circus" was in town with an un-rideable mule and acts were featured on a turntable stage which was about six feet in diameter.

In 1925 the shows name changed briefly to the "Western Comedy Show" with Bob Gandey and it still had the same cowboy theme to its acts.

At the Palace Theatre in Hartlepool, George Morgan staged the pantomime "Cinderella" with nine scenes and the Gandey's Circus for the week starting on Monday the 18 January 1926. This no doubt would have been part of a tour which would have started in December and possibly continued into March or April as before the 1960's a lot of theatres hired in a production rather than staging their own pantomimes at a large cost to themselves.

In 1928, the Circus was appearing on stage at the Empire Theatre with Mr A.C. Astor (Ventriloquist), George Hurd (Australian 1925 Royal Command Juggler), Pierce and Roslyn (Instrumentalists), The Leo Sax Trio, Jack Short and May Dalziel.

A year later and the Circus appeared at a local theatre which was advertised as "Staffordshire's Wonder House", the Regent, Hanley. This was a variety and playhouse from 1929 to 1950 when it then became the Gaumont Cinema or Picture House, closing in 1974 until 1976 when it was taken over by the Odeon group until 1989 when it again reverted back to a theatre as the renamed "Regent Theatre" (Opened 21 Sept 1999). Topping the bill at the Regent was the play "Sorrell and Son" by Warwick Deeping and H B Warner with the Regent Symphony Orchestra, E Felton Rapley at the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ and "Our Circus" with Gandey's Comedy Circus and Spencer's Juvenile Wonders. Shows at this time usually has a one act play alongside a variety programme to give the public a whole night out of entertainment.

By 1930, some of the posters were proclaiming "Bob Gandey's Famous Circus", but when the act was taken back into the theatres it was still being billed as Gandey's Comedy Circus as this line-up from the (Lyceum) New Theatre in Crewe dated the 4th to the 9th of January 1932 shows.

Vivian Foster Presents "This is Variety" with Vivian Foster (The Vicar of Mirth), The 7 De Guise Seymours, Gandey's Comedy Circus, Cooke, Wells and Harvey (Cyclists), Farolas (Vocal), Dixon and Lee (Comedians and Dancers), Paul Thompson and Sadie (Dancers) and Henry Hilton (Conjurer from Maskelynes in London).

In December 1930, Gandey's Circus was at the Birmingham Hippodrome alongside one of Scotland's greatest comedians, Will Fyffe (b. 16 Feb 1885 .D. 14 Dec 1947). Others in the variety show included Coram, Terry and Yorke, Valencia Trio, Torrani, Charteris and Dickson and Los Costrillos.

By now Bob was training Shetland Ponies, Mules, Geese and Sheep not only for his own act but also for the Blackpool Tower Circus (Opened on the 14 May 1894) and Tom Arnold's Circus in the Harringay Arena as well as for pantomimes including the New Theatre in Crewe. In December 1938 Bob and his animals were at Crewe in "Robinson Crusoe" a pantomime which was presented by Frank H Fortesque and starred Jimmy Malborn as Billy Crusoe, Geraldine Hurley as Robinson Crusoe, Kitty Iris as Principle Girl, Neil Durham as Mrs Crusoe (Dame) with Wally Thomas as the Old Man of the Sea and the Cannibal King. Bob brought his "Gandey's Comedy Circus" to the show with Ponies, Dogs, Monkey's and that famous Kicking Mule. The show then went on tour to various venues including the Preston Hippodrome in January 1939.

In September 1939 Gandey's Circus appeared at the Alexandra Theatre in Hull with 15 minutes of horse sense and a comic kicking mule alongside other variety acts Scott and Foster (Wit and funny Burlesque), Rita, Jane and Hooley (Fan Dance Sketch), Harry Carlton (Ventriloquist), Mark Rivers and Jean (Comedy), Bert Allison (Comedian) and Temple and Holes (Accordion Duettists). This period at the start of the war (Declared on the 3 September 1939) was a time that changed the nature of performances for the next 30 years. When the war started all the theatres and places of entertainment were closed down as they were thought to be targets for the Germans and the death toll would be too

great if they were hit by a bomb. However, the Government soon changed its mind and theatres were reopened as the moral of the people was considered to be a greater need than the threat of mass deaths. The nature of the variety acts showed a change from family variety to a more adult content with nude dancers on the theatre stage. This meant that due to the change of direction in the theatre programmes there was a move for the Circus to go back into the community rather than the indoor theatre circuit. Christmas shows were still a time for family entertainment and so the following Christmas the circus was at the Coliseum in Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth for the week starting on the 26 December 1939. Gandey's Circus by now had its own tent made of canvas with a single mast, made out of a tree trunk for the King Pole. This was essential for the Circus to survive the war years and by 1940, the local authorities were hiring Gandey's Circus for a twelve week run as part of the countries "Holidays at Home" initiative where they would set up a tent in a local park for people to enjoy entertainment in their own town's rather than having to pay for transport to the coast as well as keeping the rail network available for troop movement rather than the annual trip to the seaside. These engagements included the Oldham Hyde Park in Manchester in 1942.

It was at this time that Joe Gandey met Mary Kennerley a local estate agent's daughter from Cheshire and they married. With Mary becoming part of the act they, both appeared in "On the Gaff" with the following cast of performers. Mary Gandey, Tickey's the Clown and his dog act, The Mighty Apollo, Sonya Allen, Anita in the Air, Tommy Allen and Mr Chipperfield who all appeared in various Fairground side shows and Circus tents.

Mary would go on to team up with Michael Gerbolain an Aerialist act under the name, "The Kusicks". Michael Gerbola was also the strongman act in the ring and his family in Ireland still own a circus.

In December 1942 and January 1943, the Circus was back with Frank H Fortesque's Company and the pantomime "Bo Peep and her Sheep" which again stopped off at Crewe for the week of the 11th to the 16th January 1943, this time with headliner Charlie Regan as Simple Simon, Nita Dene as Boy Blue and Phil May as Bo Peep.

In August 1943, Robert Gandey's Jungle Express Zoo Circus appeared at Victoria Street, Nottingham Road, Greenwich and continued with performances in Heysham in September 1944 and Grantham in May 1945.

Gandey's Super Circus appeared in Heysham Head in September 1945. It was an important venue for the company as the open-air shows at Heysham Head were to become an annual event for Bob Gandey. When Bob died his son, Joe continued to stage shows at the cliff edge for many years.

The 1945, pantomime at the Preston Palace was "Little Bo Peep" with Percy Johnson as Simple Simon, Pamela Paine as Bo Peep, Bec Thorburn as Little Boy Blue with Al Dixon as Dame and both Bob and Joe Gandey played their parts in the show with a bright little circus episode.

In the late 1940's Joe and Mary had a son called Michael who later started as a Ringmaster with the Circus but soon decided to move away from the life in the big tent.

In 1948, Alan McPherson (.b. 1935) joined Bob Gandey's Circus when it came to his home town of Southampton and fell in love with the glamour of the shows and so he decided to "Run away to the Circus" at the age of 13 and became a Clown as well as joining a Hungarian acrobatic springboard act. After leaving Gandey's Circus Alan began working in Cabaret and it was while doing these shows that he met his future wife Babs who was a dancer in the show. In 1960, the two married and formed their own dancing and Acrobatic act. Unfortunately, in 1966 the couple were involved in a car crash that stopped them performing as a circus act as Alan was left in a coma and Babs was badly burned in the accident. Sometime in 1970 Alan worked in a Sutton Coldfield factory but the circus was still in his blood. While walking home from work Alan saw a poster advertising Joe Gandey's Circus and so after 20 years from his first job with Gandey's, Alan along with Babs approached the Circus Manager about a job to do the advanced publicity manager's job for the Circus in 1970. By 1972, Alan and Babs along with their two children had moved to Brereton (in Cheshire) and wanted to combine his work as publicity manager with running their own small circus based at the three-acre Foxtail farm which was their home at the time. Their first show was to be at Litchfield in 1973.

In December 1948 and January 1949, it was again their regular booking with Frank H Fortesque for pantomime which this year was "Cinderella" and again at Crewe and also the Manchester Repertory Theatre in Hulme (24 Jan) and Queen's Park Hippodrome, Manchester (29 Jan) with southern comedian Billy Burton, Frank Mitchell, Kira Hillaud, Kim Mervyn and Vi Gilmour.

In 1952, Bob Gandey presented the "Big Top Circus". Things were looking up that year but were about to change dramatically as a year later in 1953 Bob Gandey died, leaving the Circus in the hands of his son Joe and his wife Mary. The show soon became a small intimate family circus with the reputation for good value and high quality. Uncle Joe's Circus became the highlight of many a child's year in communities from Preston to Birmingham.

One of the acts in the 1950's that was looked after by Joe Gandey was a set of Geese. Three of the geese were called Arthur, Jane and Mary and appeared regularly in the ring.

In 1956 the show included musical clowns Toni, Tina and Tini, "The strong man act of the Appolos" and a Trapeze artist.

In 1957, Joe (Philip) and Mary's youngest son Philip Gandey was born. He would become "Starri" The clown and would later take on the job of running Gandey's Circus with his future wife Carol Gandey (b. 29 Apr).

It was probably at this time that the show became a regular feature of the Sandbach calendar with the Big Top being erected on Scotch Common for its Summer Show.

With Television becoming popular after the Queen's Coronation in 1953 it seemed a good idea for the Circus to be a part of it. Joe had a pony called Tommy which could seemingly answer questions and was billed as "Tommy the Clairvoyant Pony". This attracted the TV producers and soon he was a television star with a set of postcards depicting this amazing animal released in 1963 (August).

In August 1966, Joe Gandy heard that Tom Sandow (The Sandow Family) and Sheila were out of work and offered them a short contract until the end of October. General Manager at the time was Peter Featherstone who was leaving at the end of the season so Tom applied for the job and was hired to take his place until 1969 as well as providing his roller skating and stilt walking act. As a clown Tom Sandow was not required to do this during the season as Joe would take on that role himself as Jo-Jo the Clown. The publicity for the shows was simple and Peter had done a great job of arranging it in advance of him leaving. Sanger's Circus by this time was working within a 50-mile radius of London's Piccadilly so Gandey's worked the North with a 50-mile radius of Manchester's Piccadilly. Hiring fees for venues were usually £5 a day but on one occasion a fee of £12 was charged to which Joe said "We are taking a chance with that cost". Joe's opening speech in the show started "We do not claim to be a large circus" as he was known as someone that wanted to keep the cost down as much as he could. He was also not keen on the inclusion of Wild Animals in the Circus which probably explains why Elephants and Lions did not appear in the Gandey Ring until after his death.

Aug 1967 Show = Clown Jock McPherson

By 1967, the company had moved to P.A. Fir Farm, Brereton, Sandbach, Cheshire with Joe Gandey presenting "Royalls Miniature Circus" with included Ponies, Dogs and Geese in a show until the 28th January at the Empire Theatre, Sunderland.

After working for a few more seasons, Sheila became pregnant and after a short season at the Little Theatre Rhyll Tom agreed to settle down in a caravan near Sandbach where his mother had settled in 1970 after working for Joe Gandey in 1969.

1-6 September 1969 Show at Twickenham

"Joe Gandey's Circus Presentations Circus International"

(England's largest single mast Circus)

Incl; Abdulla Troupe (Whirlwind Moroccan Acrobats)

Europa Brothers (from Budapest)

Caprice (Alpine Goat)

From BBC Television Gandey's Royal Shetland Ponies

featuring the Pony with the Master Mind.

Saida and Partner (Hungarian Foot Juggler)

Royall's Dogs

The Sandows (Balancing Cocktail)

Gunga-Din and Sapphire (Sensational 20th Century Hercules /

Thrilling Eastern Yoga / Breath-taking Lift of 10 Men)

Jo-Jo the Clown with Queenie the dog (Joe Gandey)

PRICES 3/- 5/- 7/6 Adults

2/6 3/- 5/- Children

7- 11 Oct 1969 New Victoria Theatre Halifax

(Don Ellis Presents Gandey's Circus International)

Incl; **Scott's Amazing Sea Lions**

Abdulla Troupe (Whirlwind Moroccan Acrobats)

Scarri and Dot (Trick and Comedy Cyclists)

Miss June's Pigeon Fantasy (June's Pigeons)

From BBC and Granada TV "Tommy" Pony with the Human Brain.

Saida and Partner (Hungarian Foot Juggler)

Starri and Co (5 Clowns) (Starri was Philip Gandy)

Royall's Dogs

The Sandows (Balancing Cocktail)
Gunga-Din and Sapphire (Sensational 20t Century Hercules /
Thrilling Eastern Yoga / Breath-taking Lift of 10 Men)
ADDITIONAL ACTS at Sunderland October 1969
Dash's Chimpanzees (Circus Television direct from Circus Bonar)
Horses and Ponies presented by Emily Thompson
Ringmaster Chris Christian
Running Fox and Juanita (Apache Fire Eaters)

The December 1970 pantomime for the circus was "Cinderella" at the Queen's Theatre, Burslem. However, things didn't go quite to plan as half the cast went down with seasonal sickness. It was supposed to have starred Danny Ross (The Clitheroe Kid) in the Philip Bernard production as Buttons but he became ill, with his place being taken by Dave Peters who was one of the Ugly Sisters and so Roy Rolland (Dame) starred as the Ugly Sister on his own with Fred Gandey playing Baron Hardup along with his speciality animals.

CINDERELLA by Aubrey Phillips with songs by Alan Martin
Choreography by Johnny Worthy.
Costumes and Scenery by Philip Bernard.
Musical Director Howard Jennings
Stage Manager David Kelly

With

Danny Ross (Off Ill) as Buttons
Dave Peters as Buttons (Was Ugly Sister)
Elspeth Pirrie as Cinderella
Roy Roland (Old Mother Riley Stand in) as Ugly Sister
Fred Gandey as Baron Hardup
Heather Easton
David Kelly
May Sims
David Leonard
Roger Graham
The Bernard Dancers
Gandey's Miniature Circus

In July 1970, the Circus returned to Pantomime with the production of "Cinderella" at Bolton's Studio One (Lido Theatre)

WITH Don Ellis as Buttons,
Billy Wells and Bobbie Kent as Ugly Sisters,
Gladys Ambrode as Cinderella,
John Emms as Dandini,
Chris Fox as Prince Charling,
Roy Minting (Dame),
Dumarte and Denza as the Brokers Men (Also presenting 60 Skeletons Alive),
Bob Danzar,
Mary Fitz,
Chris Ellis
Joe Gandey as Baron Hardup (with his Mini Circus).
Speciality acts included the Royals Dog, and Tommy's TV Pony Express
(Named after the 1960's Tommy the TV Pony)
with the Russell Leit Dancers (Gaiety Dancers), and the Jack Rodney Orchestra.

In 1971 the final touring show of Billy Smart's Circus took place. In 1984 the last Television Circus from the Smart family was aired and on the 21 February 1986 all the 1,500 bits of circus paraphernalia was put up for auction bringing to an end the most famous Circus. Billy Smart Jnr and his German born wife Hanna kept the copyright of the Circus and at the time hoped to do something possibly in Europe where the Circus was still a big attraction.

In 1973, Joe Gandey died suddenly while in Scotland leaving his son Philip to become the youngest director of a Circus in Britain at the age of 17.

In the 1980's, Gandey's Circus teamed up with Tycross Zoo and PG Tips to present the TV Chimps live on stage. One of the venues was the New Brighton Pavilion during the week of the 26 May 1980 (Easter Week)

1-8 Jan 1983 at the Theatre Royal Hanley a CHRISTMAS CIRCUS (Gandey's Circus)

Incl; Martin Lacey and his Giant Male African Lions
Mary Chipperfield's Animals

In November 1983 'Smithy' Bernard Blackmore had a trunk call with a difference as he was asked if he could help out the Circus while it was in Garston as the Elephant, Ranne needed its toenails filing down. Used to shoeing smaller ponies the three-and-a-half-ton elephant presented a larger problem but he was able to help out. The elephant was part of Billy Smart's Circus who had loaned them to Gandey's for three seasons until 1988 including the elephant Buffy who enjoyed playing football in the morning.

Ever keen for publicity and putting something back into the communities a special visit was arranged for the Clowns from the Circus to visit the Children's Ward of Leighton Hospital in Crewe in January when the show "Gandey's Circus Comes to Town" was at the Crewe Theatre (Lyceum) (12- 17 Jan 1981).

In 1983 at Crewe Theatre, Gandey's small bears trained by Graham Tottle were used in a production of their Christmas show, "The Wizard of Oz" between the 12 December 1983 and the 14 January 1984 with YANA as Glenda Good Fairy, Gale Ashley as Dorothy. Bored waiting for the next show the two Canadian Honey Bears called Rita and Daley escaped from their cage outside the Lyceum Theatre when it was unlocked by a stranger on Boxing day (1983). The two bears from Gandey's Circus were playing Hickory and Dickory in the production and the six-foot high bears Rita and Daley decided to go for a walk round the market next to the theatre. They were found by their keeper soon after their escape with Rita being discovered in their van outside the theatre. Daley was found on one of the Market stalls eating his favourite sweets, Polo Mints.

The whole Circus returned to the Crewe Theatre in February 1984 with Philip Gandey's Circus along with Martin Lacey's Lions and Mary Chipperfield's Exotic Animals.

17 – 19 Oct 1985 Malvern Link Common, Malvern (Davies and Gandey Presents)

Incl; Oxo, Titch and Alex (Clowns)
Tommy (The Pony with the Computer Brain)
Duo Hellas (From Czechoslovakia)
Brett and Rosa Montana (Rope Spinning and Knife Throwing)
Johnny Brown and Samantha (Illusionist)
Elizabet (Contortionist from Prague)
Davis and Gandey's Troupe of Liberty Ponies and Mules
Alun Davies and his 10 Poodles
Alec Halls (Multi Instrumentalist madness from the City Variety Theatre Leeds)
Running Fox and Juanita (Apache Fire Eaters)
Cheeko the Cheeky Shetland Pony
+ Others

TICKERS 80p 60p 40p

In 1985, the Circus was run by both Philip and Carol Gandey and included the two bears called Rita and Daley (Named after Daley Thompson the swimmer) and owned by Graham Tottle. Other acts at the Circus were Martin Lacey who brought his six tigers and mined lions. Mary Chipperfield's four impressive black Friesian stallions, pony and exotic dromedary, reindeer, llama, zeboid (Zebra / Palomino cross) and April, a pigmy hippopotamus that were looked after by David Sherwood. Clowns Tottie (Graham Tottle), Pepper and Peanuts performed with their Space Rocket. Fire eater Geronimo (Trevor Jones), Clara Kevan (Solo Aerial rope act), Three Girl Cossack Riders, The Anglo-South African Troupe, The Cherokees, Pete Hansen's high-flying trapeze act were also part of the entertainment with music provided by Frank Crawford's trio of trumpet, organ and drums.

By 1988 Philip and Carol Gandey had based their centre of operations in Chapel House, Chapel Street, Congleton.

In 1988, Binky Beaumont joined Gandey's as a clown. Binky was born Ian Welsby and lived in Sandbach for many years. He is the grandson of Bessie and Cliff Welsby who for many years owned

the chemist's shop in Sandbach and the son of Tony Welsby. It was Cliff Welsby who knew Circus proprietor Joe Gandey as they played cards together and through the chemists, they got to know quite a few of the performers. It was Cliff's connection that gave Binky (Ian Welsby) the chance to join the Circus after he had met some of the clowns while Gandey's was in the area and Ian showed an interest in joining them in an act.

In July 1988, Billy Smart's elephants continued to appear with Gandey's Circus on tour including a visit to Tranmere.

Having started with horses and ponies in a Wild West Show at the start of the 1900's Gandey's Circus had recently brought in more exotic animals like elephants and tigers to appear in the ring during the 1980's but things were about to change as by 1988 Animal Rights protesters were calling into question if animals should be kept in cages and transported round the country, considering it to be demeaning for the animals as they performed tricks in what the protesters considered to be an unnatural act. Things have changed in the circus since the days that lions were controlled with a wooden chair and a whip, but by this time more consideration was taken about the welfare of the animals and regular checks by the RSPCA made sure they were not being harmed. Ringmaster Graham Tottle told the Liverpool Echo that "the animals were let out into an exercise yard for at least an hour every day, playing for 30 minutes before falling asleep". Coming from Safari Parks these captive bred animals have not enjoyed the life in the wild so they couldn't survive if they were put back into their native lands. The animals have built up a trust with their trainers and will do what they are asked to do but as they are wild animals, they will not do what they do not enjoy and often did their own thing. Little bears Rita and Daley are trained by Graham Tottle, who takes them for walks every day and he finds they do exactly what they want to do in the ring much to the delight of the audience.

Unfortunately, by the end of the 1990's the growing number of protesters increased with some picketing various circus's including Gandey's in May 1989 when they appeared at the LRT Sports Ground in Old Kenton Lane, Kingsbury. Some of the more reckless protesters were responsible for letting out some of the animals at venues around the world, making it impossible for Circus's to continue to have anything except horses and dogs in the Circus Ring and in the case of Gandey's even these are mainly kept out of the ring.

The Circus appeared at the Aintree racecourse between the 8th and 20th May 1990

10 July to 9 September 1990 Hippodrome, Great Yarmouth (Presented by Peter Jay)

Incl = Billy Wilson Smart's Indian Elephants and 6 African Lions
Black Bears / Camels / Horses / Ponies /
Medieval Jousts / Aerial Acts / Flying Trapeze / High Wire
Cloud Swings / Solo Trapeze /
The Didgets (Britain's Smallest Clowns)
Ian Stevens Circus Band

In January 1992, the Circus was still using animals and Ringmaster Binky Beaumont was seen at New Brighton in Lancashire (Merseyside) with two Camels trying to get a taxi back home after they had been for a walk along the sea front. The show also had Polar Bears in the show and a baboon that was seen on the back of a bicycle with its trainer Mark Austin when the tent moved to Aintree.

8 July to 6 Sept 1992 Hippodrome, Great Yarmouth (Presented by Peter Jay)

Incl; John Roberts and his Mighty Indian Elephants
The Flying Neves (From Brazil)
5 Aerial Acts under one roof
Giant Space Wheel

17- 20 June 1993 Newry Beach, Holyhead / 21 -23 June Caernarfon

Incl; Amedeo Folgo's Mighty African Elephants (Presented by Mark Austin)
Paslea Troupe (Springboard from Russian State Circus) (New)
The Garcia Family (Aerial Superstars from Spain) (New)
Camels
Eva Garcia (Foot Juggling)
The Digits (Clowns)
6 Friesian Stallions and 3 African Zebra (New)
Maria Garcia (Trapeze)
Shire Horse and Shetland Pony
Ian Stevens Circus Band

The Gandey Showgirls

After the 1993 season in Blackpool, Binky Beaumont retired as a clown with the Circus. In 1992 he had filled in as Ringmaster when Philip and Carol Gandey were unavailable and would remain with the circus as the Ringmaster until about 1997 when he went to work for a Jaguar car dealership in Manchester. The dealership allowed him time off to do seasons with Gandey's and when he gave up selling cars, he would become part of the management team of the Circus based in their Congleton offices.

In 1996, Gandey's Circus took on the "Chinese State Circus" with 46 performers as they made their UK tour between May 1996 and February 1997.

In 1999 Philip Gandey made history when he was able to take the first ever Circus to Saudi Arabia. Another change for Gandey's happened in 2005 when after the loss of exotic animals, the company acquired the "Spirit of the Horse Show", which went back to the early days of the family and a more modern version of the wild west show, showing skills on horseback.

In January 2016, newspapers reported that a fire in Brereton on Sunday the 24 January 2016 had broken out at the Circus site destroying 10 of the companies caravans with heat from the fire causing damage to another five mobile homes a car and a van. No one was living in the caravans at the time as they were only being stored by the Gandey Organisation. Fire crews from Sandbach and Holmes Chapel were called out at 3am to tackle the fire and also to cool down cylinders of LPG or Liquid Petroleum Gas which was stored at the site and could have exploded if they had reached a high temperature. Two more appliances attended from Congleton and Crewe to help with the incident and all four crews were on the scene for three hours making sure the site was safe.

In May 2018 Acrobat Navas Haugui (.b. 1995 known as Howie) was minutes into his act on the Giant Double Giant Spinning Wheel in Guernsey when he fell from the 30ft spinning wheel as he ran from one end to another. He was rushed to the local Hospital but after scans he was found to only have suffered slight bruising.

Another act that had a problem during a show was the Gerling Family who presented "The Thunderdome", a large metal ball inside which motorcyclists ride round in a fast-moving display of skill. It is made more dangerous as one rider is joined by a second and then a third person in the confined space. On the 20 February 2019 at Liverpool someone stole their bikes and they had to find replacements at short notice from Hunts Motorcycles in Manchester. However, the bikes they use for the act are specially built and despite rehearsing for most of the day for the performance on the 21 February 2019 things didn't go to plan as when they were joined by number three, their female rider they seemed to slip in the dome and she fell to the bottom of the cage causing her to be taken to hospital with a broken ankle.

Today the circus is run by Philip and Carol Gandey with their daughter Hayley involved in producing the shows and has acted as Ringmistress for the Great Circus of Europe (Tours included Hong Kong in 2019). Chico's other daughter is Mariska.

It takes about 50 people with 15 lorries, 30 performers, technical staff, about 40 office workers, internet designers, photographers, publicity, drivers and many locations to put on a show in one town for one week. It has certainly changed from the days when one man organised the location with the cast and crew all pitching in to make the show work, but this is the 21st century and "nothing is what it seems".

CIRCUS

Circus has always appealed as family entertainment with patrons from babes in arms to the eldest visitor in 2018 coming to see the show at the age of 102.

#####

SHOWS RUN BY GANDEY'S 2018

- Bolshoi Circus (Represent)
- Bolshoi on Ice (Represent)
- Chinese State Circus
- Cirque Surreal
- Edinburgh International Circus Festival (Event)
- Fist of the Dragon
- Gandey's Thrill Circus
- Kremlin Ballet (Represent)

Krystal Dinner Show (Events)
Lady Boys of Bangkok
Los Vivancos (Represent)
Monster Truck Show (Represent)
Planet Puppet (Represent)
Royalles British Thrill Circus
Russian International Ballet Company (Represent)
Spirit of the Horse

#####

CURRENT SHOW (May 2019)

It has been a long time coming to the area of its historic base but Gandey's Circus has set up the Big Top in Arclid for the first time in over 100 years since the original owners broke down near to Brereton and Arclid in the 1920's and found a home to settle down in.

It has taken about 50 people with 15 lorries, 30 performers and a brand-new Italian Tent to bring the show to South Cheshire for "The greatest show" to be seen by thousands of patrons at the farm next to Arclid Traffic Lights.

The show has changed over those years to include motorcycles inside a dome of death and clowns from all over the world but essentially the excitement a youngster gets from seeing the acts in the circus ring has not changed. I asked one young lady what was her favourite part of the performance and she liked all of it in equal measure.

When you first mention the Circus is coming to town the first question many ask is are there any animals in it to which the reply is there has not been animals in Gandey's Circus since the 1990's, however this is not quite true as the "Pushmepullyou" (Push me pull you) from Dr Doolittle made a guest appearance during one of the dance numbers.

The current show on the 10th to the 13th of May at Arclid had Binky Beaumont greeting the patrons as they entered the foyer. Binky is the grandson of Bessie and Cliff Welsby who for many years owned the chemist's shop in Sandbach and the son of Tony Welsby who also worked in the shop and opened up the photographic side of the business until his retirement. It was Cliff Welsby who knew Circus proprietor Joe Gandey and his connection that gave Binky (Ian Welsby) a chance to join the Circus and Bessie Welsby whose involvement with the Sandbach Players gave him the theatrical background to want to entertain the crowds. Usually Binky has been the Ringmaster at Gandey's but he has decided to take a back seat and helps run the company from their Congleton offices. Today the ringmaster is Ryan Brown who joined the company at Ellesmere Port on the 31 March 2019 for a couple of shows when he was invited to take over from Joel who along with his wife is now enjoying maternity leave with their new baby. Ryan has been on the tour to the Isle of Man in April and now at Arclid he has become a big hit with the youngsters, having selfies with them before the show, in the interval and afterwards with clown Chico Rico as they personally said goodnight to all the visitors to the circus.

An opening of dancers and a taste of some of the acts started the show before the Havana Troupe from Cuba came into the ring with the first of their appearances, this time with pole balancing. A change to the high wire was preceded by clown Chico Rico (Adan Morales from Mexico) and an audience participation opportunity to throw a potato onto a fork. The high wire or tightrope was staged by the Gerling's who returned on motorbikes in the second half but on the high wire a slower pace was taken as one of the members was bound at the feet and blindfolded as he crossed from one side of the tent to the other with gasps from the audience.

Next newly engaged Brandon Carrisosa-Nava and Jacqui Morales the daughter of Chico the Clown appeared as 'Duo Nava' an act that involved using silk ropes strung from the roof in a display of skill and danger as they slide down them without support except from the silk strands and singing sister Rosalia Morales who sang a song during the act from "The Greatest Showman", 'This is me'.

Next a big production number to bring on a small box containing Amiri the bendy Prince (Contortionist) from Tanzania who not only gave the children an extraordinary exhibition of how articulate he was as he wrapped himself round himself but managed to make the adults feel nauseous as they thought his feats could only be done with one of those rubber figure toys from the 1960's and 70's as he looped his leg through his arms and around his neck.

Another break filled by Clown Chico Rico, who played music loudly with his remote control a device which he found he could also use to pause the Ringmaster as he complained about the noise. A great comedy act before one of the most dangerous performances of the evening the 'Giant Wheel of Death' a device that had two circular cages at either end of a rotating arm which the 'Duo Siffolini' would run along and over as it rotated at an astonishing speed. Again, a blindfold was included to make it even more dangerous as the Bulgarian duo rushed along to the music of the 'Firestarter'. In May last year

Navas Haurigui (Howie) fell off the wheel 30 foot in the air and after being taken to be checked out by medical staff was found to only have slight bruising. This shows how dangerous the act can be but as this was the only incident I can find, proves the professionalism of the company with thrills, spills and that slight bit of tension which creates the right atmosphere for the night at the circus.

An interval was needed to get over the suspense of the last act and the audience was brought back to see Clown Chico's daughters Jacqui and Gina Morales as 'Las Chicas Morales' who performed various tricks including hula-hoops on top of Rolling Globes (Balls).

Their father returned to pull out five members of the audience to make up a boxing ring and a fighter to face him in a funny comedy routine that seemed choreographed but clearly was only known to Chico. The Havana Troupe returned this time with a Springboard (Seesaw) which catapulted one of the artists into the air to land in a chair and also to do summersaults before their landing.

The next break was filled by the cast performing "Join the Circus" from Barnum as the finale act was wheeled in for the Gerling Family. The Thunderdome is a large metal ball inside which motorcyclists ride round in a fast-moving display of skill. It is made more dangerous as one rider is joined by a second and then a third person in the confined space. The trio has recently changed as on the 21 February 2019 at Liverpool someone stole their bikes and they had to find replacements at short notice from Hunts Motorcycles in Manchester. However, the bikes they use for the act are specially built and despite rehearsing for most of the day the performance didn't go to plan as when they were joined by their female rider they seemed to slip in the dome and she fell to the bottom of the cage causing her to be taken to hospital with a broken ankle. The performance at Arclid was textbook with no incidents and plenty of drama.

The show was concluded by the cast singing "You can't stop the beat" before the sell-out 1,200 seat audience left the tent having enjoyed this wonderful show.

#####

Ryan Brown (Ringmaster)

Opening Dancers

Havana Troupe (**Pole Balancing** / Springboard) from Cuba

Chico Rico (Clown) from Mexico (Born Adan Morales in 1969. Married to Catherine born in 1995.

Daughters (Rosie) Rosalia Morales .b. 2007 / (Jacqueline) Jacqui Morales .b. 1994

(Georgina) Gina Morales .b. 1993

Amiri the Bendi Prince (Contortionist) from Tanzania

Gerlings (High Wire)

Duo Nava (Aerial Silks) Jacqui Morales and fiancé Brandon Carrisosa-Nava (Became engaged in 2017)

(with Rosalia Morales singing "This is Me")

Chico Rico (Clown) – Remote Control sketch

Duo Siffolini from Bulgaria (Giant Wheel of Death)

INTERVAL

Las Chacas Morales (Rolling Globes) from Central America / Mexico = Jacqui and Gina Morales

Chico Rico (Clown) – Boxing Ring

Havana Troupe (Pole Balancing / **Springboard**) from Cuba

Join the Circus = Dancers with Balloons

Gerlings (Thunder Dome Motorbikes)

END You Can Stop the Beat

#####

TOUR DATES FOR GANDEY'S CIRCUS 2016.

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"AWAKENS" TOUR

12 – 28 Feb 2016

LIVERPOOL Speke Hall Road.

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TOUR DATES FOR GANDEY'S CIRCUS 2017.

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TOUR DATES FOR GANDEY'S CIRCUS 2018.

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“THE GREATEST SHOW” TOUR
21-24 Mar 2018 LONGPORT Former Fred McGuinness Site.

TOUR DATES FOR GANDEY’S CIRCUS 2019.
#####

“THE GREATEST SHOW” TOUR
11- 15 Sept 2019 DERBY Bass Recreation Ground

TOUR DATES FOR GANDEY’S CIRCUS 2020.
#####

“UNBELIEVABLE” TOUR
31 May 2020 HOLYHEAD Newry Beach
20 Sept 2020 NOTTINGHAM Woodthorpe Grange Park
26 Sept 2020 DERBY Bass Recreation Ground
23 Oct to 1 Nov 2020 MERRY HILL SHOPPING CENTRE “Spooktacular”

TOUR DATES FOR GANDEY’S CIRCUS 2021.
#####

Merry Hill
Aintree Racecourse

“UNBELIEVABLE” TOUR
17- 23 May 2021 KNUTSFORD The Big Heath
16-20 June 2021 KENDAL Rugby Club
10- 13 Sept 2021 NOTTINGHAM Forest Recreation Ground
GANDEY’S CIRCUS “SPOOKTACULAR”
15- 31 Oct 2021 TRAFFORD CENTRE, Near Manchester

“GANDEY’S CIRCUS OF ALADDIN”
26 Nov 2021 to 3Jan 2022 MERRY HILL SHOPPING CENTRE, Level Street, Brierley Hill.

TOUR DATES FOR GANDEY’S CIRCUS 2022.
#####

18 Feb – 6 March 2022 TRENTHAM GARDENS Staffordshire.

1-24 Apr 2022 TRAFFORD CENTRE Outside the Grand Hall (Easter Spectacular)
27 Apr to 2 May 2022 OLDHAM ATHLETIC FC CAR PARK
5 – 8 May 2022 ARCLID / SANDBACH Newcastle Road, Junction A50 / A534
Arclid Traffic Lights
12-15 May 2022 GUERNSEY Victoria Avenue, St Sampsons.
19 – 23 May 2022 JERSEY Peoples Park, St Helier
27 May to 7 June 2022 LEIGH Greyhound Roundabout (A580 East Lancs Road, Glazebury)
10- 12 June 2022 KENDAL RUFC, Mint Bridge, Sharp Road
16-26 June 2022 ELLESMERE PORT Circus Site A41/ A5117 Backford Roundabout
29 June to 3 July 2022 LLANDUDNO Badaton Fields, Gwynedd

THE SHOW “ROAR”
Buffalo Soldiers (Flying Saddles)
Gerlings (High Wire / Thunder Dome Motorbikes)
Maycon (Clown)
Aditya Mhskar (Mallakhamb Pole = Aerial Yoga, Gymnastics and Wrestling)
Rola Rola (Cuban)

#####

CIRCUS IN SANDBACH

#####

23 May 1916 A large Circus appeared in the town on the 23 May 1916 (Tuesday).
 It was decided that SandbachSchool should have an extra holiday in the afternoon
 of the Circus to allow the pupils to attend the entertainment.
 (Venue not mentioned but possible behind the GeorgeHotel where various fates
 were held)

**1927 SANDBACH Tent blew down during a performance for Sandbach School Children on the
28 October 1927.**

#####

GARDEN TRAIL

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Started in 2000 by Mrs Pru Bowles (Guide Captain and Commissioner) who made the arrangements to
raise funds for the local church.

Today the event is organised by Barbara West, Jenny Haines, Kathy Benson and members of the
Allotment Society Yeowood Farm, Ettley Heath on behalf of Churches Together.

ROADS ON WHICH GARDENS WERE OPENED

2000 =

2002 =

2004 =

2006 =

2008 =

2010 =

(June 2010)

(July 2010)

(18-19 Sept 2010)

2012 =

2013 = Held in Aid of the Friends of Sandbach Park.

Taking Part were 11 Gardens.

(15-16 June 2013)

(22-23 June 2013)

(27-28 July 2013)

2014 = Not held this year.

2016 =

Taking Part were -

Allotment Society,

Sarah Davies,

June and Richard Grisdale,

Max and Aileen Higgs,

Helen and Ron McGarvey,

Irene and Bernard Preston,

Barbara West,

Howard Yates.

(25-26 June 2016) Moreton Close, Deans Lane, Marsh Green Road Elworth, Crewe Road, Hawk Street
(6-7 Aug 2016) Hartford Close, Congleton Road, Allotment Society Yeowood Farm, Ettley Heath.

2018 =

Taking Part were -
Allotment Society,
Kate Croydon,
Elworth Park,
Graham Masters,
Helen and Ron McGarvey,
Kath and Dave Millington,
Stuart Naylor and Tricia Budd,
Sandbach Railway Station, Elworth,
Lynn and David Slack,
Barbara West,
Howard Yates.

(16-17 June 2018) Crewe Road, Hartford Close.
(14-15 July 2018) Moreton Close, Smithfield Lane, Gowy Close Elworth, Allotment Society Yeowood Farm, Ettley Heath.
(18-19 Aug 2018) 3x Belmont Avenue, Marsh Green Road Elworth, Elworth Park, Sandbach Railway Station.

2020 = Cancelled due to Coronavirus.

Taking Part were -

GAS WORKS/ GAS COMPANY WORKS (Demolished)

Built in 1874 near the Brook Silk Mill (On the West side of The Hill next to a large lake near where Waitrose is today) at the end of Union Street, Off Crewe Road, it had a capital stock of £3,000 raised by selling £10 Shares. The Gasometer held 24,000 cubic feet of gas. The gas was charged at a rate of 6-8d per 1,000 cubic feet. The company consisted of the Rev. John Armitstead (Chairman of the Directors) Mr Robert Bray (Manager) and John Bailey (secretary).
Mr Walter Hill was manager of the company for over 50 years after Mr Bray left the company. The supply from the "Sandbach Gas Company" ran to Sandbach, Elworth and Wheelock and later Malkins Bank, who had their own gas supplied by the Salt Union Ltd.

GEORGE HOTEL (Bridge Street / High Street)

Built in the 1600's as the "George and Dragon" it was the staging post for 'The Rocket' and 'Rocket Sovereign' stage coach from Liverpool to Birmingham. The old building held balls, dinner dances in a large club room at one side of the yard.

In the Early days of the Coaches they were used to take convicts from Liverpool to London for deportation to Van Diemen's Land and as they were usually bound on hands and feet the George was used as a resting point on the long journey.

The building we see today is of a much later date possibly built in 1810.

In 1834 the towns Post Office moved to "The George Inn" public house.

During the early 1800's the building was used for the Hunt Balls and Dinners as described below in a report about the 1822 to 1825 period.

The building was described thus; - "The Building was rough cut, it had large square windows and was approached by three semi-circular steps. It was here that the London Stage Coaches stopped to change Horses and to refresh the Passengers and Hunt Balls and dinners were frequently held in the Inn. There was a side gateway leading to an extensive yard and still beyond to the bowling green. A Mr and Mrs Emery kept the Inn".

In December 1980 two priest holes were discovered in the building. This is surprising as Priest Holes are usually associated with the time of Henry VIII.

In 2012 the building was closed and in 2013 the building was taken over by the Wetherspoons group who opened the pub on the 18 December 2013.

GRADE 2 listed building.

LANDLORDS

1782 = William Lindop (George Inn)

1834 = Thomas Emery (George Inn and Posting House -Bridge Street, Sandbach)

1844 = Mr and Mrs Emery (“George and Dragon” known locally as The George)

The George also had a bowling green.

1899 = Henry Hildyard

GEORGE HOTEL 1834 Coach Timetable

12.30pm (Every Day) To London – The ROYAL MAIL from Liverpool

2pm (Tuesday to Sun) To London – RED ROVER

10pm (Every Day) To London - ERIN GO BRAGH

Various Times Each day To Liverpool from London.



(19 May 2004 George Hotel)

GRAMMAR SCHOOL (see Sandbach School)

Started in the 17th Century, Sir George Gilbert Scott, R.A. of London helped with the designs for the current building of which he designed the gate house in 1850. Additions to the building were designed by A Price and Son with the builder being H. Hilditch and Son.

GUIDES / GIRL GUIDES / BROWNIES

In 1909 the Guide Association was formed as a female version of the Scouts.

The founder of Guiding in Sandbach was Mrs J Thorley who formed the group in 1922 with (Married Name) Mrs J Richardson being the first guide enrolled. Mrs Richardson attended the 21st anniversary of the Trefoil group in 1968.

The first meeting of the Guides was on the 22 January 1922.

Another founder member was Miss Florence Booth (.b. 30 Aug 1909 .D. 9 Mar 1975) who joined as a Guide in 1922 and subsequently became a Patrol Leader, Brownie Guider and Guide Captain following Miss Violet A Royds as Captain after she had been appointed District Commissioner. In 1954, Florrie Booth retired as Guide Captain after 32 years in the movement. Florrie went on to become the Badge Secretary and a prominent member of the Trefoil Guild. Florrie Booth became a well known citizen of Sandbach as she owned the Fish and Chip Shop on the Market Square until her death in 1975, feeding many a hungry school child and becoming a well known chippy with people driving miles to her establishment.

In 1947 the Trefoil Guild was formed to help fundraise and support the guide movement.

1949 GUIDES – a picture was taken of the local girls on the Saxon Crosses after they had been to Crewe to see Lady Baden –Powell the founder of the movement at a meeting in Crewe.

District Commissioner Mrs Muriel Farnsworth Smith, Guide Captain (Sandbach) F Booth

In 1950 the Guides celebrated the 28th Anniversary of the movement in the town with an event at “The Hill” Sandbach. Among those attending were Miss V A Royds (Recently resigned as District Commissioner), Mrs M Farnsworth Smith (New Commissioner), Miss Elizabeth Royds (Known as Betty), Mrs D Richardson and Captain F Booth.

In 1968, the guides “Trefoil Guild” in Sandbach celebrated its 21st Anniversary with a party at the Sandbach Heath Primary School. Cheshire Councillor Mrs Irene Lea, Sandbach UDC Councillor Mrs Eileen Henshall and various members past and present including Mrs J Thorley (First Guide Captain and Founder of the Guide Movement in Sandbach), Miss Violet A Royds (President of the Guides) and Mrs Pru Bowles (Guide Captain and Commissioner).

In 1968 Eileen Thompson took charge of the 1st Sandbach who met at St Mary’s Church Hall.

In 1972 the Guides celebrated 50 years with a reunion at the Sandbach Library along with an exhibition showing the half century of the movement. Organised by Mrs Eileen Henshall Chairman of the Sandbach Guides Association the event was attended by Chairman of the Sandbach Urban Council Cllr Bert Johnson and his wife.

Those who attended included a founder member Miss Violet A Royds. Another founded member Miss Hilda Cooke had written a history of the Guides in Sandbach which she presented at the event and hoped that a booklet she had produced would be published in a bound edition.

1974 Sandbach Brownies celebrated their Diamond Jubilee with various events. Guide Leaders = Astrid Jennings, Anne Curzon, Sylvia Maddock and Brenda Shone.

1975 Trefoil Group included Mrs M Bagnall, Mrs D Richardson, Mrs M Butler, Miss E Lake, Mrs J Thornton, Mrs C Earle, Mrs E Knowles, Miss M Mill, Mrs R Sherratt, Mrs W Shawcross, Mrs H Cooke, Mrs D Robinson, Mrs M Locke, Mrs J Thomas, Mrs M Hargreaves, Mrs M Shelley, Mrs H Skellern, Mrs D Abbiss, Mrs F Garner, Mrs E Charles.

1975 Guides included Mrs Barratt (Divisional Commissioner), Mrs Jones, Mrs Shone, Mrs Maddock, Mrs Curzon, Mrs Pru Bowles, Mrs Bradreth, Mrs Warburton, Mrs Thompson.

In 1980 the Sandbach East Ranger Company was formed. Meeting at the Scout Hall in Chapel Street off Bradwall Road it nearly closed due to a lack of members and because it had to use Sandbach Library for its meetings and was unable to carry out most of its activities. It then acquired the use of the Scout Hall which the Rangers spent three months decorating. By March 1981 they were ‘Investing’ another five of its eight members. Former Sandbach East District Commissioner Mrs Sylvia Maddock performed the ceremony in-front of present Commissioner Mrs Margaret Mussett and Temporary leader Mrs Anne Green along with Rangers, Helen Robinson, Susan Green and Julie Thornhill. By 1982, Mrs Sylvia Maddock had taken on the role of leader of the 3rd Brownie Pack.

By 1981 when the Sandbach East District Guides held their Autumn Fair at St Mary’s Church Hall on the same day as the Round Table’s Ox Roast there were three Brownie Packs, two Guide Packs and a Ranger crew.

In November 1984 Lianne Raybould (15) was pictured receiving her Ranger Badge from Mrs Ena Shaw (Unit Ranger Leader) at the Friday night meeting at the Sandbach Guide Headquarters in Chapel Street. Others who gained their Ranger Badges were Rachel Day (16), Elizabeth Burgess (15), Lianne Raybould (15), Kate Bowers (14), Sharon Boardman (15 and Sarah Harper (16).

Mrs Anne Newall was also invested as a Venture Leader along with new Venture Scouts Jane Bosworth (15), Susan Green (19), Jayne Stubbs (18) and Diane Thomas (18).

Sandbach Group Scout Leader Mr Mike Peterson also invested the following Venture Scouts at the same meeting, Dave Bradbrook (15), Steve McDermott (16), Geraint Jones (16) and Mark Ashley (15). Geraint Jones (Geraint Price-Jones) later became Mayor of Sandbach in 2020-21.

David Mellor was presented with his Venture Scout award by Venture Scout Leader Mr Paul Fricker.

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HACKNEY'S ROAD HAULAGE

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Frederick Hackney Brief History

Father Frederick Hackney (.b. 1881 .D. June 1970)

Mother = Marie Priscilla Robinson (.b. 1886 .D. 1909)

Frederick Hackney Born on the 25 September 1905 in the Stockport area.

Harold Hackney (Half Brother) Born on the 15 April 1912 (.D. 1996) in the Stockport Area.

Frederick married Eliza Davies (.b. 1908 .D. 1998) on the 12 May 1928 in Old Rode, Sandbach, Cheshire.

Frederick Howard Hackney their son born on the 10 Mar 1934 (.D. 1994) in Congleton.

Frederick Hackney (Fred) died on the 3 June 1985 in Sandbach (Congleton / Crewe District)

#####

14 December 2017

HACKNEY'S GARAGE DEMOLISHED

The end of another historic building in Sandbach happened on the 14 December 2017 when the Nissen Hut (First produced between the 16 and 18 April 1916 and produced commercially in August 1916) like Structure belonging to the Hackney Haulage Company was finally demolished as a digger was bought in to pull it down. Part of the town centre's history this building for many years housed a Showman's Traction Engine owned by Fred Hackney which had been a major attraction at most events in the town.

Mr Fred Hackney (Frederick Hackney b. 1881) started his haulage business in Sandbach in 1919 in a building in School Lane, Elworthwith two Commer vehicles (Company formed in 1905). During the Second World War all vehicles had been commandeered for the movements of essential equipment etc. by the Government and continued to be run by them until the 1950's after which they were returned to their owners with the Denationalisation of Haulage. It was at this time that Fred Hackney acquired the Tower Garage (Named after the Water Tower near where the Fire Station now stands) in Sandbach off Congleton Road where he stayed until the end of his business and this is where the metal structure stood until this year.

In 1933, Mr Hackney had purchased the fourth vehicle built by the newly formed ERF Company of Sandbach and wherever possible over the years he continued to use lorries made in the town by ERF or Foden's.

By the 1970's, Fred Hackney started to take an interest in older forms of transport and entertainment including a Fairground Barrel Organ and the 1916 Showman's Traction Engine which was one of the oldest surviving vehicles of its kind (Registration number DO1932). "Enterprise" as it was called was built in 1916 by John Fowler and Co (Leeds) Ltd and worked up and down the country before it was purchased by Hackney's who proudly took it into the town under its own steam to become a familiar attraction at events in Sandbach.

In 1974, this Traction Engine came into its own soon after its boiler had been refitted when "Enterprise" was brought out of retirement to power the lighting at the E.R.F. Works at Middlewich when there was a problem with the electric supply to the repair department due to the UK Miner's Strike which meant power cuts across Britain. It had originally been used to power Hobby Horses on Fairgrounds and was driven to Middlewich one Friday by Fred Hackney, his brother Harold (lived in Glendore, Abbey Road, Elworth) and grandson Simon Rigby.

On the 17 December 1964 F Hackney (Sandbach) Limited was formed by Frederick Hackney and by 1991 the Company Directors were Eliza Hackney (8 Mar 1991 to 19 April 1998), Frederick Howard Hackney (8 Mar 1991 to 3 Aug 1994) with Jean Elizabeth Rigby as Director of the company (appointed 8 Mar 1991) and Simon Michael Rigby (appointed 4 Nov 2003 until it was dissolved in 2013). With the death of its founder and changes to the Commercial Haulage business the company was officially dissolved on the 18 December 2013 having moved off the Congleton Road site a few years earlier.

Fred Hackney also owned the Petrol Station on the Congleton Road next to his house and the Ambulance station and by the 1980's with profits declining they decided to sell the petrol business to Texaco who continued there until after 2000 when the buildings were demolished and they put their efforts into the station next to the M6. In April 2014, Mr Awat Murad (of Shelton, Stoke on Trent) applied to convert the land of the petrol station into a car wash having already cleared the site in June 2013.

With the demolition of the Nissen Hut on the site of the Haulage Garage on the 14th December 2017 and the redevelopment of the “Star Services Petrol Station” the only structural memory of the Hackney Haulage Company remaining is the family house next to the land, which has unfortunately been boarded up for many years.

(Location) Star Service Station CW11 4SP / CW11 1HG



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HASSALL ROAD

(Cold Moss Heath, on the left of The Hill, going out of the town)

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There are various houses of various dates down this road but one group near the corner of Hassell Road and Houndings Lane are of particular interest. The first group of 2 sets of two houses were built in 1887 and are named "Stafford Terrace". In 1894 another house was added (Detached) called "Stafford Cottage" followed in 1906 by a second detached house (Also called "Stafford Cottage"). In 1911 two more houses were added followed by another detached building the date of which is not registered on the outside.



(17 May 2004)

#####

HAWK STREET (at the back of St Mary's and Penda Way)

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At the library end of Hawk Street is a black and white building that dates back over 300 years to 1570 (on Well Bank Road).

Another the other end of the road is a Black and White building which is a recent construction replacing an earlier building that fell down.

By 1925 Hawk Street was occupied by William Mellor's second hand shop (he also had stables for horses that would pull his wagonette) and a public house called "The Dunham Heifer", all of which have been demolished.



Havel Street c. 1925 (behind St. Mary's Church). On the right is William Mellor's second-hand shop behind which he had stables for his horses and wagnement. The white gable-ended house (centre) is the public house, "The Dunham Heifer".

© Sandbach History Society

HIGH STREET to the Hill.
 #####

On one side of the street it is made up of old houses, while on the other side it is more modern. Passing by the saving bank (Midland / HSBC) we come across a shop formally owned by Mr Ford as a Music Shop. Passing on towards the town Centre a group of shops ending with the Swan Hotel (See Swan Hotel).

The High Street also had a Café, or Cocoa House (as it was first described) (See Co-op or below) and a large shop next to them (See Woolworth). These two buildings were built at the same time as the Town Hall about 1889.

The Co-operative building or Pricefighter (Now Handy Households) store next to the town hall was built in 1892. It was from 1892 until 1946 the Hungerford Café run on behalf of the Hungerford (Lord Crewe) family.

Next is the other shop mentioned above. This is now owned by the Woolworth chain and occupies a building constructed in 1936 as an original 3d and 6d (Woolworth) shop.

Shops on the opposite side include Chatwins bakeries. These premises were built between 1760 and 1860. In the early 1900's (Picture of shop taken in 1910) the corner buildings (Rumbelows / Choices Video Shop and Welsby's photographic shop) were owned by Wardle's with Charles Wardle as the proprietor.

Shops on the Southern side of the Red Lion Hotel date back to before 1758.

The George Hotel (See George Hotel) is next to the house of two ladies called Miss Sibons who were the maiden daughters of the Rev John Sibon, who was the Curate of the Parish for 36 years. They were described as being with precise manners, erect bearing and dressing in antiquated dress. They managed the old Post Office for many years. Miss Sarah Sibson died in 1857 at the age of 90 years. In her will she made provision for the church of St John's, Sandbach Heath, to be built. (See St John's Church).

Down Bridge Street past the church gates there was a road which branched off to the left down Front Street just inside what is now the Church wall. In 1875 -77 the road was closed to make way for the enlargement of the churchyard.

It was at this time that the soil was put into a mound and the Brook Bridge was installed to take the road over the river rather than using a "Ford".

The town spout was positioned opposite Bridge House at the foot of the steps on the south side of the church graveyard (on High Street). It was moved in 1876 when the church graveyard was extended. Opposite the Church on the corner of Church Street and Well Bank are two buildings called "Dingle Cottages", they were built in 1894.



(Town Well at Front Street 17 May 2004)

Opposite the Dingle cottages now stands a monument to the original Pump used for the water supply to the town positioned at the bottom of the steps near the church graveyard (see later).

Bridge Street contains some old houses opposite the church with a opening to St Anne's Square. "The Steppes" is a former farm house.

Next we come to Front Street in the hole between the Church and the Bridge. The Corner Black and White building dates back to 1639.

From Front street we join Church Street briefly and ascend on foot only as the road was blocked off in the 1980's towards the Bye-Pass.

Previously the road then sloped down to the "Ford" (See Ford) and Brook Bridge.

Next we come to the Bye-Pass (Opened in November 1986) where it used to be Factory lane (on the Right or West of the Road) and beyond that Lower Brook House (Also on the left near what was the Lower Brook Garage).

Lower Brook House had a shop on its ground floor which sold silks, cotton and wool. In 1792 a Sunday service was held at one o' clock by the Wesleyan Society. The house at the time was owned by Mr Thomas Mann who I presume was a member of the Wesleyan society from its foundation in Sandbach in 1785 (In May 1738 John Wesley founded the society of Methodism with a service in Aldersgate) with 20 members. The Lower Brook house was later owned by Mr Wm. Dean.

On the left of the High Street was a wood, some of which is still there. Some of the trees were removed to make way for a cinder tip. This cinder tip later became a transport Garage and yard owned eventually by British Road Services before it went out of business and was demolished to make way for new houses.

Next port of call down the road, now called "The Hill" are the Almshouses (See Almshouses).

At the end of the Almshouses is Smithfield Lane a road that led to cottages and nurseries. Now the road leads to a housing estate.

Next to the entrance of Smithfield Lane was a spout and trough for drinking water.

A little further up The Hill is Mill Row and a set of houses known as Chimney Row (Built in 1850), due to the first building on the main road having a prominent Chimney. This site was originally a factory with a tall chimney built in 1850. Mr Bull introduced a silk making factory to this site at that time starting the silk trade in Sandbach. (See Mills).



On the opposite side of the road is the town Cemetery. As you enter the main gates you can see a memorial at the far end of the drive. This was in fact moved to this position in 1934 and is a war memorial for those who fought in the First World War (1914-1918). The monument had originally been at the "Brunner Mond and Co Limited" works at Malkins Bank Near Wheelock which closed in 1934. It was decided to move the monument to the cemetery instead of destroying it.



Next up The Hill behind the Mill was the first Sewage Works in Sandbach, constructed in 1891. In 1908 they were abandoned because they were too low in the ground and replaced by a larger works constructed by Mr John Stringer under the direction of engineer Mr William Wyatt. Again this was abandoned as a better facility was constructed in Hind Heath.

Near to the Chimney row (Mill Row) is the site of an 18th Century Inn known as the "Golden Lion". The building is now number 60 The Hill. During its Inn days the upper rooms served as a meeting place or Club room with the ceiling decorated with the emblem of the "All-seeing Eye".

72 The Hill is now occupied by Lawton Tools but was the venue for the Number 4 branch of the Sandbach Industrial Co-operative Society (Limited) (see Co-operative)

At the Top of the Hill there was a thatches cottage owned by Charles Dunning who owned a "Bear" that he took to various Wakes to perform tricks. Another owner of a bear lived in Church Street and kept it in the basement.

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THE HILL (Leonard Cheshire Home)

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Built in 1733 as a town house for the Twemlow family. The central portion being added in 1870 and a Billiard room in 1912.

After the death of Miss V Roydes in 1964 the building was given to the Leonard Cheshire Homes Trust.

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H. M. S. VIMIERA (Ship Adopted by Sandbach)

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30 Nov 1941 Foden's Band played for the "Sandbach Warship Week" when the town officially adopted a warship "HMS Vimiera". (see below)



1941 In December 1941 the town adopted HMS Vimiera in a civil ceremony after a successful "Warship Week National Savings Campaign" (29- 30 November to the 6 December 1941 raised £168,000.) The aim of the Warship Week in Sandbach was to raise £120,000 to buy of Corvette and included a Procession, Exhibition at the Literary Institute, Entertainments and a slogan competition. The event was opened by Sir Francis Joseph on the Saturday for the parade. (18 Oct / 8 Nov / 15 Nov 1941 Crewe Chronicle)

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WARSHIP WEEK

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Between the 28 February and the 7 March 1942 many towns took part in the National Warship Week. By the end of the fundraising week a total of £955,611,589 was raised from 1,178 warship week events involving 1,273 districts. The money was used to help to pay for eight battleships, four carriers, forty nine cruisers, three hundred and one destroyers, twenty five submarines, one hundred and sixty four corvettes and frigates and two hundred and eight minesweepers.

The money was invested in Government Bonds, National Savings Certificates and even Post Office Savings Bonds by individuals.

The Town or Village will receive a copy of the ships badge and a plaque will be fixed to the quarter deck of the ship to commemorate the town's donation. Villages that raised funds were not given shields

but presented with scrolls produced by John Buchanan an artist with no hands who produced over 3,500 such certificates in less than 12 months.

H.M.S. VIMIERA HISTORY
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Named after the Battle of Vimeriro (21 Aug 1808) sometimes shown as Vimiera or Vimeira in contemporary British texts. General Arthur Wallesley who later became the Duke of Wellington defeated the French under Major General Jean-Andoche Junot near the village of Vimereiro, near Lisbon in Portugal during the Peninsular War which ended the first French invasion of Portugal.

MOTTO Sicut clin = “Victory as Formerly”

A relic of the first Great War HMS Vimiera was built at the Swan Hunter yard in Tyne and Wear from October 1917 (Laid down) and was launched on the 22 June 1918. On completion on the 19 September 1918 it was sent into service with its motto “Sicut clin” (Victory as Formerly). An Admiralty V class destroyer it was 300ft (91.4m) o/a 312ft (95.1m) in length and 26ft 9in (8.2m) wide. It had a top speed of 34kt with a crew of 110 sailors.

During the First World War it was involved in conveying Leonid Krasin and Viktor Nogin to Reval for the first stage of negotiations in the Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement.

Between September and December 1939 H.M.S. Vimiera was converted into an Escort destroyer (WAIR) with anti-aircraft and Submarine capability. The Pennant Number for visual signalling was changed to L29 to conform with the identity used for the fleets convoy escort destroyers.

In January 1940 she became part of the “Nore Command” for coastal duties in the North Sea and English Channel.

On the 7 March 1940 H.M.S. Vimiera, H.M.S. H32 (H Class Submarine built in 1919) and H.M.S. Anthony took part in exorcises off Portland.

In the 10 April 1940 she was transferred to Dover Command supporting military operations in France including the Battle of Dunkirk to provide additional AA Defence as part of Operation FA.

On the 12 May 1940 H.M.S. Vimiera’s duties included the evacuation of troops from Flushing.

On the 16 May 1940, along with H.M.S. Wolsey the Vimiera gave supporting naval gunfire for military operations in Escault.

On the 19th May 1940, she rescued survivors from HMS Whitley. In the following days the Vimiera was involved with assisting other ships in Boulongne and Calais.

On the 22 May 1940 the Vimiera escorted ships taking two Guards Battalions to Boulogne. The Vimiera left from Dover with Mercantile ships Biarritz and the Queen of the Channel to cross the channel.

On the 23 May 1940 H.M.S. Vimiera assisted in the evacuation of troops from Boulogne having seen the Biarritz and the Queen of the Channel return to England.

On the 24 May 1940 the destroyers Vimiera, Wessex, Wolfhound (W-Class Destroyer Ordered 9 Dec 1916, Laid Down April 1917, Launched 14 Mar 1918, Commissioned 27 Apr 1918, Reclassified as an escort destroyer in May 1940, Sold for scrap 18 Feb 1948) and the Polish Navy destroyer ORP Burza (Wicher-class destroyer, Ordered 2 April 1926, Laid down 1 Nov 1927, Launched 16 Apr 1929, Commissioned 10 July 1932, Decommissioned 28 June 1960) were ordered to bombard the German Army forces in France as they advanced towards Calais. At 16.20 hours after opening fire on an enemy armoured column at Sangatte Hill, West of Callais, the ships received return fire from the German Artillery and at 16.30 hours 27 Junkers Ju87 Stuka dive bombers attacked the destroyers hitting H.M.S. Wessex with three bombs sinking the destroyer at 51°00’54”N / 001°45’50”E.

When the HMS Wessex (Ordered 9 Dec 1916, Laid Down 25 May 1917, Launched 12 March 1918, Completed 11 May 1918, Commissioned 11 May 1918) was sunk on the 24 May 1940. The Vimiera helped rescue survivors but also sustained damage from six near misses from the Junkers and was taken for repairs on the 25 May 1940. The Polish ship Burza then became the target of the bombardment and like the Vimiera sustained damage from shrapnel hitting and jamming her two 40mm anti-aircraft guns. Tree bombs then exploded in the water near the ship damaging her boilers which reduced her speed. Two bombs hits the water just by her bows forcing the ship to limp back to Dover stern first (Back) with the Vimiera. Of the 27 Junkers attacking the three ships only one was shot down by the three ships under attack.

On the 25 May 1940 H.M.S. Wolfhound (Adopted by Bridewater in Somerset 8-15 Nov 1941) took over bombarding German tanks on the approach to Calais and disembarked ammunition for the troops

and returned with Vice Admiral Somerville after he had told Brigadier Nicholson that Calais must be defended to the last.

On the 27 May 1940 H.M.S. Wolfhound landed a shore party of Captain William G. Tennant R.N. and a party of 12 Officers and 160 ratings alongside the North Mole at Dunkirk to co-ordinate the evacuation of the troops from the shoreline "between" the 27 May to the 4 June 1940. The ship lost her port screw after being grounded, while trying to get free. The Wolfhound then assisted with the evacuation taking 142 troops back to Dover being the first destroyer on the scene.

In June 1940 repairs had been made to H.M.S. Vimiera and it resumed its convoy defence duties this time in the North Sea.

Between August and September 1940 the Vimiera carried out anti-invasion patrols in the North Sea.

In October 1940, H.M.S. Vimiera resumed defence duties along the East Coast of England,

In November to December the Vimiera was again deployed in the North Sea.

Between January and December 1941 H.M.S. Vimiera was deployed in the North Sea to defend the East Coast Convoys.



Ships Crew at the Rosyth Dockyard in Scotland in 1941

On the 21 November 1941 after a refit H.M.S. Renown (Captain C.S. Daniel, CBE, DSO, RN) started trials off Rosyth in Scotland. After completing the trials she left to go to Scapa Flow escorted by H.M.S. Arrow (Commander A.M. McKillop RN), H.M.S. Wallace (Lt Cdr E.G. Heywood-Lonsdale, RN) and H.M.S. Vimiera (Lt Cdr A. A Mackenzie RNR) arriving on the 22 November 1941.

During November 1941 Britain held a Warship Week to help fund ships and the Cheshire town of Sandbach and the surrounding districts adopted H.M.S. Vimiera.

After being adopted by Sandbach in December 1941 the Vimiera under Lieutenant-Commander Angus Alexander Mackenzie, RNR was sunk in the Thames estuary when it hit a mine on the 9 January 1942 off East Spile Buoy at the Thames Estuary at 51°28'N, 00°55'E with the loss of 96 hands.

Lt Cdr Mackenzie was found not guilty of sinking Vimiera and was put in charge of H.M.S. Liddesdale.



OTHER SHIPS SUNK BY MINES IN THE THAMES ESTUARY

On the night of the 12 and 13 November 1939, a German U21 boat and the German Destroyers Z18 “Hans Ludermann”, Z19 “Hermann Kunne”, Z 20 “Karl Galster and Z21 “Wilhelm Heidkamp” managed to lay magnetic mines in the Thames Estuary on the east coast near Shoeburyness. At about 5am the mines damaged “H.M.S. Adventure” a mine laying cruiser under Captain A.R. Halfhide, RN. H.M.S. Basilisk under Commander M Richard, RN was escorting the Adventure and took on board the survivors with the Destroyer H.M.S. Blanche under Lt Cdr R.N. Aubrey, RN standing by. However as the force made its way towards safety at about 8.30am on the evening of the 12 November the B Class battle destroyer “H.M.S. Blanche” (51°29’N, 01°30’E) hit a mine in its stern killing two crew members and injuring 12 before sinking on the 13 November 1939. The tug “Fabia” sent to the destroyer’s assistance capsized and sank.

In November 1939 a total of 27 Ships of 121,000 tons were sunk by the German laid mines and for a time the Thames Estuary was virtually closed to shipping.

On the 19 January 1940 at 12.50pm the Destroyer H.M.S. Grenville (H03) operating out of Harwich with six other ships of the Flotilla was returning from contraband control off the Dutch Coast in calm waters when it hit a mine in the Thames Estuary at 51°39’N, 02°17’E with 118 men surviving but 77 officers and crew lost their lives.

On the 9 September 1940 the Cruiser “H.M.S. Galatea” was damaged by an Acoustic mine in the Thames Estuary. The Galatea, H.M.S. Campbell, H.M.S. Vesper and H.M.S. Garth left Sheerness and were sent to Calais to bombard the town with H.M.S. Aurora. H.M.S. Venetia, H.M.S. Hambleton and H.M.S. Holderness were sent to Boulogne to bombard the harbour area. Aircraft spotters looking over Calais didn’t spot any shipping and so the Galatea and her escorts were returned to harbour but as they came into the Thames estuary it hit a mine and sustained minor damage. As H.M.S. Galatea was due a refit it lay in Sheerness awaiting repairs to H.M.S. Arethusa at the Chatham Dockyard until the 17 October 1940.

On the 19 October 1940 H.M.S. Venetia (D53) under Lt Cdr Desmond Lisburn Cyrtis Craig, RN, hit a mine in the Thames Estuary at 51°33’N, 01°10’E just off Margate near the Knob Buoy.

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PLAQUE DONATED TO SANDBACH

The Plaque was given to Sandbach Urban District Council who in turn was absorbed into Congleton Borough Council which on the formation of Cheshire East was stripped of its assets and the plaque was handed back to Sandbach Town Council formed along with a new Congleton Borough Council to run local facilities on Cheshire East’s behalf and look after local interests.

SHIPS BELL

After the sinking of the ship the bell was salvaged and given to H.M.S. Graham in 1956 by its first wartime C.O. Captain R.B.N. Rodger Hicks DSO who had purchased at an auction. He donated it as a memorial to the men who had died when it sank.

The Bell was in 1993 removed after H.M.S. Graham was closed (Scottish Training facility from 1906 to 1993 located on the Whitefield Road, Glasgow) and has not been seen since.

It was also reported that in 1993 the bell was sold at auction by Defence Sales through Phillips Auctioneers but the buyer remains anonymous. On investigation by the V and W Destroyers Association asked Sandbach Town Council if they had the bell along with their plaque but it is not in their collection so the hunt continues.

In 2017 on the 75th anniversary of the sinking of the Vimiera the V and W Destroyers Association laid a wreath at the Clyde Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve War Memorial in Govan in memory of those 93 personnel who lost their lives on the ship. There were 127 men on board the ship when it sank of which 93 died that day with 38 surviving but 4 of these died in hospital from wounds leaving 34 survivors of the sinking.



Bell seen at HMS Graham 1957

NEWSPAPER REPORTS ABOUT THE ADOPTION
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H.M.S. VIMIERA ADOPTED BY SANDBACH, CHESHIRE

After their successful Warship Week from the 30 November to the 6 December 1941 raised £168,000 in National Savings for the construction of a new corvette. It was the custom on these occasions for the admiralty to present a replica of the crest of the ship mounted on a wooden shield to the town. When HMS Vimiera was lost, with most of the ships company a month after adoption, this was not only a disaster for the families of the men but presented the Admiralty and Sandbach with a major problem. The decision was taken to go ahead with the presentation.

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8 November 1941 Crewe Chronicle Page 6.

H.M.S. VIMIERA

Sandbach, Holmes Chapel, Goostrey and the adjacent parishes, co-operating wholeheartedly in Warship Week, November 29th to Dec 6th, are out to raise £120,000 for the purchase of a corvette named H.M.S. Vimiera. The Goostrey target is £10,000 and Holmes Chapel's £20,000. Insurance Companies and Banks have promised strong support. The Prudential Assurance Company, Ltd., will buy three per cent. Savings Bonds equal to the full amounts assured on which the first premiums are paid and completed between now and up to the end of Warships Week. The Company made £19,400 in purchases during War Weapons Week.

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22 November 1941 Crewe Chronicle Page 6.

WARSHIP WEEK PLANS

Arrangements are being completed for Sandbach Warship Week, Nov 29 – Dec 6th, during which it is expected that £120,000 to buy a corvette will be raised. Up to the present £10,000 has been promised by the British Soda Company and £5,000 from each of the five banks. The Sandbach and District Corvette is H.M.S. Vimiera, several of the crew of which were recently decorated for "Bravery, determination, and devotion to duty in rescue work".

On the opening day there will be a procession of local Defence Units and A.R.P. Units, a hundred men from H.M.S. Wellesley and a paratroop unit. Sir Francis Joseph will take the salute on The Commons and will declare the Warship Week open. Foden's Band will play in the Town Hall on the Sunday evening and on the previous Friday there will be a dance at the Town Hall, a whist drive on the following Tuesday, and a concert by the Red Carnations party on the Wednesday, when the prizes in the children's slogan competition will be presented. Other social functions are also being held. To mark Mr R. B. Hovey's year of office as Chairman of the Council, Zan Ltd., are to give their employees (and employees in the Forces) a certificate each and a half-crown stamp to each employee's child. An interesting exhibition of ships models, etc. will be staged in the upper room of the Literary Institution.

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29 November 1941 Crewe Chronicle Page 6.

WARSHIP WEEK TARGET OF £12,000

Sir Francis Joseph to take the salute

Sandbach and the surrounding parishes, including Holmes Chapel and Goostrey, set out on Saturday to achieve if possible, their Warship Week target of £120,000.

The additional effort coming as it does after the £230,000 War Weapons success, is ambitious to say the least but many people are optimistic that the whole district will respond well enough to reach the objective. At the time of writing Sandbach had raised £38,000 which had been raised several days before the opening of the campaign. With the £10,000 promised by Goostrey district and £20,000 by Holmes Chapel, Sandbach will be left with a balance of £52,000 to be raised.

The Entertainments Committee have a fairly full programme of social events in the Town Hall. At the Red Carnations concert on Wednesday, the children's slogan prizes will be distributed. The exhibition at the Literary Institution (see advertisement), open throughout the week; will be well worth a visit. On Saturday a procession will form at the Middlewich Road end of Park Lane, and Sir Francis Joseph will take the salute from the Commons Service and Civil Defence representatives will be present.

The Norwich Union Life Insurance Society have a scheme by which business transacted with them during next week will help to increase the Sandbach total and at the same time benefit their clients.

SLOGAN COMPETITION

The school children's slogan competition was judged on Tuesday and the awards were as follows: 1 three Certificates, H Simcock, Goostrey School (slogan "If you've money to spend you have money to lend"); 2. Two Certificates, Allan Abberley, Sandbach Senior Council School ("Buy new boat to sink U boat"); 3. One Certificate, T Clarke. Hassall Green ("Your money or your sailors lives").



29 November 1941 Crewe Chronicle Page 6.

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29 November 1941 Crewe Chronicle Page 6. (Part 2)

HOLMES CHAPEL

WARSHIP WEEK EVENTS -

There are to be no spectacular events similar to those held during War Weapons Week, but group collectors have canvassed every house in the district (which includes Cranage, Cotton and Byley). Having prepared the ground, they will pay another visit to the houses during the Week. A dance takes place at Saltersford School on Thursday and there will be a film show on Saturday. War Weapons Week produced £41,000. The target this time is £20,000 and the hon. Secretary (Mr C. F. Carroll) is hopeful that that sum will be reached. Mr Alfred Jackson is chairman of the organisation.

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29 November 1941 Crewe Chronicle Page 6. (Part 3)

GOOSTREY

WARSHIP WEEK –

The organisation has thoroughly prepared for the week's "offensive" which begins on Saturday, when there will be an official opening ceremony in the Village Hall by Lady Stockton. In the afternoon there will be a whist drive and football match, with a dance in the evening. A Ministry of Information film show has been arranged for Wednesday. The auction sale on Saturday promises to be a most exciting and interesting affair. Goostrey aims at £10,000.

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6 December 1941 Crewe Chronicle Page 6.

RAISING £120,000 TO BUY A CORVETTE

Warship week opened by Sir Francis Joseph

Sandbach and District Warship week, organised to raise £120,000 to buy the corvette, H.M.S. Vimiera, was opened on Saturday with a ceremonial parade better even than the big War Weapons Week parade. Most noticeable was the fine spirit and co-operation of the various Defence units.

Sir Francis Joseph, K.B.E., took the salute from the base on The Commons, where there was a large crowd. Mr J.H. Brocklehurst, parade marshal, moved the parade promptly from the assembly point in Middlewich Road, from where it went to the Fountain traffic island, along Bradwall Road, Offley Road, and Congleton Road to the Commons.

IMPRESSIVE SIGHT

Viewed from the saluting base, the procession was smart and impressive. After the Police and the specials came the bugle band of Crewe A.T.C. and the large contingent from H.M.S. Wellesley drew applause. A unit of the South Staffordshire Regiment with vehicles and light guns preceded an anti-aircraft battery, and there followed the Home Guard, of whom Sandbach might well have felt proud, the Royal Observer Corps, Crewe A.T.C., The Fire Brigade, Fire Guard, Wardens, Auxiliary Nursing detachment (Arclid Hospital), First Aid Post and First Aid Party, Ambulance Service (with women drivers and vehicles), members of the Council Report and Control Staff, the Decontamination Squad, Repair Squad, the Brownies and Girl Guides.

The W.V.S. displayed their motor wagon camouflage nets of their own make and advertised the need for salvage. Local Works, including Messrs, Fodens, Messrs J. H. Jennings, Ltd., and E. R. F., sent their fire fighters and appliances, while the Council sent several vehicles and the mobile canteen Foden's had an ingenious modern of H. M. S. Vimiera complete with guns, depth charges and a search light in action. Into its hull people threw coppers.

TWO TELEGRAMS

Mr R. B. Hovey read the following telegram from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Kingsley Wood: "Heartiest good wishes for the success of the Sandbach and District Warship Week. This Week gives us the welcome opportunity of showing our gratitude for the unceasing vigilance and matchless courage of the Royal Navy, and of aiding and arming our brave Forces everywhere in their battle for Freedom and Liberty."

A telegram from the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr A. V. Alexander, read "I send you my best wishes for the success of your Warship Week, for to the Admiralty the money you raise means ships, guns, torpedoes, mines, and aircraft, and we cannot have too many of these. The enemy threatens our command of the seas from a coast stretching from Narvic to Pyraenees, a considerable part of our Fleet having to remain in the Mediterranean to keep the Italian Navy in subjection and support our other Forces. We are all proud of the great work of the officers and men of the Royal Navy who have fought off the menace of the enemy. They deserve and must have as much of the finest equipment as we can give them. That is why I want every ship and every weapon I can get. We ask you to lend your money to the limit of your resources to build the road to victory."

Mr Hovey then gave a warm welcome to Sir Francis Joseph.

SYMBOLIC PARADE

Sir Francis said that that day's parade, representative of all the Services and of so many of the inhabitants of Sandbach and district, was a demonstration to both friend and foe of the unity of the nation and of our determination to continue the struggle until Nazism was destroyed and the peace of the world secured. It also showed that Brittons were determined to endure whatever might be necessary in the way of sacrifices to accomplish their set purpose.

He had often been asked why he was cheerful. He did not remember during this war having been more convinced of our final victory than he had that day. Sir Francis recalled what had taken place that week – a week of great events all in favour.

Sir Francis paid a warm tribute to the Navy and the Mercantile Marine. They on the Home Front had a simple duty to perform – to find the money and remember the sacrifices of the men of the Services. “Dare we do less than our best?” he asked. He believed the people of Sandbach would write a new page in the history of their town.

Lord Colum Crichton Stuart thanked Sir Francis and Mr Hovey. Sir Francis afterwards inspected the parade.

Tea was provided in the Town Hall, and Mr R. B. Hovey entertained many guests and workers at the Old Hall.

At the saluting base were Sir Francis and Lady Joseph, Sir John Barlow, Mr R. B. Hovey, Mr J. A. Palmer (Chairman of the Warship Week Committee), Lord Colum Crichton Stuart, M.P., Col Deney, Mr G. S. Sloane, Flight- Lieuts, Cooper and Wooldridge, Mr D. S. Woodward, Col. Williams, Mr A Jackson, Mrs T. C. Toler, Mr C. F. Carroll, Mrs Herbert Lea, Mrs E Yates, Mrs L. M. S. Simpson, Mrs J Colclough, Mrs Hopley, the Rev. Father Mulcahy, the Rev. C. E. Plummer, Canon H. H. Pitts, the Rev. W. J. Gardner, Mr P. W. G. Sanders, Mr A. M. Skeath, and Adjutant Fisher. Police arrangements were directed by Inspector Harris and Sergt. Woodcock.

THE EXHIBITION

Many people visited the exhibition at the Literary Institution. There was a variety of shells, and model aeroplanes made by Percy Hulse (Winsford). Mr Cyril Stubbs (Winsford) lent his triple expansion marine engine model, a stationary vertical steam engine, and a model locomotive not quite completed. Mr J. H. Booth, manager of the Winsford Gas Company, who gave valuable assistance, sent his three own constructed model ships of fine workmanship, The R.A.F. displayed technical equipment, a rubber dinghy, an open parachute, camera gun, landing light, bomb rack, a radio instrument, and a closed parachute, etc. Cammell Lairds sent their model of H.M.S. Cossack, and there were excellent model war vessels made by Mr W Taylor (Bolton) and Mr J Field (Withington), the latter also displayed three model aeroplanes.

Fourteen year old R A Skeath exhibited an ingenious model harbour, and Mr Norman Pickstock (Winsford) showed his model locomotive, which had taken three years to construct. A one-inch navel gun, a depth charge, and a gallery of photographs issued by the Ministry of Information were among the other exhibits. The Elementary schools sent well drawn posters with slogans which reflected great credit on the scholars and teachers who made them. A rota of willing ladies were on duty at the exhibition all week, and members of the Home Guard and others acted as stewards.

The floral decorations were by Mr H Vawdrey, horticulturalist at Saitersford School, Holmes Chapel.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Mr D. E. Taylor and his committee of workers carried out an interesting programme of events, which are expected to raise a large sum for charities and meet the general expenses of the Week. On Friday the Town Hall was crowded with dancers, Mr F Lea was M.C. and spot winners were Miss N Tobbin, Mrs Edwards, Miss Hovey, Mr R Knott, Mr Edwards and L.A.C. Murray. Certificates were won by Mrs Davies (Elworth), W Booth, W Boulton, H Slynn, Mrs E. D. Taylor and Mrs N Chitty.

The lucky ticket winner was Mrs Bowker. A cookery utensil given by Miss Frost was auctioned and made £6 15s.

Fodens' Band played to a crowded audience in the Town Hall on Sunday. The cost of the additional lighting was borne by Mr F Lea. Mr Turnock florist and Mr B Plant provided the plants. At the whist drive on Tuesday Mr H Davies was M.C., and the winners were Mrs H Bickerton, Miss Lowe, N Darlington, Mrs B Burgess, Mrs Bowler, Geo. Greenwood, H Burgess, F Hulme, Mrs Evans, Mrs Jackson, Mrs G Booth, Mrs Eaton, Mrs Capper, and Mrs Cragg. Refreshments were served by the W.V.S., and the prizes were provided by the Civil Defence, Mrs Taylor, Decontamination Squad and Mr Gibbons.

A miscellaneous concert was given on Wednesday by the celebrated Red Carnation Party from the Potteries. The dance on Friday is being organised by Conlowe employees, Mr D. E. Taylor is Chairman and secretary of the Entertainments Committee.

MONEY ALREADY RAISED

By the middle of the week £70,000 had been raised. Holmes Chapel made £10,000 and Goostrey reached their target of £10,000. At Betchton £300 was taken on Tuesday and at Swettenham £619. Arcid Institution Centre had by mid-week reached £400. Up to Monday Sandbach G.P.O. reported a total of £3,600 and on Saturday Holmes Chapel P.O. took £4,600. From business done by the Norwich Union £4,256 was raised, and the Prudential Insurance Co. in mid-week reported £3,000. Jennings, Ltd., invested £1,000 and gave certificates to their employees of the total value of £564.

Mrs Hulme, of 31 Welles Street, has sent in £4 10/- for the general fund, and she thinks her neighbours for contributing towards the competition parcel. The organisation of Warship Week was again in the

capable hands of Mr D. E. Woodward and Miss Abbiss joint hon. Secretaries. Mr J.A. Palmer was chairman of the committee.

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10 December 1941 Staffordshire Sentinel Page 3.

SANDBACH WARSHIP WEEK

Sandbach Warship Week proved an unqualified success.

The £12,000 target figure was exceeded, £160,000 being the final result. Towards this amount Goostrey raised £24,000, against their target of £10,000; while Holmes Chapel, aiming at £20,000, netted £21,631. Thus Sandbach and district have purchased H.M.S. Vimiera, a corvette. The average per head of population is £11.

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CREWE CHRONICLE Saturday 19 September 1942

H.M.S. VIMIERA ADOPTED BY SANDBACH, CHESHIRE

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CHRONICLE Saturday 19 September 1942

PRESENTATION OF VIMIERA PLAQUE

MARKET SQUARE SERVICE

Instead of the simple service which the Sandbach War Savings Committee had originally intended to hold in connection with the original presentation by the Admiralty of the plaque of the badge of H.M.S. Vimiera, a massed uniformed demonstration and service was arranged on Sunday. The service in the Market Square marked the solemnity of the occasion in view of the loss of H.M.S. Vimiera shortly after her adoption by the town and district. Many members of the crew lost their lives.

The marshalling of the Civil Defence and other units were directed by Mr J. H. Brocklehurst and on the platform were Captain E Elgood O.B.E., V.D., R.N.V.R., the Revs. R N. Potts, W.J. Gardner, J.R. Jones, Father Mulcahy, B Pemberton, Col. Deneys, Messrs. J.A. Palme, J Waddilove, T Platt, W Smith, A.M. Skeath, W.H. Cross, and D Woodward. A quartet of Foden's Band accompanied the hymns.

DISTRICTS ACHIEVEMENT

After the short service conducted by the Revs. R. N. Betts and W. J. Gardner, the Chairman of the local War Savings Committee (Mr J. A. Palmer) took over the proceedings.

He reminded the large crowd of December 1941, in raising £162,000 and the admiralty's allocation to the town and district of the Corvette, H.M.S. Vimiera. It was sad to think, said Mr Palmer, that within so short a time of reaching that magnificent total the ship was sunk by enemy action and that many of the gallant crew were lost. They were not there to congratulate themselves or to hand out bouquets to each other, but to pay homage to those men who gave their lives for their country.

When the plaque was hung in the Council Chamber those who looked upon it should think of the message. "All this did I do for thee, What hast thou done for me?" They were attending that service as an act of dedication, and he would ask them to think twice before spending and wasting and to remember that men were giving their lives, or going in danger of their lives, every hour of the day. They had a duty to these men whom they were honouring that day.

"GALLANT LITTLE SHIP"

Capt. Elgood spoke of H.M.S. Vimiera as "that gallant little ship". It had been employed on escort duty-an important yet monotonous duty. Without the escort ships Britain would not get her food or munitions. True, there was a certain amount of excitement and fighting, but most of the time on duty was monotonous in the extreme. Even in fine weather vigilance was demanded of them.

He suggested that they should look upon Warship Weeks more as an insurance. For hundreds of years the Royal Navy has been the best insurance policy the country had ever had. It was axiomatic that the greater the danger the higher the premium. While they had never allowed the policy to lapse he was afraid they became under-insured. The money raised by Warship Weeks had been put to a useful and vital purpose. It was customary in the Navy to carry on names of ships. There was a Vimiera in the Napoleonic war, and the Sandbach and district Vimiera was the second. In time another would be built and the badge would be similar.

On behalf of the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty he had great pleasure in presenting the plaque to the Chairman of the Council.

TOWN'S SYMPATHY

Mr J Waddilove said that occasion was marred because the ship and some of the crew were beneath the waves. The town had hoped that the ship would have had their special care. Their sincere sympathy was felt with the relatives and with the survivors who lost their shipmates. He hoped Capt. Elgood would convey to the survivors the town's appreciation of their services. The plaque would be the treasured possession of the residents of that district.

#####



In March 2022 the Vimiera Society (V and W Destroyer Association) contacted Fodens Band about the connection with raising funds for the "Sandbach Warship Week". Mark Wilkinson of Fodens Band passed on the E Mail from Bill Forster to Stewart Green a local Historian and in turn Mike Wellings at the Sandbach Town Council to see if they had any knowledge of the whereabouts of the bell from the ship which had been missing for many years. At this point the shield was dug out by Mike Wellings of the Town Council and a photograph (Above) was circulated to both Stewart Green and the Vimiera Society. In September 2022 Mike left the Council to pursue another career and the story of its ownership would have stayed in a cupboard had it not been for a new employee of the Council making a tour of the facilities of the Town Hall.

In 2022 the new caretaker at Sandbach Town Council Steve Hyland was looking through the cupboards at the boardroom and discovered the shield again. Steve then took it upon himself to restore the shield and add a plaque which was missing from the bottom portion of the shield. The plaque was made by Swift Services (Cobblers, Key Makers and Trophy Seller) at 5 High Town, Sandbach. At a Council Meeting on the 30 November 2022 Steve Hyland proposed to the Council that the plaque be installed in the entrance to the Town Hall with a small feature on the history of the ship and a list of those who died making it an official War Memorial. A ceremony was planned for the 9 January 2023 the 81st anniversary of the sinking of the ship in the Thames.

#####

HMS VIMIERA COMPANY WHO DIED AND THEIR BODIES LAY IN THE SHIP (87)

(Commemorated on the Naval Memorials at Chatham and Portsmouth)

- Albert W Aldridge (Engine Room Artificer)
- Andrew Anderson (Electrical Artificer)
- Frederick Ashby (Able Seaman)
- Albert R.W. Ashworth (Able Seaman)
- James W B Baker (Ordinary Seaman)
- Thomas G Bales (Stoker / Petty Officer)
- James Bass (Able Seaman)
- Herbert G Benjamin (Supply Petty Officer)
- Kenneth C Bird (Ordinary Seaman)
- Robert William Briggs B.E.M. (Able Seaman)
- Archibald Sinclair Brown (Able Seaman) RNVR
- Henry "Harry" Bernard Burch (Ordinary Seaman)
- Arthur A.W. Cannon (Chief Petty Officer)

John Carroll (Ordinary Seaman)
Thomas L Carruthers (Ordinary Coder)
David S Chalmers (Able Seaman)
Francis Clark (Able Seaman) RNVR
Robert G.H. Clark (Ty / Acting Petty Officer)
Leonard Curtis (Leading Seaman)
Henry G Dean D.S.M. (Chief Petty Officer)
James Dyball (Able Seaman) RNVR
Albert E.G. Dye (Stoker)
Frederick Edelston (Able Seaman) RNVR
William S Elliott (Able Seaman) RNVR
James Farrell (Able Seaman) RNVR
William H Fasey (Able Seaman)
Matthew E Fearon (Ordnance Artificer) RNVR
James N Fielding (Stoker)
William L Forbes (Ordinary Seaman)
Stephen H Fowler (Leading Telegraphist)
Edward W French (Canteen Manager with the NAAFI)
John D Gibbons (Signalman)
Malcolm G Hamilton (Ordinary Seaman)
Harry Hand (Ty / Act / Leading Stoker)
Reginald J Harris (Ty / Leading Cook)
Frank Hawes (Ordinary Seaman)
George William Hillson (Engine Room Artificer)
William H Hodgson (Engine Room Artificer)
James E Hurley (Able Seaman)
George V Hutchings (Signalman)
Alfred J Inglis (Ordinary Seaman)
William J Ingram (Stoker)
Eric L Ireland (Able Seaman)
James D.C. Johnston (Able Seaman) RNVR
William Kelly (Stoker)
Frank E Kemp (Able Seaman)
John T Kidson (Sick Berth Attendant)
John T Lee (Able Seaman)
Leonard Lemon (Ordinary Seaman)
William J Litlewood (Stoker)
Matthew Lord (Ordinary Seaman)
Francis McAnna (Act / Leading Signalman)
Andrew McCormack (Able Seaman) RNVR
Duncan A McDougall (Able Seaman) RNVR
William Miller (Able Seaman) RNVR
Earton F Mills (Able Seaman)
Charles J Milway (Able Seaman)
John H Moffatt (Able Seaman) RNVR
Ronald D. T. Morris (Stoker)
Francis V Moses (Ordinary Telegraphist)
Joseph Nugent (Able Seaman) RNVR
Arthur O'Connell (Telegraphist)
Ralph W.E. Ord (Ty / Act / Petty Officer)
Leslie W.H. Reading (Stoker)
James Ritchie (Ty / Act / Leading Seaman)
Samuel R Rowlandson (Able Seaman)
John H Ruchley (Able Seaman)
Henry A.G. Ruffell (Signalman)
Thomas D.C. Shields (Able Seaman) RNVR
Robert I Shipp DSM (Chief Petty Officer Stoker (Pens))
Frank Smith (Able Seaman)
Lewis E.J. Smith (Ty / Act / Leading Seaman)
John S Steven (Telegraphist)

Reginald E Stoner (Ty / Act / Petty Officer)
Thomas Swinton (Stoker)
Robert "Roy" M Thomas (Ordinary Seaman)
Harry H Tompson (Shipwright)
Owen E Thomson (Able Seaman) RNVR
John W Tomkin (Ty / Petty Officer Cook)
Gerald F Treen (Ordinary Seaman)
Norman A Tudor (Able Seaman)
Thomas Watkins (Able Seaman)
David Watson (Stoker)
Joseph A Waugh (Ordinary Seaman)
Stanley A Webster (Ordinary Seaman)
Sydney Whitney (Ty / Act /Leading Seaman)
Charles R Wilkinson (Stoker)
Archie W.G. Wilson (Leading Stoker)
Charles E Winsley (Stoker Petty Officer)

FOUR SAILORS DIED AFTER THE SINKING FROM THEIR WOUNDS OR BODIES FOUND

Able Seaman John Husband RNVR (Also known as Jack)
Able Seaman John Jamison RNVR (Died 10 Jan 1942)
Midshipman David Lacy RNR
Leading Seaman Frederick G Simpson

#####

CHESHIRE TOWN ADOPTIONS DURING WARSHIP WEEKS 1941-2

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CONGLETON ADOPTED H.M.S. WOOLSTON

A plaque was donated to Congleton in 1942 and was thought to have been lost but Congleton Museum has the item and regularly displays it at open days since 2006. When the ship was decommissioned it was customary for the ships plaque to be presented to the sponsor town and it was this one that is supposed to have been thrown in a skip at some point. In Christmas 1944 the Borough of Congleton sent a Christmas Message to the ships company which was kept in their archive. On the 16 December 2022, Frank Witton the last survivor of the battleship H.M.S. Woolston turned 100 years old.

Between the 28 February and the 7 March 1942 Congleton took part in the National Warship Week.

#####

BIDDULPH ADOPTED A MTB (Motor Torpedo Boat)

In 1942 Lt Colonel E.R.C. Ames MBE TD formally opened the Biddulph Warship Week at the Knypersley Cricket Ground after a parade down the main streets the public were treated to a military display at the club.

#####

HOYLAKE ADOPTED H.M.S. VERDUN (7-14 Mar 1942)

The town's objective was £210,000 as part of a Naval Link up week between the 7 and 14 March 1942. Air Vice Marshal J.M. Robb CB, DSO, DSC, AFC opened the week's events at a ceremony at the Hoylake Town Hall in the morning and in the afternoon he took the salute outside the Town Hall. The ship they adopted was H.M.S. Verdun which after the Great War brought home the Unknown Soldier who resides in Westminster Abbey.

#####

HYDE ADOPTED H.M.S. WRESTLER (6- 13 Dec 1941)

Hyde had a target of £150,000 for the Corvette (destroyer) H.M.S. Wrestler but by the 11 December 1941 the town had raised £140,000 and by the 19 December 1941 the total had increased to between £225,057 and £226,179.

#####

NORTHWICH ADOPTED H.M.S. WITCH (7- 14 Mar 1942)

H.M.S. Witch was supposed to have been adopted by Penzance but its Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Cecil Holmes RN pulled strings after taking command on the 4 May 1941 to see the ship adopted by Northwich where his family lived. His Danish born wife was pregnant at the time and on the 14 November 1941 gave birth to her son, Jasper Hamilton Holmes in Sandiway near Northwich. Residents of Penzance were given H.M.S. Foresight a F Class destroyer instead of H.M.S. Witch much to the annoyance of their citizens who had already raised £240,269 during their November 1941 especially after the Foresight was sink by HMS Tartar after it had been badly damaged by Italian

torpedo bombers in the Sicilian Narrows during Operation Pedestal which had been designed to relieve Malta.

H.M.S. survived the war and was finally broken up at Grafton on the River Forth in 1946.

Events included a dance on the Swimming Pool (Boarded up) at which the wife of Lt Cdr Cecil Holmes was a guest.

A Grand parade through the town.

The Crescent Players staged "Ambrose Applejohn's Adventures".

The shield was held by the Council until it was donated to the Northwich Sea Scouts (Formed in 1942).

#####

SALE ADOPTED H.M.S. WALKER (7- 14 Mar 1942)

The Town raised £25,000 during Warship Week.

#####

WILMSLOW ADOPTED H.M.S. WINCHELSEA

The admiralty put on a display at Green Hall the former home of William Paulden a landowner and draper. The building later became the home the Wilmslow Council which in 178 was destroyed by Fire and it is possible that the ships plaque was destroyed at this point.

7 Mar 1942 Grand All-Services Parade 3pm (Including the bands of the R.A.F. and W.A.A.F Band and appearances from the Home Guard, A.T.C.)

8 Mar 1942 Warship Week Concert at the "Rex Theatre"

12 Mar 1942 Bridge Drive (Organised by the Ladies Luncheon Club)

19 Mar 1942 Warship Week Dance at the Rex Ballroom (Organised by Councillor Mrs Evans)

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HOLLIES – Wesley Avenue.

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Built around the 1800's it was the home of John Stringer the builder of the Wesley Avenue Church who built the house for his family while he was supervising the Construction of the Chapel buildings (1872).

In the 1930's it became the home of a solicitors.

1938= Thomas, Jones, Alcock (Solicitors)

After 1938 = Poole, Alcock and Co (Solicitors)

#####

HOME GUARD.

#####

MEMBERS OF THE HOME GUARD

Frederick Robinson (.b. 1921 .D. 14 Feb 2021) – Lived at Fairfield Avenue, Sandbach.

Aged 14 Frederick worked at Jennings Motor Body Builders.

He served in the Home Guard until 1945.

In 1945 he married Kathleen Taylor.

Frederick went on to work for ERF making Fire Engines and then went on to teach at Congleton School in their Technical Department.

SON – Norman

GRANDCHILDREN – Clare, Heather and Harry

8 Grandchildren

SISTER Dor (Doreen?)

Geoffrey Wilkinson (101 years old in 2017)

SON – Barry Wilkinson

#####

HOUNDINGS LANE or HOWNINGS LANE (Coldmoss Heath).

#####

This was possibly laid out by the Saxon Tribe of Hundings who had a village situated on the high ground overlooking what is now a mill building.

The word "Hund" is the Saxon way of spelling "Hound" thus making Hundings into "Houndings".

At the bottom of the hill in Houndings lane and Mill Hill Lane is a Corn Mill which was worked by a water wheel.

#####

11 HOPE STREET

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The actual date for the construction of 11 Hope Street is not known by English Heritage but they have put a date of the Early 19th Century (1800-1850). It was possibly built for the Bigott family as Solicitors Offices as by them in the late 1800's.

The BIGOTT family are commemorated on the Town Hall with one of the two statues. One of them is named "Bigot", he was the first Norman who held the manor of Sandbach, under Hugh Lupus, the Earl of Chester and the nephew of William the Conqueror. By the late 1800's Lord Crewe held most of the lands but the BYGOTT family still owned the Smallwood area.

By 1890, Robert Bygott was running his Solicitors Office at 11 Hope Street as well as offices in Middlewich and Crewe. In 1895 Robert Bygott was the Clerk to the Magistrates and the following year in he is mentioned in Kelly's Directory (1896) as a member of Sandbach Town Council.

Kelly's Directory also mentions

Robert Bygott and Sons at 19 High Street, Crewe

Robert Bygott and Sons at Queen's Street, Middlewich

Robert Bygott and Sons at 11 Hope Street, Sandbach

The "Sons" were Robert Junior and James Bygott in the 1896 directory.

The firm were Solicitors, Commissioners for Oaths, Commissioner to take acknowledgements of Married Women, Clerk for Special Sessions of the Northwich Division, Clerk to Commissioner of Taxes, Clerk to the Joint Burial Committee and Sandbach School and Almhouse Foundation based in Hope Street.

Reference to Robert Bygott and Sons continued to 1976 and possibly later.

In 1938 Arthur Evans (Solicitors), were also in the building. They were in charge of Almshouses and Clark to Sandbach School.

By 1980 Ronald Parr Solicitors had taken over the building.

1997 to 2012 = CVS (Volunteers) (Freehold Sale 27 Oct 1997 £45,000)

By 2021 the value of the building was at £153,000 making it the fourth most expensive building in the Hope Street CW111BA address.

3 Mar 2012 = The Brightone Clinic

BYGOTT FAMILY Lived at Crossfields, Smallwood.

Robert Bygott (.b. 1835 in Barton Upon Humber, North Lincolnshire .D. 16 Mar 1905)

Married Anna Buckley (.b. 1839 in Congleton .D. 1897)

Son 1 = John Bygott (.b. ? .D. 7 Aug 1868)

Son 2 = Hugh Bygott (.b. ? .D. 1877)

Son 3 = Robert Junior

Son 4 = James Bygott

#####

HUNGERFORD CAFÉ and SHOPS

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They were designed by Thomas Bower of Nantwich and built by Mr John Stringer in 1892 next to the Town Hall. The Building was later the home of the Co-op and Price City.

The Building was also known as CONISTON HOUSE and was later split into various units.

6 HIGH STREET

This was built in 1892 and was until 1946 the Hungerford Café a family run enterprise for over 50 years providing grocery and confectionary.

A Picture at about this time shows the building with the words Sandbach Garage on it (Town Hall Corner Side)

1899 / 1902 = William Tompkinson was the proprietor of the shop and also owner of the Commercial Hotel in Wheelock.

Next to the café was a Chocolate (Cadburys) shop (1899).

1911 = Walter Henry Scragg (Grocer and Confectioner)

1914 = William Tompkinson (Temperance Hotel)

1902 / 1914 = Frederick Allman (Clothier)
1933 = Whittle and Cope (Café)
1938 = A.T. Davies (Café)
1948 = By 1948 it had become part of the Sandbach Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd based in Bold Street, Sandbach and was still under the name Hungerford Café.
1960's/after 1987 = Co Operative Building in 6 High Street only expanding into both later.
In 1976 6b High Town was occupied by the Ambassador Staff Agency. The shop also did duplicating, typing and other office services.

8 HIGH STREET

1900's = Lunt (Hardware Shop)
1911 = William Tomkinson (Aged 72 – Grocer and Confectioner)
1914 = Nathaniel Gould and Co Ltd (Grocers)
1930's = Liberal Club (In the Ground Floor after the closure of Gould's Store at 8 High Street)
1938 = F.J. Glover (Optician Wed and Thursday only) Moved to Wesley Avenue.
1938 = National United Order of Free Gardeners Friendly Society (George C Reynolds – Secretary)
Pre 1971 = Department of Health and Social Security (Job Centre)

6-8 HIGH STREET

Between 1971 and 1994 the shop was the “Co-op” and later renamed “Pricefighter”.
By 2000 with the closure of the supermarket it became PRICE CITY (Supermarket / DIY shop) and changed its name in July 2013 to “Handy Household”.

#####

#HI.

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#####

#HJ. C.M. JEFFERIES AND COMPANY LTD.

Manufacturers and printers of high class solid and corrugated fibreboard boxes and containers in the town.

#####

#HK.

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#HL. H.J. LEA AND SONS LTD.

In 1860 the building now occupied by H J Lea and Son was an Independent Chapel seating 200 people. It was later converted to become a Primitive Methodist Hall before again changing its use and being purchased by a new miller in the 1880's, H.J. Lea.
H J Lea were established in the 1880's as a Corn Merchants in Wheelock Mills producing animal feeds etc.
Today the company specialises in pet food etc.

#####

Dr Charles LATHAM

See July 1907 Dr CHARLES LATHAM died on the (6th or) 7 July 1907.
Born in 1816 the third son of Richard and Sarah Latham he was also the nephew of John Latham (1761 -1843).

#####

LEISURE CENTRE

It was officially opened on the 17 January 1976 and was a joint venture between the Congleton Borough Council and the Secondary Modern School.

While building took place it was discovered that one of the workmen knew how to play the bagpipes. I was at school at the time and I remember that he was persuaded to play them in school assembly. He was also heard to play the bagpipes during the daytime on the work site (See 1651).



(Leisure Centre 19 May 2004)

LEONARD CHESHIRE HOME (see The Hill)
#####

A Leonard Cheshire Home (Founded 1948) since 1964 the building was originally a house on the site which was converted to house people with physical disabilities.

On the 22 May 1948, RAF pilot Leonard Cheshire took in a dying man who had nowhere else to go, into his home and started to look after him. When news of the man's situation reached the community, various people helped Leonard by chipping in with help. In 1949, the Cheshire home of Le Court in Hampshire had 24 residents. By 1955 there were five homes and the first overseas project. By the 1960's there was a rapid expansion including Sandbach and by 1970 there were 50 services in the UK. In 2008 plans were submitted to build an extension to the building and renovate the original house. In January 2010, Viscount Ashbrook Cheshire's Vice Lord Lieutenant laid the foundation stone for a new 20 bed care home to compliment the 30 beds in the original building.

The building now houses 23 adults and to provides a number of services for them.

For many years the Leonard Cheshire Home held an annual Fate which was opened by a number of celebrities including Arthur Leslie (Jack Walker in Coronation Street) and Shane Fenton (Also known as Alvin Stardust).

LIBRARY
#####

Before 1899 R. A. Tomlinson's shop in the High Street housed the Sandbach Branch of "THE MODERN CIRCULATING LIBRARY" with the latest novels from the best authors as soon as they are published. Books could be borrowed at a cost of 2d for four or seven days according to the value of the book.

In 1897 the Marriott family donated land (Now the Park) and their house (Marriott House, now the library) to the town. It was described at the time as a "Technical School, Public Gardens and Pleasure Gardens" and had various uses between 1897 and 1926.

On the 29 March 1926 a Library in Marriott House was opened on Scotch Common. It was run by Cheshire County and the library was only open on Tuesday and Friday evenings. It was run by a dedicated staff of volunteers from 7pm to 8pm. On average the library held about 70 books available from a stock of some 500 for the county. In May 1932 the library unfortunately had to start charging a 1d fine for overdue books after 14 days. By 1933 the library had issued some 31,231 books.

There was also a Group Library in the 1930's at 14 Crewe Road, Sandbach.

There was also a Library at the Library Institution, High Town Reading Room, Library and Billiards Room. (Literary Institute).

By the 1950's Marriott House was used as a Public Health Office, County Library and School building. In 1966 the town guide gave the number of books in the Marriott House library at 10,000 with over 84,000 volumes being issued to readers annually.

1966 OPENING TIMES

Monday	Closed / 2pm to 8pm
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	10am to 12.30pm / 2.30pm to 5pm
Thursday	10am to 12.30pm / 2.00pm to 8pm
Friday	10am to 12.30pm / Closed
Saturday	10am to 12.30pm / 2.30pm to 5pm

In March 1968, after Marriott House has been demolished, works started on building a new library on the site.

On the 17 March 1970, the new library was opened on the Commons.

They are situated on the site of Marriott House (See Literary Institute /Marriott House).

On Tuesday the 7 November 1995 the Library took Custody of a Chair to be displayed in the Marriott Room. The chair was originally used by Masters of the Sandbach Bud of Hope Lodge, a section of the "National United Order of Free Gardener's Friendly Society" whose headquarters were based in the town. Founded in 1842 the chair was presented in 1893 as a memorial to Brother Noah Lees for 50 years of service to the organisation. In 1993 the chair was offered to the Sandbach History Society and was restored by Mr John Minshull and local wood craftsman Mr Reg Lewis. After many years in the Marriott room a member of the management of Cheshire County Council's Libries decided it was a Fire Risk and a new home was sort to house the chair. At this time it was offered to the Sandbach Town Council and can now be seen in the Literary Institute's Council Chamber.

During October 2011 Cheshire East Council who were now running the Library Service as a joint operation with Cheshire West, decided to move its information point from Westfields in Middlewich Road to the library where it will provide the same service for more people and easier access to the facilities of the Council as it is more central to the town. Library staff instead of Council staff will take on the role of manning the desk which provides new Council Claims, Disability Cards etc.

In November 2013 the final votes were cast after a consultation as to what the public would like the library to look like in the future and the results were put to the Council for final approval. It was these suggestions that were implemented in March 2015 when building work started on improving the 45 year old library.

On Wednesday the 5 November 2014a working model Foden Steamer was put on permanent display in the library after many years of discussions with both Sandbach Town Council and Cheshire East. Built by Dr Alan Braddock of Dobcross Nr Oldham it took him from 1983 to 1998 to build the replica, dates that are reflected in the registration number of the model, AB8398. Originally on show in his home it was decided by the family that it should have a more permanent place where it could be appreciated and when Sandbach Town Council was approached they were initially pleased to house it in what would have been the Tourist information office at the Town Hall. However as objections to the sighting of an information centre in the arches of the building by certain market traders meant that there was not to be a tourist centre in the town this display area was now not an option and the Cheshire East Council were approached to see if they could find space. A possible venue was Westfields but as this was being used less and less by the public it was suggested the Town's Library be approached and Rowena Gomersall was asked to find a space in the library for it and a prominent place for was set aside so it could be seen in the main entrance area.

David Braddock the son of the model maker, John Densem from Weston Nr Crewe and the man behind negotiations for it to come into the town, installed the engine in the library in time for a Foden Exhibition on the 8 November to launch a Foden Pack dedicated to the history of the Foden Works by Cheshire Archives who distributed the memory boxes to libraries and schools in the area.

There is one addition to the model that David has added himself and that is a reminder of the days when he was allowed to see the model at home. His father placed a toy mouse on the engine for them to find and if you look carefully there is one there in the display.

12 February 2015 a new computer system was installed in the library for staff to administer the lending of books and to compliment the Self Service facility within the building.

OPENING HOURS 2015

Monday	9am to 7pm
Tuesday	9am to 5pm
Wednesday	9am to 7pm
Thursday	9am to 1pm
Friday	9am to 5pm
Saturday	9.30am to 1pm

Sunday Closed

During the Coronavirus Pandemic between 2020-21 the Library was closed to the public. Some time into the pandemic Cheshire East (Cheshire County Council) started a pickup service where people could collect a number of books chosen by the library staff to allow readers to have access to the facilities without entering the library and putting the lives of the staff at risk.

#####

USERS OF THE LIBRARY

- Sandbach U3A
- Credit Union
- Macmillan Cancer Support

NOTABLE VISITORS / SPEAKERS

- 20 May 2014 Robert Williams (Author)
- 13 Oct 2014 Roman Ring on Display from Sandbach on loan by Congleton Museum.



(Library 19 May 2004)

#####

LITERARY INSTITUTE, Hightown.

#####

Built in 1857 by Samuel Faram of Wheelock and Rode, to the design of Sir George Gilbert Scott, R.A. of London, at a cost of £2,700 (£2,100 being donated by the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood). Sir George Gilbert Scott also designed the restoration of the Parish Church of St Mary's. He also built The Almshouses, Sandbach School and St John's Church in Sandbach Heath. The building used local materials including Bricks from Staffordshire Blue Bricks and Staffordshire tiles, while the carved stone detailing comes from stone the Mow Cop Ridge Carboniferous Grit. It was built to provide affordable accommodation to inhabitants of the town and to provide a place for a Market and Corn exchange. Part of the building also housed the Literary and Scientific institute, a reading room and library.

The building has also been used as a Magistrates court (Upstairs) with the upstairs being opened as a Ballroom and Dance hall.

Before the Institute building was constructed the Literary and Scientific Society met at the house of a Grammar School master Mr Christopher Herring in "Mountford House" Crewe Road. This building was later occupied by Dr Jack and Mr Alfred Stringer, a solicitor.

It is claimed that Ramsey Macdonald (.b. 15 Oct 1866 .D. 9 Nov 1937, 1st Labour Prime Minister in 1924 the in the 1929-31 Government and 1931-35 Coalition) spoke in this building during a Parliamentary Bye-Election.

On Monday 19 September 1892 a new fountain in the middle of the town of Sandbach was handed over officially to Lord Crewe. The fountain is positioned in the middle of the roundabout by the Literary institute for the use of animals who attended the institute as part of the Markets held there and visitors horses etc.

It was in 1857 that the Literary Institute came into operation and along with the usual cattle sales and meetings the building was used as a court house with the chamber upstairs with Petty Sessions and Special Police Courts held in the building situated next to the new police station in Bold Street.

In 1896 and possibly before there was a solicitor at 11 Hope Street, Sandbach called Robert Bygott and Sons who also had an office in Crewe and Middlewich. It was at this time that Robert was also the "Clerk to the Magistrates" when they met in Sandbach and Middlewich for their Petty Sessions. The firm continued at Hope Street until about 1980 when Robert Parr Solicitors took over the building.

In 1902 (Kelly Directory of that year) it was the County Court with Henry Latham the Congleton registrar and high bailiff in charge.

In 1914 the Literary and Scientific Institution had Alfred E Stringer - Chairman, Arthur E Slade – Treasurer and Matthew H Eardley – Secretary.

The 1916, Sandbach Petty Sessions were held before Mr E Hartban (In the Chair), Messrs J.F.T. Rowds, William Foden Mr J. T. Dunson and Mr S Hollinshead.

The 1917, Sandbach Petty Sessions were held before Messrs J.F.T. Rowds (In the Chair), William Foden and W.M. Cross.

By the 1960's the Institute had a first floor Snooker Table which was removed when the Sandbach Town Council needed the rooms for an office and Council Chamber.

The Sandbach Partnership in 2004 helped to get the building renovated with the help of Architect John Carter a local man who in his youth attended dances at the building.

In 2005 the Sandbach Town Council rented rooms at the Institute in which they conducted meetings and held their archive and offices. This was a six year lease which by 2010 cost them £7,120 a year in rent.



(April 2004)



Opening ceremony 1857.

(The following was re-enacted on the 27 March 2004 during an open day at the building)

SIR GEORGE GILBERT SCOTT

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Literary and Scientific Society. This is a very fine day in the history of Sandbach and it is with great pride that I George Gilbert Scott of London, stand before you in 1857 to help unveil this most magnificent public facility the Sandbach Literary Institution.

As an Architect it is enormously gratifying to see my plans being realised by Mr Samuel Faram, builder but most of all I wish to pay warm tribute to you the inhabitants of this great town and neighbourhood for your great vision and inspiration in commissioning a building of quality to afford not only new premises for the literary and scientific society but a facility to act as a suitable place as a market and corn exchange for the numerous millers and farmers, who I understand are in the habit of attending here. I am sure that you have no doubt taken a wise and judicious step towards raising this town to that position in the commercial world, which its thriving importance and spirited enterprise so eminently entitle it to attain. I know hand you over to Mr Faram the builder who will now say a few words. (APPLAUSE)

MR SAMUEL FARAM

On behalf of the farmers, millers and towns people of Sandbach I wish to thank you Mr George Gilbert Scott for designing a building of such fine quality, the slender proportions afforded by the early English gothic style are particularly appropriate for such an important municipal building and I will I am sure form a distinctive local landmark that will grace this town for centuries to come. I am sure that everyone will agree with me that the internal arrangements are the most handsome and tasteful kind the upper room being brilliantly lighted by three gas sunlight's and the staircase and lower rooms by gas chandeliers and bronze lamps. In addition to the corn exchange the portion of the lower rooms of the building are appropriated to the purpose of a reading room and library and on the first floor you will find a very handsome room intended for the holding of public meetings, concerts, balls and

lectures, however it must not be forgotten that the accomplishment of this great building could not have been achieved without you the inhabitants. For it is not only through your great vision but your most liberal contributions amounting to £2,100 that the building cost of £2,700 have been afforded. I therefore beseech you to make full use of the books, newspapers, magazines and maps which fill the reading rooms. And before I declare this building open Mrs Vale implores me to point out that tea and coffee can be obtained on the most moderate terms, in which case without further adieux I declare this building open. (APPLAUSE)

EVENTS AT THE LITERARY Institute.

CREMONA MUSIC UNION

The above was a show with various musicians. Mr Henry Taylor (Owner of the Lyceum, Crewe) said that the show was the same people who performed in-front of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales with the Duke of Sutherland and a Party of dignitaries at Trentham.

Date **Venue**
 11 Dec 1885 SANDBACH LITERARY INSTITUTE
 Under the Patronage of Mr George W. Latham Esq. M.P. (of Bradwall Hall)

CURRENT EVENTS

Tae Quando, Brass Band Rehearsals



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LITTLE MORETON HALL

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1216

Lettice de Moreton married Sir Gram de Lostock in 1216 who inherited land in Cheshire. The Lostock family adopted the name de Moreton from this date.

1271

The name “Little Moreton Hall” appeared in the historical record.

13th Century

The De Moreton family had estates in Moreton cum Rode.

13th or 14th Century –

The Moat was dug during this period probably for a previous house on the site of Little Moreton Hall we know today.

1348

The BLACK DEATH. During this time the de Moreton family acquired a lot of land in Cheshire at a cheap rate due to the epidemic.

1400’s

The East Range and the Great Hall of the building were constructed.

1504-08

Parts of the building were constructed for the Cheshire Landowner William Moreton (.D. 1526).

1508

The East wing was extended to the south to provide extra living quarters. It also included a Withdrawing Room and a Chapel was added to the building in the south wing which was crowned with a long full length gallery. The gallery was used as a games room as four early 17th Century tennis balls were discovered behind the wood panelling.

1514

A Feud between William Moreton and his neighbour Thomas Rode about who should sit higher in the church and foremost go in procession was settled by arbitration.

1546

Sir William Moreton (.b. c1510 .D. 1561) (Son of William Moreton) replaced the original west wing with a new range housing service rooms on the ground floor as well as a porch, Gallery and three interconnected rooms on the first floor.

1559

William Moreton extended the Hall. He sub divided the great hall by inserting a midway floor. He also transformed the sleeping quarters in the east side of the building and added two large bay windows in the courtyard to light up the smaller great hall. Carpenter Richard Dale set the date of 1559 on the bay windows.

1560-62

John Moreton (.b. 1541 .D. 1598) son of Sir William de Moreton II added a south wing. The extension includes a gatehouse and a third story containing a 68foot (21 Meter) long gallery.

1580

The South Range was completed by John Moreton (still alive in 1580 although his date of death is unrecorded)

1610

A small kitchen and brew house block were added to the south wing.

1643

The Moreton family were supporters of the “Royalist” cause during the English Civil war (1642 to 1651) and in 1643 the house was requisitioned by the Parliamentarians to billet soldiers.

Although the family successfully petitioned for its restitution and survived the Civil War with the ownership of Little Moreton Hall intact they were financially crippled.

It was at this point that the family tried to sell the entire estate but as others were also in the same position the family only managed to sell off a few parcels of land.

1654

By the time William Moreton died (1654) the family had debts of £3,000 to £4,000 forcing the family to re-mortgage the estate.

1654

William Moreton’s children Ann, Jane and Philip divided the house into three separate living areas. Anne lived in the Prayer Room and used the Exhibition Room as a Kitchen.

1661

The Rev, Thomas Brook was dismissed from St Peter’s Church in Congleton for preaching sermons critical of the Established Church. Until his death three years later in 1664 he continued to preach his beliefs in the chapel at Little Moreton hall’s private chapel.

1670’s

The Moreton family had moved out of Little Moreton Hall due to its debts and rented out the building and land to tenant farmers.

1754

The Ruined Tower and great arch were built by Randle Wilbraham to be an eye catcher from the nearby Rode hall.

1800’s

The hall became a farmhouse with the parlour and “Secret Room” being used for livestock.

1807-8

Cotman drew the great hall for the publication “Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain”.

1841

The Dale family took over the tenancy of Little Moreton Hall to farm the land and stayed in residence for more than 100 years until 1945 as farmers and until 1955 as caretakers for the National Trust.

1847

The house was unoccupied and the deconsecrated Chapel was used as a coal cellar and storeroom. The house itself was boarded up and the roof became rotten during this time.

1880

Amelia Edwards used the house as a setting for her novel “Lord Brackenbury” (Pub 1880).

1892

Frances Annabella Moreton died leaving her sister Elizabeth (An Anglican Nun) to try and save the building and was possibly responsible for the brick buttresses that stopped the frame from collapsing. Elizabeth also restored the chapel.

VICTORIAN ERA

The Black and White look to Elizabethan buildings was the fashion of the Victorian era as originally the oak beams would be left untreated to age naturally to a silver colour with the rendered infill painted an ochre colour instead of the white we know today.

1800's

An investigation into the house in the 1800's revealed two secret rooms above the kitchen, connecting them to a tunnel leading to the moat.

1912

Bishop Charles Abraham (Bishop of Derby) a cousin of Elizabeth's inherited the building and inserted iron tie rods into the buildings long gallery to stabilise that part of the building.

His inheritance also had a clause that the house should never be sold.

It was at this time that Charles Abraham opened up the building to visitors for the first time.

An entrance fee of 6d was charged and the Dale family would collect the money and give guided tours of the building.

1912

The Bishop also installed a stain-glass window in the chapel.

1912

The black and white motifs were painted over.

1937

Bishop Abraham and his son Mr Robert Abraham offered the Hall to the National Trust.

The understanding was that the trust pays for a house for the resident farmer and pay for repairs incurred by the Bishop and his son during their ownership.

1937

The National Trust launched a fund for the building and £1,000 to complete work needed on the building.

1938

The Building was handed over to the National Trust.

1945

The Dale family stopped farming the land but stayed on until 1955 as caretakers for the trust.

1962

Mr Lees-Milne produced a guide to the hall which was used as the basis of many of the histories used in brochures.

1976

Wooden panelling in the parlour which was a Georgian addition was taken out to reveal painted panelling, painted with imitations of marble and inlay with bible scenes some of which were painted directly onto the plasterwork. The crude pictures tell the story of Susanna and the Elders from Apocrypha a favourite Protestant theme. .

The pictures were probably painted before 1598 as the Moreton family crest (A Wolf's Head Crest) and the initials "J.M." also feature in the paintings.

1977

Stone slabs on the roof of the south range became insecure and work began on a six phase programme of repairs to the structure which was finally finished in 1992.

THE GROUNDS

The grounds of the estate includes a Cornmill, Orchards, Gardens and an Iron Bloomery (Type of Furness for smelting Iron) with water powered hammers.

The "Knot Garden" was abandoned for many years until they were reconstructed to a pattern published in the "Complete English Gardener" by Leonard Meager published in 1672. They were restored in the 1980's.

GHOSTS

Grey Lady in the Long Gallery

A Child is heard sobbing in the Chapel.

Also during restoration work a number of shoes from the 1800's were discovered hidden in the building. Superstition from this time was they were placed there to ward off Demons, Ghosts or Witches or maybe to encourage fertility of the female occupants of the house.

FILM AND TV WORK

1986 Lady Jane (Film) starring Helena Bonham Carter, Patrick Stewart and Jane Lapotaire.
(directed by Trevor Nunn) (released 7 Feb 1986)

1996 Moll Flanders (Granada TV adaptation of the book by Daniel Defoe)

- 2002 Building Britain presented by Fred Dibnah
- 2007 How we built Britain presented by Jonathan Dimbleby (or David Dimbleby)

THE FAMILY LINE

(Moreton from the old English “Mor” meaning Marshland and “Tune” meaning farm – “A Farm at a Marsh”)

START

Sir Gralam de Lostock married Lettice de Moreton in 1216.

Gralam de Moreton (Grandson of Gralam de Lostock). Married Alice de Lymme and then Margery de Kingsley.

John de Moreton (Also a grandson of Gralam de Lostock). Married Margaret de Macclesfield in 1329.

Geoffrey de Lostock

William Moreton (.D. 1526)

Sir William Moreton II (.b. c1510 .D. 1561) (Son of William Moreton)

John Moreton (.b. 1541 .D. 1598)

William Moreton III (.D. 1654)

Ann, Jane and Philip Moreton took over the house in 1654.

Reverend Richard Taylor (Nephew who adopted the Moreton name) (Took over in 1763)

Reverend William Moreton (Son of Richard Moreton – above)

Frances Annabella Moreton (.D. 1892) and Elizabeth Moreton (Daughters of above took over the line)

Bishop Abraham (A cousin of Elizabeth’s Took over in 1912)

By the mid 16th Century the family owned 16 messuages (A term in convayancing for a House and Gardens), a mill and 700 acres (280ha) of land. The Dissolution of the Monasteries allowed the family to purchase more land.

By the early years of Elizabeth 1st, William Moreton II owned 2 water mills and 1,360 acres (550ha) of land.

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LOWER CHEQUER INN

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The Inn claims that this is the oldest building in Sandbach dating back to 1570 (The same year as 10 Well Bank, Sandbach – also Grade 2)

The Chequer board comes from the story that uneducated people used this board to count their money (I can only assume that the normal board of 8 squares by 8 squares was not used as a 10 Square board would make counting easier, however as it was used to count money by lenders they may have gained an extra 2 coins by using the standard board). It was thought that many of the early landlords were moneylenders as well as publicans.

The mounting block outside dates back to the times of horses and carriages and was used to mount the and alight from your chosen form of transport.

The house next door dates from about the same period.



(April 2004)



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#HM. MALT KILN – Bradwall Road

Situated on Bradwall Road, Malt Kiln was the place in Sandbach where Oats were roasted for the making of ale.

In 1816 Malt Kiln in Bradwall Road and the Market Square were laid with Cobbles (Cobble Stones) for the first time.

In the 1900's all the land from Offley Road, up Congleton Road, around Green Street and back to Bradwall Road, belonged to Malt Kiln Farm.

There is a well in the yard and owner Mr Jones said that there was a passage in one of his cellars which by 1981 was full of water.

Sandbach MARKET History



© Stewart Green 2017 (2021 update).

There has been a Market in the town since it was granted a Royal Charter in 1579 by Queen Elizabeth 1st.

A charter granted by Queen Elizabeth 1st to the town a market in 1578 on application by Sir John Radcliffe, of Ordsell, in Lancashire. It would come into force in 1579.

On the 4th May 1579 Sir John Radcliffe of Ordsall (In Lancashire) applied to hold "Fairs and Markets" in Sandbach from Queen Elizabeth 1st. The charter was granted and so the market would be held on Thursday with two fairs each year being held.

The Market Charter allows for Two Fairs to be held on the Thursday and Friday before the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary (8 September) with the other Fair of the 1579 Charter to held on the Tuesday and Wednesday in Easter week.

In 1816 the Market Square was laid with Cobbles (Cobble Stones) for the first time.

In 1879 the market moved from the Market Square to the Common when the Rt. Hon. Hungerford, Lord Crewe gave the land to the town along with the perpetual rights to all market tolls. He also gave the site for the Town Hall at the same time.

On the 15 March 1882, Annie Hill was sentenced to 3 months hard labour after being convicted of Pick Pocketing at Sandbach Market.

However pictures from 1888 show that the market had moved back to the Market Square and in 1890 the new Town Hall and Market Hall were opened in the centre of the town.

In 1889, the Rt Hon. Hungerford, Lord Crewe of Crewe Hall donated the land for the new building of a Town Hall and Market Hall, along with the right to all Market tolls.

The foundation stone was laid on the 2 July 1889 and was designed by the architect Thomas Bower of Nantwich who was in charge of overseeing the project and who used locally built bricks made at the Ancient Britain yard in Congleton Road with construction of the building by John Stringer.

(Some books say that Sir George Gilbert Scott designed building but it is more likely that he was the architect of the 1888 -1891 building -2nd Town Hall)

The cost of the Market Hall and Town Hall was £5,000.

Mrs Jane Court of Wheelock House presented the Main Clock, with Gas illuminations in memory of her relatives the Peover family who owned the house that had been below the tower.

When the hall was completed Lord Crewe erected at his own expense the two statues either side of the main entrance (Above the doors). One is named "Bigot", he was the first Norman who held the manor of Sandbach, under Hugh Lupus, the Earl of Chester and the nephew of William the Conqueror.

The Second statue is that of Sir Randolph Crewe, Sergeant-at-law, an ancestor of Lord Crewe who lived in the reign of King James 1 (Accession 1603 - 1625). He bought the manor of Sandbach from John Radcliffe and became Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench. He built Crewe Hall about 1620.

In October 1890 the Town Hall and Market Hall was officially opened.



Pre 1879



Pre 1879 Market Square Market

By 1890, in the book “History of Sandbach Co. Chester” by J.P. Earwaker” (Only 250 copies printed with 100 to be given away as Presentation copies) the fairs were held on the Tuesday of Easter Week and the first Thursday after the 12 September and on the 28th of December each year.

Both of these dates have long since been abandoned with the Wakes week being held on the first Thursday after the 12th of September. This date has again largely had been replaced with a fair on the Friday to Wednesday of a week in September and by the 21st Century had been moved again to a Friday to the following Tuesday in Wakes Week (September).

The traditional market at this time continued from 1578 with one being held every Thursday on the Market Square (Where the Saxon Crosses now stand).

On the 1st of December 1890 under the “Seal of the Sandbach Local Board of Health” a list of Tolls was published and still hangs at the back entrance to the Market Hall.

SANDBACH MARKET

TABLE OF TOLLS LEVIABLE

IN THE MARKET BELONGING TO THE SANDBACH LOCAL BOARD, ACTING AS THE URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.

POULTRY AND PIGS

For any number of fowles or pigs brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a basket not exceeding 17 inches in length and 14 inches in width, the sum of 1d.

For any number of fowles or pigs brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a basket or hamper not exceeding 2 feet 6 inches in length and 2 feet in width, the sum of 2d.

For any number of fowles or pigs brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a basket or hamper exceeding 2 feet 6 inches in length and 2 feet in width, the sum of 3d.

For every turkey, goose, or pig brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale otherwise than in a basket, hamper, or other similar receptacle the sum of 1d.

For every fowl brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale otherwise than in a basket, hamper, or other similar receptacle the sum of ½d.

EGGS AND BUTTER

For any quantity of butter or for any number of eggs brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a basket not exceeding 17 inches in length and 14 inches in width, the sum of 1d.

For any quantity of butter or for any number of eggs brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a basket not exceeding 2 feet 6 inches in length and 2 feet in width, the sum of 2d.

For any quantity of butter or for any number of eggs brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a box exceeding 2 feet and not exceeding 3 feet in length, the sum of 4d.

For any quantity of butter or for any number of eggs brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a box exceeding 4 feet and not exceeding 5 feet in length, the sum of 6d.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

For any quantity of fruit or vegetables brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a basket, bag, hamper, pannier, cask or box not exceeding 17 inches in length and 14 inches in width, the sum of 1d.

For any quantity of vegetables, fruit, or agricultural produce brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a cart drawn by two horses, the sum of 9d.

For any quantity of vegetables, fruit, or agricultural produce brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a cart drawn by one horse, the sum of 6d.

For any quantity of vegetables, fruit, or agricultural produce brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a cart drawn by one ass or mule, the sum of 4d.

For any quantity of vegetables, fruit, or agricultural produce brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a cart drawn by two asses or mules, the sum of 6d.

For any quantity of vegetables, fruit, or agricultural produce brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, in a waggon, the sum of 1s.

For every score of live turkeys or geese brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, the sum of 6d.

For every score of live ducks brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, the sum of 3d.

For every calf, sheep, lamb or goat brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, the sum of $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

For every gig, carriage, cart, or other vehicle brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, the sum of 6d.

For every horse, mare, gelding, colt, or filly brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, the sum of 4d.

For every cow, bull, ox, or heifer brought into the market or sale or exposure for sale, the sum of 2d.

For every ass or mule brought into the market for sale or exposure for sale, the sum of 1d.

(d= Pence / s = Shilling)



1890 Prices

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1899 Picture

By 1893, Sandbach has a Waggonette coming into the town on a Thursday at 1pm and returning from the Wheat sheaf at 5.30pm especially for people to visit the Market.

In 1902 the Town and Market Hall was looked after by John Wood (Keeper) and by 1914 Jessie Wood was "Hallkeeper".

In 1908, at the Petty Sessions in Sandbach on the 29 July 1908 Sarah Basford of Goostry was fined 2 shillings (2/-) for cruelty to fowls after six were discovered in a confined small basket with their legs tied together when they were taken to Sandbach Market.

In recent times by 1914 (*Kelly's directory*) a Saturday Market has been added to the inside of the Town Hall along with stalls for Thursday (Not in the original Charter).



© Sandbach History Society 1924 Picture

In the local newspaper of the 15 June 1916 they announced that the price of potatoes had raised from 10/- per cwt to 12/- per cwt. But by the 6 July 1916, the price had increased so high that the paper reported that there was a big drop in the price to 20/- per cwt.

At this time the market was on the Market Square by the Saxon Crosses where it stayed until 1920 when it moved to Scotch Common with a wholesale market replacing it on the Market Square. The Tamworth Herald announced in its 14 October 1922 edition that Lord Crewe had donated the historic lands in Sandbach to the town including Scotch Common and the Market Tolls which was worth about £1,000 a year. He had owned the land around Scotch Common and Tolls for the outside Market had been paid to Lord Crewe. In 1889, the Rt Hon. Hungerford, Lord Crewe of Crewe Hall had donated the land for the new Town Hall and Market Hall with the tolls from the hall being paid to the town but now the rights to the outdoor market were also given to the town. Between the 4-7 September 1917, Lord Crewe sold off most of his land and buildings in Sandbach to pay off debts and is a possible reason for his generosity to not pay as much tax on his earnings.

In 1955 the Wholesale Market finished on the Market Square leaving only the general market on Scotch Common.

When Cyril Massey wrote his book "History of Sandbach and District" in 1958 he describes the market thus – "The Market proved a great success and hundreds of people attended from the Potteries, Crewe and the surrounding countryside. The Market was formally held on the Market Square, where the Crosses stand, but today there are the Market Hall, Market Ground and Scotch Common. The Market Square is the scene of the wholesale market of farm produce".

By the 1960's the Market had grown to cover the whole area including the smaller car park. When the Borough of Congleton produced a booklet in the late 1970's the market was shown to be back to being a single market on a Thursday.

This was also a time when Casual Traders would wait by the Bus Shelters to see if any of the regular traders failed to turn up at which point a first come first served system came into operation with allocating a stall for that week.

On the 11 August 1977, the BBC filmed a feature on Sandbach Market.

The Market also celebrated the Queen's Silver Jubilee with a special Market with stall holders dressing up for the occasion with a snake charmer, female American Indian fire eater and other entertainment. With the 400th anniversary of the original charter for the market the traders under the Town Council's initiative held a Tudor Market on the 3 to the 5 May 1979. This soon became an annual event with traders dressing up in Tudor or Elizabethan costumes and events were staged with entertainers joining in the spirit of the event. BBC Radio Stoke and Signal Radio broadcast at various times from the Market with presenters also joining in with costumes.

In 1984, the Elizabethan Market also included a selection of Morris Dancers who danced on the market square and paraded through the high street.

On the 6 May 1985, the renamed "Elizabethan Market" was the subject of a Children's Saturday Morning programme called the "Saturday Picture Show" with presenters Maggie Philbin and Mark Curry (Later Blue Peter Presenter) filming features with local traders, artists and even a snake. The 1986 Elizabethan Market also included the appearance of a real brown bear, a magician and the Morris dancers who were by now performing in the new Penda Way Precinct behind the Crown Public House. The area by the Masonic Hall was also made available for a Kiddies Bike Ride area with small motorbikes.

Times were changing and so were the traders who felt reluctant to join in the spirit of the Elizabethan Market with token items on their stalls relating to the events and as for the costumes they became less and less visible until only one trader dressed up for a Thursday Market and by lunchtime he had changed back into his normal clothes.

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In 1984, a list of Stall Holders was published in a promotion leaflet for Sandbach and shows some of the stalls that attended the town's Market at this time.

OUTSIDE TOWN HALL

Marion Mitchell (Green Grocer / Fruit and Veg)

INSIDE TOWN HALL

B Bate (1984) (Readymade and Crushed Velvet Curtains)
 Mrs T Strickland (1984) (British and Oriental Crafts and Clothes)
 R and M Legg (1984) (Salad, flowers and pot plants)
 The Banner Stall (Men's Shirts, Children's wear)
 The Card Stall (1984) (Cards for all occasions, Jewellery and Key Cutting)
 Joans Printing (1984) (Individual Printed T Shirts)
 Josies (1984) the MARKET HALL CAFÉ (Hot and Cold Meals)
 Leese Bros (1984) (Top Quality Butcher)
 D and H Lainton (1984) (Cheese and Dairy requirements)
 The Candy Stall (1984) (Sweets and Novelty Chocolates)
 W Richardson (1984) (Lobster, Crab, Prawns and all fresh fish)
 R F and V Walker (1984) (Quality meats and bacon)
 G B Pet Care (1984) (Pet goods and food)

OUTSIDE MARKET STALLS

Mr and Mrs A T Capey (1984) (Men's and Children's Wear and Blazers)
 Mr and Mrs Jones (1984) (Foam Products, Oil, Cloth and Chamois)
 Dennis Pemberton (1984) (General Everything)
 Eric Clark (1984) (China, Pottery and Stone wear)
 Hart Brothers (1984) (Bulbs, Plants and Flowers)
 Michael Faust (1984) (Ladies coats, raincoats and casual wear)
 Carol Faust (1984) (High Class ladies suits, dresses, skirts and blouses)
 George and Joan (1984) (Top quality dress fabric)
 G Wood (1984) (Curtain and upholstery velvets)
 Michaels (1984) (Children's Ladies and Gents wear)
 James Dixon Carpets Limited (Est 37 years in 1984) (Carpets, Rugs, Kitchen Vinyl and Table Felts)
 Mellors (1984) (All Types of Covers, Seat Covers, Cushions and loose covers)
 Barry Allen (1984) (Top quality velvets, velvet curtains, screen prints and dralons)
 Bill Johnson (1984) (Lamps and lampshades with all cotton curtains to match)
 R Bostock (1984) (Vacuum and washer spares)
 Poniznik (1984) (Mail order surplus and clearance lines)
 J and M Nield (1984) (Stretch covers, zipped cushion covers and foam)
 Michael Harris (1984) (Wallpaper requirements)
 Frank Bellstone (1984) (Children's wear and hosiery)
 Taylor International Tools (1984) (Hand and Garden Tools)
 Monty (1984) (Chain Store seconds for all the family)
 Tinsleys (1984) (Best quality Fresh Fruit and vegetables)
 Nixons (1984) (Ladies and Gents underwear and thermal)
 Eddy Kay (1984) (Sheepskins, Fur, Leather and Lambskin Coats)
 Lees (1984) (Ladies and Gent's underwear, nightwear and hosiery)

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By the 1990's it had again expanded to a two-day market with a smaller market being held on a Saturday with mainly stalls inside the Town Hall on a regular basis.

On the 12 June 2010, a Farmer's Market was added to the Market Square on the Second Saturday of the month with a "Saxon" or Artisan Style market being added for the 4th Saturday from the 27 Apr 2013 and was renamed "The Crosses Market".

On the 3 December 2010 the Town Council including Cllr Carolyn Lowe started a Christmas Market. In 2011, Cheshire East asked local Town Councils to take over some of the assets in their area including the Town Hall's and Markets. Sandbach decided that taking on the Market on a permanent basis would be a good idea and started to promote and improve the facility.

On the 2 December 2012, Cllr Carolyn Lowe improved the "Christmas Street Market and Late-Night Shopping" event starting at 4.30pm that was designed to encourage more people to come to the town and to see the facilities Sandbach Market had as well as bringing in speciality stalls to make Christmas a special occasion in the town with an event that compliments the Light Switch on held on another night.

Choirs singing around the Christmas Tree, Bell Ringers, a Brass Band, Best Dressed Festive Character competition (Judged by the Mayor) and Santa in his Grotto were some of the attractions with stalls in the Town Hall Market, Down the Main Street and at the Market Square this was a successful event which was duplicated on the 30 November 2013 with the addition of the Best Dressed Trader and the

results of the “Best Dressed Shop Window Display” Competition which the Town Council had taken over from the STAR organisation who between 2010 and 2011 had reintroduced the competition.

In 2014, the Artisan Market was closed and amalgamated into the Farmers Market and on the 11 April 2015 instead of the Town Council running the market a new company called “Makers Market” were brought in to organise the stalls and publicity for the monthly Saturday market. Makers Market also run stalls at Middlewich (Last Saturday of the Month which stopped in 2017), Cheadle (1st Saturday), Knutsford (1st Sunday of the Month) and Didsbury (Last Sunday of the Month).

On the 4 December 2015, the annual Christmas Market took place with a special guest “Tears for Fears”, original drummer Manny Elias and his actress wife Deborah Bouchard (Coronation Street extra 2007, Emmerdale extra) who sold “Bongo’s Chilli”.



By March 2016, Sandbach Town Council had proposed a redevelopment of the Market Hall with the instillation of a second floor which would house the offices of the Council that would move from the Literary Institute. The plans involved spending vast sums of money to alter the fabric of the GRADE 2 listed building with the closure of the area for a number of months while building work took place. Sandbach Town Council had given four options which the people of the town had to choose between in a questionnaire which was sent out to houses on the 21 March 2016 with a stand at the Makers Market on the 9 April 2016 for Councillors to explain the proposals in more detail. However, the option to leave the building alone and improve the facilities and publicity for the indoor market seems to have been left off the list in the leaflet. Rightly the stall holders were not pleased with the ideas and expressed their opinions at a meeting on the 17 March 2016 about the future of the Town Hall building and started putting together a petition to oppose the plans and keep the Market open. Customers on the Saturday following the meeting were also outraged at the proposals to change the indoor market and when news of the changes hit Facebook the town exploded in a wave of opposition to the waste of money. On the 13 May 2016, the results of the questionnaire were released despite its bias towards the Council’s plans and was immediately condemned by all the members of the public who attended the meeting.

Various heated meetings then followed between public, traders and Council and eventually the Sandbach Town Council decided that it would not be worth the aggravation to implement the changes and they were dropped. A further meeting on the 6 June 2016, between the Council, public and traders was held to put forward proposals to save the Market and by late 2017 plans had been drawn up to improve the facilities within the hall and to redesign the stalls to make them into a more attractive area.

Plans were put forward for the improved look to the market in October 2017 by architects David Trowler Associates with work starting on the outside of the building during the beginning of May with Scaffolding being placed inside the Market Hall on the 20 May 2018 allowing work to start painting the ceiling and altering the electrics above the stalls.

Repairs to the tiled flooring took place from the 16 – 18 May 2018, with Baby Changing facilities and Toilet improvements being made outside the main hall with alterations to the Market continuing from the 7 May 2018 to the 5 July 2018 (44 Days) with the instillation of new glass canopies on top of the side stalls from the 16th June to the 5th July 2018, New signage added from the 2nd to the 4th July 2018 and the lobbies next to the doors being improved between the 4th to the 29th June 2018 with new picture shutters being added to the side stalls that will include scenes of old Sandbach supplied by local historians.

Work was completed with a hand over between the 6 – 7 July 2018 and then a new era will begin for this historic building.



On Thursday the 26 July 2018, Sandbach Town Council held the official opening of the renovated Market Hall at 2pm with various events taking place on the following Thursdays to help promote the new building improvements.

In February 2019 with bad weather the Maker's Market were able to get their stalls into St Mary's Church Hall until about 1pm when another booking took over the hall. The following month of March (9 March 2019) the company behind the market put another 20 to 30 stalls in the Church Hall. Unfortunately, the variety of stalls didn't change from those on the common with cake stalls, lamp holders made out of electrical and household bits (Old Radios and film projectors etc.) with Cheese stalls, local wines and chocolates.

COST OF STALLS ON SANDBACH MARKET (March 2019)

DAY	OUTDOOR MARKET (Regular Traders)	INDOOR MARKET (Regular Traders)	OUTDOOR MARKET (Casual Traders)	INDOOR MARKET (Casual Traders)
THURSDAY 9am to 4pm	£20	£11.50	£30	£17.50
FRIDAY 9am to 4pm				
SATURDAY 9am to 4pm	£18	£5	£25	£10
SUNDAY				
GAZEBO HIRE	£6.50		£6.50	

MAKERS MARKET 9am to 3pm (On the Second Saturday of the Month)

DAY	OUTDOOR MARKET (All Traders)			
SATURDAY 9am to 3pm	£45	WHAT YOU GET FOR YOUR MONEY Price Includes a 1.5-meter gazebo with a 6ft / 2ft 6inch trestle table. INSURANCE You will need to have Public Liability insurance for £5 million ALCOHOL LICENCE Needed if you sell alcohol. FOOD INSPECTION LICENCE Needed with the local authority / Council to display a food hygiene rating on their stall.		

GAZEBO HIRE	£6.50			

On the 17 August Rob Nixon was appointed to look after the Market taking over from Bob Nightingale.

(see also Market Charter #14.)

MARKET SQUARE
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The Square was the original venue for Markets in Sandbach as well as the home of the Saxon Crosses and the War Memorial.



(April 2004)



It is also the venue for many kings of open-air meetings with speakers like Mr James Keir Hardy M.P. (.b. 1856 .d. 1915 Scottish Labour leader and co-founder of the Labour party), Sir John Simon (.b. 1873 M.P. for Walthamstow, Home Secretary for the Coalition Government in 1915-16, Secretary of State Foreign Affairs 1931-35) and Mrs Sylvia Pankurst (Daughter of Emmeline Pankhurst .b. 1858 .d. 1928 - suffragette).

The square also had a Church House, formerly the residence of the Curate, with a school forming part of the building.

Buildings on the left hand side of the square were constructed in 1767 while the Crown and Market Tavern were built a little earlier in 1680.

On the right is the old Post Office (See Post Office) and one of the original Police houses in Sandbach built in 1760 where C. Godfrey Williams and Son's now stands. Other buildings on this site were constructed about 1760 as well.

Between Ladbrooks where the old Post Office was and Godfrey Williams (Place of one of the old Police Houses) is a walkway for St Mary's Church Hall (See St Mary's).

NOTABLE DATES

- 1680 The Crown and the Market Tavern public houses on the Market Square were opened.
- Pre 1810 An engraving by W. Alexander, F.S.A. in 1810 showed the original town hall next to the Saxon Crosses. It was positioned where the War Memorial now stands on the Square. The Upper Floor was for assemblies while the ground floor was for Prison Cells and Shops. The stocks were placed besides the wall of the Town Hall.
 In 1882 **Thomas Hughes** (.b. 20 Oct 1822 .D. 22 Mar 1896– The writer of Tom Brown’s Schooldays) was appointed to a County Court Judgeship in the Chester District in July of that year an appointment that included Sandbach and worked out of the Town Hall.
 During an archaeological survey in 2009 it discovered the foundations of the original Town Hall with its High Street Stalls under the piers of the building for selling food and included a butcher’s.
- 1815-16 Saxon Crosses collected from all over the area to be rebuilt in the Market Square.
- 1816 The Market Square and the yard of the Malt-Kiln in Bradwall Road were cobbled.
- 1838 Sandbach Celebrated the Coronation of Queen Victoria at Westminster Abbey on the 28 June 1838 with an event on the Market Square.
- 1888 The 2nd **Town Hall** was built. (In 1891 it was demolished)
 Also used as a Magistrates Court with Police cells underneath.

- 16 Apr 1922 The War Memorial was unveiled on the 16 April 1922 at 3pm by Lieut Colonel John Kennedy, C.M.G., D.S.O., of the Black Watch on the Market Square.
He was the son of Colonel and Mrs Kennedy of Brookside, Arclid.
- 1972 Post Office and Sorting Office opened on the Market Square.
- 1972 In 1972 the Church House on the square, originally constructed in 1760 was rebuilt.
- 1 Apr 1978 The Original TOWN CRYERS Competition took place in the Market Square in April some 150 years since the town had a town Cryer.
Organised by Councillor's Bob Holmes (Sandbach Town Council) and Mrs Eileen Henshall (Congleton Borough Council) the competition was won by 45 year old Don Burgess a wages boss at Fodens Motor Works Ltd Marcia Brooks was the only entry in the female class and so was awarded a bottle of Sherry.
- 2007 Archaeological Survey took place in the Market Square before it was redeveloped.
- Feb 2009 The Market Square refurbishment was completed. This also banned vehicles from the area with parking restrictions being enforced.
- 12 June 2010 A Farmer's Market was added to the Market Square on the Second Saturday of the month
- 12 Sept 2010 Foden's Band held a free concert on the Market Square.
- 27 Apr 2013 The first "Saxon Crosses Market" took place on the Market Square, an Artisan Style market was held on the 4th Saturday of the Month. This was later changed to a "Makers Market" (Run by an independent company)

REGULAR EVENTS

- Sandbach Transport Festival
- Part of the Sandbach Today Event (Also in St Mary's Church Hall)
- Halloween Event (Sandbach Partnership)
- Remembrance Day
- 11 November (Remembrance Day)
- Lights Switch On
- Makers Market (Once a Month)

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MARKET TAVERN

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Built around about 1680 (The same date as the Crown). Inside are lots of little rooms that were used by Market traders to conduct their business in private over a jug of Sandbach Ale.

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MARRIOTT HOUSE HISTORY (Demolished)

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Built on the site that is now occupied by Sandbach Library.
John Wilson the owner of Brook Farm, Betchton and Dean Hill Farm, Betchton, built the house, probably in 1740. It was then called "The Commons House". It then changed its name to "Squire Wilson's Mansion" and was surrounded by a high brick wall that "Shut it off from vulgar observation".
In 1897 The Marriott family donated the building to the town. A letter at the time explains why,
"As a contribution towards a permanent memorial of the 60th year of the reign of Her Gracious Majesty and also for the more private purpose of doing honour to the memory of their late relative, the family propose to give to the Urban District Council of Sandbach for the use of the public forever, their house known as "Commons House" and the land attached thereto (Containing in the whole rather more than six acres of land) subject only to a small annual charge of few shillings for the tithes rent and, except certain buildings adjoining Hawk Street and about 16 feet of land attached thereto, which they propose to dedicate in another way. In making this offer it is with intention of transferring the building which may be used or adapted for public exhibitions, library, technical school, lecture rooms and class rooms, etc. and other means of intellectual improvement and enjoyment of old and young of both sexes and subject to reasonable requirement for enlargement of the building for any such purposes if required, that the remaining land may be retained and developed as an open space and place of resort, playground, etc. The donors do not propose to trouble you with any conditions, but would stipulate that the Council shall prepare on general terms some scheme

for the development of the property in the interests of the community of Sandbach in furtherance of the proposal. A reference to the ratepayers shall be made whenever any important variation to the scheme should happen to be proposed".

In November 1897, Marriott House was opened to the public for the first time in its new role. Between 1897 and 1926 the building was a Technical School and on the 29 March 1926 it became a Cheshire County Library.

Marriott House was used in the 1950's as a Public Health Office, County Library and School building. It was demolished in 1969 to make way for the modern Library (See Library) which was opened in 1974. The only parts of the building to survive from the original structure are a fireplace that was incorporated into the Marriott Room at the library and a Staircase at the back of the building (Not on public view).

A white building next to Marriott House was the Coach house belonging to Tom Marriott who gave the building to the Freemasons in 1897. Like Marriott House the building has since been knocked down and a new building has been put in its place and is now known as the Masonic Hall.



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MASONIC HALL

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In 1877 a new Lodge of the "Independent Order of Good Templars" was opened under Dr Lees in the Temperance Hall, Sandbach (Schoolrooms and later the 2nd Fire Station) by the Rev. F Stanfast of Middlewich.

In 1897 a white building next to Marriott House (Now the site of the Library) which had been a single story Coachhouse belonging to Tom Marriott was given to the Freemasons for their lodge meetings. During the First and Second World Wars the military used the building with the Volunteer Battalion (5th) Cheshire Regiment (1902 and 1914 = C Co Captain C H W Bennett; Sergeant Major John Bevan – Drill Instructor c/o Armoury Scotch Commons Sandbach) in WW1 and the US Forces in WW2. Over the years further developments on the building included the addition of first floor accommodation.

Like Marriott House the building has since been knocked down and a new building has been put in its place and is now known as the Masonic Hall.

(With thanks to Peter Hanlon)

By 1948 the Masonic Hall was the home of the Freemason's Samarian Lodge No 368 and Saxon Crosses Lodge No 6227. It was also the venue for Dancing in the town, along with the Town Hall and Literary Institution.

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MIDDLEWICH ROAD

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Part way down the road towards Middlewich on the right is Wesley Avenue. Named after the Wesleyan Chapel on the corner (See Wesleyan Church) it was originally called "Seaman's Bank" until after 1917.

On the left is a house called "The Cottage" with its own stables and outbuildings. For many years until 2004 it was part of a Doctors surgery, but it probably started life in 1787 as a vicarage and was the property of Lord Crewe.

This building was demolished in 1958 (Check Info).



(Magistrates Court May 2004 / Demolished 2015)

Opposite the old Magistrates court and Police station is the new Police station and what used to be "Westfields" (*Demolished*), a large property originally privately owned by the Foden Family. At various times it was used as a meeting place for the Sandbach Players (See Separate file) and was eventually taken over by the Sandbach and Congleton Borough Council as their offices. However when the Congleton Borough Council decided to build its new offices the building was demolished to make way for the car park. The Fountain outside the house is still in the area of the new building.

On the corner of Abbey Road was a "Toll-Bar house".

"Abbey Fields" a large house between Middlewich and Crewe Roads was owned originally by the Abbey of Dieulacres (Monks).

Elworth Hall is a 16th or 17th Century farmhouse occupied by the Raven family. Mr Thomas Hulse owned the house around about 1679 when he married Mary Raven. Eventually relative John Hulse left the house to two of his servants, Thomas and Elizabeth Plant who owned the house until they died. The building then passed to Cambridge University.

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MILLS in Sandbach.

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On the 29 March 1538 Thomas Leversage of Wheelock died and at the inquest into his death his assets were named, The Manor of Wheelock, 300 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 100 acres of pasture, 20 acres of wood and bruert and a water-mill there. The list then named land in Bradwall, Kynderton and Haslyngton (Now Haslington).

In 1552 Sir Richard Bulkley died leaving in his estate a water mill in Wheelock possibly the same one owned by the late Thomas Leversage.

In 1686 the estate of Hind Heath was purchased by Ellen the widow of Williams Ford, of Fordgreen in Stafford and consisted of various bits of land in the Abbey fields area and a "Water Mill" in Hindeheth (Now Hind heath).

In the 1700's an Iron works was built at Cranage by the Hall family. Unfortunately the family lost money in the venture and turned it into a flower mill which also was unsuccessful. However it later became the flower mill owned by Mr E Massey and his Family and became known as Cranage Mill of Massey's Mill.

On the road called "The Hill" (Sandbach Heath) is a set of houses known as Chimney Row or now Mill Row. This site was originally a factory with a tall chimney built in c1809 and was the site of the first Silk Mill in Sandbach owned by Mr Bull (Possibly John Bull 1822 Pigots Directory).

The chimney from the mill is still visible on the building now 1 Mill Row and 58 the Hill with the latter being occupied in 2011-22 by Austin Broady (Air Conditioning) with the mill being demolished and the new cottages in Mill Row being built to house workers.

c1809 The Wheelock Mill was constructed starting the Textile Industry in Sandbach.

In 1850 a new Silk factory was built on "The Hill" along with Mill Row (Chimney Row) houses for the workers.

Other Mills in Sandbach built around this time were Messrs. Makin, Walker and Hope's, "Brook Silk Factory" (on the West side of The Hill next to a large lake near where Waitrose is today), "The Commons Mill" which was built in the Mid 1800's – 1850 by Thomas Bull and produced Velvet fustian cutting at the Commons factory and Town Mill, with tenant Mr William Dumbrill (or William Durnbull).

Mr Edward Percival owned the "Town Mill", succeeding his father Mr Ralph Percival. By 1860 there were 500 women working in the Sandbach Mills.

The "Brook Mill" in Factory Lane, was opened in 1860 with 365 windows on three storeys. At night time the light from these windows lit up the large pool between the Mill and Brook House near the Bridge.

In 1902 it was occupied by Thomas Skerratt (Silk Thrower).

Since 1938 there had been a lot of extension work done to the mill by its owners Messrs. G.H. Heath and Son Ltd of Macclesfield. (1938 Kelly's Directory) (See below)

Another mill is down Mill Hill Lane (3 story building opened in the late 1800's) at the bottom of the hill that leads to Houndings Lane this is a corn mill worked by a water wheel using the river (Un-named but goes to Dingle Lake and beyond on one side while the other joins the River Wheelock) to power it. The Corn milled would probably have been sold at the Literary Institute in its early days. John Jarvis of Darlaston, co, Stafford (1722 to 3 Mar 1747-8) owned property in Mill Hill in Sandbach which was possibly a forerunner of the mill in situ today. He also owned property in Bradwall.



(Mill Hill Lane Cotton Mill May 2004)



MILL TOKENS

The Mill owners wanted to keep a tight grip on their employees making them stick to various rules during working hours including no gambling with some employees having to sign agreements not to drink or gamble while learning the trade.

One way of paying their employees less was to issue them with MILL TOKENS which had a face value of their wage but could only be spent in the Mill owners shop or a business that was connected to the Mill and would give the Mill owner a percentage of the profit rather like the Voucher system of today. Possibly starting in 1794 the Tokens were specially stamped by the owner with their own die (Metal Stamp) onto a brass or copper disc. Some of the owners used to purchase old coins that were worn at a reduced price and then over stamped them with their own picture or Mill name, sometimes leaving the original design on one side with their stamp on the other side. An example of this was the "Deanston Cotton Mill" in Perth where they were struck by the owners using old worn scrap 'Bad' halfpennies which were over-stamped with the mill owners name and are quite rare.

These tokens were legal tender until 1814 although some tokens were still in existence until much later. An example of one such coin was from the Town Mill (Opened in 1825) in Sandbach which was marked at 3/6. About 1814 a child could earn 1d a day while an adult would be paid up to 3/- a day. Not only did Cotton Mill owners use this form of payment but Rolling Mill's, Hop Pickers (9d token were given out to hop pickers in Hereford on a farm owned by Edith Walter Stoke) and the Fire Brigade issued Beer Tokens which could be used as payment for a drink of beer for helping to operate the hand pumps of the 1700's to 1800's.

COMMONS MILL, off Congleton Road.

Built in 1843 (or 1850) for Velvet Fusion Cutting "The Commons Mill" or "Newfield Silk Mill", which was built by Thomas Bull for mill owner John Woolley (.b. Unkn .D. 27 Aug 1863 aged 80 years) who also had built "Field House" (40 Congleton Road, Near the Ambulance Station) for him to live in. The building later became a Cottage Hospital, Employment exchange, "Field House" and Undertakers. (There are also reports of Thomas Woolley .b. 17 June 1843 in Sandbach .D. 1916 in Chester who lived in Bridge Street as did John Woolley. On the 2 April 1871 Thomas was living in Middlewich Road, Sandbach and had become a plumber employing 1 Man and 1 Boy. By 1916 Thomas had moved to Chester where he died. His Father was William Woolley .b. Sandbach about 1805, Mother Elizabeth – Unknown .b. 1808 in Sandbach .D. Unknown.

Thomas married on the 20 June 1865 in Edge Hill, Lancashire a Elizabeth Trumble .b. 1841 in Liverpool .D. 26 Nov 1915 in Broughton Lancashire. They moved to Middlewich Road, Sandbach and they had two children William Edward Woolley .b. 1866 in Liverpool .D. 1941 in Prestwich, Lancashire and Charles Trundle Woolley .b. 1868 in Sandbach .D. Unknown)

The mill was built in 1843 at a cost of £888.00.

In 1850 John Woolley was a Silk Thrower at Scotch Common (Commons Mill).

In 1853 it was first used to spin silk.

In 1860 the mill was "Let" to Mr William Damsbrell.

In Kelly's Directories 1896 and 1902 John Shepherd and Sons were Fustian Cutters at the Scotch Commons and Town Mill, Sandbach.

One story about the factory is that during World War 2 the American Troops used it as a base with its Generals living at the Old Hall.

Another story is that at one time the building caught fire. With the fire station over the road you would have thought that their appliance would attend the incident and indeed the crew were called out to the "Shout" but the appliance developed a fault and wouldn't leave the Fire Station so while crew's from the whole of Cheshire attended the fire, Sandbach was unable to assist.

By the 1980's the building had been abandoned and in 1982 the building was demolished.

Now the area is a building estate of bungalows.

G.H. HEATH AND CO LTD (Silk Throwers) at Brook Mill, Sandbach.

The Mill was built in 1825 and was 450ft long with 365 windows.

In 1834 Ralph Percival and Bull and Thomas Percival were Silk Throwers in Brook Mill.

In 1850 Ralph Percival and Co were in the local directory as Silk Throwers at the Brook Mill.

Later in the 1800's the building was taken over by G.H. Heath and Co Ltd.

Established in 1876 the company were silk manufacturers from Macclesfield and had their main factory there. They ran the Throwing factory at Brook Mills which they acquired from Lord Crewe in 1908 by purchasing the lease under the name G.H. Heath Ltd of Macclesfield.

By 1932 the mill had almost doubled in size. The Sandbach factory catered for the hosiery trade while they also had a controlling interest in a new factory at Middlewich called British Crepe Ltd which combined with Sandbach employed well over 1,000 staff.

In 1926 the business was incorporated into a new company run by Colonel George N Heath (Who commanded the 125th Brigade of Lancashire Fusilliers) and Edward Lomas the Managing Directors, with Mrs K.L. Heath, Mrs H Lomas and W.E Whiston on the board.

In 1932 the pond used for the water in the production disappeared as it was filled in as the factory went for Electric Power rather than water power.

In 1968 the Warehouse caught fire with six appliances attending the fire for over three hours. Although the main building wasn't affected it did put back production for a couple of weeks.

In 1974 the Mill was demolished.



Brook Mill (c/o Sandbach Past and Present)

TOWN MILL

The Town Mill was opened in 1825 by Thomas Bull to produce Velvet fustian cutting as well as his mill at the Commons factory. The Town Mill was run by tenant Mr William Dumbrell (or William Durnbull).

By 1896 (and 1902 Kelly's Directory / 1914 Reference) John Shepherd and Sons were in situ as a Fustian Cutters at both Scotch Common (Commons Mill) and Town Mill.

With the decline of a market for Fustian Cutters the Town Mill was sold possibly in the 1920's to CONLOWE LTD. They were formed in 1924 under the name W.A. Lowe and Company Limited and were later the knitting division of the English Sewing Cotton Co Ltd which had eight factories in Cheshire and Staffordshire.

Named after its founder William Kenneth Lowe (.b. July 1916) who started his manufacturing in Congleton (Congleton Lowe / Conlowe) at the Brown Street Mills. Late they company had offices in 21 Lawrence Lane, London, 16 Newton Street, Manchester and were represented in Capetown, South Africa.

In 1930 Conlowe formed a subsidiary called Condula and by 1932 this new brand was employing 100 people.

In 1938, the Sandbach Mill was run under the name of Conlowe Ltd and was advertised as a Silk Manufacturer.

In 1939 the Condura name was changed to Conforma Ltd and continued to manufacturer children's clothes during the Second World War.

By 1939 the company was advertising for sewers for the Conlowe Ltd factory in Sandbach working throughout the Second World War.

On the 9 May 1947 W.A. Lowe Ltd became incorporated presumably into Conlowe (Company House records only show its incorporation until the company was dissolved on the 13 December 2000)

In (1948 according to Graces Guide) 1958 Conlowe became a subsidiary of the English Sewing Cotton Company.

By 1966 the firm was manufacturing ladies and children's lingerie, dresses and suits sold under the brand names "Judy" (Girls' outerwear and lingerie), "Conlowe" (Ladies Lingerie) and "Tootal" (Dresses and suits for women). The company also produced fabric for their products and also for sale under the name "Condura".

In 1967 (and 1969) the company advertised again for staff this time under the name English Sewing Ltd for their Knitting Department which was working alongside the ladies fashion.

ENGLISH SEWING COTTON COMPANY

The English Sewing Cotton Company had been established in 1789 by Thomas Dewhurst in Skipton, Yorkshire to spin cotton making Dewhurst's Sewing Cotton. In 1828 they built the Belle Vue Mill to produce Woollen Mill products. By 1869 John Dewhurst and Son were manufacturing sewing cotton and cotton yarn for spinning. In 1888 the company became a Limited Company. Employing over 1,000 people. On the 16 July 1897, John Dewhurst and Sons became a public company under the name "English Sewing Cotton Company" with Algernon Dewhurst as Chairman. They would take over a number of Companies.

Sir Richard Arkwright and Co, Edmund Ashworth and Sons, Bagley and Wright (Sewing thread business), Crawford Brothers, John Dewhurst and Sons (Original Company), Ermen and Roby, S Manlove and Sons, Marsland Son and Co, J T Raworth, C A Rickards, W G and J Strutt, William Waller and Co, J and E Waters and Co plus George Wigley and Co.

In 1898 the company acquired the shares of R F and J Alexander and Co as well as a controlling interest in the American Thread Company.

In 1912 they built the East Mill in Belper.

In 1958 (1948 according to Graces Guide) the English Sewing Cotton Company had acquired the Stanhill Ring Spinning Company (1920) Ltd, Conlowe Ltd (Congleton and Sandbach), Condura Ltd (Congleton), Conforma Ltd, Neckwear Ltd and the American Thread Company of Canada Ltd.

About 1961 the company acquired McIntyre, Hogg, Marsh and Co shirt-makers of London.

In 1963 with the support of ICI and Courtaulds the English Sewing Cotton Company acquired the holdings of the TOOTAL Ltd Company (Formed in 1799 in Manchester by Robert Gardner to make shirts).

1964 and English Sewing Cotton Company acquired Barlow and Jones of Manchester and Bolton.

1968 and the English Sewing Cotton Company merged with the Calico Printers Association to form English Calico.

In 1973 the company changed its name to TOOTAL LTD and in 1982 became TOOTAL GROUP PLC.

In 1991 Tootal was acquired by the Coats Vivella Group (Formed in 1961 after a merger between Viyella and Hollins) who in 2000 decided to pull out of the clothing industry and started to sell off its assets becoming Coats in 2001.

SANDBACH

In 1971 the name Longton Fashions joined the list of brands being made out of the Town Mill.

In 1973 Conlowe was advertising as part of English Calico (Formed 1968).

During 1973 (and 1975) more staff were needed for Conlowe Ltd but by 1978 the name W.K. LOWE and CO LTD appeared on the building.

In 1989 "W.K. Lowe and Co" was advertised as a 'Ladies Wear Manufacturer'.

By 1992 "W.K. Lowe and Co" was advertised as a 'Warehouse'.

In June 2002 Cloverbrook purchased the company of W.K. Lowe.

CHANGE OF USE TO AN ANTIQUE SHOWROOM

In September 1992 John Jones (Probate, valuer and Antique Dealer) took over 1 Bold Street as an Antique showroom. When the Church and the Sandbach Players moved out of the Hope Street Chapel in October 1992 the building was in need of repair as it had dry rot in the walls and the cost to repair the building was too much for the chapel who decided to sell off the Church and the old Schoolroom / Little Theatre / Church Hall. An early occupier was John Jones who used the building as a storeroom / antique shop extension to compliment his Bold Street premises. After two years in Hope Street the Commons Mill was up for sale and John was asked if he would like to purchase it for an Antique Emporium. About 1996 (Tbc) The Saxon Cross Antiques opened in the Mill filling all the floors with furniture and other items.

Saxon Cross Antiques, owned by John Jones has featured on various TV Antique programmes including "Bargain Hunt" which included filming in February 2011 with Charlie Ross and Mark Stacey. Another feature was shown on BBC 2 on the 12 September 2012 and was "Celebrity Antiques Road Trip" with Peter Shilton and Peter Schmeichel (Footballers) with experts Paul Laidlaw and Mark Stacey (S2 Ep 8 / Tbc) on a trip round Cheshire. The "Antique Road trip" (BBC 2 – 8 March 2010 to Date) with Philip Surrell was also filmed in Sandbach showing him purchasing items at the Mill. 2004 = Curshaws Restaurant and Antique Emporium.

In late 2018 /19 the antique part of the building (Floors 1 upwards) was closed to shoppers with only the ground floor shops open.

Pre 2003 to 2013 = Curshaws Wine Bar run by Richard Shaw.

February 2013 to Dec 2013 = Picchu Tapas (Restaurant) was opened in the downstairs area to serve Spanish food.

On the 6 October 2015 the building was put on the market with a sale price of £1,250,000.00 but was later taken off the market.

In June 2016 the Mill Restaurant was closed due to the owners employing under aged staff and their licence was not renewed. This was nothing to do with the Antique Showroom and John Jones decided to go in a different direction with the downstairs restaurant area.

On the 30 July 2016 (Opened in August) John and his son opened La Boutique Market (Various shops) / Saxon Antiques with about 21 small areas for businesses ranging from Hairdressers to photographers and Antique concessions.

In February 2018 the Saxon Cross Antiques were confined to the First and Second Floor with the Ground Floor taking another set of shops / stalls making 23 in total.

A need to make more of the building it was proposed to use part of it to make into flats unfortunately this idea was turned down by the Cheshire East Planning Department on the 30 September 2020 for one apartment.

FOUND IN THE BUILDING

John Jones who opened an Antique emporium in the building has discovered many items while restoring the mill.

- 1) A 1843 Clay Pipe found behind one of the panels has the words Sandbach on one side and Liverpool on the opposite side of the stem. (1843 was the year that the Commons or Newfield Silk Mill built for John Woolley.)
- 2) Clay and Wooden Pipe under the floorboards (Very early Pipe)
- 3) Mill Currency marked 3/6
- 4) Under the footings a number of coins dated 1797 George III (Year of the Cartwheel Penny but not that coin)
- 5) About 130 Georgian Half Guinea Coins (John Jones thought they may have been used for gambling in the mill but this is untrue as Mill owners frowned on gambling during the hours of work. They are

more likely to be defective coins the mill owners purchased from the royal mint to make into their own tokens by Re-Stamping them on one or both sides.)

2018 SHOPS WITHIN THE DOWNSTAIRS AREA of The Town Mill Sandbach.

1. Saxon Cross Antiques (First and Second Floor)
2. Dec 2017 = Barking Heads and Meowing Heads – (Natural Dog and Cat Foods)
3. Dec 2017 = Bella Boutique
4. EMPTY
5. 2017 = Rich Photographers (Photography and Handicrafts) www.richphotos.net
6. Dec 2017 = Hayley and Emma Arts and Henna Tattoo
7. Dec 2017 = Gentlemen John’s Gents Barbers
8. 2018 = Jessica Rose (Ladies Hairdressers) 07713-481786
9. 2018 = Dragon Vapour
10. 2018 = The Nail Place – Emma Michelle (Lash and Nail Artist) 07860668480
11. 2018 = 2211 Menswear 07525-199418
12. 2018 = Mason Blinds
13. 2018 = Handmade by Joss
14. 2018 = Crafty Corner
15. 2018 = Bella’s Accessories
16. 2018 = Mini Boutique
17. 2018 = Craft Shack (Photos and Prints / Clothing etc. Made to Order)
18. 2018 = Posh Paws
19. 2018 = EMPTY
20. 2018 = EMPTY
21. 2018 = EMPTY

UNKNOWN NUMBERS

2019 to 2020 = Gibson’s Greengrocers and Deli (Café and store)

(Moved to 51 High Street, Sandbach in November 2020)

SHOPS CLOSED WITHIN BUILDING

Dec 2017 = Milkshakes and More (Café) CLOSED 23 Oct 2018



(Back of Town Mill / Curshaws 19 May 2004 / Sandbach Crosses Antiques)

#####

MOSTON and the MOSTON DRAGON

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Just outside the boundary of Sandbach and Ettley Heath is the area known as Moston. Mainly known for the Brine Salt works it is also the home of Newfield Fabrications and a practice Golf Range.

The area is crossed by the Trent and Mersey Canal. In 1801 there were 120 inhabitants, 1831 had 184 inhabitants and in 1841 there were 37 Houses and had 224 inhabitants. In 1850 the estimated gross rental was £1,560/15/ 00d. Jacob Bright was the principal landowner with Mrs Boston, George Wilbraham, E Vernon, Cambridge University, J Skerratt, Mr Samuel Lewis and Mr Buckley also landowners in the area.

The Domesday book survey said that the area was supposed to have formed a part of Warmincham.

The Manor was in the territorial possession of the barony of Kinderton.

It gave name to a family settled here at a very early period, certainly coeval with Edward 1st. At a subsequent period, it descended with the Vernons' estates to the Vernons, and about the year 1801 was sold by Lord Vernon, to the Rev. John Armitstead, of Middlewich, and afterwards came into the possession of Mr. Bright. Lysonsestate a subordinate manor was held by a family which took the local name, in the reign of Edward 2nd.

LOCAL BUSINESSES IN 1850

John Buckley (Tailor)
William Dutton (Corn miller) (Moston Mill)
John Morris (Beerhouse and shopkeeper)

FARMERS

James Batterbee at Sparrowgrove Hall
George Beckett at Green bank
Jane Boston,
John Buckley,
Thomas Buckley,
William Gibson,
Samuel Lewis,
William Phillips.
BAILIFF; Samuel Skerratt; John Sutton, Moston House; and Edward Wild in g.

By 1896 the Earl of Crewe was the Lord of the Manor and principal landowner.
In 1891 the population was 183.

LOCAL BUSINESSES IN 1896

James Cookson (Farmer)
Samuel Cookson (Farmer)
Thomas Banks Davis (Farmer),
Walter Dutton and Son (Millers / Steam and Water)
Edward Gibson (Farmer)
John Kirkham (Farmer at Crows Nest)
George Lewis (Farmer)
Samuel Lewis (Farmer)
Mrs Katherine Manning (Farmer)
Joseph Millington (Farmer – The Fields)
Stephen Nixon (Farmer)
Richard Pass (Commercial Traveller at Willow Cottage)
William Robinson (Farmer)
Isaac Smallwood (Farmer)
Thomas Sutton (Farmer Moston Manor)
John Trelfa (Farmer)

In 1901 the population was 173 in an area of 714 acres at a rateable value of £1,552.

LOCAL BUSINESSES IN 1901

Samuel Cookson (Farmer)
Thomas Banks Davis (Farmer),
Dutton and Son (Millers / Steam and Water) (Was Walter Dutton and Son)
Edward Gibson (Farmer)
Frank Hollinshead (Farmer)
John Johnson (Farmer)
John Kirkham (Farmer at Crows Nest)
George Lewis (Farmer)
Mrs Katherine Manning (Farmer)
Joseph Millington (Farmer – The Fields)
Stephen Nixon (Farmer)
Isaac Smallwood (Farmer)
Thomas Sutton (Farmer Moston Manor)
John Trelfa (Farmer)
John Todd (Farmer)

In 1914 the population was 145 in an area of 714 acres at a rateable value of £1,648 with the trustees of the late J Bright as principal landowners.

LOCAL BUSINESSES IN 1914

Samuel Cookson (Farmer)
Mrs Catherine Dutton and Son (Millers / Steam and Water) (Was Walter Dutton and Son)
Arthur Eaton (Farmer)

Robert Hopwood Farr (Farmer)
Samuel Lewis Fitton (Farmer)
Leonard HuntbachGleave (Farmer)
FrancisHollinshead (Farmer) was Frank Hollinshead
Samuel Marshall Irving (Farmer)
Samuel Jackson (Brick Manufacturer)
John Kirkham (Farmer at Crow's Nest)
Daniel Henry Malpass (Farmer)
Mrs Catherine Manning (Farmer) was Mrs Katherine Manning
James Moseley (Farmer – The Fields) was Joseph Millington
John Phillips (Farmer)
Isaac Smallwood (Farmer)

MOSTON MILL (Crows Nest Lock on the Trent and Mersey Canal)

The mill was built in 1820 as a Corn Mill for the Dutton Family and continued to produce corn until after 1914. The three-story Mill was unusual as it used water from the overflow weir above a canal lock.

In 1850 William Dutton ran the mill. In 1896 it was Walter Dutton and Son who had introduced a steam engine as well as the water mill to the building. In 1901 it was Dutton and Son (Steam and Water Millers) and in 1914 Mrs Catherine Dutton and Son were running the mill.

In 2004 a number of businesses were run out of Moston Mill by Stephen David Jones (.b. March 1953) who owned the building and was a director of a number of businesses in the Midlands area. He was a Director of Brush Holdings Ltd (2 Apr 1998 to 1 Apr 2004, Active company 2020), Fisher-Karpark Holdings Limited (5 Aug 1998 to 17 June 2004 Dissolved), Brush Properties Limited (20 Dec 1999 to 17 June 2004 resigned, Company still active in 2020), Hamsard 2386 Limited (14 Sept 2001 to 17 June 2004 Company dissolved), FKI Distribution Limited (28 Nov 2001 to 17 June 2004 Dissolved), Logistex Limited (28 Nov 2001 to 17 June 2004).

Another business run out of Moston Mill was Charles Mann electricians. (Pre 2020)

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LEGEND OF THE MOSTON DRAGON

There is however a more sinister story about the area and it concerns the Legend of the Dragon of Moston. The land was originally in the hands of Gilbert de Venables and was mainly swamp land. In Dragon Lane (Named after Dragons Lake in 1839) off the Middlewich Road a dragon terrorised the local residents of the area in the 12th Century until one day a man called Terry Venables decided to kill the Dragon. The monster had terrorised the local people with its three rows of fangs, flaming eyes and a scaly reptilian body with six claws extending from each foreleg and a long tail capable of crushing a bear with one swipe.

Thomas Venables the son of Sir Thomas Venables and the first cousin of William the Conqueror, equipped himself and set off to the lake of the beast where he found it devouring a child that it had seized in the waters of Bache Pool (Later renamed Dragons Lake). On seeing the monster, he fired arrows at it until he hit one of the Dragon's eyes and then proceeded to attack it on its blind side with his sword until he eventually killed it.

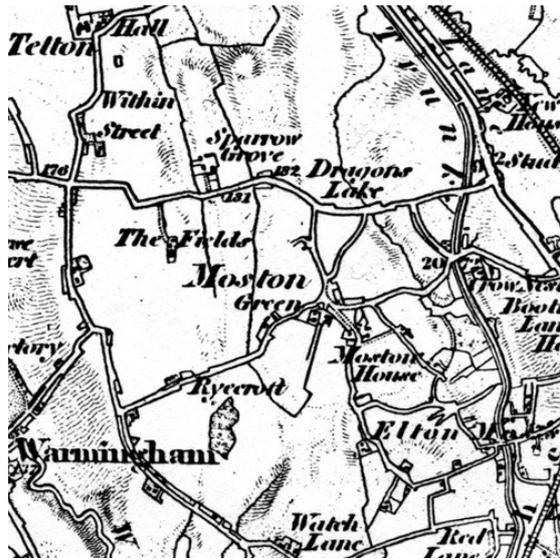
This basic George and the dragon story dates back to the 13 Oct 1560's when it was recorded in the "Patent of Augmentation, of the Arms and Crest of Thomas Venables of Goulbourne in this County" and is commemorated in the naming of the lake and the dragon crest appearing on the Coat of Arms of the Venables family, who it is said was awarded the Manor of Moston for his bravery.

There is however a little doubt as to the stories true origins as George Ormerod in his "History of the County Palatine and City of Chester" says that Sir Thomas Venables (19th Century Baron of Kinderton, Nr Middlewich) applied for the patent of Augmentation in 1560 and wanted to attribute the slaying of the Dragon to his Great- Great Grandfather, Thomas Venables, but as William Venables the father of the dragon slayer had already acquired Moston in 1412 it ruled out the possibility of the dragon having been slain by his son Thomas after that time.

The feature of a dragon being slain on the Venables crest appears in various branches including the Bradwall branch of the Venables family who have a Wyvern (Dragon) issuing from a fish weir and devouring a child having been pierced with an arrow a design made in the 13th Century.

Another problem is the location of Dragon's Lake as a 1842 Ordnance Survey Map seems to have placed the Dragon's Lake named pool of water next to a different pool of water than the legend and not what was known as Bache Pool which by this time had been drained of water and was now just a dip in

the land. The story also becomes blurred as the Venables had land at Kinderton (Nr Middlewich) which also has a Dragon's Lake and Dragon's Lane and as the Crest is housed in Middlewich Church the story could relate more to this area than that of Moston.



The Dragon of Moston (Egerton Leigh "Ballads and Legends of Cheshire 1867)

I.

OFT have we heard of that fell fight,
In which old *England's* patron knight,
By chroniclers *St. George* who's hight
The scaly dragon slew.

II.

But of that combat now I sing,
With which all *Cheshire* once did ring
A picture of the fight I'll fling,
And of a warrior true.

III.

A dragon *Cheshire* troubled sore,
Insatiate was his horrid maw;
Clotted with blood and poisonous gore,
Wide wasted he the land.

IV.

Widows and orphans would turn pale,
Were he but named, men's hearts would fail;
Warriors, ne'er known before to quail,
Durst not before him stand.

V.

Moston's curst township rued the day
When in its swamp it wallowing lay;
Like the thick dust uprose the spray,
As thrashed his tail the slime.

VI.

Remnant of monsters, that the flood
Retiring left (a deadly brood),

Or sprung from some gaunt giant's blood,
Spawn of some devilish time.

VII.

Sharp fangs gaped wide a triple row,
Its bloodshot eyes like flames did glow,
Its body like a serpent low,
And scaled o'er as with mail.

VIII.

Six claws on either side appear,
Its prey to seize, its prey to tear:
'Twas said, that e'en a grizzly bear
Had crushed its whelming tail.

IX.

Where'er it roamed, its upas breath
On all sides, round, above, beneath,
Like plague-sores, belched a horrid death,
'Gainst which 'twas vain to pray.

X.

This gallant *Venables* did hear
(A man he was to Cheshire dear),
And *Moston* he resolved to clear,
Or perish in the fray.

XI.

He vowed unto his ladye fair
To beard the dragon in his lair,
And offered up to heaven a prayer
To grant him strength in fight.

XII.

The dragon's swamp scarce had he won,
The beast had seized a widow's son;
He was his mother's only one.
Loud shouted then the knight.

XIII.

The morning mists that challenge cleft;
The dragon heard the shout, and left
The child of sense not life bereft,
And rushed on in his might.

XIV.

Bold *Venables* unflinching drew
With steady hand the sounding yew;
Forth, winged by death, the arrow flew,
And pierced the dragon's eye.

XV.

Well 'twas he aimed not at his side:
The sharpest bolt had vainly tried
To pierce elsewhere his scale-armed hide,
Or to the heart come nigh.

XV.

Fierce through the reeds the dragon crashed,
The swamp to foam in fury lashed,

Wildly at *Venables* it dashed
The knight ne'er dreamt to fly.

XVII.
On the blind side advanced he then,
And smote the beast once and again
Between the scales: soon in the fen
Black heart blood soaked the ground.

XVIII.
Far, far, that dying shriek was heard,
E'en distant *Beeston's* warders stirred,
And springing up some onslaught feared,
So awful was the sound.

XIX.
Who, who, may paint the widow's joy?
Again, again, she hugs her boy.
What can the mother now annoy?
Her lost child breathes again!

XX.
Broad lands in *Moston* for that deed
(Fortune's reward, and Valour's meed),
For *Cheshire* saved in utmost need,
The *Venables* did gain.

XXI.
But what than lands he valued mair,
Was a dark tress of glossy hair
(For this, what would not true knight dare?),
Gift of his ladye fair.

XXII.
A dying dragon bathed in gore,
Which e'en in death an infant tore,
In arms he proudly thenceforth bore,
Emblazoned on his shield.

XXIII.
Still, children at the dragon quake;
The fight to list they'll play forsake;
Still by the name of '*Dragon's lake*'
Is called that *Moston* field.

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MOTORWAY / M6

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A story I was told when I was young is that the bodies of the dead from the massacre at Scotch Common on Congleton Road Sandbach were laid to rest in a plot of land near Sandbach Heath, later called 'Pipers Hollow', the exact spot that the M6 Motorway passes through the town and where the Saxon Cross Motel used to stand.

On the occasion of the burial a lone piper, who it was thought to be dead, recovered enough to play a lament while the bodies of his comrades were being buried. On completion of this task he was also killed and buried along with his kinsfolk. It is said that the Ghost of the Piper can be heard along that stretch of the motorway and some say is the cause of many of the crashes on this stretch of the M6 Motorway.

Sandbach Advertiser (Friday 2d)
Sandbach Guardian (Wednesday 1d / Saturday 2d)
Weekly Sentinel (Saturday 2d)

1943 NEWSPAPERS.

Crewe Chronicle (Saturday 3d)
Sandbach Chronicle (Friday 3d) NEW
Sandbach Guardian (Friday 2d) Now published only on a Fri.
Weekly Sentinel (Saturday 2d)

1948 NEWSPAPERS.(from Sandbach Town Guide)

Crewe Chronicle (Saturday 3d)
Sandbach Chronicle (Friday 3d)
Sandbach Guardian (Friday 2d)
Weekly Sentinel (Saturday 2d)

1958 /60 NEWSPAPERS.

Crewe Chronicle (Saturday)
Sandbach Chronicle (Friday)

1974 NEWSPAPERS.

Crewe Chronicle (Wednesday?)
Sandbach Chronicle (Friday)
The Saxon Crosses - Newspaper first published in 1974 and closed possibly in 1976.

2013 NEWSPAPERS.

Crewe Chronicle (Wednesday)
Sandbach Chronicle (Thursday)
The Saxon Newspaper first published in Feb 2013 although its cover has Feb 2012.

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#N1. CREWE CHRONICLE

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CREWE CHRONICLE (Sandbach Edition)

Over the years Sandbach has had a number of Newspapers covering its area. The first of which was probably the Chester Chronicle which was first published in 1775 and by the 1800's was printing stories about the towns of Crewe and Sandbach. Originally named the 'Chester Chronicle; or Commercial Intelligencer' it changed its name sometime between 1776 and the beginning of 1789 to 'The Chester Chronicle and General Advertiser'. In July 1789 it was again renamed this time simply as 'The Chester Chronicle'. In 1814 the name changed again to the 'Chester Chronicle and Cheshire and North Wales General Advertiser' a name it kept until 1964 when it again became 'The Chester Chronicle' and finally dropped the "The" from its title in 1993 simply becoming Chester Chronicle. The popularity in the area led to the owners of the Chester Chronicle publishing the first Crewe and Nantwich edition as a "Radical Alternative to the Tory-based Crewe Guardian". Starting on the 21 March 1874 the first '**Crewe and Nantwich Chronicle and North Wales Advertiser**' appeared with the front cover of this publication made up totally of adverts, with news items starting on the second page as was the format for both Local and National publications at the time. The first set of offices for the Chronicle, were at 2 High Street, Crewe a building that was over a Milliner's shop called "Lowe's". The Milliner's shop before that was a public house that was either called the Old Vaults, Jubilee Tavern or The Commercial. Behind the High Street premises was "Oak Farm" and later Oak Street. Oak Farm was one of the early venues for entertainment in Crewe changing its name from Oak Farm to the Pioneer Anglers Club in 1911. In 1883 the Chronicle became the '**Crewe and Nantwich Chronicle and West Cheshire Advertiser**'. In 1890 Nantwich was lost from the title and so it became the '**Crewe Chronicle and West Cheshire Advertiser**' and in 1904 became 'THE CREWE CHRONICLE'. In the 20 August 1909 edition of the Crewe Chronicle the first photograph appeared in a supplement about the Crewe Cottage Hospital.

CREWE CHRONICLE SANDBACH EDITION

By 1926 Sandbach had its own edition of the Crewe Chronicle according to a local directory of the time which later had the front page of the Chronicle devoted to the town with various features about Sandbach within its pages.

In 1945 Nantwich gained its own version of the Chronicle with the publication of the NANTWICH CHRONICLE edition.

During the late 1950's (1958-64) Avril Jones worked for the Crewe Chronicle from their offices in 39 Middlewich Road, Sandbach (Just before the corner of Chapel Street and now the Co-op Funeralcare shop) as a junior reporter who took her younger brother Blair Jones along to see her at work. He tells us that the shop window had pictures of local news stories on display, which were taken out the following week to be replaced by the next weeks story. The pictures were then put in a large draw to be archived or binned later. The editor at the time was John Gleave (Who had a daughter called Jenny) with his deputy editor David Leake who worked in offices upstairs with a public desk downstairs where the junior reporters worked. When Avril Jones left she was replaced by Peter Gallimore who went on to be a producer for BBC Radio 4 on the 1989 Budget and possibly the Today programme where he also made contributions and in 2000 he produced "5 Live Report" for the BBC.

By the 1960's the front page had changed to news items with all its publications.

In 1964 an edition of the Chronicle was published for the Middlewich area under the title MIDDLEWICH CHRONICLE and had been part of the Mid Cheshire Chronicle series.

In 1981 Sandbach was again given its own version of the Chronicle with the CREWE CHRONICLE (Sandbach) edition being published.

In 1994 the paper became known as CHRONICLE with various town names printed underneath a title format it kept until 2000 when it again became the CREWE CHRONICLE.

The 5 April 2000 saw the last copy of the Chronicle in a broad sheet format changing to a tabloid format for the 12 April edition.

On the 30 September 2004 the Chronicle moved from High Street to 32-34 Victoria Street, Crewe. The Offices now housed the editorial departments of "The Crewe Chronicle" (Crewe, Sandbach, Nantwich Editions), Crewe Mail (Free Paper), and the sister paper "Buy and Sell" (Established in 1979) which has moved from offices in 234 Nantwich Road.

In 2007 the Middlewich and Sandbach Editions of the Chronicle merged together to cut down costs and the CREWE CHRONICLE (Sandbach and Middlewich Edition) hit the shelves.

However, with the increasing use of Home computers and the sale of the publication to Trinity Mirror it was decided on the 18 March 2014 that the Offices in Victoria Street would close in May 2014 with 8 staff being lost due to the main work of printing being moved to Chester and Journalists working from home.

On the 5 October 2016 the CREWE CHRONICLE Sandbach and Middlewich editions of the paper merged with the CREWE CHRONICLE (Crewe Edition) leaving only the Nantwich Edition as a separate paper.

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#N2.

SANDBACH CHRONICLE (Based in Congleton)

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(See Also Congleton Chronicle)

1894 NEWSPAPER

Sandbach Chronicle and Mid Cheshire Journal (Published by W.J. Harper) High Street, Sandbach

1896 NEWSPAPERS

Sandbach Chronicle (Robert Head Publisher and Printer - Published Saturday)
c/o Eachus and Son, Local Publishers at The Square, Sandbach

1902 NEWSPAPERS.

Sandbach Chronicle (Robert Head Publisher and Printer – Miss Harriet Jones, Local Publisher – Saturday)
High Town, Sandbach

1914 NEWSPAPERS.

Sandbach Chronicle (Robert Head Publisher and Printer)
Jessie and Miss M A Wood 7 High Town, Sandbach, Local Publisher (Published Saturdays)

SANDBACH CHRONICLE (Congleton Chronicle Series)

The Congleton Chronicle was founded in 1893 by Heads (Congleton) Limited with the Congleton Chronicle and Biddulph Chronicle. In December 2011 the publishers also printed the Alsager Chronicle.

Robert Head (.b. 1857) the founder of the paper and the publisher owned a shop on the corner of Swan Bank and Duke Street. The shop sold Toys, Books, music and stationary as well as publishing the Chronicle from this venue. A picture from 1906 shows the shop still in existence on the corner of Swan Bank and Duke Street, but a letter from 1922 shows the Chronicle had moved to its current position in High Street.

The Congleton Chronicle has only had four editors over the years with founder Robert Head passing on the job to his son Lionel in 1937 when he died and in 1988 the job passed to John Codliffe who bought out he paper that year, handing down the job of editor to his son Jeremy Condliffe who now runs the paper.

According to the Chronicle the first Sandbach Edition was published in 1949 (1944 IPSO Annual Report) but an "Old Sandbach" history book compiled and published by W J Harper R.A.I. (London) in 1894, advertised a "Sandbach Chronicle and Mid Cheshire Journal" which had offices at offices in the High Street, Sandbach and was edited and printed by W.J. Harper.

Trade books from 1896 have a "Sandbach Chronicle" being published by Eachus and Son on the Square, Sandbach on behalf of Robert Head of Congleton. In 1902 the local publisher was Miss Harrier Jones of High Town Sandbach who was also the publisher of other papers in Sandbach at the time.

At the start of the 1914 war the Sandbach Chronicle was still being published on a Saturday but it is possible that due to the paper shortage the local newspaper ceased publication as trade magazines from 1926 and 1933 failed to mention the Sandbach Chronicle during these years.

However in 1943 the Sandbach Chronicle re-appeared on a Friday priced 3d (Three Pence)

In 1949 articles about the Sandbach Players were in an edition of the Sandbach Chronicle and by 1951 the Sandbach edition also had on its headline title a Holmes Chapel and Goostry edition with the lettering changing from a Block with letters in it to the old-fashioned lettering still used today (2016).

Up until 2004 the paper was published on a Friday, changing in 2009 to a Thursday on which day it is still published.

The Chronicle offices moved to 11 High Street, Congleton where they still edit the paper although printing which was done in Congleton in the 1970's was then moved to the Sentinel building in Eturia, Nr Hanley, Stoke on Trent and is now printed by Newbury News Limited, Newspaper House, Faraday Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2DW.

GLYN BOON Photographer.

At the age of 15 (1960/61) Glyn Boon who was born in 1945, joined the Chronicle as a darkroom assistant. One day he was asked to do an assignment for the paper to take a picture for the chronicle. This was the start of his long association with the camera starting with photographs taken on glass plates with the print being made using hot metal at the firm's own press which at the time was run by the sons of its founder, Lionel and Basil Head.

In 1969, Glyn married Gail who he met in Congleton where they both came from and where he was living at the time. The couple married at Astbury Church and then moved to Sandbach Heath where the couple still live and where they brought up their three children and by 2009 had three grandchildren. On the 4 March 2009, Glyn Boon was made the Rotary Club of Sandbach's Citizen of the year and was invited to attend the event he thought to take pictures of the latest recipient but was surprised with the award himself with his colleague Emma taking the picture. Mike Garrett the Chairman of the Community Services Committee of the Rotary club said that after the pictures were taken Glyn could be seen checking what she had taken on her digital camera as he never felt easy unless he was behind the lens of a camera.

In 2010, Glyn Celebrated his 50th anniversary and was given a surprise celebration at the White Lion in Congleton. His colleagues made up a fake advertising assignment to show the renovations at the pub owned at the time by Joe Manning who was in on the surprise and kept him working at the back of the building while his colleagues came in through the front to surprise him with a presentation of a gift voucher for a holiday weekend at a country hotel in the Yorkshire Dales along with a walking map of Wensleydale.

Over the years Glyn has used Glass plate photography, 35mm Film SLR and finally by 2018 when he retired the Digital SLR which made life so much easier as you could for the first time in his career check the pictures you have taken before leaving the assignment.

Some of Glyn's more memorable assignments included photographing the Royal Family when they came into the area, Up with the Red Devils (Parachute Display Team) and the Bosley Mill Fire on the 17 July 2015 when he also appeared in the background of the BBC North West coverage of the event. Glyn has covered many events from plays, concerts, openings, celebrity appearances, transport festivals, shop openings, Mayor's events, British Legion Ball, Remembrance Day Marches, Armed Forces Day, Charity fund-raises, murders and fires.

In June 2018, Glyn decided to hand up his camera at the end of a long and fruitful career as the longest serving employee of the Chronicle based in Congleton.

He will be remembered for the way he took pictures and the great friendships he has built up with the whole community of Sandbach who looked forward to his arrival and his unique way of taking local paper pictures by organizing the people, standing on a chair or platform to get that different angle and the professionalism he brought to the occasion when he blended into the background for those unplanned shots he took at concerts and special occasions.

One of his last assignments was to take pictures at Elworth and Sandbach's War Memorials on the 100th Anniversary of the death of Foden Band Member Edwin Firth on the 1 June 2018.



Fringe Benefits



Edwin Firth Memorial 2018



Citizens of the Years



Remembrance Day

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#N3. CONGLETON CHRONICLE

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CONGLETON CHRONICLE

Newspapers in the town had been available from London and Chester printers since the 1700's.

In 1825, a Macclesfield and Congleton paper was printed, but this was a short-lived venture that bankrupting many local businessmen.

In 1856, Edward Joyce, the Bridge Street bookseller and printer started the 'Congleton Advertiser', however it only survived until the economic depression of 1861. The name was then changed and the 'Congleton, Sandbach and Crewe Advertiser' continued to be read in the towns until 1876.

Back in 1858 Robert Clarkson, also of Bridge Street started the 'Congleton and Macclesfield Mercury'.

The building at 11 High Street had been a public house the St George's Tavern and when it was demolished it was rebuilt and became the Town Hall keeper's lodge.
In 1879, Samuel Yates opened a stationers (S Yates Bookseller) at 11 High Street, Congleton and in 1820 they published a history of Congleton.

In 1893, the CONGLETON CHRONICLE was started by Robert Head (Head Publications) who was not only the founder but also the first editor. Robert Head (.b. 1857) the publisher owned a shop on the corner of Swan Bank and Duke Street. The shop sold Toys, Books, music and stationery as well as publishing the Chronicle from this venue.

By 1896 the Chronicle had moved into 11 High Street publishing the Chronicle on a Friday. At this time Head's had started publishing the Sandbach Chronicle (Robert Head Publisher and Printer - Published Saturday) with the paper being printed at Eachus and Son, Local Publishers at The Square, Sandbach.

The 1902 Kelly's Directory shows Robert Head at 11 High Street and also at Swan Bank (Bookseller, Publisher, Stationer and Printer). The 1902 Congleton Chronicle was published on Saturday and the Sandbach Chronicle was now being printed by Miss Harriet Jones, Local Publisher in High Town, Sandbach on a Saturday.

A picture from 1906 shows the booksellers shop still in existence on the corner of Swan Bank and Duke Street (Now a Jewellers opposite the Counting House) it sold Stationery, Toys, Books and Musical Instruments.

Kelly's 1914 directory shows the Chronicle at 11 High Street having incorporated the Congleton and Macclesfield Mercury. The directory also showed that Robert Head was the honorary Secretary of the Congleton and District Floral and Horticultural Society which was run from the same building and the Swan Bank business had moved to 11 High Street. Robert Head was also running the Congleton Bill Posting and Advertising Company.

By 1914 the Sandbach Chronicle was run by Heads with Jessie and Miss M A Wood at 7 High Town, Sandbach, Local Publisher printing the paper (Published Saturdays).

A letter from 1922 shows the Chronicle had moved to its position in 11 High Street after selling the next door building.

The Savings Bank (Later the TSB Or Lloyds or Lloyds TSB, established in 1819 in Congleton or 1817 according to their website) had worked out of the downstairs part of the Town Hall Building and then 11 High Street before moving to their corner building at 13 High Street after 23 years by 1896 (Actuary Charles Russell Hall, open on Saturdays from 1pm to 3pm / 1902 Open Monday 7pm to 8.30pm and Sat 1pm to 4.15pm and 7pm to 8.30pm. In 1921 the Congleton Trustee Saving Bank became part of the Chester, Wrexham and District Savings Bank which in 1947 became part of the Chester, Wrexham and North Wales Trustee Savings Bank. In 1973 it became part of the TSB of Wales and Border Counties and later the TSB Group which in turn in 1995 merged with Lloyds Bank to become Lloyds TSB. In 2009 they split after the bank acquired HBOS and was asked to become smaller due to the monopolies commission. On the 20 October 2020 the branch was closed as nationally branches were cut back as internet banking took over.). In 1933 number 13 High Street was rebuilt and a year before in 1932 the Head Family purchased the building at 11 High Street from the bank for their permanent home.

In 1946 (After the War) Fred Jackson took on the role of head of engraving with the paper and then as photographer with the Chronicle having worked for Marson's in the High Street and during the war was in the Royal Navy. Fred who lived at 13 Moody Street a tied House owned by the Chronicle and stayed with the paper for about 10 years under Editor Mr Lionel Head (15 Moody Street, Congleton)

In 1988 the job of owner passed to John Codliffe who bought out the paper that year, handing down the job of editor to his son Jeremy Condliffe who now runs the paper.

By 2010 the newspaper continued to expand and to be a part of the community and was responsible for the Biddulph Mercury, Biddulph Chronicle, Sandbach Chronicle, Congleton Mercury and the Macclesfield Mercury.

In December 2011 the company launched the Alsager Chronicle.

In 2019 a COVID 19 Pandemic hit the world and changed the way people did things. The Government at the time decided to shut down the country and the Chronicle decided to shut the door on its reception area on the High Street. The decision was then made to close it completely and move the reception to the back of the building while renting out the front to another business.

By April 2021 after 150 years the Head's Shop was closed and MP Fiona Bruce officially opened the new reception desk at Market Square and Sophie Bursnoll opened a new Bridal Dress shop at 11 High Street.

PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH THE CHRONICLE
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ROBERT HEAD

Robert Head was born in 1857 the son of James Head the manager of the Howey Hill Silk Mill. At the age of 12 in 1869 Robert Head left school to take a job with Andrew Cockayne as an errand boy with the printing side of William Clarke's (Previously Samuel Yates) business at 11 High Street. At the end of his apprenticeship he went to work at the Stafford bookshop. Samuel Yates a local publisher and bookseller had died in 1833 and his business was taken over by William Clarke who also started running a circulating Library in 1839. The printing side of the business was being run by Andrew Cockayne. Robert saved hard and in 1880 an opportunity arose to purchase the Cockayne business. With a loan, he set up the County Publishing House at 11 High Street and expanded to Swan Bank with a shop on the corner. Interested in journalism he set up a second newspaper in the town the Congleton Chronicle in 1893, with its rival being the Congleton Mercury (Congleton and Macclesfield Mercury started in 1858). In 1887, Robert Head had published his history of Congleton book. With the success of the Congleton Chronicle (1893) in 1896 Head's publishing took over the Congleton Mercury. In 1897, Robert Head opened a Library in the 11 High Street shop building a shop that dates back to 1800. In 1937, Robert died leaving his son's to take over the publishing business. The Head family continued to edit the newspapers until 1963 but the stationary and bookselling side of the business had closed in 1960.

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JOHN CONDLIFFE

In 1943, John Condliffe joined the Chronicle and would later become its owner and editor. Born in Kidsgrove in 1928 the family came from Congleton and a relative also called John Condliffe who was a surgeon in the 1600's is buried in Astbury Church. John's father was a blacksmith in Congleton and his father ran a General Store selling various good and hardware. John Condliffe went to the Burslem School of Commerce in Staffordshire to study shorthand, business studies and typing, hoping to go into journalism. After leaving the school he went to work at Kidsgrove Gas Works a job his father thought he should keep as it gave him security and a pension. However in 1943, Chronicle editor Lionel Head offered John a job. At the time the editor only had a typewriter, desk and chair with the senior reporter only had a desk and chair while the cub reporter only had a desk and this was the job John took on writing his reports in longhand. In 1946, John served his National Service as a shorthand writer for the War Office. In 1949, John Condliffe returned to Congleton and was sent to Sandbach to launch the Sandbach Edition of the Chronicle or should I say relaunch the paper as a version of the Sandbach Chronicle had been published from before 1896. Staying in Sandbach for two years John returned to Congleton as Chief Reporter in 1951. In 1957, John married Shirley (.b. 20 Nov 1935) and they had two sons Jeremy (.b. 16 Feb 1962) and Andrew. From the 1950's John rose to Chairman and in 1988 along with business partner Ray Stacey bought the company from the Head Family. John Condliffe died aged 76 in Jan 2005 having handed over the business to his son Jeremy.

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JACK BRINDLEY (Photographer)

In 1948 Jack Brindley joined the Chronicle as a trainee photographer. Born in 1933 in Congleton at the age of 15 Jack began his apprenticeship with the Chronicle earning 30 shillings a week with a promise of 65 shillings a week after his indenture ended in 1953. In 1958 on Jack's 25th birthday he married Marjorie who he had met at a local dance and they went on to have two children Stephen and David who in turn gave them grandchildren and great grandchildren in Jack and Marjorie's 62 years of marriage.

After working for the Chronicle in Congleton Jack went to the Newcastle Times and then in 1970 the family moved to the Peterborough Times where he was the Chief Photographer for nearly 20 years. He also became the Peterborough United official photographer and wrote a gardening column for the paper.

On the 8 January 2020 Jack died at the Peterborough City Hospital after a long standing illness.

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JOHN CLOWES

In the 1960's John Clowes joined the newspaper as a reporter and became a familiar face at events in the area. John who was born in Congleton started working at his parent's butchers in Antrobus Street which is still being run in the same building as butchers now under the name of Ray Moss (Who died in 2016-7) and is now run by his family.

He became the deputy editor of the newspaper. He then became the editor in chief of the Stockport Advertiser and then editorial director of the amalgamated Express Advertiser and continued in that role until he retired. John didn't stop writing on his retirement and wrote a book on local manufacturers "Beresfords" (Ribbon manufacturer) which was published by his close friend Stephen Sebire (Owner of Beresfords) and as an accomplished pianist entertained patients at Stepping Hill hospital as a volunteer.

He was married twice, firstly to musician Doreen Clowes and had two children Ian and Mike. Later he married Sue who had children Matthew and Emma from a previous relationship. John Clowes died on the 3 April 2018 at the age of 85 in Stockport.

On the 28 April 1995, Jeremy Condliffe was appointed one of the Directors of the Heads (Congleton) Company (Also known as Tudorent Limited).

On the 14 April 2000, Raymond Leonard Stacey (Printing Manager) resigned as Director of the Heads Company with Albert John Condliffe also resigning on the 11 January 2005. Jeremy's mother Shirley Condliffe took over as Director on the 28 January 2005. Shirley has also been the company's secretary since the 21 December 1995.

At the start of 2020 a Coronavirus Pandemic took hold over the whole of the UK and the world. By November 2020 the Chronicle was affected to the extent that the staff were working from home and the offices in the High Street were closed to the public. In 1922 the newspaper had moved into 11 High Street and in 2020 the owners decided to lease out the front of the building for a commercial business to use while the newspaper moved to the back rooms with a new front desk. Timothy A Brown estate agents were tasked with finding a new occupant of the (51.32 square meters) 552 square feet room with a display window. (19 November 2020 Chronicle Page 17).

#####

EDITORS / SUB EDITORS

1893 to 1988 Robert Head

1940's Lionel Head

(1970's John Clewes = Sub editor)

(? Chris Proudlove = Sub editor)

1988 to John Condliffe (Died aged 76 in Jan 2005)

1995? Jeremy Martin Condliffe (.b. 16 Feb 1962)

2010 EMPLOYEES

Jeremy Condliffe (Editor), Glyn Boon (Photographer), Harry Leach, Peter Wetton, Dennis Proudlove, Mark Chaddock, Alan Bloor, Tom Byrne, Harry Wharfe, Steph Barnett, Chris Young and Lesley Telford.

2012 EMPLOYEES

Jeremy Condliffe (Editor), Shirley Condliffe (.b. 20 Nov 1935 - Company Secretary), James Jackson (Assistant Editor), Vanessa Todd (Sub Editor), Angela Anderson (Sub Editor), Glyn Boon (Photographer), Eileen Jackson (Photographer), James Byrne (Congleton Reporter), James Morris

(Congleton Reporter), Rachel Naylor (Congleton Reporter), Katie Ollier (Alsager Reporter), Kelly Harris (Biddulph Reporter), Kayleigh Williams (Sandbach Reporter).
Alan Bloor (Pre Press Production), Pete Wetton (Pre Press Production), Jay Kelly (Page Make-up), Harry Chaddock (Advertising) Sue Thomson (Inputting), Dennis Proudlove (Maintenance).
Pam Austin (Advertising Manager), Tracey Jackson (Sales Executive), Rob Ryan (Sales Executive), Jennifer Banks (Office Manager/ Sales), Ann Durose (Sales and Invoicing), Elsy Booth (Newsagent Queries), Stephanie Davies (Newsagent Queries), Dawn Withers (E Mail Admin), Angela Wedgbury (E Mail Admin), Harri Wharfe (E Mail Admin).

2013 EMPLOYEES

Kirsty-Ann Hewson (Trainee Reporter)

2014 EMPLOYEES

2015 EMPLOYEES

Luke Powell (Trainee Reporter)
James Morris (Trainee Reporter)

2016 EMPLOYEES

Alex McIntyre (Trainee Reporter)
Char Duncker (Trainee Reporter)
James Byrne (Trainee Reporter)

2017 EMPLOYEES

2018 EMPLOYEES

Lisa Meakin (Left 2 March 2018) Trainee Reporter (Went to the Manchester Evening News and the BBC as a Democracy Reporter)

2019 EMPLOYEES

2020 EMPLOYEES (Coronavirus Period)

EDITOR - Jeremy Condliffe (Editor).
ASSISTANT EDITOR - James Jackson (Assistant Editor).
COMPANY SECRETARY - Shirley Condliffe (.b. 20 Nov 1935 - Company Secretary).
PHOTOGRAPHER - Eileen Jackson (Photographer),
REPORTERS – James Connolly and Joe Yates.
ADVERTISING - Tracey Jackson (Advertising Manager)
SALES AND INVOICING – Rachel Matthews
E MAIL ADMIN - Angela Wedgbury (E Mail Admin), Harri Wharfe (E Mail Admin).
PRE PRESS PRODUCTION – Ashleigh Gleave and Dan Rushton.
PRE PRESS ADVERTS – Mark Chaddock.
MAINTENANCE AND HOME DELIVERY – Chris Jones.

2021 EMPLOYEES (Coronavirus Period)

EDITOR - Jeremy Condliffe (Editor).
ASSISTANT EDITOR - James Jackson (Assistant Editor).
COMPANY SECRETARY - Shirley Condliffe (.b. 20 Nov 1935 - Company Secretary).
OPERATIONS MANAGER – Vanessa Todd.
PHOTOGRAPHER - Eileen Jackson (Photographer),
REPORTERS – James Connolly and Joe Yates.
ADVERTISING - Tracey Jackson (Advertising Manager)
SALES AND INVOICING – Rachel Matthews
E MAIL ADMIN - Angela Wedgbury (E Mail Admin), Harri Wharfe (E Mail Admin).
PRE PRESS PRODUCTION – Ashleigh Gleave and Dan Rushton.
PRE PRESS ADVERTS – Mark Chaddock.
MAINTENANCE AND HOME DELIVERY – Chris Jones.
SWITCHBOARD – Ann Durose and Angela Wedgbury.

#####

NUCLEAR BUNKER (Congleton Road)



Near Fields Farm / Meadowley.

Sandbach had a Nuclear Bunker which was situated in a field just off Congleton Road and near the Junction of the M6 Motorway between Park House and Field's Fisheries. Most bunkers were built in the 1960's for men to watch and monitor the world after a nuclear blast. By the 1990's most were abandoned and the one in Sandbach was filled in in 1990 with the surface structure removed leaving a field and the structure below.

According to the Subterranea Britannica (27 Apr 2001) the bunker was a Royal Observer Corps Monitoring Post (OS Grid ref; SJ76386208) and was opened in September 1963 and closed in October 1968 on the East side of the track to Fields Farm, 240 yards North of the A534 and was demolished leaving no surface trace in 1990. However it is possible that the structure has since collapsed leaving a surface dip in one of the fields where the bunker was.

One of those who knew about its existence was Peter Hanlon (Electrician and shop owner working for MANWEB at the time) who was involved in checking the electrical systems to make sure it worked. He tells us that it was intended to be completely self-contained with living arrangements to house important people in times of a nuclear attack. It consisted of two rooms accessed via a big metal door set into a mound which led to another door and finally the bunker itself was found after going down some stairs. He only visited on a about four occasions with a colleague and had to get the keys from the old Council Offices on Crewe Road (Opposite the Grammar School) and would be accompanied to the site where other people were also working on the bunker. It was larger than the monitoring stations but he thinks that they still had equipment to check what was going on above ground. His job was to check the independent generator which would have been used in the time of fallout as no external supply could be relied upon. All of this happened between 1955 and 1965 (Peter moved to Stoke on Trent from Sandbach) and suggests that it was built a little earlier than the ROC Stations and was possibly the result of World War 2 being built either just after the war because of Nuclear bombs or during the war to house important people from general bombing.

Nevell Thornhill owned the Farmland the bunker was on.

The bunker is not listed as part of a network of ROC monitoring posts (Middlewich No 27, Audlem No 26 and Silverdale No 25) and its proximity to the M6 may suggest that it was a larger version that was used as a bolt hole for dignitaries in transit on the M6 rather than for local people although Peter Hanlon's account would mean that the government knew they were going to build the motorway many years before it was actually opened.

THE TASK

The task of the bunkers were to warn the public of any air attack, provide conformation of a nuclear strike and the fall-out of radioactivity as well as providing information to NATO and as a post attack meteorological service to survivors.

They would be issued with a set of WB1400 carrier control warning equipment a unit that would broadcast a warning of a nuclear attack (HANDEL Nuclear Attack Warning equipment also known as Wire Broadcast System WB1400 – see <http://www.ringbell.co.uk/ukwmo/Page213.htm>) and the (Royal Observer Corps formed in October 1925 and disbanded December 1995) ROC stations would be manned by recruits from local secondary school science teachers, or commercial engineers and technicians with a scientific education. These employees would be trained once a fortnight by means of

printed material provided by the home office Scientific Branch and lectures and training by the Assistant Sector Controller at UKWMO (United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organisation – Formed 1957 and dissolved 1992) who had their headquarters at Cowley Barracks in Oxfordshire. It was usually not known who the operators were in an area but one give away could have been part of the training as every couple of years with no notice given they would suddenly be called away and disappear for 48 hours into their bunkers as part of an exercise.

THE BUNKER

The top of the bunker would be very basic and have very little to show it was a monitoring post. A Green metal entrance with hatch for a person to climb down into the bunker would be at one side with a Ground Zero indicator on top (Cylinder). In the middle area a Radiac Tube and a B.P.I. Baffle would protrude from the ground and on the other end as a small area would be an Air Vent which would be filtered in the event of nuclear fallout etc.

Underneath would be a 20 foot vertical ladder leading down to a 7ft x 16ft x 7ft high underground chamber. In this area would be a main observing room and two person bunk bed. At the bottom of the ladder would be a small room with a chemical toilet inside. The building had no electricity, gas or running water with the only form of communication available via a UKWMO speaker / intercom system to other posts in the area and headquarters. It was under these conditions that the operators would stay for up to three weeks after a nuclear attack.

AREA

Each area of the country was equipped with a number of bunkers which were then sub-divided into groups with a Master Post and a special number. Those ending in 10, 15, 20, 25 etc. would be master posts while other numbers would report to the master post.

In our area (South Cheshire) Middlewich was numbered 27, Audlem 26 and Silverdale 25 (The MASTER POST) with Sandbach coming under this area but no number registered on the list.

- Sandbach (Unknown)
- Altrincham 11
- Audlem 26
- Bomere Heath 30 (MASTER)
- Brierley Hill 51
- Cheslyn Hay 50 (MASTER)
- Church Stretton 47
- Gnosall 42
- Great Bolas 37
- Helsby 10 (MASTER)
- Knighton 56
- Knutsford 15 (MASTER)
- Ludlow 55 (MASTER)
- Lydbury North 57
- Malpas 21
- Market Drayton 35 (MASTER)
- Middlewich 27
- Minsterley 31
- Much Wenlock 46
- Nesscliffe 32
- Oakengates 36
- Overton 20
- Pattingham 53
- Poynton 16
- Rushton Spencer 17
- Silverdale 25 (MASTER)
- Standon 40 (MASTER)
- Stottesdon 52
- Upton Magna 45 (MASTER)
- Weston on Trent 41

LOCAL BUNKERS (MAP Reference SJ...)

Altrincham (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ71478879) 1965 to 1991.

Audlem (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ66104485) 1965 to 1991.

Crewe (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ72215208) 1964 to 1968.
 Faddiley (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ58735313) 1 May 1959 to 1 Oct 1968.
 Helsby (MASTER POST) (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ49247544)
 1 Oct 1962 to 1 Sept 1991.
 Hyde (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ95789260) 1 Dec 1962 to 1 Oct 1968.
 Knutsford (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ74847945) 1 Nov 1959 to 1 Sept 1991.
 Macclesfield (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ92497256) 1965 to 1968.
 Malpas (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ49454795) 1962 to 1991.
 Middlewich (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ70856629) 1965 to 1991.
 Neston (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ31487962) 1963 to 1991.
 Northwich (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ67287225) 1965 to 1968.
 Poynton (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ93208262) 1962 to 1991.
 Preston on the Hill (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ571819) 1965 to 1968.
 Rushton Spencer
 Sandbach (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ76386208) 1963 to 1968.
 Saughall (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ36656931) 1959 to 1981.
 Tarporley (ROC Warning and Monitoring station Ref; SJ53966386) 1965 to 1991.

Hack Green Secret Bunker outside Nantwich CW5 8AP (French Lane End, Nantwich)
 or CW5 8EN (44 Nantwich Rd, Nantwich).
 Hunt Green Nantwich CW5 8AQ ?

BBC RADIO STOKE – Bunker at Swynnerton MoD which was maintained by Chief Engineer Simon Penfold.

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#HO. OFFLEY HOUSE

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Offley House stands on the opposite side of the road from Offley Road and was for many years owned by the Foden family.

In the 1902 Kelly Directory the house was owned by William S Billington a Farmer.

By the First World War Mr Harold Lloyd lived at Offley House and in May 1917 he was engaged in the Transport Office at the Abbey Field Hospital. Presumably he was in charge of organising the movement of injured soldiers to and from the Hospital via the Railway Station and local transport. Harold was also involved with the Garden Committee. He was the organiser of Entertainments, Sports and games and was described as “Invaluable for the practical interest he took in the men, being constantly at the Hospital in the Evenings”. He worked at Abbey Field until January 1919. His wife was called Lucy Lloyd and during WW1 was the Assistant Commandant for the Red Cross at the Abbey Field Hospital, Sandbach and the Dowery Hospital in Nantwich organising whist drives, flag selling etc. and the working parties, putting in half days for 18 months plus 200 hours until September 1918.

In 1938 the House was still owned by Harold H Lloyd an Auctioneer.

In November 1941 Mrs Lloyd (Aged 59) died. Her funeral was attended by her husband Mr Harold H Lloyd, Lieutenant F. A. and Mrs Lloyd (Son and Daughter in Law). Miss A Newell and Miss Margaret Lloyd (Daughters), her brother Mr A Berry and other members of the family.

In October 1945, Frank Lloyd and Sons were working out of Offley House (Tel 23 or 335) with other addresses at 16 Watergate Street, Whitchurch (Tel 62), High Street, Wrexham (Tel 2041) and sold all classes of Motor Vehicles and Tractors which had a sale at Whitchurch (Salop) Smithfield on Friday 9th November 1945.

On the 13 October 1945 in the Liverpool Daily Post a report about two “Joy Ships” reaching the docks with the Mayor of Liverpool greeting returning soldiers who had been ex-prisoners and internees from the Far East. The Empire Pride (852 Army Personnel, 3 Navy, 2 R.A.F. and 51 civilians) and the Boissevain (1,742 Army Personnel, 1 R.A.F. and 1 civilian) which had on board Miss Mary Brighthouse, “granddaughter of the late Mr Samuel Brighthouse the well-known South West Lancashire coroner. Her father, Mr S Brighthouse, who died in internment at Saigu in May 1944, was for many years a solicitor in Bangkok, Siam. His wife and two daughters were interned there, but the youngest daughter, Jane, who was at school at Penang, was evacuated to Australia.

Mrs Brighthouse, who is a daughter of the late Mr Edwin Berry, the well-known Liverpool solicitor, is at Rangoon with her other daughter awaiting a ship home. Miss Brighthouse was met at the landing stage by her uncle, Mr Arthur Berry, of Offley House, Sandbach.”

In 1967 it became the home of Ken Beresford, another local truck haulier (Business in Staffordshire). The land adjacent to Offley house was once a Horse-racing course which has now been built on with the Tatton Drive Estate.

BERESFORD'S TRANSPORT

During the 1930's and 1940's a company called Beresford, Caddy and Pemberton operated ERF trucks from a High Street depot in Tunstall, Stoke on Trent Stoke and carried Earthenware and Pottery products from the many "Pot Banks" in Staffordshire to places in London, Liverpool and Manchester. In 1953 the company split and became Beresford Transport with many customers coming from the old company. With changes in transportation there was less pottery moved by road and so the company went into distributing H and R Johnson Ltd Tiles.

In the 1970's the company expanded into Middle Europe and moved into Container movement.

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OFFLEY ROAD

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Over the years the road has been known as Cinder Lane (1932), Narrow Lane and Offley Road. It has many houses and Offley Avenue comes off the main road. It is also the home of Offley Road School one of the first "Open Planned" Schools in the Country which was opened in the 1960's.

#####

OLD HALL HOTEL

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(See also pubs for landlord list)

Evidence of a 12th Century building on the site of the Old Hall exists with a wattle and daub rectangular building with a turf roof which was possibly used as a seminary for priests attached to the local minster (Now St Mary's Parish)

The site was also probably an ancient manor and home of the Sondbache Family from the 13th Century which according to historians was destroyed by fire. These were some stone roofing flags found when the building was restored in 2010 that had smoke damage making the assumption that they were reused in the New Hall.

The Old Hall was probably built for Sir John Radclyffe (The man who got the town a Market Charter in 1579). It is possible that Sir John's Son John Radcliffe built the house but no records exist of who actually organised the workforce.

Date of the actual building is unknown but a gable end has the numbers TB 1656. This is probably a later extension by Thomas Broome a local carpenter, who also did work in St Mary's Church. The building was a private residence until 1845 when it was split into two tenements, one of them becoming a public hotel called the "Three Turns Inn". The Inn was famous for its brewing of a strong malt liquor.

One feature of the Old Hall or Three Turn's Inn is a tunnel (Priest's Hole and an underground passage) that leads to St Mary's church and was supposedly used to smuggle priests escaping from prosecution (Now Bricked Up) unfortunately this is untrue as the building was erected well after priests had to flee and may have been a feature of the original building on the site. Another story is that they were used to smuggle in girls into the Coaching Inn a more promising story of the era. A second tunnel is also supposed to exist between the Hall and a house in Front Street but no evidence of this can be found.

In 1844 the "Old Hall" was owned by Mr Thomas Bostock a Silk Thrower who built "The Hill Factory" which by 1894 had been converted into flats.

In 1887 John Stringer did extensive restoration work for Lord Crewe (about £1,000 worth) who now owned the building. It was also at this time that a new extension was added to accommodate travellers on the Liverpool to Lichfield Coach which stopped off at the building. A Carriage Arch was built on the right wing of the hall leading to stables for the horses at the rear (Now Private Homes).

The Landlord of the Public House in 1938 was Harold Breakell.

Between 1939 and 1945 it is said that the building was requisitioned for the American Army under General Patton to house its officers during the war as the troops were based at Knutsford. It is also said that General Patton visited his troops at the Hall and at Knutsford on many occasions.

By 1958 it was owned by Lady Anabella Dodds-Crewe, a daughter of the late Marquis of Crewe. Among the building there are three original fireplaces one of which has a secret door on the right of the chimney. There is also a left handed staircase, built this way so that swordsmen could have their sword hand free, not something needed today and like the secret door panel possibly came from another building.

In the 1960's (?) while replacing a wall the skeleton of a baby was found in the cavity. This led to the usual stories of Ghosts haunting the building and indeed it is said to be haunted by the Grey Lady. In 2007 the Old Hall was put on the English Heritage "At Risk" list after it was put up for sale and became unoccupied. A "Sandbach Old Hall Action Group" was formed (in 2006-7) to try and save the building.

In 2011 the hall was reopened after refurbishment by Brunning and Price Ltd. The action group changed to the "Sandbach Old Hall Appreciation Group".

TUNNELS

There are two tunnels leading from the Old Hall. The first leads from the Cellar in the Hall to behind the Alter at St Mary's Church and was possibly used to smuggle Priests out of the hall to sanctuary in the church or escape. The second tunnel is supposed to go to one of the houses on Front Street and was thought to have been used to smuggle prostitutes / girls into the building.

GHOSTS AT THE OLD HALL

- Room 2 Matthew a man who hanged himself.
- Room 11 Lady in her 90's who possibly died in her favourite chair. Guests have felt that their beds have been on fire and some people while taking a bath have felt that they are being pushed under the water.
- Kitchen Poltergeists throw
- Behind Wood The panels came from Haslington Hall and when they were removed they discovered the skeleton of Lady Gray who is said to haunt the rooms in the old hall. Lady Gray is said to be searching for her child and when the panel was replaced in her room the skeleton of a baby was found (Haslington Hall).

DEREK ACORAH

Priest in the Priest Holes and Ground floor.
Two young prostitutes were possibly killed in the building and haunt the hall.



(Old Hall April 2004)

The building is GRADE 1 listed by English Heritage.

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#HP. **The PARK / Sandbach Park**

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The area of the park was originally owned by the Marriott family who in 1897 gave both his house (Demolished in 1969 and is the site of the Library – See Marriott House) and the grounds to the community of Sandbach (See Marriott House / Library).

In 1898 the first significant development was put into place with a new Bowling Green and the clubhouse for the Marriott House Bowling Club which was formed with Thomas Marriott being installed as its first President. Subscriptions at the time were half a crown for the first season and thereafter three shillings.

In April 1899, the Sandbach Urban District Council took over the land from the Right Honourable Earl of Crewe and others with a declaration of Trust to secure the area for a public park or pleasure ground for the people of Sandbach and no other purpose. The deed allowed the Council to let a small proportion of the land for the use by clubs / committees for tennis, bowling and other recreation sports for a term not exceeding seven years. The deed also states that the park should be open between 8am every day to the public, shutting the gates an hour before sunset.

The 6 acres of land at the back of the house were turned into the Park by the Sandbach Urban District Council (1894-1974) in 1901 when it was opened to the public for the first time.

The oldest official tree was planted in 1902 and was an Oak Tree planted to mark the coronation of King Edwards VII (No longer Marked).

The first marked tree dates from 1935 to mark 25 years of the reign of King George V.

The Park and Bowling Green are also the home of the Marriott House Veterans Club who provides teas on a Thursday for visitors to the Market (To October each year) and facilities for the members club.

By the 1960's two hard Tennis Courts were installed.

On the 17 April 1908, a Monument to Dr Charles Latham was unveiled outside the Town Hall.

However, as the town became busier it was decided on the grounds of safety that it should be moved to the park and was positioned in the entrance and next to the Fire Station before being relocated to outside Ashfield's Doctor's Surgery.

The Park has two bowling greens on the land, one named Marriott House and the other green was put into the park after developers built behind the George Hotel (Pub) (about 1989) and the Council moving their green to the park as a separately run space.

In January 1991 the George Bowling Club was renamed the "Sandbach Park Bowling Club" after the move from the George Hotel green to the new green in the Park.

Later in 1991 the pond in the far corner of the park was dug out officially as it had been a boggy part of the land and in 2013 it was extended and made into a feature area officially being re-opened on the 17 May 2014 by local MP Fiona Bruce.

On the 28 July 1998 a plaque commemorating the Centenary of the donation of the land by the Marroitt family was unveiled and placed on the main footpath side of the bowling green.



In 2010 the Sandbach Partnership commissioned Ryder Landscape Consultants Ltd to produce a concept design for improvements to the park based on views by users of the facility. These new improvements included a new Children's Play Area, Youth Facilities, Adult Recreation, environmental improvements and an Events infrastructure.

In May 2010 there was a fire in Sandbach Park which destroyed some of the play equipment.

On the 5 November 2010 the "Friends of Sandbach Park" was formed at its first meeting to look after the area and to redevelop it. The idea had been launched on the 18 September at the Sandbach Today Event with David Bone a member of the Sandbach Partnership co-ordinating the group before its first meeting.

In April 2011 the "Friends" installed a new Junior Play area (Opened by Cheshire East Mayor Gordon Baxendale and MP Fiona Bruce, April 2011) for under 15's.

A new Toddler's Play area was opened by Mayor Dennis Robinson in August 2011.

Improvements to the tennis court area were made in 2012 with a Multi-Use Games Area for 5 a side Football, Basketball and Netball Courts marked out with nets included.

In April 2012 an outside Gym was also installed with five items of equipment for over 13 year olds.

2012 also saw the refurbishment of the toilet facilities at the entrance to the park by the Cheshire East Council Assets team. These improvements now included disabled facilities and a baby changing area and were opened in March 2012.

The Friends also helped to organise a number of events in the Park including an annual Foden's Band Concert ("Party in the Park" on the First Saturday in July), Fun Days and a Sports Day.

On the 3 June 2012, an Oak tree was planted to Celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee as well as the official opening of a new flower bed (Dated 2 June 2012) in the main entrance to the grounds. In 2014 the park was awarded the "Cheshire County Playing Fields Association Les George OBE Memorial Award".

In 2013 the Friends of Sandbach Park identified the steep slope from Adlington Drive and so in 2014 the pathway slope was reduced to help with access to the park. (Funding from Cheshire East Council Park Development Fund)

In 2013 work started on improving the wildlife ponds in the park and the new look ponds were opened by MP Fiona Bruce in May 2014 with a new decked area and different habitats for wildlife in various stages of development from a new pond to an established one.

In 2015 a new concrete Table Tennis table and Boules pitch were installed near the tennis courts funded by Sandbach Town Council.

In July 2015, Sandbach Park had been given a "Green Flag" for the high standard of the site. Sandbach Park was only one of 1,582 parks in the country to have the award for excellence. The following year the Park was able to keep its status after a surprise inspection and in July / August 2017 after another full inspection the park was given its second flag.

On the 23 September 2015 the park had an unexpected visitor in the shape of the Northwest Air Ambulance which was attending a car crash on the Congleton Road near Tatton Drive.



Air Ambulance drops into the Park 23 Sept 2015

In 2016 using Section 106 Funding via the Sandbach Partnership the pathway from the Adlington Road access path to the area next to the ponds was widened and levelled to help with drainage.

#####

6th May 2017 TELEPHONE KIOSK ADDED TO SANDBACH PARK.

In April and May of 2017 a new addition to the park was installed. A Telephone Kiosk which had originally been in Platt Avenue and had been saved for the community was installed near the entrance to the park.

By the 1960's the Post Office had installed 64,000 telephone kiosks in Great Britain including a K6 Phone Box in Platt Avenue. These boxes were designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and has become an iconic part of what many consider to be Britain. However, by 2005 BT (British Telecom) had decided to shed many of its phone boxes with less than half of the 72,000 boxes being used as there was an increase in personal phones from the Apple I Phone to phones by Samsung and many other providers. Many people even have two phones, one for work calls and one for personal calls. One of the boxes abandoned was the one in Platt Avenue by Sweettooth Lane. It soon became a shell with its workings removed and cables disconnected, left to become an iconic memorial to a bygone age and something that should be preserved for future generations.



On the 17th August 2015, Stewart Green was passing the box as he had done for many years and noticed a message attached to it with the words “BT IMPORTANT NOTICE – Public Telephone Kiosk 01270- 759060 – BT is proposing to remove this Kiosk. If you have any comments about this, please contact the planning department at Cheshire East Council within 42 days from the date of this notice (30 July 2015), quoting the telephone number of this payphone.” With only a few days to object to its removal Stewart E-Mailed the Council and started a campaign to save the kiosk on Facebook via the “Sandbach Past and Present” page where hundreds of people started reminiscing about the times they used the box when they were young or living in the area. The Sandbach Chronicle then took up the story with a feature in the 20 August 2015 paper on page 56 and the letters page on page 40, that started the next phase of its salvation.

The Local PCSO's, Fire Cadets and Councillors started to show an interest in the campaign as well as Dot Flint of the Sandbach Partnership who took up the cudgel to save the kiosk. In 2008, BT introduced an “Adopt a Kiosk Scheme” where a charity or interested public body could take on the kiosk for a £1. BT needed to know Dot had serious backing and so she approached Cheshire East, Sandbach Town Council and many more to get permission and financial backing to renovate, restore and remove the box from Platt Avenue to a more secure location in the Park a suggestion made by many on Facebook and in the Chronicle.

Council Officials at Cheshire East agreed to the official adoption of the Kiosk on behalf of the Sandbach Partnership allowing Dot and her team to start making progress on the restoration of the kiosk.

The first job was to remove the Kiosk from its original location and to put it into storage until it could be stripped down to its base metal and then repainted.

On the 9 June 2016, Dot Flint and the Sandbach Partnership removed the Telephone Kiosk on Platt Avenue to a safe location to be sandblasted and repainted by Norman Belfield of M B Services, just before it was to be put into Sandbach Park the following spring. The operation should have taken place on Monday the 13 June but due to a crane being made available on Thursday the 9 June 2016, it was arranged for its removal to take place between 6.30pm and 7pm that night. Local residents were informed of its removal and to comply with a request from BT a notice had been put on the box showing that Cheshire East and the Sandbach Partnership had taken over responsibility for it. However, one local member of the public noticing the lorry removing the Kiosk called the Police and Cheshire Constabulary sent three cars from all over the County to see what was going on. Had a member of the Sandbach Police Force been available then they might have known of its removal as PCSO Spike Elliott has kept a keen eye on events to do with the phone box since its removal had been suggested back in August 2015 with the result that the story made a good headline in the Sandbach Chronicle. Dot managed to secure a large amount of funding for the project to take on phase three, installing the kiosk in Sandbach Park and on the 3 April 2017, the kiosk painted in grey suddenly appeared in the place left years ago by the removal of the Dr Charles Latham memorial which was moved to outside the Ashfields Surgery. Now by the Fire Station and opposite the bowling green and entrance Phil Mason and his team at Care4CE including Bob Bowerbank, painted the kiosk with its red coat and put in the replacement glass (Plastic) along with the lettering.



With it looking better than it has over the last 20 years the kiosk now stands proudly in the park in tribute to the hard work done by Dot Flint and her team who have made this icon just that. A wonderful tribute to everything that is British and more importantly to this Sandbach K6 phone box with its history and stories from Platt Avenue and hopefully its future stories in its new location.

Booked for a ceremony before an election had been called the, at the moment ex MP for the area Fiona Bruce performed the official opening ceremony for the kiosk on the 6th May 2017.

After completion, the plan is for the Sandbach Fire Cadets to take over its upkeep and responsibility with suggestions being sort as to its final use. One early suggestion was to house a Defibrillator inside but since the kiosk was moved from Platt Avenue the regulars at the Military Arms have purchased their own machine which is accessible to all opposite the Park. Other suggestions are a book drop (leave your old books for others to take and read before returning them for the next user), Notice board for local events, Art instillation, Picture gallery, Tourist information kiosk for leaflets and posters of local attractions or just a meeting place with a seat where people can meet to reminisce or just to watch the world go by.

Stewart Green who started the campaign to save the Telephone Kiosk was full of praise for Dot Flint who has put so much time and effort into saving this part of Sandbach and has made his wish for it to be part of the town for many more years to come true. It has been a long struggle to get funding and to arrange everything for its repositioning but as people walk past the fire station, library and park it has already become a very prominent part of the Town Centre and Stewart for one is very grateful for the effort Dot has put in to the project.



2017

 In 2018 the park installed its first "Insect Hotel".
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Also in 2018 the pathway from the gym area to the pond was redesigned for wheelchair use and funded partly by the Sandbach Partnership and Sandbach Town Council with money they have in reserve for Sandbach Park. The improvements also included a seating area and picnic area by the Fire station pathway.

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In 2019 ANSA, Friends of Sandbach Park and Cheshire East Council developed a Wet Area at the bottom of the park to encourage a Wild Flower Area. Cheshire Wildlife Association advised on planting having taken soil samples and suggested various native plants for the area.

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On the 28 June 2019, Sandbach Park had a few new amenities opened by MP Fiona Bruce and the Mayor of Sandbach Mike Muldoon. A new noticeboard at the front entrance was installed near the road and was funded by the Sandbach Partnership and the Friends of Sandbach Park. The raised bed in the sensory guardian had been completely rebuilt by Phil Mason and the Care4CE volunteers with funding by Cheshire East Council and ANSA Environmental Services who look after the maintenance of the park.

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In 2020, Sandbach Park was now looked after by various groups from Cheshire East Council via ANSA who plant flowers, trees and shrubs in the park including the Bowling Green and mow the lawns. The FRIENDS OF SANDBACH PARK are also responsible for planting in various areas and also keep the gardens free of weeds along with helping to make improvements to the space with the pond area, keep fit area and pathways which have been sponsored with money from the SANDBACH PARTNERSHIP who fund projects that are for the benefit of the citizens of Sandbach.

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The Park has had great success with the Green Flag award starting in 2015 and continuing in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Nov).

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In November the Park unveiled two new hopscotch games were etched (Painted) into the tarmac area by the fire station.

After the success of a Coffee and refreshment van in the park in October 2020 Peter Evans of Blackwater and Grub took over the concession to provide a warm drink etc.

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EVENTS

Annual	BONFIRE "Fireworks Display" (to 2012 Sandbach Lions Club / 2013 to 2016 "Blitz")
July 2000	Sandbach Dog Show (First of the Annual Shows – See 2010)
2 Sept 2000	FODENS BAND Concert in the Park.
3 July 2004	FODENS BAND Concert in the Park.
11 July 2010	Sandbach Dog Show (10 th Annual Dog Show)
6 Nov 2010	Bonfire Night
2011	Bonfire Night
5 June 2012	FODENS BAND "Party in the Park" to Mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.
3 Nov 2012	Bonfire Night
20 July 2013	"Family Fun Day". Includes Zorbing (In a Big Plastic Ball), Team games, Arts and Crafts, Face Painting, Willow Arts, Bat The Rat, Balloon Modelling. Free activities were organised by Nasar Raiz who organised team games such as Cricket, Football and Basketball. For the older person there is shove ha'penny and table skittles. The library also presented a 'Story time' in the Park
1 Aug 2013	"Sandbach Street Sports" organised by Leisure Development at Cheshire East.
7 Aug 2013	"Play and Sport Day" organised by Leisure Development at Cheshire East.
12 Aug 2013	"Sandbach Street Sports" organised by Leisure Development at Cheshire East.
23 Aug 2013	FODENS BAND "Party in the Park".
3 Nov 2013	Bonfire Night (Blitz)
10 Dec 2013	Community Pride Tree Planting – Planting of the Oak Tree which was part of the prize from the Community Pride Awards.
17 May 2014	Opening of the Pond and Boardwalk by Fiona Bruce MP.
5 July 2014	FODENS BAND "Party in the Park".
19 July 2014	"Summertime Fun in the Park" (Sandbach Town Council)

- 6 Aug 2014 "Play and Sports Day" (Cheshire East)
 2 Nov 2014 Bonfire Night (Blitz)
 27 June 2015 "Family Fun Day".
 4 July 2015 FODENS BAND "Party in the Park".
 5 Aug 2015 "National Play and Sports Day" (www.Playdays.org.uk)
 6 Nov 2015 Bonfire Night (Blitz)
 12 June 2016 Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations – Giant Picnic in the Park.
 2 July 2016 FODENS BAND "Party in the Park".
 16 July 2016 "Family Fun Day". (Later than last year)
 3 Aug 2016 "National Play and Sports Day" (www.Playdays.org.uk)
 30 Oct 2016 Bonfire Night at Sandbach Park (Blitz) **Last one.**
 24 June 2017 "Family Fun Day".
 1 July 2017 FODENS BAND "Party in the Park".
 2 Aug 2017 "National Play and Sports Day" (www.Playdays.org.uk)
 7 July 2018 FODENS BAND "Party in the Park".
 1 Aug 2018 "National Play and Sports Day" (www.Playdays.org.uk)
 23 June 2019 PICNIC IN THE PARK (Sunday 12.30pm)
 Fun and Games in the Park organised by the Grace Church
 Bring your own Food
 Family Guest Service at 10.30am in the Town Hall
- Sat 29 June 2019 FAMILY FUN DAY in Sandbach Park.
 Fun and games for all the family.
 Co-op Community Band 11.30am to 1.30pm
 Arts and Crafts
 Bowls
 Camouflage Activities
 Face Painting
 French Boules
 Junior Assault Course
 Organised Team Games
 Stilt Walking
 Table Tennis
 Victorian Games
 Zorbing
 TIME 11am to 4pm
 TICKETS Free
 CONTACT Sandbach Town Council 01270-600800
 WEBSITE www.sandbach.gov.uk
- 6 July 2019 FODENS BAND "Party in the Park".
 7 Aug 2019 ALL INCLUSIVE PLAY DAY / "National Play and Sports Day"
 (www.Playdays.org.uk) at Sandbach Park
 Arts Crafts and Sports Day in the Park.
 TIME 12noon to 3pm
 TICKETS Free (Bouncy Castle £2, Face Painting Charge)
 CONTACT Sandbach Partnership / Cheshire East Sports
 WEBSITE www.sandbachpartnership.co.uk

EVENTS CANCELLED IN 2020 – 21 DUE TO COVID 19 PANDEMIC.



19 May 2004

Pond Re-Opening May 2014

TREES PLANTED IN THE PARK include.

- 1902 Oak Tree planted to mark the coronation of King Edwards VII (No longer Marked)
- 6 May 1935 To Commemorate the Silver Jubilee of George V and Queen Mary
Planted by Cllr. George Booth JP (Chairman of Sandbach Urban District Council)
- 12 May 1937 To Commemorate the Coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth
Planted by Cllr. J H Jennings JP (Chairman of Sandbach Urban District Council)
- 1980 Tree to celebrate the 80th Birthday of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.
- 3 June 2012 To Commemorate Queen Elizabeth’s Diamond Jubilee
Planted by Cllr. Carolyn Lowe (Mayor of Sandbach Town Council)
- 10 Dec 2013 Community Pride Tree Planting – Planting of the Oak Tree which was part
of the prize from the Community Pride Awards.
- 2020 Four new trees were planted in the Park with tree guards round them to protect them
as they grow. A Tilia Crodata / Small Leafed Lime Tree (Near the Keep Fit
Equipment), Quercus Rubra / Red Oak Tree (Near the Football Pitch),
Taxodium Distichum Featherhead / Swamp Cyprus (Near the Pond) and a
Liriodendron / Tulip Tree (On the slope near the Daffodils).
- 2021 Two new trees were added towards the Fire Station area and picnic area.
Other trees were cut down as they had died or to provide more light for the area.

TREES IN THE PARK planted mainly by park keeper Neil Pardoe include

Acers, Alders, Ash, Beech, Cherry, Ginko Biloba, Holly Tree, Hornbeam, Larch,
Laurel, Line, London Plane, Magnolia, Oak, Poplar, Sycamore, Walnut and
Whitebeam.

FLOWER DISPLAYS

- Unkn Teddy Bears Picnic
- Unkn Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- 1977 Silver Jubilee
- 1981 Wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer
- 1994 Lions International in Sandbach 1984 to 1994 Anniversary.

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Sandbach PARTNERSHIP

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SANDBACH PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership has been involved with many aspects of the town from helping to set up groups and to assist with running events including over the years including the Sandbach Light Switch on, Sandbach Today, Halloween event, events in the park including “Play in the Park” and Health and wellbeing fairs in Sandbach.

One of the many events it organised was the Sandbach Today Event. Although it wasn’t started by the Partnership Dot Flint was involved and when she took over the Partnership she also took on the organising of the event.

SANDBACH TODAY EVENT

Aileen Thompson tells me that in the 1990’s Beryl Evans at Sandbach Library started events at the Marriott Room to promote local groups who used the library. The events took place on a Friday afternoon and evening in September with Sandbach Arts, The Ladies Association, Photographic Society, Bert Gill’s First Aiders and the Sandbach History Society taking part along with John Bowles who used to do sketches.

Started in 1997, the Sandbach Today event was first held on a Friday night at the Town Hall and was organised by Congleton Borough's Arts officer Carol McGregor, Cllr Dorothy Flint (Chairman of the Town Council) and Town Clerk Mike Garratt, to promote local organisations with an exhibition of many of the societies in Sandbach. Taking part were groups from Wheelock, Elworth, Sandbach Heath, Sports clubs, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts and the Sandbach History Society with the ballroom and bar area full of stands.

The second year of the event was also at the Town Hall but this time on a Saturday with an exhibition in January.

However, with various changes in local government and the formation of the Sandbach Partnership, the Partnership took over running the event in 2003 along with a committee of various volunteers who help to organise the annual event as it has become a major calendar date for networking between organisations, recruiting new members as well as publicising what is going on in the town.

Original committee helpers included Andy Maddock, Roger Foden, Aileen Thompson followed by Graham Hannen, Dick Maccaulay, Graham Alcock and Sue Brereton. Groups taking part included the Sandbach Arts Group (Now Disbanded),

In 2012 the event moved to St Mary's Church Hall after the price of the Town Hall had become too much for the event with about twenty-three organisations taking part.

In 2007, Dot Flint one of the organisers of the event wrote, "I had only intended to do this as a one off, but I am pleased to have been a part of it and seen how it has grown over the past 10 years". Twenty-two years on the event has seen a number of changes over that time period and many of those original groups in the Town Hall meeting are no longer active in Sandbach but have been replaced by new organisations including the U3A (Formed in 2003), the Rotary Club of Saxon Crosses (2003) and the "Friends" groups (Sandbach Park 2010). Established organisations from that 1997 exhibition were continuing to support the town and the event including the Sandbach Photographic Society (Formed in 1979) and the Sandbach History Society (Formed in 1976) who have not missed any of the Sandbach Today Events.

SANDBACH TODAY DATES

1997 =

1998 = Jan 1998 (Organised by Congleton Borough Arts)

1999 = 26 November 1999 (Organised by Congleton Borough Arts)

2000 =

2001 =

2002 = Wesley Centre (Organised by Congleton Borough Arts)

2003 = (Sandbach Partnership)

2004 = 18 September 2004 (Organised by Sandbach Partnership)

2005 =

2006 = 30 September 2006 at Sandbach Town Hall

2007 = 29 September 2007 at Sandbach Town Hall (Daytime)

(Organised by Congleton Borough Arts and Sandbach Partnership)

29 September 2007 Celebration event at Town Hall (Evening)

2008 = 27 September 2008 at Sandbach Town Hall.

2009 = 19 September 2009 at Sandbach Town Hall 10am to 2pm.

2010 = 18 September 2010 at Sandbach Town Hall 10am to 2pm. (Opened by Fiona Bruce)

2011 = 17 September 2011 at Sandbach Town Hall 10am to 2pm.

Last Event at the Sandbach Town Hall before it moved to St Mary's.

2012 = 15 September 2012 at St Mary's Church Hall between 9.30am and 1.00pm.

2013 = 7 September 2013 at St Mary's Church Hall between 9.30am and 1.30pm

along with Youth Organisations on the Market Square.

2014 = 20 September 2014 at St Mary's Church Hall and Market Square.

2015 = 19 September 2015 at St Mary's Church Hall and Market Square.

2016 = 17 September 2016 at St Mary's Church Hall and Market Square.

2017 = 16 September 2017 at St Mary's Church Hall.

2018 = 15 September 2018 at St Mary's Church Hall.

2019 = 21 September 2019 at St Mary's Church Hall.

2020 = Cancelled due to Covid 19 (was to have been the 19 September)

The Sandbach Partnership was formed in 2003 by Cheshire Borough Council when funding became available from a scheme to help 16 towns in the North West as part of a Rural Recovery Fund. The fund was called the Market Town Initiative Fund and was aimed at supporting Market Town's including Sandbach to help with their regeneration.

In those early years a £1.8 million donation helped to build the Sandbach Enterprise Centre, The regeneration of the Market Square and a shop front grant initiative to encourage the improvement of the look of the buildings to bring them in line with the rest of the town.

In 2005 Dot Flint was invited to take on the role of Chairman of the Sandbach Partnership after failing leadership looked as though the initiative would collapse. Dot initially agreed to stay for 12 months to turn around the Partnership, but this was soon extended as more projects were added to the success of the group and more funding was becoming available to help with schemes to improve the facilities within the town as well as advising on other Partnerships in South Cheshire.

By 2007 David McGifford was the Enterprise Manager (Enterprise Centre) and Julie Walker helped to organise events including the Sandbach Today event.

In 2007 the Sandbach Partnership joined with the Congleton Borough Council and Sandbach Town Council to form a "Sandbach Community Pride" organisation to enter the National Civic Pride competition.

In 2007 they took over the Market Square and replaced the surface along with arranging an archaeological dig to find out more of its history. Replacement of the cobbles took place in August 2008 with plans to finish the project at the end of March 2009. On the 11 July 2009 a launch event was held on the Market Square to celebrate the improvements with activities from local groups and included performances from local entertainers.

In 2008 the Partnership set about some projects in Sandbach Park and continued to support the Friends of Sandbach Park as well as funding new pathways and disabled access.

2008 also had funding for new street furniture in the town alongside new litterbins, benches, signposts and notice boards to tell people of events. The year also had funding for 100 new hanging baskets and eleven continental planters to be distributed around the town.

In 2009 a Historic Trail leaflet was funded by the partnership.

In 2010 the Partnership was involved with a project to develop a comprehensive Town Action Plan for the future development of the town into 2020. Along with the Town Council they would consult on various aspects including cycle lanes and youth projects.

In May 2010 Sue Brereton joined the Sandbach Partnership having worked in Local Government for 30 years including Newcastle Borough Council in the Community Recreation Service and Congleton Borough Council as the Community Development Manager.

2010 the Friends of Sandbach Park was formed with David Bone a member of the Sandbach Partnership co-ordinating the group before its first meeting on the 5 November 2010.

In May 2010 a fire in the park had caused extensive damage to play equipment with a working group in October 2010 looking at various options to replace damaged items.

In 2007 there was a "Light up a Life" event at the Community Garden on Scotch Common organised by the Sandbach Support Group for St Luke's Hospice which continues alongside the "Light Switch on event. The 4 December 2009, event included a short service at St John's Sandbach Heath. This idea was taken a step further by the Partnership with a "Tree of Light Festival".

On the 8 December 2011 the first Tree of Lights Ceremony took place at Sandbach Cemetery with stars to remember those who have passed away available from the Library, Westfields Council offices, the Sandbach Town Council and the Sandbach Partnership in the Enterprise Centre. Town Mayor Dennis Robinson (and Town Crier) led the service with readings and music from the Sandbach Ladies Choir and St John's School.

On the 26 October 2013 the Partnership staged its first Halloween Event on the Market Square between 4pm and 7pm with a fancy dress competition and various spooky stalls.

At the 2015 AGM Craig Bayley was made Vice Chairman of the Sandbach Partnership after David McGifford had stepped down to pursue pastures new. Craig was involved with the Disability Resource Exchange (Closed in 2012 due to the lack of funding) and has been instrumental in helping to improve the town centre to make it Disabled friendly by installing dropped curbs and pathways in the park etc.

In 2015 Craig was involved with the setting up of the "Grassroots Disability Sandbach" a forum for ideas.

In 2017 the Partnership opened a phone box in the Park which they had moved from Platt Avenue after Stewart Green wrote an article for the Sandbach Chronicle about how it should be saved for the people of the town.

In September 2020 Dot Flint announced that she was standing down as Chairman of the Sandbach Partnership a role she has been at the heart of for 19 years.

In 1994 Dot stood for election to the Sandbach Town Council and Congleton Borough Councils and became councillors for both organisations. Her husband Fred was Chief Executive of Congleton Borough Council. In 1998 Dot Flint became Chairman of Sandbach Town Council (Mayoral Role) and it was then that she started the Sandbach Today event under the funding banner of Congleton Borough Council.

2017 COMMITTEE

Chairperson	Dot Flint
Vice Chairperson	Craig Bayley
Project Officer	Sue Brereton
Volunteer Representative	Sue Wood (Ashfields Patient Participation Group)
Community Representative	Cllr Mike Benson (Cheshire East and Friends of Sandbach Park)
Sandbach Town Council Representative	Cllr Gill Merry
Cheshire East Council Representative	Cllr Barry Moran

On the 24th November 2020 (Tuesday at 7pm in the Masonic Hall) Dot was due to hand over the role at the AGM unfortunately due to the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown in November the AGM was postponed to February. Sue Brereton was also standing down as she was retiring. At the February 2021 AGM Keeley Todd was appointed the new Chairman of the Sandbach Partnership.

However things didn't go smoothly and at the February 2022 AGM Keeley Todd and Mike Benson both put in their resignation from the organising committee with Keeley citing "Targeted Harassment" online as one of the reasons for her departure. The 19 May 2022 Sandbach Chronicle announced that Keeley had written updated job descriptions for the roles within the Partnership and a period of two weeks for applications from forum group members. If after that period no applications had been received then a further two weeks would open up applications to outsiders.

GROUPS STARTED WITH THE HELP OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Sandbach Fire Cadets
Clean Team
Friends of Sandbach Park
Sandbach Dementia Group
Grassroots Disability

PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

27 Oct 2012 Halloween Event

6 Dec 2012 Tree of Light Ceremony

26 Oct 2013 Halloween Event

5 Dec 2013 Tree of Light Ceremony

1 Nov 2014 Halloween Event / Spooky Saturday

4 Dec 2014 Tree of Light Ceremony

31 Oct 2015 Halloween Event

3 Dec 2015 Tree of Light Ceremony

29 Oct 2016 Halloween Event / Spooky Fancy Dress

8 Dec 2016 Tree of Light Ceremony

28 Oct 2017 Halloween Event / Spooky Spectacular

7 Dec 2017 Tree of Light Ceremony

27 Oct 2018 Halloween Event / Spooky Saturday

6 Dec 2018 Tree of Light Ceremony

26 Oct 2019 Halloween Event / Spooky Saturday. **Cancelled at the last minute due to bad weather.**

5 Dec 2019 Tree of Light Ceremony

2020 Events Cancelled due to Coronavirus.

30 Oct 2021 SPOOKY SATURDAY at St Mary's Church Hall.

Thurs 2 Dec 2021 TREE OF LIGHT CEREMONY

Sandbach Partnership's Annual event to remember the loved ones that have passed away.

Held at the Cemetery on Newcastle Road Dedicated Stars will be placed on a special tree.

Last date for Stars 20 November 2021.
Stars are available from
Sandbach Library,
Sandbach Partnership (Wesley Avenue Enterprise Centre)
Sandbach Town Council at the Town Hall Entrance,
Sandbach Rugby Club,
The House (Blackwater and Grubb) on Congleton Road,
Demeter Foods at 12 Welles Street,
And Sandbach Market on Thursday the 18 November.
TIME 4.30pm (Gates Open) / 5pm Ceremony
TICKETS Free
CONTACT Sandbach Partnership 01270-752124 / 01270-768693
WEBSITE www.sandbachpartnership.co.uk

END
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