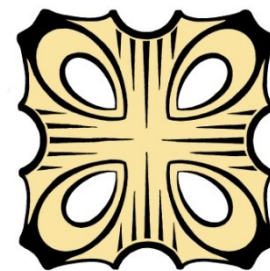


THE WOOLTON SOCIETY

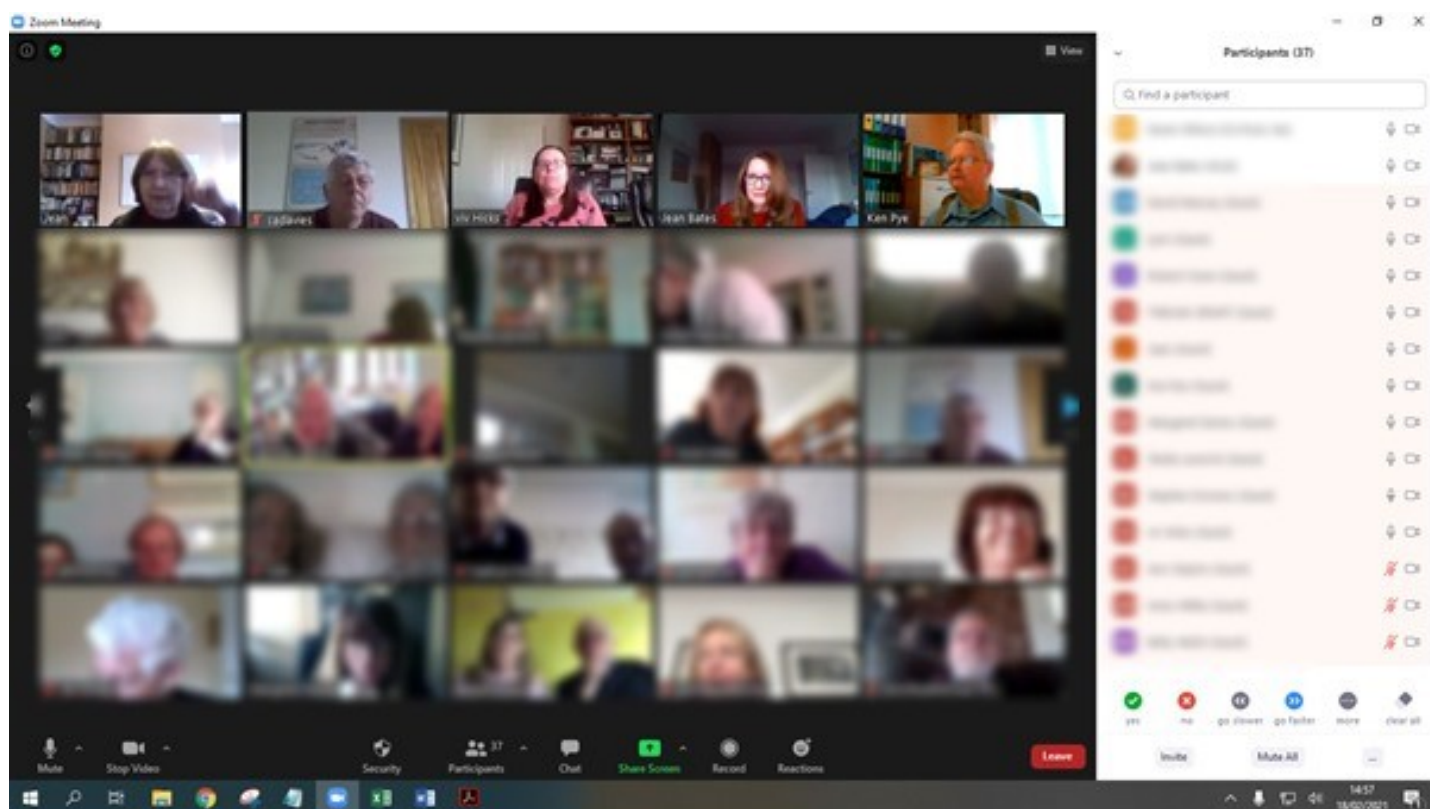
www.wooltonsociety.org.uk

ISSUE NO 358 Spring 2021

THE WOOLTON SOCIETY - SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR NEARLY 50 YEARS



NEWSLETTER



Screen shot of Ken Pye's Zoom talk on February 18th

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Society News

Recent talks

The Woolton Society has been very fortunate in having two exceptional speakers to present the first online talks. The decision had been made by the committee last year to hold talks online for the foreseeable future, as with halls closed by the pandemic restrictions it was no longer possible to meet in person. Moving online was a decision made by many groups & societies, with the Gateacre & Wavertree societies, as well as the Women's Institute & the Arts Society making the same move. It was accepted that the choice was between moving online or having no meetings at all. It has been acknowledged that this decision excludes those members without internet access, & also non members who have always been welcomed to the talks, but it is hoped that the move online will be a temporary one.

There has been much positive feedback about the two online talks, which have been particularly popular with long distance members who had been unable to attend talks in person. It has been suggested that the online talks could be continued in the dark winter months, although the move has been to afternoon talks in February & October for this reason. It could be that some talks will be online, perhaps by way of live streaming, in the future, even when the world returns to normal.

Ken Pye was the speaker for the very first online talk on 18th February, with the lost history of Woolton as his subject. This was a very informative & entertaining talk, with Ken finding fresh information even for those who know Woolton well. A lively question & answer session followed the talk. A screen shot of this talk is on page 1 of this newsletter.

On 17th March, Marie Passey spoke on the history of Duke Street, taking us on a guided tour of this historic thoroughfare. This was fascinating, & Marie spoke without notes for over an hour as she does when leading tours about the city as a blue badge guide. It is hoped that members will be able to go on one of Marie's tours in person, as soon as restrictions are lifted.

The Woolton Society's programme of events for the remainder of 2021

The talks & events for April, May & June will be held online, with members sent a link to access the talk a few days before the event. It is hoped that the Autumn programme will be held in St Mary's hall. More information should be available in issue 359 of the newsletter, out in June or July.

There has been a change to the published programme for the April talk, with the history of the telephone box being rescheduled for a date in 2022.

Wednesday 21st April at 7.30pm, David Hearn: The Fab Five

David Hearn will be speaking on the architects who made Liverpool's skyline so distinctive, & who made the city what it is. They are John Foster junior, Peter Ellis, Sir James Picton, Alfred Waterhouse, & Thomas Shelmerdine. Mention will also be made of Herbert James Rowse.

Wednesday 19th May at 7.30pm, Rob Kirby: the Dam Busters Raid of May 1943

WS committee member Rob Kirby gave a very well received talk to a packed audience in February 2019. This was on the development of the AVRO Manchester, the legend behind the Lancaster bomber. Rob mentioned the Dam Busters raid in his talk, & so was immediately booked to speak on this subject as soon as possible. This promises to be an equally informative evening.

Wednesday 17th June at 7.30pm: Quiz Night

This will be the fourth quiz night although it will be the first with participants playing from home. The defending champions are The Layton Ramblers who won the coveted trophy in June 2019.

No talks or events are planned for July or August. Fuller details of the Autumn programme will be in newsletter 359. Members will be notified in good time whether the talks will be held in St Mary's hall or online.

Wednesday 15th September at 7.30pm: Chris Tigwell, The Rainhill Trials

The Rainhill Trials of 1829 were held to test locomotive power for the Liverpool to Manchester railway which was then under construction. Five locomotives were entered in the trials, with Stephenson's *Rocket* the only one to complete the course. This was a pivotal moment in the history of transport.

Thursday 21st October at 3pm, Stephen Guy: Forgotten Liverpool, aristocracy & merchants.

The West Derby Society's Stephen Guy, a well-known local historian & writer will be speaking on the people who made Liverpool the second city of empire in the nineteenth century.

Wednesday 17th November at 7.30pm: 49th Annual General Meeting of the Woolton Society

It is to be hoped that the 2021 AGM will be held at St Mary's hall, & that as many members as possible will be able to attend. Refreshments are planned!

It should be noted that the WS will be celebrating its 50th birthday in 2022, so an item on the agenda could well be suggestions from members on how best to mark the occasion.

At the tenth anniversary in 1982 a dinner dance was held at Woolton Hall, with sixty six members & friends dancing the night away.

The twentieth anniversary in 1992 saw a party at the village club, with a birthday cake decorated with a Woolton cross cut by society president Dr Carl Warner.

There is no record of any celebrations of the thirtieth anniversary in 2002, as at the time the society was in a state of flux, being very nearly dissolved in 2004. Fortunately a group of stalwart members revived the society, with it being revitalised under the chairmanship of Edith McGlashan.

The ruby anniversary in 2012 saw another party in the club, with wine & cake. The previous year an oak tree had been planted on High Street's dual carriageway, now known as the Woolton Oak.

There have been several suggestions for the golden jubilee celebrations, ranging from a grand day out to planting another tree. All sensible suggestions will be considered.

Full details of the AGM will be in issue 360 of the newsletter, out in September or October. At the AGM the officers & committee will be elected, & new committee members are always welcomed. All societies need an active committee, with the WS the duties are not onerous & always interesting. If anyone should be interested in standing please contact the society via the website or ask any current committee member.

Plaques Project

Previous newsletters have reported on the society's plans to install commemorative plaques on several sites around the village. So far three have been unveiled, at 38 Linkstor Road, in honour of police radio pioneer Edgar Menzies, on the old library on Allerton Road, & the Mechanics' Institute on St Mary's Street. The unveiling ceremonies were in November 2019 & January 2020.

The project has been stalled until recently but plans are now under way to install several more plaques. Notice has been served on the doctors at Woolton House Medical Centre & the owner of the old school on School Lane that the society plans to install a plaque on their building. This notice is a legal requirement for listed buildings, although all the owners have expressed great pleasure in the proposals. The old school is the oldest known building in Woolton, with a date of 1610 over the doorway. At Woolton House the plaque would be to commemorate Dr Carl Warner GP, holder of the Military Cross, a founder member of the Woolton Society & later chairman & honorary president. A plaque is also planned for the former court house on Quarry Street, but as this is not a listed building the process is much simpler.

The notice period has now passed & so a formal application for listed buildings consent is going ahead. This has to be done by way of the planning portal, with permission, if granted, taking around eight weeks to process. If approval is granted the plaques will be made at Photocast in Speke, & will

be in the house style, which is circular & with the Woolton Society logo, & in a shade known as *Duchess blue*.

A further tranche of plaques is being planned, with the former convent at 45-47 Woolton Street on the list. This is also a listed building, as are many in the village centre. It is hoped that there will be more to report in newsletter 359, out in June or July.

Markets and merchandise.

It is unlikely that the markets will be held again in the village until at least May. The restrictions will not be eased until April 12th at the earliest which would be too late for the market that month. Saturday 8th May will thus be the first date the market could open. The Woolton Society has taken part in the markets for many years, as the stall provides excellent publicity, with many new members enrolling after meeting committee members at the stall.

The stall also gives an opportunity to browse the range of publications & pamphlets, with, so far, two books & five pamphlets to our name. The books are available in the meantime at Brown's on Woolton Street, as well as books by members Stuart Rimmer & Charles Roberts. Please see page 8 of this issue for more information on these.

The Woolton Society publications are *A History of Much Woolton*, priced at £3, & *Woolton Stone & Liverpool Cathedral*, priced at £5. This is also available at the bookshop in the Anglican cathedral.

Matters arising from newsletter 357

After comments on the society's difficulties in accessing the council's planning applications the situation has much improved. Councillors Kelly & Brown have sent their own list of applications, & the society has now been added to the council's list to receive regular updates on all applications relevant to the conservation area & the wider L25 environs. This is very good news, & thanks go to all concerned.

Questions have been asked about the Woolton Society's archives, which consist of several large boxes of papers & photographs inherited from founder Janet Gnosspeilus. There are also copies of every newsletter from issue number 1 in 1973 to the most recent. This is a valuable resource for the newsletter editor who is able to delve into the archive to confirm details, & is often able to find material of interest to members today. It is notable that the same topics recur over the decades: the deterioration of Woolton Hall, parking & traffic in the village, litter, noise, nasty smells & concern over planning developments. Newsletter copies are also sent to the records office as they constitute an extensive archive of a thriving civic society.

Environment, Planning News & Applications

Woolton Hall

In January the hall, which is Grade 1 listed, was put up for sale by the owners, with an asking price of £4 million. Woolton Manor is also on the market, with the price set at £6 million. When last seen the hall was in a state of considerable disrepair, with the photographs on the estate agent's site not reflecting the current condition of the building. The main photograph showed a gathering at the hall which looked to be set in Victorian times, while the interior shots appeared to date from the 1980s. The hall is with the estate agent Orme Associates (phone number 0151 227 9191) who were somewhat vague about the property when contacted. It was admitted that the photographs were not current, & that there had been "some interest" in the hall, but no offers had so far made for the property. The agent has promised to keep the Woolton Society informed of all developments. Members will be notified if any offers are made.

Land at Woolton Manor

The society has reported on the development of this land for some years now, as the developer plans an estate of eco-lodges which resemble prefabs but which will be on the market for a million pounds each. There has been vigorous opposition to the scheme, which is on green wedge land on the edge of the village, but the site is now being cleared. The developer, Rushton Properties, has notified the society that they plan to have a bat roost, using a derelict shelter, plus bat boxes dispersed about the site in accordance with the ecological recommendations for a wildlife area. An image of the shelter is on page 8 of this issue.

Jeudwine Close

After a mention in issue 356 several members have contacted the society to comment on the land at the end of Jeudwine Close where it borders Speke Road. This had been fenced off, with some suggesting that the council planned to use the land to widen the pavement. Councillor Juarez has contacted a WS member to report that the land had been bought by a resident who planned to make a "sensory garden/grassy area for dogs with problems ie blindness, deafness or other issues". This is unusual, but it is to be hoped that the fenced area will be kept clean & tidy.

The Village Club

In March the Village Club posted on social media that it would be re-opening the beer garden on 12th April at 2pm. This was not good news for the residents of The Water Gardens on Church Road South, built on land sold by the club in 2014. This development was opposed by the Woolton Society & many residents as the apartments were built on the former orchard which bordered the bowling green at the rear of the club. In March 2020 the club gave notice to the bowling team but no warning to the residents of the flats which directly overlook the green. A large number of tables, benches & outdoor lights were set up on the bowling green & months of disturbance followed.

Residents will remember the scenes in the village last Summer, when large crowds flocked to drink in the open air after some restrictions were eased. The result was that four premises were taken to task by the licensing committee for breaching the terms of their licences. The village club also came in for criticism by many residents as it started offering instant membership so that the premises could be used by many more people.

The Water Gardens residents are mainly retirees, who are greatly saddened by the sudden lack of peace & quiet in their homes. They are currently seeking legal advice.

Planning Applications

Please note that the development description is the one provided by the applicant/agent & is subject to change by a planning officer when the application is validated. The progress of each application can be checked online using the Planning Explorer at:

<http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/>

The majority of recent applications have been for tree works or single storey extensions. Others of note are:

20H/2925 27 Acrefield Road L25 5JH

To erect a two storey extension to side & rear.

21H/0312 28 Chartmount Way L25 5LB

To erect a part two storey/part first floor extension, with a single storey extension to front & rear.

20H/2590 12 Hathaway Close L25 4SN

To erect a two storey extension to the rear, following demolition of the existing garage.

20H/2038 24 Orient Drive L25 5NZ

To erect a two storey extension to the side.

20L/0621 Woolton House Medical Centre L25 5JA

To erect a single storey link extension following the demolition of the existing conservatory.

20F/1605 Menlove Car Sales & Car Wash Vale Road L25 7SE

To erect a part three/part four storey building to comprise 31 apartments for over 55s, with associated parking & amenity space, following the demolition of existing buildings. Carry out works to existing boundaries & footpath & associated landscaping.

It has been noted that only 15 car parking spaces are planned for the 31 apartments.

20H/0449 2 The Riffel Woolton Park L25 6DR

To sever curtilage of site & remove link building between main dwelling existing annexe, convert existing annexe into dwelling house & erect two storey extension to side, single storey extension to front, new roof lights & dormer extension to front, & install new boundary treatment to rear. New pedestrian access gate in existing boundary wall facing Woolton Park.

20F/0141 29 Woolton Street L25 5N (this building is between the post office & the cheese shop)

To convert single dwelling into three flats.

21L/0023 & 21F/0022 52 Beaconsfield Road L25 6EL

To demolish curtilage (Listed Buildings, Retrospective) & carry out alterations to boundary wall in connection with building two dwellings on the site.

20H/2924 155 Quarry Street L25 6DY

To erect a two storey extension to the side.

20H/2572 2 Castle Street L25 7SW

To erect a two storey extension to the side following the demolition of the existing single storey extension.

20H/0325 Rosemead New Mill Stile L25 6JY

To erect a two storey extension to the front & side, single storey extension to rear & side, new glazed entrance & canopy to front, reconfigure roof over dwelling & new vehicular access at front, new windows & rendering of exterior.

20H/0614 3 Woolton Road L25 6DR

To erect a two storey extension & porch to front, single storey extension & dormer extension to rear, two storey extension to side, new vehicular access & hard standing to front.

21F/0152 Blandford Lodge Woolton Hill Road L25 4RF

To erect new detached dwelling following demolition of existing dwelling, & lay out parking & landscaping.

19H/2850 27 Chartmount Way L25 5LB

To erect two storey extension to side & rear, single storey extension to rear, new porch & canopy at front in connexion with conversion of garage into living accommodation. Apply render & timber cladding to exterior of property.

20F/2176 65-67 Quarry Street L25 6EL

To use premises as a veterinary practice, & carry out changes to fenestration, doors/gates.

After the talk on Duke Street when this building was praised, it was dismaying to see this notice in the Liverpool Echo the following day:

21F/0580 former LMA building at 85-89 Duke Street & 4-8 Parr Street

To demolish existing buildings & erect 3 buildings ranging between 5 & 8 storeys, creating 190 serviced apartments.

Land at Beaconsfield Road: This site is close to the traffic lights with Menlove Avenue, & is notable for having been a building site for several years. An iron framework was in evidence for some time, before it was demolished then rebuilt. Currently the site features a very large hole, but it is rumoured that a detached house is to be erected there. More news as we have it.

Woolton News

Barclays Bank

Many residents were dismayed by the recent news that the Barclays branch in the village is to close in June. This is despite its being a very well used branch & having had an extensive refurbishment last year. The closure follows the loss of the HSBC branch a few years ago, to be replaced by a pizza restaurant. This is not yet a cashless society, & all communities need banking services in order to thrive. This is bad news for the Woolton Society as well as many other businesses in the village as the WS has banked at this branch for many years, since the late Gordon Nickson, society treasurer in the 1980s & 90s, was manager there. Members can expect to be urged to pay their subscriptions by standing order rather than cash or cheques if this branch should close.

Councillor Kelly has contacted Barclays to ask for a reprieve for this branch, & has set up a non-political petition at: www.liverlibdems.org.uk/save_barclays_woolton where comments can be added to the site.

Woolton in Bloom

It has been decided that the Open Gardens event, postponed from 2020, will not go ahead in July this year. Current restrictions will be in place until at least June 21st, which would mean that forward planning for the gardeners & organisers would be extremely difficult. Tickets are usually on sale from May, which would be unwise in the present circumstances. The event is now planned to go ahead in 2022, which will be the 21st anniversary of Woolton in Bloom.

In the meantime several of the gardens, at Layton Close, Manor Road, Runnymede Close & Speke Road will feature in the Yellow Book, organised by the National Gardens Scheme. The open day is **Sunday 11th July**.

Spring planting is going ahead, under the direction of horticultural manager Kerry Peacock.

Volunteers are always needed, for such tasks as the repair & painting of planters as well as weeding & planting. Ask about volunteering at the market stall or by enquiry to any of the gardeners seen about the village.

The very popular WIB calendar sold out last year, with the 2022 edition available from September. It will feature views of our beautiful village, & will be on sale at the market & at Brown's newsagent on Woolton Street.

For more information & pictures go to the WiB site on www.wooltoninbloom.wix.com/wooltoninbloom

Friends of Reynolds Park

Geoff Kendall, chairman of FORP reports that activities have been limited recently, but he is hopeful of a positive response to his application to fund further redevelopment of the wild flower meadow. The park has been well used in recent months, but unfortunately some individuals have dug up one of the paths in the meadow to make a cycle track. Youngsters have also been seen riding on e-scooters around the fields, thus cutting up the ground.

Geoff is pleased to announce a positive message from the council, who are about to declare that all Liverpool's parks will be protected in perpetuity by a deed of dedication in partnership with Fields in Trust. This has been negotiated by the Liverpool Parks Friends Forum. No other city in the UK has secured 100% of its parks in this way. This is excellent news.

FORP may be found online at:

www.friendsofreynoldspark.co.uk

www.twitter.com/reynoldsparkfrs

www.facebook.com/friendsofreynoldspark

www.instagram.com/reynoldsparkfrs

Publications by Woolton Society members

Steady sellers on the stall are *The old pubs, taverns & beer houses of Woolton* by Stuart Rimmer, & *Just Like Starting Over* by Charles Roberts, a memoir of his childhood friend John Lennon. New

editions of both have been published, & will be available on the WS market stall & at talks, although already on sale at Brown's newsagent.

The new edition of Stuart's book has 27 additional photographs, & over 10,000 words of new text. This includes new chapters on the Inebriates Acts of the Victorian era, & the Woolton residents who fell foul of them, as well as much more fascinating information.

More details on www.oldinnsofwoolton.com the book is priced at £14.99, with free delivery in the L25, L26, L27 and L16 areas.

The Woolton Annual

Ron Brown who produces *High Rise*, the newsletter for residents of the flats on Vale Road, has sent a copy of *The Woolton Annual*. This is a very informative publication of 32 pages, with a long article on police radio pioneer Edgar Menzies, plus a mention & photograph of the Woolton Society plaque. There is also an article on a fund raising initiative in Gateacre during the war, when residents hoped to buy a Spitfire for the war effort. A name was chosen, *The Spirit of Gateacre*, but the necessary £5.000 was not raised & the money went instead on components. Members will recall that issue 357 of the Woolton Society newsletter recorded a similar drive in Woolton, which resulted in the purchase of Spitfire R7199, named *Woolton/Lewis's Ltd*.

The Woolton Annual is on sale now at Brown's newsagent (428 2408) priced at £4.99.



The bat shelter at Woolton Manor. See page 5 for details.