

MORLEY

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Newsletter

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Tonight

We welcome the return of John Wallis and this is long overdue. John talked to us a couple of times in the early millennium. We found that he was always in charge of his subject and entertaining. He is a specialist in the History of Variety Entertainment and tonight he will be talking about Variety in War time.

The Last meeting

After problems with a bad traffic jam in Leeds, Marilyn Joice quickly settled down and gave us an extremely comprehensive, illustrated talk about the life and work of the novelist Jane Austen who is now gracing our new £10 notes. Marilyn has had her obvious deep interest since the days at school when she was inspired by an English teacher and she has been a member of the Jane Austen Appreciation Society for many years.

It's unfortunate that many left after refreshments because Marilyn gave us a lovely, intimate question and answer period. Here she expressed some forthright and pertinent opinions on the various interpretations of the author's works in recent years and also some guides on how to make the most of the wit and beliefs of this woman who has left us with such a complete record of life amongst a section of English life which remains relevant to this day.

Publications

One of our new members, Jeff Chambers, has started to transcribe MLHS materials which were printed in times when reproduction techniques were rather limited due to the use of stencils. Last time, I told of his work on Yearbook 4 which contains articles on Gildersome. Now he has completed Yearbook 6. This has been considerably enhanced with much better graphics, particularly in the articles by David Atkinson and Frank Horsnail. Yearbook 25 is in preparation with tributes to George Atkinson and Bob Dennis.

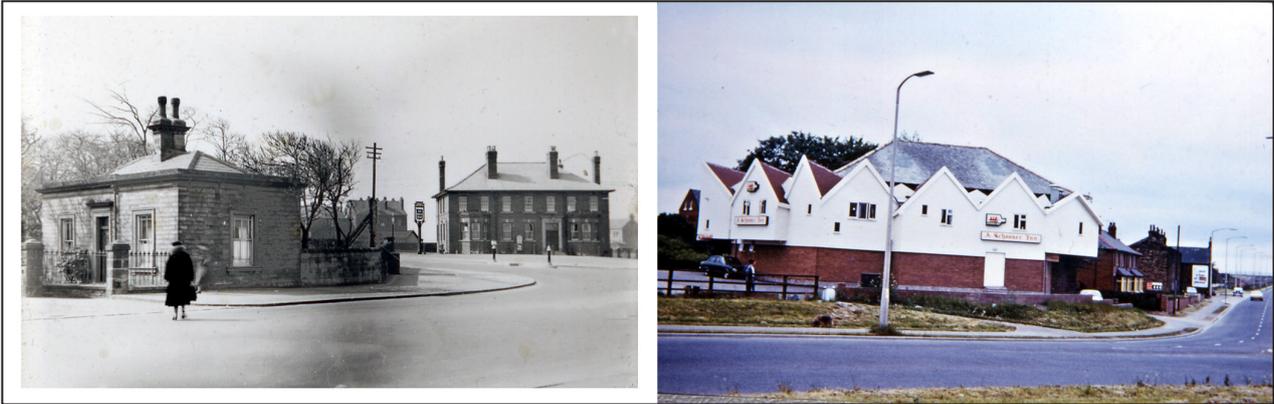
The cost of these is £4 with £1 of this going to MLHS funds. It is likely that we will make collections of individual articles, such as the various biographies of Morley personalities. On our recent tours of the Town Hall we had requests for copies of the booklet on the building which David Atkinson and I wrote on the occasion of its centenary. The supply of the original printing has now run dry so we have made a copy of the booklet which can be printed at will. Such are now available at £5 each (£1 to MLHS).



Senior members Bob Dennis and George Atkinson at the MLHS Silver Jubilee, December 1991

The New White Bear and Christopher Saxton

What could the link here possibly be? Well, the disused pub restaurant at Tingley roundabout is to be demolished and, some time ago, the Yorkshire Society put up a plaque there in memory of the locally-born cartographer Christopher Saxton. The Society has decided to move the plaque to the New Scarborough Inn and the ceremony will take place at 2pm on Thursday-12-October. I will be giving a dedication to Christopher but I think a few words and pictures on both topics are appropriate here.



*Left: The entrance way to Tingley Hall and the New White Bear in the distance at Tingley Crossroads. After a rebuild. 1940c
Right: The refurished New White Bear in the early 1980s after the crossroads was turned into a roundabout.
Photos by kind permission of Peter Aldred.*

There has been a New White Bear at the Tingley Crossroads for over 150 years. Sadly it has now met the fate of many pubs, due, perhaps, to the No-Smoking Ban and ready availability of cheap beer.

As with many people of his period, we know more about the map-making achievements of Christopher Saxton than we do about his personal life. It can be said with certainty that he was born in this area but now it's thought his birthplace was Sowood, these days consumed into Ossett, in the 1542-44 era. Later his family came to live in Dunningley which remains the small hamlet it was in his day. It seems that he had a good education and that he came under the influence of John Rudd, the vicar of Dewsbury, learning the skills needed to be cartographer from this man.

At this time, the country's knowledge of its landscape was poor and Queen Elizabeth's brilliant first minister, Lord Burghley, realised this had to change if the country was to grow economically and also meet the often ferocious competition of other European countries.

Saxton proved to be the ideal man to deal with this task. Starting in 1570 he began the enormous task of mapping the whole country, county by county. He was given official authority and recompense by the Queen to carry out this task but I think he must have needed and obtained help from locals. His first maps appeared in 1574 and by 1579 he was able to publish his Atlas of England & Wales. This beautiful work remained the starting point of English mapmakers until the advent of the Ordnance Survey in the 19th Century.

Although the Queen granted him a Coat of Arms and he cannot have been without money, Saxton remained true to Dunningley all his life and his map of Yorkshire contains a reference to it. It is likely that he died here around 1611 and that he was buried at Woodkirk.



*The Coat of Arms
Granted to
Chrisopher Saxton*

Clive McManus