

# WINCKLEY SQUARE TIMES

Issue 10 | February / March 2019

## Friends of Winckley Square

Welcome to our first issue of 2019. I would like to thank the hundreds of people who wrapped up to attend our Christmas Concert in December. No doubt the mulled wine and parched peas also kept you warm! St Stephen's and One Voice Choirs were absolutely brilliant. Malcolm Smith was like the Pied Piper with his lovely notes vibrating from bagpipes through the Square and Winckley Street, encouraging people to come to the Gardens.

January saw the start of this year's Guided Walks. Both January walks were fully booked: it goes to show people's interest in local heritage is not limited to the warmer months.

March 8th is **International Women's Day** so we are running additional Guided Walks including '**Women of Winckley Square**'. These were very well attended and reviewed during Heritage Weekend. Please book early to ensure a place.

Winckley Square is possibly the only Georgian square which is undulating with a valley in the middle. We are constantly asked on the Guided Walks why this is the case. In this issue Steve provides a background on Page 2.

**A BIG THANKYOU** to Jon Hoole and his students from Myerscough College for planting over 5,000 bulbs in January in the Gardens. What a great bunch of young people they are!

We have a group of enthusiastic researchers who are researching the people and the buildings around the Square. We welcome anyone who is interested in local research. The research findings will all be on our new Winckley Square website which we are aiming to launch in the Spring.

*Patricia Harrison*

*Chair of Friends of Winckley Square*

Email: [patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk)

## Meet Sue Clarke

I was born in Preston and adopted and raised 'sand grown' in Blackpool. On leaving school I worked in the civil service. A colleague sensed my restlessness and suggested I return to education. Following her advice I trained as a teacher. However jobs were few in the north so I moved to London, working in inner city schools in the East End boroughs. I specialised in Early Years in the belief that family support and early intervention is key to a child developing confidence and security.

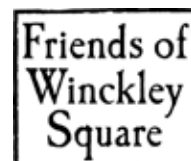


I continue to have family links with London and as a trustee for 'The Complete Works' a charity offering alternative education to excluded young people.

Since retirement our home in Preston is close to Winckley Square and Avenham & Miller Parks. I have found the Friends of Winckley Square a positive community initiative. They support the beautiful Square available to everyone. The Friends are a welcoming group of people and every individual's contribution is valued.

The difference the Friends have made is there to be seen. We run events, historical walks, and make improvements to the gardens. I hope to continue to work with the Friends to offer the Square to the youngest children to create pride in the area down the generations to come.

If you are interested in becoming a **Friend of Winckley Square** or joining our **Researchers' Group** or being placed on our mailing list to receive newsletters and details of events, please email [enquiries@winckley.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@winckley.org.uk)



@WinckleySquare



Friendsofwinckleysquaregardens



# The Syke and Winckley Square

By Steve Harrison

Red Rose Collection: Harris Museum, Library and Art Gallery

*When I visit a town or village I try to picture it in its undeveloped state; how it was before building took place. (**Note to self- get a life Steve**). We might ask ourselves why there is an undulating piece of the countryside (**Winckley Square**) bang in the middle of the city.*

## Visiting Preston

From whichever direction you approach Preston (except Longridge!) you encounter a steep hill. From the east you climb Brockholes Brow, from Walton le Dale it's London Road, from Penwortham you face Fishergate Hill. All are the north side of the Ribble's valley.

However, from the north, you descend from Moor Park to the Moorbrook Inn and then climb again up North Road. The Inn is named after a stream, the Moorbrook, which flows east-west. Once an open stream but now culverted underground.

A number of small rivers/ large streams carved their own valleys through the ridge that Preston stands on. Today these are hidden, running through underground culverts, but they shaped the land on which Preston developed.

## Winckley Square

Fishergate and Avenham Walk, two areas much loved by the wealthy residents, were developed well before Winckley Square. Walk from Fishergate to Ribblesdale Place through Winckley Square and you walk down and then up the sides of a valley cut by a stream - the 'Syke'. The north side of the Square and Ribblesdale Place to the south are about 30m above sea level. The lowest point in the Square (the bottom of the valley) is about 25m above sea level.

The Syke still flows. It originates at a spring near the junction of Queen Street and Grimshaw Street. It flows along Syke Hill and Syke Street, through Winckley Square then down Garden Street. At the junction of Mount Street and Garden Street you will hear the water gurgling beneath your feet. The Syke continues under the railway to Broadgate and the Ribble.

When the first houses were built on the north side of the Square the Syke was open. It had game birds nesting in boggy banks and presented a barrier to anyone on foot.

## Syke is a Scandinavian word for a small river or stream;

very common in the Trough of Bowland and in much of Lancashire and Cumbria. Preston had a number. Suckling Syke and Spittal Syke are just two. The one through Winckley Square was often referred to as Avenham Syke but latterly became known simply as '**The Syke**'.

The Syke was culverted in the early 1800s, enabling the southern part of the Square to be developed and closing the gap between Fishergate and Avenham Walk. Water still flows beneath the Square in the brick culvert constructed over 200 years ago.



*During the Winckley Square restoration work in 2016 the original pre-Victorian culvert was reinforced and linked with modern drainage systems to reduce seasonal flooding of the site.*

One of Winckley Square's defining features is that it retains its undulations formed by the Syke. It is this that gives it the feel of the Countryside in the City; 'Rus in Urbe'. The roads to the east and west of the Square were engineered; smoothed out to make them less steep.



# International Women's Day 2019

Every year International Women's Day falls on March 8; celebrating the achievements of women and their contributions to society. Women's Day commemorates the movement for women's rights and the role of women in it. The first International Women's Day was held in different countries in 1911.

## Winckley Square Guided Walks.

<b>Former Residents</b> - famous and infamous <b>1hr 15min</b>	<b>Wednesday 2pm</b> February 6th March 6th	<b>Sunday 2pm</b> February 17th March 17th
Extraordinary Women of Winckley Square <b>1hr 15min</b>	<b>Friday 2pm</b> 8th March	<b>Sunday 2pm</b> 10th March
<b>Edith Rigby</b> takes you to where she was born, married and lived. <b>2hrs</b>	<b>Wednesday 10am</b> 6th March	

## WALKS AND TALKS

To celebrate International Women's Day we offer **Women of Winckley Square Guided Walks**.

We tell the unsung stories of women such as Frances Winckley, who rode alongside the Duke of Wellington inspecting the troops in Paris after Waterloo, of Ellen Cross who finished what her husband started - Winckley Square, of Henrietta Miller, who inherited the equivalent of £3 million and married at the age of 20 a man who proved to be a monster, there is the nun with children who founded the Convent, Preston's first female solicitor, the female accountant on Hitler's hit list. A separate walk concentrates on the Life of Edith Rigby.



*Henrietta Miller:  
The Miller Collection  
Harris Museum, Art  
Gallery and Library*

## Group Guided Walks

If your group would like a dedicated guided tour these can be booked in advance. These have been very popular with Women's Institutes, Rotary, church groups and local history groups and businesses. Some groups incorporate lunch in a local café.

## Illustrated Talks

FoWS also offer speakers to give talks to local groups who are interested in learning more about Winckley Square heritage.

For more information on any of the above please contact [patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk)

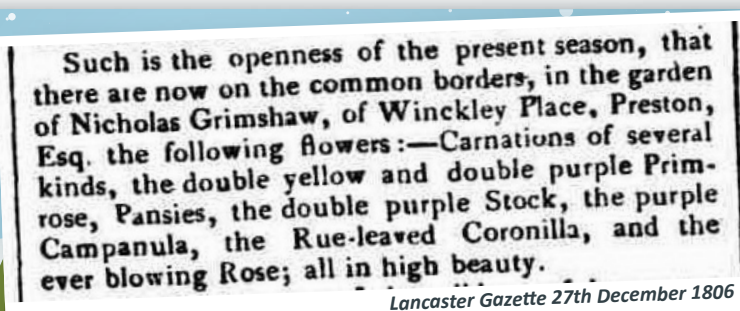
**FREE**  
Donations are welcome to support our projects.

Walks start in the centre of the Gardens at 2pm.

Everyone is welcome but you do need to book a place  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk>

or contact [patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk) • 01772 254395

*Walks can be adapted to avoid steps. Contact Patricia.*



We too have had a mild winter. In general the present borders on the Square are geared more to shrubs than herbaceous plants but we do have a little colour still with flowers on the Daisies, Rudbeckia, Globe Thistles and Rose of Sharon. The milder weather has brought on the Spring flowering plants so that over Christmas we saw the aptly named Christmas Rose, Helleborus Niger, putting on a showy display. We also have colour starting to emerge on the new planting from last year, such as the Mahonia and Sweet Box.



Photography: Tony Lewis

There is more to come! Young plants with relatively few flowers give us an idea of how things are going to look once established. This was what we planned they should bring to the Gardens, an increased seasonal interest. A great thing about gardening, as well as setting challenges, is it gives you something to plan for and look forward to.

The bulbs we planted will increase the extent, both in area and over time, of colour; heralding the onset of Spring and 'better' weather. They are Narcissi 'Tête-à-tête' to add cheerfulness in drifts around the sunnier aspects of the Square and snowdrops to brighten up the shaded areas; adding to the woodland feel. These daffodil bulbs, being poisonous, won't appeal to our furry tailed f(r)iends, although they may be attracted to the newly dug earth.

We welcome volunteer gardeners. If you would like to help and get your hands dirty, then please get in touch with [t.lewis@preston.gov.uk](mailto:t.lewis@preston.gov.uk)



# Memories of Winckley Square

In response to our requests for people to contact us to share memories of living, working, going to school or being married near Winckley Square Angela Hardwick contacted me to tell me about her parents who have recently celebrated their 65th Wedding anniversary.



Joan and John Gregson, both 90 of Hutton, were married at St Wilfrid's Church, Chapel Street, on 26th September 1953 and have celebrated their Blue Sapphire 65th Wedding Anniversary.



They were absolutely thrilled to receive a card from the Queen congratulating them on their achievement.



When the couple met, Joan was a keen bowler and competed in the final for The Wade Cup against her own mother. Mum, Nellie, won on the last shot! Joan worked as a proof reader at the Preston Herald. John, who had

served in the Navy, was an all-in wrestler and competed in an exhibition bout of wrestling at the Sportsman's Carnival for the 1952 Preston Guild (Johnny Sullivan took part in a display of boxing at the same event).



Preston Cricket Club Programme 1952 Preston Guild

Just look at the prizes on the day-

**GIRL WITH BEST HEAD OF HAIR**  
unlikely to see that in 2019!

In 1976 John and Joan moved to Farnham in Surrey with John's job before returning to their Preston roots in 1987. John, a retired Regional Director for Booker Food Services, turned his hand to running a fish and chip shop in Ingol before finally retiring in 1992. Some of you may remember Joan and John in their chippy.

The couple, who now enjoy quality time together and days out with family, have three daughters, Carmel, Helen and Angela, three grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.