



Rainford Heritage News

Issue 16, April 2018

Dear Members

Fundraising towards the new heritage centre continues to surprise us with the Spring Quiz breaking all previous records and netting £815, much of this being due to the generosity of the people who came and the money they spent on the raffle and the stand-up bingo. Many thanks for your support and thanks to David Grice for doing the stand-up bingo.

The barn at Bridge Farm is well on the way to being cleared after a 6 month delay and we hope to give a detailed progress report in time for the August newsletter. The first job will be to undertake structural surveys to assess ground structure and the amount of underpinning required.

We have installed a footfall counter on the door at Inglenook Centre and have been amazed at the number of visitors. The March Sunday Market total was 630 visitors and the month which included Easter gave us a fantastic 1,500 visitors.

April Sunday Market was not as well attended in general but we still counted 577 people coming in to have a chat and see the exhibits and artefacts; this of course includes many children. The footfall counter cost us over £100 but it is necessary to prove footfall when applying for grants. If any business wishes to install one we can recommend the type we chose and can pass on details.

Looking forward to seeing you at one of our summer events.

Ray Waring
Chairman

Inside this Issue:

Chairman's Letter	1
New Bottle Collection	2
Looking to the Future	3
Business Members' News	3
Rainford Milestones	4
Metal Detecting	5
AGM	5



New Bottle Collection

Rainford Heritage has recently been given a selection of bottles by Barry Eastham of Springfield. Barry was a digger driver and came across these bottles as a consequence of his job where he would occasionally dig up an old tip. Based on the names and addresses embossed on the bottles Barry mainly worked in Southport, Liverpool, Chester and Bolton. Here are some picture of the stoneware ginger beer bottles that Barry found.

Many local ginger beer bottles were made at Midland Pottery, Melling. Melling Pottery started in 1872, initially staffed with migrant potters from Rutherglen, Glasgow. Clay was shipped from Devonshire via Stanley Docks, Liverpool and barged along the Leeds/Liverpool canal. The coal for the kilns was barged in from Wigan along the same canal.

In 1922 the pottery was bought by Harley's Jam of Aintree and the production appears to have been diverted to solely producing jam jars as there does not appear to be any Midland pottery produced after this date. The pottery was destroyed by fire in 1929 resulting in many men and women being thrown out of work.



David Pye

Looking to the Future

It will be at the end of this year before our first application form can be submitted to start the process of applying for a Heritage Lottery Grant. I have therefore been putting together a group of professional people who will advise the committee and take us towards the last step to opening the new centre at Bridge Farm. There are still a couple of roles I am trying to fill, ie Financial Adviser, someone to formulate a 2 year business plan and a professional Minute Secretary. The meetings will only be about 6 per year and while I know not everyone has the time, I am sure there are people out there who would be willing to give something back to the community over the next 2 years and help us open the heritage centre, which is something we have been working to achieve for the last 5½ years. They would not in this case need to be members of the society to join the group, so if you know anyone please let me know.

Now that we are getting nearer to our goal the Committee is looking to sell some fundraising items, as in the new centre there will be a visitors' shop which, hopefully, will go some way towards ensuring a steady income for the Society. We are already selling local history books and would like to slowly add things such as Rainford tea towels, pens, pencils, mugs and maps of heritage walks. These could also be sold on Ebay to people with memories of Rainford. In conclusion we need a **Marketing Manager** who would be willing to give the necessary time.

Do you know anyone?

Business Members' News

We have several new businesses who have joined us for 2018 - Best Property Centre, AG Auto Body Repairs, Mahood Marquees Ltd, Chris Houghton at Rainford Online Trading, Richard Humphries at Rainford Farm Shop, Grace Tabern at Grace Ancestry (a Genealogist and Family Historian) and John Tabern of Tabern Electrical Ltd. We thank them all for their support and I hope you, in turn, will support our business members whenever possible.

Well done Rainford Deli!! Ann Marie and the gang ran an Easter raffle for their customers and put the profits into the 2 donation boxes on the counter, one of which was ours. We would also like to thank them for putting out our local history books for customers to browse through; it created interest and is selling extra books. Thanks everyone!

An excellent social history talk at the Library by member Barbara Hurst of BJC Photography was enjoyed by all those who attended, this is resulting in talks at other local libraries so if you missed it watch out next time.

Paul Draper at The Junction Pub has finished the Snug extension and we were able to help by providing the photos on the left hand wall, one of which is on public view for the first time. They now have a new chef and have started to do some special offers; the new menu will be out shortly.

Janette and John Cockayne at Bridge Farm have made great progress with their Tea Rooms and builder Phil Anders says it should be ready in July, so watch this space.

Janette has also applied to extend her camping space to take a few more tents and caravans. If you know any campers or caravaner's pass on the good news.

All businesses, please let me know if you are doing anything different, I am here to help you and don't forget our free advertising at Inglenook Centre.

Rainford Milestones and an Ancient Road

Milestones were a simple distance marker set 1 mile apart to measure the distance travelled and the distance to your next destination. Some stones were flat some almost square and the later ones triangular with a sloping top.

Many very old ones would be set along a Roman road and, of course, be marked with Roman numerals. The ones in Rainford are about 150 years old; I have simply worked this out from the spelling of St Helens - surely any earlier would have said St Elyn, the name coming from the church in the centre which eventually gave the town its name in the industrial revolution.



Starting at the north the first stone is by Randle's Brook Bridge and is leaning badly; on one side it has 'Ormskirk 6 miles' and on the other side 'St Helens 5 miles'. We of course have no idea if any of our milestones have been moved over the last century and a half.

Going south the next stop is at the junction of Church Road and Rookery Lane where we find one on the right against the wall of a cottage. It says on this one 'St Helens 4 miles Ormskirk 7 miles'.



Carrying on south there is one at the bottom of the hill by the first house on the left that goes up to the Bottle and Glass Pub. This is the same shape but very low in the ground. However, it is different because it simply says 'Rainford' in large letters across the front, as if a boundary marker. That is the last I found along the road to St Helens and if there are measurements underground perhaps we will never know.



The milestones were followed by Fingerposts which can be found on old maps, followed by the modern road signs we have today

You may know the roads through the village by the various names they have had over the years but did you know that the ancient name is Chester Lane. The old winding road started at Latham House/Castle; I don't know it's actual date but it was well established and refortified by 1644 when Oliver Cromwell and his Parliamentarians attacked.

Coming into Rainford travellers would pass Rainford Chapple probably c1530 but the first curate recorded in 1541. Past the ancient stocks and what is now the Derby Arms was the site of John Berrington's ale house dating from early 1600s. Rainford would be a great place to rest as there were also streams and wells to quench ones thirst.

Chester Lane then winds its way to Windle where 2 witches were sent for trial in 1642. On the left travellers would pass Windle Chantry, early 1400s, and St Thomas's Well; both are still there today. Dropping down into St Helens it passed on the right the old chapple of St Elyn 1552, rebuilt in 1618, which is now the site of the Parish Church. On the left, and still there today, is Friends Meeting House built 1679.

The lane then winds its way through Peasley Cross to Sutton Manor where at the top of Sherdley Park the part of the road from the island heading to the old Sutton Manor Colliery is the only part in St Helens to retain the name of Chester Lane. Lords of this manor in 1321 were the De Holland family and in 1558 Rodger Holland was burnt at the stake for heresy, then in 1642 Thomas Holland who was a Jesuit priest was tried for high treason.

Chester Lane went out toward Widnes then Warrington before ending up in Chester where its first castle was built out of wood in 1070 by William the Conqueror it has been added to and strengthened many times over the centuries.

I hope to do more in-depth work on this ancient lane when I have more time.

Ray Waring



The Society's Metal Detecting Group has started detecting again after months of flooded fields kept us sitting by the fire! We are working on a meadow at Bridge Farm where some interesting coins have so far turned up but of particular interest is an early shoe buckle found by Dennis. When the meadow is finished the items will be put on display in our 'Latest Donations Exhibition' for everyone to see. This will be at Rainford Library in May. If all goes well, we hope to then move onto land at Lower Shades.

Please remember that only Heritage Society members can detect with us; also you cannot join the Society simply to metal detect, but must participate in Society activities.

AGM

Don't forget if you wish to attend the AGM it is on Friday, 18th May 6.30 to 7.00pm in the Function Room at the Junction Pub. It will take the usual format and we will welcome for the first time Joanne Cook and Phil and Carol Cornforth all of whom came on the committee during the last term. If anyone would like the chairman's job I will be only too willing to step down as I was 6ft 3in when I started it!!

Committee Members

Chairman	Ray Waring	01744 885547
Treasurer	Jill Woods	01744 635508
Displays Organiser	David Pye	01695 722112
Newsletter	Norma Waring	01744 885547
Member	Martin Rigby	01744 884153
Member	Tony Hirons	0151 431 0856
Fundraising	Joanne Cook	01744 885840
Member	Carol Cornforth	01744 635415
Member	Phil Cornforth	01744 635415

Committee Appointments:

Adviser on Rainford History	Joan Dagnall
Grant Applications	John Davies
Metal Detecting Lead	Dennis Brownbill



Rainford Heritage Society

Joining Form 2018

Name:

Address:
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Post Code: Tel No.

E-mail:

Gift Aid: Yes / No

Membership Group (please tick)

- ◆ £10 Individual
- ◆ £15 Family
- ◆ £20 Business

Please send to: Ray Waring, 4 Reeds Brow, Rainford WA11 8PN
or Jill Woods, 154 Church Road, Rainford WA11 8PX