



# Wardle and Smallbridge History Group

Issue number 3, October 2016

wardlehistorygroup@mail.com

**The Watergrove Room** Despite not receiving the hoped for financial assistance to create this exciting new project, all of our members and friends joined together during several hectic weeks this year to create a unique exhibition displaying the valley in the days before, during and after the construction of the reservoir. See page 2 for the full story.

## Church Banners

Again, thanks to the efforts of members and their friends and families, we now have an outstanding and possibly unique display of church and chapel banners which have been left in the care of the group over a number of years. The main part of the collection, on show in the entrance staircase is particularly striking.

On the left is one of the smaller examples painted by Louisa Cook, daughter of Canon Cook during their time at Saint John the Baptist church in Smallbridge. Both Louisa Cook and her mother were talented artists.



## Heritage Day

On the weekend of September 10th and 11th the centre was open to the public as part of the Heritage Open Days event.

This proved to be most successful with over fifty visitors arriving from near and far during the course of the weekend. Many complimentary comments were received; the 'Main Attraction' being the opening of the Watergrove Room.

### Contact us

At the **Wardle & Smallbridge History Centre**  
**110 Wardle Road**  
**Rochdale OL12 9ER**

We're *almost* always there on Wednesdays between 10am and 12 pm – pass straight along the corridor, then up the stairs for a friendly chat and a look at our exhibits.

Email [washg@mail.com](mailto:washg@mail.com)

Website [www.washg.co.uk](http://www.washg.co.uk)



On Remembrance Sunday after the ceremony, refreshments are again being provided by members of the Prince's Trust on the ground floor of the Centre.

Come upstairs afterwards and have a look around .....

Our Facebook page has been most successful this year, covering around a hundred different subjects, with enthusiastic support from as far afield as Australia. There's no need to subscribe to Facebook as you can access it by simply going to our website at [www.washg.co.uk](http://www.washg.co.uk) and clicking on the link, .... while you're on the website, you can also download this newsletter

Find us on facebook

## The Watergrove Project

A great deal of time and effort went into preparing and submitting an application for a grant to enable us to create a dedicated "Watergrove" room. Despite our best efforts, it was not to be.

As a group we took this as a challenge, not a failure and in the best Churchillian tradition set to with mops and buckets, hammers and drills, paint and polish and a large amount of artistic flair to create a room of which we are justifiably proud.



We extend our thanks for the generous help of the United Utilities staff who donated a large display case complete with a collection of historical artefacts from the reservoir area.

A last minute burst of enthusiasm saw the room complete just in time for the open days over the Heritage weekend, when we had a record number of visitors who showed great interest in all aspects of our work.

*Left – a corner of the Watergrove Room. Below - the Queen's Birthday event*



## Other Activities

Because of all of the work involved in creating the "new look" history centre over the past several months, our promised day out has had to be postponed. Perhaps there's still time this year to have a gentle walk via Tattersall's in Wardle for a cheese and onion pie?

✦ While on the subject of food, in celebration of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, a very successful cream tea was organised on Sunday June 12<sup>th</sup> this year at the Community Centre, Wardle Road.

Over fifty people attended and we hope to hold another event in the summer of next year. On the right are a couple of pictures showing us `ready for the start` and later in full swing with the popular raffle in progress.

✦ Christmas will soon be here and we'll be holding a `Mince Pie Morning`. Coffee or tea with Mince Pies will be served from **10.30 am on Wednesday December 14<sup>th</sup>** in the downstairs room of the Community Centre on Wardle Road. All are Welcome.

✦ A selection of our other activities include very interesting talks by Betty Hurst and Roger Crossley which were both instructive and entertaining. We hope to have more guest speakers in the coming months.

✦ A fascinating and challenging exploration of the course of Wardle Brook from its source in the hills above Wardle down to its confluence with the River Roch has been completed and will appear on the website in the near future.

✦ At last we're able to give the Arnold Wade models of Smallbridge a more prominent position in the main room. A start has been made on identifying all the buildings and providing a short `biography` of their uses and residents over the years. In August a selection of the models were

exhibited at the Models Exhibition held at Horse Carrs where they generated much interest.

✦ Further research has been done on local celebrity `Captain` Butterworth of Smallbridge, veteran of Waterloo and related by marriage to the Healey mill owning family.

✦ A large amount of information has now been collected on around twenty Smallbridge pubs, in several cases going back to the earliest years of the 19th century. The Wardle pubs will be added in the near future.

✦ The memorial stone to James Cross, son of a Wardle mill owning family with links to Saint James' Church, has been restored and put on more prominent display.

✦ Last but not least, our computer had to have a couple of serious operations but is now feeling much better and is happy to talk to us again.