



WINCKLEY SQUARE TIMES

Spring has sprung: Tony Lewis

Friends of Winckley Square

How lovely it is to have the sunshine after all the dreariness of the last few months. The Gardens are coming to life not only the plants but also the numerous visitors enjoying the 'gem in the city centre'.

In our last issue we advertised our History Investigators' workshops. They were very successful and we now have a team of 20 enthusiastic investigators researching the history of Winckley Square. **Susan Douglass** has written the first of our **Vote 100** articles on the Women of Winckley Square. She has written a short article for this issue but you will be able to read much more about **Henrietta Miller** when our new website is launched in the near future.

We invite you to **THE BIG LUNCH** on 3rd June. We have planned lots of activities which you can read on page 3. All we need is nice weather and **YOU**.

There is still time for you to view the **Inside Out Exhibition** at St Wilfrid's Church in Chapel Street. There have been many visitors; some of them have never been inside St Wilfrid's Church before. Without exception they have been overwhelmed by its magnificence. It was originally built in 1794 and the land on which it stands was sold by Thomas Winckley to Father Dunn (aka Daddy Dunn).

Patricia Harrison:
Chair of Friends of Winckley Square
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Meet Sally Cullen

After admiring the stunning historical gardens for many years we decided to move to the area just over a year ago. It is a great place to live with the Gardens and Avenham and Miller Parks on our doorstep.

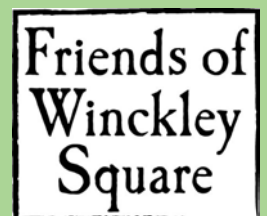


I joined The Friends of Winckley Square because I wanted to be involved and have a say in what happens in the Gardens. I have been so impressed with the passion and dedication of the group with event planning and researching the history of Winckley Square and the surrounding area.

I am delighted to be organising, with others, our first ever Big Lunch Event, in the Gardens on Sunday 3rd June between 1 - 4pm and I hope that this will be the first of many. If the sun shines on us it will be a terrific day!

The Big Lunch is a national event which simply gives local communities the opportunity to gather together to enjoy food and good company. Come along and join the fun. Listen to live music and eat, drink and relax. What a lovely way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

If you are interested in becoming a Friend of Winckley Square you can be assured of a warm welcome. We are an active group with varied interests so I am sure you will fit in.



Henrietta Mary Miller

A brave and determined woman...

By Susan Douglass

Henrietta (known affectionately as 'Minnie' by her family) was born in 1852, the eldest daughter and third child of Thomas Miller, one of the owners of the Horrockses textile company. The family were Victorian 'nouveau riche', living an extremely comfortable life in their Winckley Square mansion at number 5.

Thomas Miller died in 1865 when Minnie was nearly 13 and two years later her eldest brother Thomas Horrocks Miller became head of the family on reaching his majority. He inherited the main Miller estates and assets. Minnie and her sisters inherited £30,000 each (worth roughly £3.5 million in today's terms).

Minnie grew into an attractive young woman and at some point met her future husband: Sutherland Dumbreck, a gentleman of London and Sussex, one year younger than her, a former student of Harrow School and son of Sir David Dumbreck, Inspector General of Army Hospitals and Honorary Physician to Queen Victoria.

They married on 2nd September 1873 in Preston Parish Church; Minnie was 20 years old and Sutherland was just one month short of his 20th birthday. The wedding was extremely lavish with a whole column devoted to it in the 'Preston Chronicle and Lancashire Advertiser':

...the sun shot forth, and lit up the chancel to behold the bridal couple .., who, with bowed heads and genuflected knee, listened to the telling words of the minister and prayed for a happy union'...

The happy couple joined their guests at 5 Winckley Square for the wedding 'dejeuner' before setting off to London for their honeymoon and their life together.

It must be remembered that Minnie was in possession of a fortune and in 1873, as far as the law was concerned, on marriage a woman became the property of her husband. All that she owned became his. It was not until 1893 that married and unmarried women were treated equally. In order to protect a proportion of Minnie's fortune, a Marriage Settlement was signed before the wedding with Minnie's brother, Thomas Horrocks Miller, as trustee.

The couple had two children but unfortunately for Minnie, almost from the start of the marriage, she suffered verbal, physical and emotional abuse at the hands of her husband. He was frequently drunk, habitually deserted her and committed adultery; he threatened and beat her with his belt; he dragged her out of bed by her hair, pointed a pistol at her and demanded money.



Henrietta Miller:
The Miller Album, Harris Museum,
Art Gallery and Library

On 1st November 1882, Minnie filed for divorce taking advantage of The Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857. This was highly unusual at that time. The Act explicitly made divorce easier for men than for women: a husband could petition for divorce on the sole grounds of his wife's adultery, whereas a wife had to prove adultery combined with other offences such as incest, cruelty, bigamy or desertion.

Divorce proceedings were expensive, but even wealthy women would rather suffer in silence or live in discreet separation from their spouse. Divorce was social death for a respectable upper class woman, with the prospect of being stigmatised as a bad woman and shunned by her social circle, friends and even family. In 1890, fewer than 2 marriages per 1000 ended in divorce.

What drove Minnie to start divorce proceedings?
Was it the appalling treatment that she had suffered for 9 years?

Minnie's family supported her; photos show her at family gatherings and a newspaper reported her attendance as a guest at her sister Edith's lavish wedding the year after her divorce in 1884. Perhaps new love was the reason, for exactly two years after the final decree, Minnie married again in St. George's Church Preston, having sought the special permission of the Archbishop of Canterbury and enjoyed 17 years of happy marriage before her second husband died in 1902.

**JOIN
US FOR...**

the big lunch

an eden project

Sunday 3rd June 1- 4pm Winckley Square

Come to our very first Winckley Square Big Lunch. There will be Live Music from Liverpool's **Intercity Blues Band** and a licensed bar!

There will be an Edith Rigby Puppet theatre and games for children.



**EAT
RELAX
UNWIND**

So why not save the date? Join us to relax in the Gardens with a cool glass of Pimms or Prosecco or beer. Bring your own picnic or munch on a hot dog or muffin from our food stall. The Big Lunch is the UK's biggest annual get together for friends and neighbours.

For a few glorious hours just unwind - meet, greet, share, swap, sing, plan and laugh. In 2017, 9.3 million people took to their streets, gardens and neighbourhoods to join in for a few hours of community, friendship and fun.



Guided Tours

Would you like to discover more about your local heritage? Then join us for a guided walk led by one of the Friends of Winckley Square. EVERYONE is welcome but you do need to book a place through Eventbrite or contact patricia@winckley.org.uk

Group Bookings

Wednesdays 2pm **Sundays 2pm**

★ 6th June

★ 17th June

★ 25th July

★ 29th July

We also offer group bookings to clubs, societies and businesses. If you have a group of friends or colleagues who would like a dedicated guided tour these can be booked in advance. It is also possible to incorporate viewing the **Inside Out Exhibition** in a local café with lunch or dinner if you fancy an evening walk we can do this now it is summer.



The Literacy and Philosophical Society: Cross Street and Winckley Square: Courtesy of Preston Digital Archive

Free!
Donations are welcome to support our projects.

Tony's update!



A couple of warm days has been enough for the Gardens to spring into life. It is always surprising just how quickly things can move, especially the weeds and the grass. No prizes for guessing what I've been doing... bang goes the peace and quiet.

One advantage of a long cool wet spring is that when the blossom does burst it seems to last longer and is more vibrant. This is certainly the case for our ornamental cherry which never fails to impress. So much so my photograph has made the front cover! As the seasons move on we can look forward to seeing our native hawthorn in flower. Interestingly the well-known Scots saying "Ne'er cast a clout till Mey's oot" conveys a warning not to shed any cloths (clothes) before the summer has fully arrived and the Mayflowers (hawthorn blossoms) are in full bloom.



Hawthorn:
Tony Lewis

With milder and wetter winters some plant roots suffer from waterlogged conditions. The soil in the borders is wetter than you would expect and shows variation across the same border.

This has led to some of the plants not doing well and you may have noticed gaps appearing. Some of this is due to plants just not making it through the winter or us taking preventative measures and lifting ailing plants to go into restorative care down in the polytunnel. Hopefully when they have recovered they can be restored into the Gardens, in different locations. This has also given us the opportunity to divide some of them so creating more plants! We have also moved plants around hopefully to cheer them up and consolidate the planting.

One of the great things about gardening is the constant change, be it the seasons or the plants we use. The current situation has given us the opportunity to re-evaluate what is going on. In the coming months we will be adding a range of plants that will give us increased all year around scent interest. So watch this space, or more accurately the Gardens. We are also trying to improve the South East corner which suffers due to the shade from trees.

We have used a combination of various types of grass seed that, hopefully, will be better suited to these conditions. Initially this has germinated quite well, but we will have to wait until towards the end of summer when conditions are at their toughest to see how successful we have been.

Something is always happening. If you would like to help and get your hands dirty, then please get in touch t.lewis@preston.gov.uk.

If you are interested in getting involved, becoming a Friend of Winckley Square or you would just like to know more about what we do. Please contact me patricia@winckley.org.uk or phone 07813 213 629.

