

# TWINCKLEY SQUARE TIMES

## Friends of Winckley Square

I was so pleased to read that Preston has been named the most improved city in the UK to live and work and that Winckley Square is the 'gem' in the heart of the city.

How lovely the Square looks at night especially with the Christmas tree kindly donated by Winckley Square CIC. Why not come and get into the Christmas spirit singing carols around the tree at our **Christmas Concert on 2nd December**? And if the singing alone doesn't keep you warm there is always the mulled wine or hot chocolate!

Have you seen the **Winckley Square Tommy** which is one of several erected in Preston? Read more about these silhouetted figures of First World War soldiers on page 4. **Edith Rigby and Thomas Miller**: You may have noticed the shiny new **Blue Plaques** on 28 and 5 Winckley Square. The earlier plaques were replaced because they contained errors. Thank you to Preston City Council **Townscape Heritage Initiative** for funding the replacements and also to Preston Historical Society for organising this.

In this issue Susan describes **Christmas in Preston in 1860** based on contemporary newspaper reports. This gives us a great insight into how Christmas was celebrated over 150 years ago in the churches and streets we walk along today.

Since our last edition I have been contacted by a few people who want to join our **research team**. We welcome anyone who is interested. We will be sharing our findings on our new website which will be launched in the New Year. Please contact me if you would like to join our team and help us tell the untold stories of Winckley Square.

Thank you to all of you who support the work of our very enthusiastic volunteers.

**Merry Christmas to all our readers!**

*Patricia Harrison*

Chair of Friends of Winckley Square

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

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## Meet Susan Douglass

My family moved to Preston from Hertfordshire when I was 10. After a year at Lea County Primary School, I went to the Park School where we spent the first year in 5 Winckley Square: first years were called 'Winckles'. My interest in the Square began as a 'Winckle' aged 11.



After 'A' levels, I became an undergraduate apprentice at British Aircraft Corporation on a four year 'thin sandwich' course: studying for a degree in Business Studies at Lanchester Polytechnic, Coventry, combined with on-the-job training back at BAC. After graduating, I was an aircraft parts and equipment Buyer for 17 years.

I later re-trained as a Teaching Assistant, working with Traveller children in many schools across Lancashire before qualifying as an English teacher working for Lancashire County Council's Adult Education service.

I love walking in the Bowland Fells; I'm a keen reader, member of the WI and 'Friends of Winckley Square' Researchers' Group. Last but not least, I'm the proud grandmother of two high school age grandsons!

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)

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Friendsofwinckleysquaregardens



# Christmas in Preston 1860

by Susan Douglass

On Christmas Eve 1860, the talented Artistes of Pablo's Royal Circus and Temple of Equestrian Wonders formed a phalanx of courage, skill, daring and grace, never excelled in the history of equestrianism on the Orchard (Now the transformed covered market).

That night, Miss Elam, Miss Hirst, Mr. Grime and Mr. Hilton sang the solo parts of Handel's 'Messiah' in the Parish Church (now the Minster) supported by the choir. Afterwards, people trod warily home, as the temperature dropped below freezing and the ground became treacherous with icy, hardened snow. Captain T. Wilson of Winckley Square fell near to Garden St. and broke his arm.

The moneyed classes had decorated their homes courtesy of Mrs. Fawcett's 'German Fair' at the Fancy Repository, 27 Fishergate, where Christmas Trees and elegant decorations were newly arrived.

In the morning, children excitedly inspected their new toys and treats. Mothers hoped to receive the new and superior perfume, 'Preston Bouquet', remarkable for its sweetness and permanence! Fathers were delighted with their gift of a Sheet Almanac for 1861 containing such useful information as tide tables, lists of public Borough and County officers and every Member of Parliament returned for Preston since 1700.



*John Lennon's lyrics 'For the Benefit of Mr Kite' were inspired by a playbill for Pablo's circus which he bought in an antique shop.*

Wikipedia

At 12 o'clock on Christmas day, the new bell of St. Walburge's Church, consecrated and raised to the tower only the day before, rang out the 'Angelus' across the town.

Sideboards were replete with such traditional festive fayre as roast beef, dried tongues, savoury sauces, plum pudding, dates, figs, nuts and citrus fruits. Bagley's herbaceous stomach pills were on hand to restore order to the digestive system.

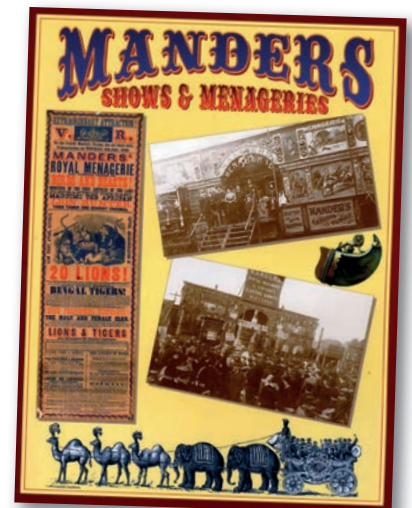
In the millworkers' houses, there was no extravagance: what little money could be saved provided a meagre treat of rabbit and potatoes. Later however, families would meet neighbours and friends at the annual Church and School Christmas tea party, where the hall was decorated with evergreens and banners.

After coffee, currant bread and oranges, the minister gave an address, perhaps intoning on the virtues of temperance. Songs and recitations were given, then the Christmas tree, donated by local ladies, was stripped of its 'fruit' – trinkets and toys – a gift for each child.

The workhouse poor were not forgotten; served boiled beef and apple dumpling, a visiting local dignitary and his lady would graciously treat them to mince pies.

The following day there was more festive fun when Manders Royal Menagerie and Monster Temple of Zoology exhibited lions, tigers, elephants, elks, bears, hyenas and monkeys to the excited citizens of Preston on the Orchard.

That night three monkeys froze to death and were thrown over the Ribble bridge at Walton-le-Dale as the Menagerie made its way South!



*Manders Shows and Menageries*

The Circus 'No Spin Zone' Blog

Preston Chronicle's annual Christmas message read:

*"there is now more want than at any other time of the year. The biting wind and nipping frost must not chill our hearts or deaden our sensibilities...there must be sunshine in our homes...so bright as to cheer not only our own domestic circles, but many families besides."*





# WHAT'S ON



*Lady Frances Shelley  
1787 – 1873 daughter  
of Thomas Winckley;  
wife of Sir John Shelley  
Miniature by G. Sanders*



*South West corner of Winckley  
Square showing the gates that the  
residents erected to close off the road  
to general vehicles.  
Red Rose Collection, Harris Museum,  
Art Gallery and Library.*

## WALKS AND TALKS

### Talks to Local Groups

FoWS offer speakers to give talks to local groups who are interested in learning more about the origins of Winckley Square and the former residents who played a significant role in the development of Preston from the 18th to the 20th centuries.

### Women of Winckley Square

The Friends also offer talks on the Women of Winckley Square – the unsung stories of women who lived and worked in Winckley Square and made a significant difference to the lives of others.

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.

For more information please contact [patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk)

### Guided Walks

Our Guided Walks are extremely popular and the high attendance shows just how interested people are in the History of Preston's only Georgian Square.

If you 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.

**Wednesday 9th January**

**Sunday 20th January**

**Wednesday 6th February**

**Sunday 17th February**

The 'Women of Winckley Square' guided walks will be offered in the spring.

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

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

Everyone is welcome on all walks but places need to be booked through Eventbrite [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) or contact [patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk) • 01772 254395

Access: Guided walks can be adapted to avoid steps.  
Partial wheelchair access. Please contact in advance  
[patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk)



## FREE CHRISTMAS CONCERT AT WINCKLEY SQUARE

with **St Stephen's Choir**  
and **One Voice Choir**

**SUNDAY 2ND DECEMBER**  
**3.30pm – 6.30pm**

Join us by the Winckley Square  
Christmas Tree for a **FREE** festive singalong!  
Help us let the sound of carols ring  
out around Winckley Square in the  
run up to Christmas.

On sale will be mince pies, mulled wine, hot  
chocolate and of course Peter's Parched Peas.

*The concert will be signed; so  
Preston's deaf community can  
join in the festive celebrations*



**Pop up bar**

# Tommies: "Lest we forget"



Silhouetted figures have appeared around Preston, indeed across the whole of the UK. These are part of an art installation called 'There But Not There' marking the centenary of the end of the First World War. They have been purchased by Preston City Council and the Chamber of Commerce.

We are particularly proud that one was installed in Winckley Square funded by Winckley Square CIC.

The campaign hopes to raise at least £15 million for armed forces and mental health charities. It is run by the charity Remembered, which aims to educate all generations about why so many made the ultimate sacrifice and to raise funds to help heal those suffering from the hidden wounds of war.



Steve Harrison



Steve Harrison



## Spooky or what?

November 1st dawned with three jack-o-lanterns dotted around the Gardens, obviously from the night before complete with tea lights.

By the afternoon a further six pumpkins, all exotically carved, had appeared as if by some sort of All Hallows magic. The explanation is more mundane. Social Media carried advice that it was a good idea to leave pumpkins on your local park for wildlife to eat (after first asking the park keeper). One person did ask me. I have yet to see any evidence of anything showing any interest in them. If anyone has, please let me know.

After the trials and tribulations with squirrels eating crocus bulbs last year we have trialled various bulb types in different areas. So if (when?) you see little 'spots' of colour popping up all over the place in Spring it will mean Gardens 1, Squirrels 0.

Now is a good time to take stock and reflect on what has been happening.

Over the year we have seen the Gardens enjoy some plant relocation, new planting in the original borders and in new areas; especially the SE corner.

FoWS are very grateful for the grant we received from **Lancashire Environmental Fund** which paid for the plants.

The key is 'Right plant, Right place'. Overall the feel of the Gardens is becoming more rural, very much 'Rus in Urbe', literally Country in the City. The Georgians liked parks and gardens that contained looser more flowing planting, more closely mimicking a natural setting rather than the earlier more ordered and defined styles from the Continent that saw planting contained in hedged borders.

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)



Paul Rushton,  
Preston Photographic Society



Tony Lewis



Tony Lewis

**Are you interested in getting involved, becoming a Friend of Winckley Square or would like to know more about what we do?**

**Please email [patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk) or call 01772 254395.**