

# Cheadle Civic Society

*Established 1964*

## Newsletter



Colourful tranquillity at the ponds behind Abney Hall

**Cheadle Civic Society** was formed in 1964 with the following aims:

- To encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in Cheadle, Cheshire.
- To stimulate public interest in and care for, the beauty and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest.
- To pursue these ends by means of public meetings, exhibitions, lectures, publications, other forms of instruction and publicity and promotion of schemes of a charitable nature.

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Web site address: [www.cheadlecivicsociety.org](http://www.cheadlecivicsociety.org)



## Cheadle Matters

News and updates from around the village

**Greetings** everyone. We are happy to send you the latest newsletter (20 pages in total this time) and with a special history theme to it, containing plenty of excellent archive photographs we hope you all enjoy.

As always, members of the committee have been busy throughout the year tackling a range of issues from parking to planning to help make Cheadle a better place for everyone, but as always they are keen to investigate any issues anyone may have so don't ever hesitate to get in touch if you think something needs sorting out.

Being the last newsletter of the year, we wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

**Cheadle to celebrate Queen's Diamond Jubilee**  
2012 marks the Diamond jubilee of the Queen's reign and to mark this notable occasion, plans are being drawn up for a celebratory street party and mini festival to take place in Ashfield Road and Jubilee Park beyond over the weekend of June 2/3rd, 2012. The first planning meeting has already taken place and it is hoped as many local traders and performers as possible will be in attendance for what should be a great local occasion.

### Alan Bridge new life president

One of the changes to come out of the last AGM in May is that the Society's President, Alan Bridge, resigned from the committee and has now become the Society's Life President. Alan joined the Society in 1973, when it was still in its formative years, and subsequently became its vice-chairman for many years before serving as chairman for nine years. He says his proudest achievements were successfully campaigning against Bruntwood Park being turned into a science park in the 1980s and Cheadle Library being returned to the Institute building next to Cheadle Green in recent years. Everyone at the Society would like to thank Alan for all the work he did over many years and for the invaluable assistance he has provided to the current committee and we all look forward to seeing him again at next year's AGM.

### Barnes Village development

We reported in newsletter number 21 (Autumn 2009) that major redevelopment plans had been drawn up to transform the land around Barnes Hospital into a thriving new village containing an assortment of new houses and offices. Due to the current economic climate, the original plans have now been revised. The proposals which have now been produced include plans to refurbish the main

hospital building into a modern apartment block containing 43 individual apartments, along with 25 new town houses, 11 detached houses and five office units being constructed on the surrounding grounds. It is expected that a formal planning application for the project will be submitted shortly and if it is given the go-ahead, it will be one of the biggest and most expensive building projects in the area since the Cheadle Royal Business Park was completed in the 1990s. The Society intend to monitor this project closely over the months ahead, especially with regard to access, environmental and archaeological issues.

### National Lottery funding for Hall Street Green improvements

We reported previously how many of the home owners living on Hall Street, Ernest Street and other roads at the back of St. Mary's church created a dedicated organisation called Friends of Hall Street Green to try and significantly improve the open land adjacent to Hall Street. The Civic Society initially donated £500 to help the group with their efforts and this helped pay for many minor improvements, such as the installation of a notice board, many new bulbs being planted and a herb wheel installed. The latest development is that they have now been awarded a grant of £43,000 from the Community Spaces National Lottery fund which will pay for a new path around the green, replacement railings at the end near the brook, two metal seats, a litter bin, a wildlife area and bog garden, along with interpretation boards, a wood sculpture, further flower planting, replacement trees and refurbishment of the lights in a heritage style.

It is hoped the work will begin shortly and once completed it should make a considerable difference to the area.



The new notice board on Hall Street Green was part funded by the Cheadle Civic Society and many other improvements will follow shortly

## Cheadle Matters (continued)

### Cheadle Green archaeological dig DVD now available. Only £5



A highly informative 20 minute film of the archaeological dig which took place on Cheadle Green last year as part of the green's 200th anniversary is now available on DVD. The film was produced by Cheadle and Gatley Film Makers and shows highlights of the dig which unearthed some of the foundations of Cheadle Hall, which had stood at the back of Cheadle Green for more than 200 years, until it was knocked down in the 1950s. County archaeologist Norman Redhead and Cheadle MP Mark Hunter, along with many local people are featured in what is an excellent documentary record of one of the most significant archaeological digs in the area for a long time. The DVD costs just £5 and can be purchased in a number of ways. Either, in person, at Andrew J Taylor Solicitors, Westend Chambers, 10 Wilmslow Road, Cheadle. Or, by post, by sending a cheque made payable to: Cheadle Civic Society, to 19 Mornington Road, Cheadle SK8 1NJ. Or, by paying securely online with a debit/credit card at: [www.cheadlecivicsociety.org](http://www.cheadlecivicsociety.org)

### Proposed Abney Hall visit

Plans are currently in place to try and arrange a special viewing day of the interior of Abney Hall exclusively for Cheadle Civic Society members. For those who have never been inside this wonderful early Victorian stately home, lived in for many years by the famous Watts family and visited frequently by Agatha Christie in the early years of the 20th Century, it contains a wealth of magnificent furniture and artwork and was decorated to the highest standards of the period. Once a date has been arranged, we will contact members and suggest anyone interested in attending should make their booking as quickly as possible.

### Double yellow lines returning to High Street

We are very pleased to report that double yellow lines will shortly be returning to large parts of High Street and this should help to reduce the constant congestion there is in the village during the

day. The Society has been pushing for improved parking restrictions for a long time and Stockport Council has now agreed to the changes and the new lines should be in place before the end of the year. It is hoped that with double yellow lines and more parking attendants patrolling High Street, fewer motorists will be tempted to leave their car on the road and this should significantly improve access for everyone.



It is hoped double yellow lines will significantly reduce illegal parking on High Street and thereby reduce congestion

### Weavers Building proposed improvements

Many local people have complained that the continuing saga of the Weavers Building remaining unoccupied and boarded up, is a serious eyesore in the village. While the owners of the building, which is on the corner of Wilmslow Road and Gatley Road, are legally entitled to do what they want, it has recently been noted that public money is now available to improve the appearance of this and other empty local shops, under a Stockport Council initiative called the Commercial Properties Facelift Grant Scheme, so long as the owners also put up some money themselves. Councillor Iain Roberts is particularly keen to see improvements made to the Weavers building and at the time of going to press is in discussion with the owners of the Weavers Building to encourage them to make an application. There are also rumours there may also be new occupiers of the building shortly.



Improvements to the Weavers Building which has been empty and boarded up for several years could be made under a new council initiative

## Cheadle Matters (continued)

### Cheadle Green improvements update

Unfortunately, the recession over the past few years has meant a number of community projects have had to be postponed until there is an upturn in the economy. One of these has been the improvements which had been agreed for Cheadle Green. The original plans had been for the existing pond to be replaced, new benches, a footpath and lighting added and the canopy of the trees to be lifted significantly to enable the green to have much more daylight. While the plans remain in place, Stockport Council don't currently have the funds to begin the work, but the Cheadle Civic Society, in association with the Cheadle Green Focus Group, have been actively seeking to find funds from private sources to help pay for the improvements and they are now being assisted by an experienced local professional fund-raiser to try and speed-up the process. As such, we hope it will now be a case of when the improvements will take place, not if, and we will keep you informed.

### Proposals for an archaeological dig in the grounds of Abney Hall

The interest and success of the archaeological dig on Cheadle Green in 2010 has encouraged Manchester County Archaeologist Norman Redhead to look at other possible sites in Cheadle where a dig may also prove fruitful. Speaking at the Society's AGM in May, he believes there is excellent potential for a dig at nearby Abney Hall where a number of outbuildings used to exist during the time the old Grove Printworks occupied the grounds, before Abney Hall was built. He believes the remains of some of these buildings may still exist beneath much of the foliage which has now grown on top and could provide a lot of new useful information about the history of the area. He also believes there is excellent potential to undertake an archaeological dig on the old Bleachworks site which used to be the home to Cheadle's lower mill as it contains a large amount of local industrial heritage, with much of it still visible at ground level. As always, acquiring funding could be an issue, but judging by the success of the dig on Cheadle Green, there will certainly be no lack of interest.

### New Cheadle Traders Association web site

The Cheadle Traders Association, an organisation devoted to help local retailers share common problems and try and encourage more people to shop in the village, will shortly be launching a new web site where local residents can get more information about many of the shops and other establishments in the village and the products and services they offer. The web site's address will be:

**[www.choosecheadle.co.uk](http://www.choosecheadle.co.uk)**. It will be a useful

place to keep in your "favourites" on your computer as many of the shops will be announcing special offers via their web site so checking in regularly could be an easy way to make sure you don't miss out on any last minute bargains or one-day sales..

### High Street dormer window developments

Members who have followed our story about the iconic dormer windows which were removed without permission from the roof above the Carphones Warehouse shop on the corner of High Street and Massie Street will be happy to note there have now been positive developments. Stockport Council's Conservation Officer has informed us they wrote to the owners of the property in the summer explaining local conservation laws have been breached and action needs to be taken and as we went to press we have learnt the owners have accepted responsibility and are currently in the process of agreeing a timescale to get replacement windows designed and installed. Hopefully, this will happen in the next few months and be in place sometime during 2012.

### Society acquires new archive photographs

The Society has recently acquired a range of new historic photographs showing scenes of Cheadle from the past 120+ years and we intend to add some to the web site and will also make them available at next year's AGM. A couple of the new pictures are shown below.



High Street looking towards St. Mary's church, 1904



Inside Barnes Convalescent Home, 1907



## Cheadle Matters (continued)

### Christmas events

Come and enjoy a couple of very special season occasions in Cheadle this Christmas.

Saturday 10th December.

Switch-on event on Cheadle Green with entertainment and guest speakers. The Mayor and Mayoress will open the event and there will also be a funfair and brass band.

Wednesday 21st December

Christmas carol service on Cheadle Green and free drinks and mince pies at St. Mary's church before. There will also be a peal of the bells at St. Mary's.

### Planning permission granted for Sainsbury's expansion at Cheadle Royal

Sainsbury's application to make a number of major alterations at its prestigious Cheadle Royal store have been approved by Stockport Council. The proposals include the store being expanded, resulting in more floor space, more products being sold and more staff being employed, as well as a new, dedicated Sainsbury's restaurant and toilets, more store entrances and improved environmental features in the extension.

While it was initially hoped all the changes would be in place by Christmas, no work has yet begun and it will now look as if building work will not begin until sometime early next year.

### Warwick Mall arcade

Anyone who has walked past the Warwick Mall arcade over the past few months will have noticed all the old shops have now been vacated, but may be confused as to why no building work is taking place to renovate the property. Planning permission for a new store on the ground floor and apartments above was granted a long time ago, but so far, nothing has happened. It is believed the intended occupants of the revamped ground floor will be Sainsbury's in what will probably become the largest supermarket in the village. The latest information we have from the architects is that building work will begin before the end of the year, but it's unlikely that the new store will be open before the end of next year at the earliest, or possibly not until 2013.

### George and Dragon redevelopment

After many months of being unoccupied and with shutters on the doors and windows, the owners of the George and Dragon have recently received planning permission to re-open the premises as an upmarket pub and restaurant. The Society is happy that a redevelopment of this iconic Cheadle landmark (a grade 2 listed building) is now finally pro-

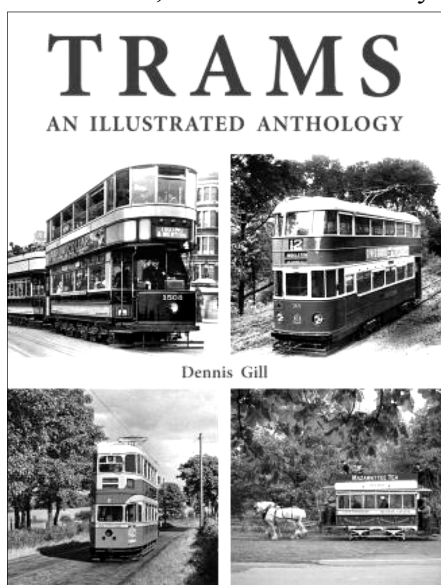
gressing and the integrity of the building will by and large be maintained. It is also hoped the new establishment, which should re-open sometime during 2012, could prove to be an economic boost to the village in general and with 18 new jobs being created, this is further good news.

### Cheadle Mill housing development

As previously reported, the new housing development at the end of Mill Lane is continuing to make progress. The first stage of the development was completed last year when the first houses, near the chimney, were completed and these have now all been sold and occupied. Phase two is currently taking place with the construction of six apartments and they should be available for occupation sometime early next year. Work will then begin on phase three for a further seven mews houses and this work will probably begin sometime early next year. Once they are completed, it is anticipated further properties will then be constructed at what will then be a fairly sizeable new housing complex at the end of Mill Lane.

### Local author completes major new book on the history of trams

Dennis Gill, who has lived locally for nearly 50



years and has been a tram enthusiast since childhood, has recently completed one of the most comprehensive books on the history of trams ever produced.

Entitled, *Trams, An Illustrated Anthology*,

it runs to more than 250 pages, contains an outstanding selection of archive and modern photographs and also includes an interesting selection of archive articles about trams written by such luminaries as D H Lawrence, Arnold Bennett, George Melly and others. The book has been meticulously researched by someone who has a passionate interest in the subject and although it has a published price of £50, it can be bought for less. For anyone who has an interest in the history of trams or light rail systems in general, this will make a superb Christmas present and a great addition to the coffee table.

## History Corner - a look inside the growing and extensive archive now available to view in St. Mary's church

Having been around for nearly 500 years, there is no other place in Cheadle which has as many records from the past as St. Mary's church. It has been part of Cheadle life for many generations and over that time, literally tens of thousands of births, marriages and deaths have been recorded in the church's register.

To make sure as many of the older records remain as accessible as possible would be a daunting task to many people, but for Lucy Swainson, the church's part-time archivist, it's a labour of love she does with great enthusiasm. She does it for the benefit of all the people of Cheadle and over the past few years she has filled the north-east corner of the church with a fantastic display of local historic ephemera.

Supported by St. Mary's current rector, Dr Rob Monro, this dedicated space has come to be known as History Corner and has proved immensely popular to many of the church's visitors, whether they are local people or those from many miles away.

Lucy, who has had a keen interest in local history since her schooldays, has been the church archivist for more than eight years. She followed in the footsteps of George Chivers, who recently passed away and who did much of the work previously with his late wife Mary.

Lucy has now taken what they began much further and has neatly sorted, indexed and arranged countless records, folders, old magazines, pictures, photographs and much more relating to the history of people in Cheadle, with some of the material hundreds of years old.

Assisted by her colleague Rose Betts, she has also created a highly useful volume of work about the history of the National School which was formerly on Wilmslow Road where Tesco Express is now located. This contains the names and photographs of many of the former pupils as well as teachers and can be a very useful reference source for anyone trying to trace local family members who lived in Cheadle in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

However, the greatest records in the archive is the detailed map showing the 1400 or so gravestones located around the church's grounds.

This was put together by the late Alan Stain and means the exact location of each gravestone can easily be found. All the words which were inscribed onto each stone have also been transcribed, even those which have now largely worn away.

With the earliest of the outdoor graves dating from the beginning of the 1600s, this is perhaps the only way most people can trace family members who

lived in Cheadle several centuries ago.

Other notable artefacts on display are the dozens of copies of the old Parish magazine. One of the oldest copies dates from the 1880s, while there are many from the 1940s, 50s and later which provide a revealing snapshot of life in Cheadle at the time. In another cupboard is a copy of the original book which shows the births, marriages and deaths relating to people who have attended the church. The first record dates from 1558 and is written in real olde English with the word married being spelt "maryed" and the phrase "Anno Domini" being used regularly.



St. Mary's archivist Lucy Swainson reading some of the old literature she now has on display in the church's History Corner

For anyone who has not visited History Corner recently it is a wonderful way to pass away an hour or so on a Monday and Friday lunch time when the church is open to visitors and Lucy is in attendance.

But Lucy also does much more. She regularly gets enquiries from people who want more information about some of their family members who may have worshipped in the church many decades or centuries ago. This includes many people who contact her from around the world whose forefathers emigrated overseas and their subsequent offspring are now trying to piece together where in Britain they came from. Many are then usually extremely grateful for the extensive amount of knowledge Lucy is able to provide and some even send old photographs or other items of interest which Lucy can add to her collection, for the benefit of everyone.

History Corner is accessible every Monday and Friday between 12 and 2pm when the church is open or Lucy can be contacted by e-mail at: [history@cheadle.org](mailto:history@cheadle.org) or by mail by writing to: Lucy Swainson,, St. Mary's Church, Cheadle, SK8 1PX.

## Policing Cheadle. On patrol with Cheadle's beat officers - by Alan Jabez

With several armed robberies in recent years and a tough economic climate, this is as challenging time as any for Cheadle's police officers to help keep crime off the streets.

News of armed robbers at the Post Office and the Santander bank, along with regular break-ins and shoplifting at local stores has put increasing pressure on the police to make sure the criminals are locked-up and people of all ages can feel confident of living in an area which is very well protected.

These days, the policing of Cheadle comes under the control of Inspector Stephen Gilbertson who works out of the state of the art police station, off Bird Hall Lane, in Cheadle Heath.

Despite regular news of cuts in police resources nationally, Inspector Gilbertson is happy to declare there are now more officers on patrol in the area than before and they are also on patrol for more hours, working until 2am on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

While just keeping an active patrol in the area takes up a lot of police time and resources, they also have to deal with up to 500 reported incidents a month which includes burglaries, break-ins, bogus house callers, domestic disputes, anti social behaviour issues, drug and alcohol abuse, shoplift-

ing, underage cigarette sales, road traffic accidents and many others.

Inevitably, the job offers considerable variety and one of those who patrols Cheadle on a day-to-day basis is PC Philip Gibbs, who began his career with the Met Police in London in 2003. He recently invited me to join him on a Friday evening patrol where we drove around the area for several hours visiting many of the area's potential trouble spots. Not surprisingly, he explained Cheadle on an average Friday evening is a much quieter environment than a busy Friday night in London, but PC Gibbs still had to use all his training, awareness and personal skills to make sure the area remained quiet and peaceful.

Initially, we visited a number of small local parks where youngsters sometimes congregate. Whenever we found any, PC Gibbs politely asked them what they were doing and so long as they weren't being a nuisance, he simply let them know he was around, in case there may be any trouble, and that he was also there for them if they needed any help.

He says that with so few places for local youngsters to go to in the evening, many do sit in the parks late at night, especially in the summer, and although this may not be ideal, he believes it is



The state of the art police station in Cheadle Heath is the focal point for all policing issues in Cheadle



much more preferable than having them wandering aimlessly around the streets and causing a disturbance outside people's homes.



Inspector Stephen Gilbertson adopts a zero tolerance approach to underage youngsters found with alcohol in their possession

This deliberate effort to monitor local youngsters in the evening at weekends is part of a current initiative called Operation Antidote. It is specifically targetted at any youths causing any form of antisocial behaviour, including making any loud noise, drug or alcohol use, riding bicycles recklessly or any threatening behaviour. So far, the initiative has proved successful with reported instances of antisocial behaviour in the area having fallen by about 20 per cent over the past 12 months.

PC Gibbs explained a recent problem they have had to deal with is youngsters from Wythenshawe coming to Cheadle and Gatley in the evenings causing problems and for that reason he always asks everyone he speaks to where they live and if they aren't from the area he may start to ask more searching questions or suggest the youngsters return home quickly

While High Street remained fairly quiet during our patrol, there was a lot more activity along Stockport Road towards Cheadle Heath. This was particularly the case outside the two off-licenses where up to 20 youths had gathered, although they were not causing any trouble. PC Gibbs made sure everyone was aware of his presence and also visited one of the shopkeepers to assure him the police were on patrol in case he needed any assistance.

He also visited a nearby church youth club to let the organisers know he was in the area and they could also rely on him. They too were happy to have a chat and it seemed almost everyone was very appreciative that the police were on the lookout and were around if they needed any help.

We later went to the scout hut at the back of Abney Hall where a group of cubs from Liverpool had just arrived for the weekend. With a distinct

lack of lighting in the area, the leaders were very reassured that the local bobby had come to visit them to make sure they were OK and were happy to listen to his suggestions as to local places they could visit during their brief stay in the area.

With the evening appearing relatively trouble free, PC Gibbs began to discuss a number of the local crime issues which the force have had to deal with. One is the larger than average number of armed robberies that have taken place in the area over the last few years.

He says some officers believe the reason Cheadle has been targetted is because it is a very easy place to access and with the motorway and A34 both very close by, some criminals know that they can get out of the area very quickly once they have committed a crime, which may not be the case in other places.

He says another recent problem has been household shed break-ins with expensive bicycles and garden tools being stolen on a regular basis. Once this trend was identified the police tried to tackle it in two ways. One was to distribute leaflets to households which had garden sheds, with the aim of getting owners to make a greater effort to secure and protect them. At the same time, they made a great effort to find the people who had committed the crime.



Officers now spend more time on patrol in Cheadle

Another local initiative to reduce crime has been to target houses which are badly lit. Officers will also leave a leaflet inside these properties advising the owners that a badly lit house is much more susceptible to a crime than one which is very well lit.

Even today, the police say many local homeowners can still do much more to protect their property. Having a home and garden brightly lit can certainly be a deterrent. So too can burglar alarms, strong security chains, dogs with loud barks, external lights with timer switches or motion sensors, as well as ensuring gates, doors and windows are all locked, especially when no-one is around.

House crime is still one of the largest categories of crime the local officers have to deal with and if more homeowners followed tried and tested security measures this could reduce the number of house crime incidents significantly and thereby release officers to concentrate on more serious issues.

Thefts from cars is another avoidable crime which also wastes local police resources. There are known youngsters who simply walk along local streets or within local car parks trying every car door handle. If they find one unlocked, they simply take any valuables from the car and run off as quickly as they can and the crime is over in a matter of seconds. However, this then waste the officers' time trying to recover the property and investigate the incident.

It is now more than a decade since Cheadle Police station on Stockport Road was closed down and all local operations began to be co-ordinated from the new police station in Cheadle Heath. It is a move which still remains controversial to some residents. They feel that by closing the main local police station and moving away from the village, it has removed the police from the heart of the community and thereby made it harder for local residents to discuss crime issues with a local officer.

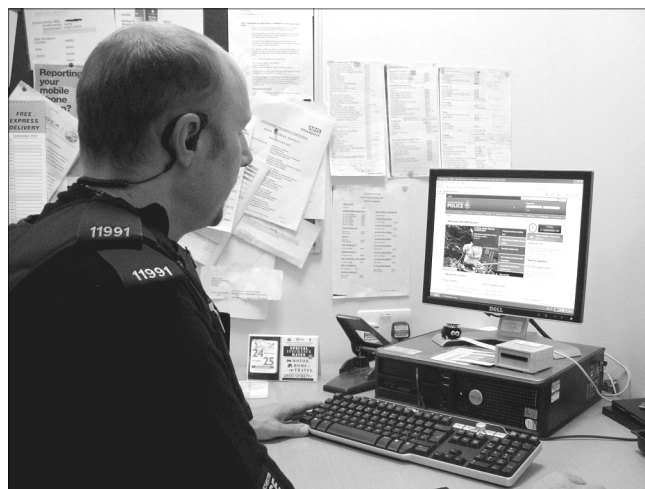
The police though take a different view. They cite the multiple benefits of the changes. One is that by having a large police station serving a number of local areas is very cost effective and a better use of resources. They say members of the public can also still visit the Cheadle Heath Police Station up to 11pm every night and can also telephone the force 24 hours a day. If the police then believe there is an issue which needs investigating further the person will be given an appointment where an officer will come and visit them at their home within an agreed two hour time slot.

But officers could again be based in Cheadle shortly if Inspector Gilbertson gets his way. He is very keen for the Cheadle Post police station (located behind the new Raja Indian restaurant on Gatley Road) to be reopened and used by local officers to do much of their office based work. While there probably won't be any counter facilities for the public, it will mean officers will be working within the heart of the community and it will also mean they will be able to respond quicker if there is an incident.

There is also a mobile police station which is regularly moved around the area so residents who may not ordinarily be close to a police station on a permanent basis, could find there is a mobile one, manned by local officers, very close-by for them

to discuss any local crime issues. The vehicle is regularly used at key local events and provides officers with the opportunity to generate interest in the community in a range of crime and protection issues. There is also a much greater emphasis on crime prevention these days. As is the case elsewhere, Cheadle and the surrounding areas are now served by a number of PCSO's (Police Community Support Officers). They spend much of their time walking around their designated area, getting to know the local people, gathering important local intelligence, as well as identifying possible trouble spots. They also spend much time visiting local schools and other establishments giving advice about a range of crime prevention measures.

The policing of Cheadle today is a world removed from the fictional image of policing as portrayed by Dixon of Dock Green in the 1960s. PC Gibbs took me inside the Cheadle Heath police station which is now one of the most modern stations in Greater Manchester. Inside, there is a large custody suite with 36 individual cells, the full gamut of interview rooms, modern breathalyser and fingerprint machines and also banks of computers for the officers to use. As in so many other aspects of life, computers have changed how the local officers now do much of their work.



All police officers now spend much more time on computers where they can access vast amounts of useful information

### Computers

Now, all the officers can instantaneously access vast swathes of data about local crime trends on their PCs, along with the number of incidents reported in the last day, week, month or year and each type of incident and how or whether it has been resolved. There's also extensive information and photographs (past and present) of local criminals, suspects and their associates available to view, far more than officers in the past would have had available to them, although probably too many images for officers to keep in their head when they are on patrol.

The local police also use modern technology much more to communicate with the community.

Greater Manchester Police now have an extensive web site with regular news updates and in 2008 they became the first force in the country to use the social networking website Facebook in a bid to fight crime.



Plans are now being looked at to get local officers to be based at the Cheadle Post police station on Gatley Road behind the new Raja Indian restaurant

They also have officers who monitor the Facebook pages of known local suspects so if anyone starts boasting online about a crime they may have committed or are planning to commit, the force might now be able to take appropriate action much more quickly. Local officers now also report crimes on Twitter, another popular social networking web site. They will sometimes “Tweet” a message a short time after a crime has been reported which means local people can both become more vigilant themselves and possibly also lookout for possible suspects.

Another recent initiative is that details about the exact type of crimes which have been committed in the area can now be accessed online. Go to: [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk) and enter Cheadle into the search window and this will reveal the number and type of crime incidents in the area and also their exact location.

### CCTV

Questions have been asked recently as to whether CCTV cameras on High Street would help reduce shoplifting and other forms of street crime. The view of some local councillors is that if the police persuaded them that CCTV cameras would prove an effective deterrent or help to identify offenders so they could be punished appropriately, then it would be worth undertaking a full analysis of the potential of the cameras. But it is not something

that is likely to happen soon. Inspector Gilbertson says they currently have rapid deployment cameras which they can install very quickly in an area where they believe there may be the possibility of problems and he believes this is more cost-effective than having fixed cameras at specific locations, which then also have to be monitored on a regular basis.

As for the future, Inspector Gilbertson sees the tackling of antisocial behaviour as remaining one of his key objectives and he is particularly keen to maintain a zero tolerance approach to anyone who is underage found with alcohol in their possession on the streets. He plans to continue to work with local schools and colleges so teachers and lecturers can help identify potential trouble makers and also write more to the parents of youngsters who have been involved in incidents of unacceptable behaviour, hoping their actions may make a difference. He also still urges members of the public to either contact Crimestoppers or the local police team if they are aware of any regular incidents of antisocial behaviour in the community as he believes better communication between residents and the police inevitably helps get crime off the streets.



The exact location where crimes have been committed, as well as the type of crime, can now be accessed by anyone online by going to: [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

While there may be a lot of talk nationally about a lowering of moral recently within the police due to job cuts, there's no question the officers working in Cheadle do a thoroughly professional job and engage with the community as much as they can. Encouragingly, they have managed to see a drop in several types of crime recently and while no-one should become complacent, there is no reason that if more home and business owners remain as vigilant as possible and everyone looks out for their neighbour, then Cheadle should remain a relatively safe and crime-free location in the future.



## Finding the Fallen. Bob Jackson on remembering the soldiers of the Somme

Long-time Cheadle resident and retired firefighter Bob Jackson has devoted many years studying the brutal conflict of World War 1 and also founded the Lancashire and Cheshire branch of the Western Front Association

For more than 40 years, Cheadle resident Bob Jackson has been a man with a mission. He has spent much of his spare time trying to get a better understanding of what happened on the Somme during the worst months of the First World War when literally hundreds of thousands of British servicemen lost their lives, and many more were seriously injured.

He has also worked hard to find as much as much information as possible about what happened to many of the Cheadle servicemen who never returned and has helped many of their relatives learn more about the final hours of their loved ones, including taking many of them to the graves where the soldiers are now buried.

This devotion to such a worthy cause began in the early 1950s when he was a young boy growing up in a small town in the North East of Scotland. One day he asked his gran why his grand-dad couldn't bend his arm, or why one of the neighbours had a huge boot on one foot and a normal one on the other and why another man in the tenement block where they lived was always coughing. His gran explained they were all injured on the Somme, in Northern France, many years earlier.

Even though he was only a schoolboy at the time,

Bob then began to do his own research as to what happened at this infamous location. He figured at the worst of the battles the place must have been like hell on earth as more than one and half million people were eventually killed or injured, starting with more than 50,000 casualties alone on the first day, at the beginning of July, 1916.

It was something that stayed in his head and when he returned to live in Cheadle in the 1960s, he maintained this interest in finding out more about the history of the worst single conflict in Britain's military history. By the early 1980s, having got married and settled locally, he began making visits to the old battlegrounds at the Somme so could expand his knowledge further.

At first, he went alone, but then began taking small groups of other interested people, sometimes up to 16 or so at a time. Among those he took were veterans of the conflict, along with their relatives. Over the years since, he has continued making these trips, sometimes going two or three times a year. These days, he mainly goes alone or with a couple of old friends. He normally camps on the old British front line and still regularly come across artefacts from the battles, including old rifles, shells, spades, boots, shrapnel, bullets, grenades and rum jars. Even now, nearly 100 years



There are more than 1000 cemeteries throughout the area and tens of thousands of graves. Bob goes regularly to tend the graves of the Cheadle soldiers who are buried here and has also taken many of the dead soldiers' relatives

later, local farmers are still digging-up these items when they plough their fields each year. Some put them on display so new generations have a better idea of what the battles were all about. Bob has brought a number of them back to Cheadle and is always keen to show people so they too have a better understanding of what happened.



Bob Jackson at his home among many of the items of historic interest he has collected over the years

He has always regarded it as personal crusade to try and find as much information as possible about the soldiers from Cheadle who died at the Somme. Initially, he went to the War Memorial at Cheadle Green and noted down the names of everyone listed there. He then contacted the Commonwealth War Graves Commission who keep a record of where every British soldier who died in action is buried.

He discovered that about 30 of the soldiers listed on the Memorial died on the Somme and most of them are buried in the area. Over the years, he has subsequently managed to find all their graves and he has also found much information about where and when they fell, as well as the wounds and other injuries they suffered.

He says that visiting the vast number of cemeteries throughout the area is always the most poignant part of every trip he makes. He believes there are more than 1000 cemeteries with most of the gravestones having been very well looked after.

He says that even though he has no personal family link to the dead Cheadle soldiers, he regards it as the right thing to tend their grave and he has done this over and over again. He believes he may be the only local person who has ever visited many of these graves, and for that reason, each trip he makes is not only very important to him, but also very personal.

From his research he has found that there were organised trips for families of the dead soldiers back in the 1920s, but it is unlikely that many of the ordinary local people who the trips were arranged for would have been able to afford them, and as such, so many relatives would never have been able to pay their last respects.

On some of the trips he has organised where a family member has gone to visit the grave of their father or grandfather, most people find it a very moving experience. Some will spend a few hours by themselves at the cemetery in their own time of reflection and then rejoin the rest of the group later. He says everyone though is affected by the huge number of cemeteries and in particular the vast number of gravestones, with some of them seeming to dominate the landscape for miles around. In recent years, there are museums which have opened up which help to explain to today's generations what the whole conflict was about.

As is the case of soldiers from everywhere, there are some Cheadle soldiers who have no known grave. Instead, they are "Known unto God," but their names are recorded on the Memories to the Missing, like the one at Thiepval which has 72,000 names or the Menin Gate, with over 54,000 names or Tyne Cot with over 32,000. Even after such a long time, there are still bodies and graves being found today.

After so many years of researching the conflict and making so many visits there, he says many people do ask him what has made him maintain this extraordinary interest in the area and some people do wonder whether he is merely a war-monger himself or someone who is simply trying to glorify the past.



There are still many artefacts being dug up in the area each year, including old rifles, shrapnel, bullets and grenades

But Bob explains he maintains the interest because he believes that by helping to expose this dreadful atrocity it will remind future generations that such a war must never happen again and that more resources should be spent on trying to cure disease, eradicate famine and promote peace, than build any sort of military hardware.

Inevitably, over the years of doing all his research he has accumulated a huge amount of photographs, documents, records, artefacts, as well as stories from many people and is always keen to share his knowledge and experiences with anyone else interested in the subject. For more information, Bob can be contacted on 0161-491-1049. **AJ**

## Heather Clarke's archive of Cheadle history

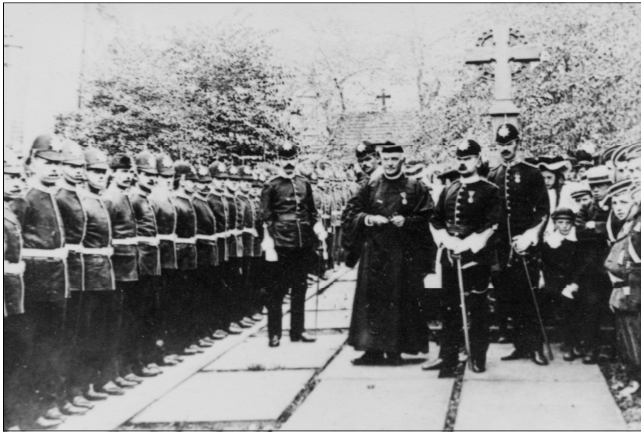
The passing away of Heather Clarke in February was not only a great loss to many local people, but the village also lost one of its most respected local historians.



Heather had devoted much of her life to chronicling the history of Cheadle and had accumulated a huge amount of old photographs, school albums, registers, books and plenty of other paperwork relating to Cheadle in the past.

Her family has now brought this excellent collection of material together and donated it to the Cheadle Civic Society so it can be enjoyed by future generations of local residents. We hope to display much of it at next year's AGM, and in the meantime, we have begun to add some of it to the Society's web site as an appreciation of Heather's love of Cheadle.

Below is a sample selection of some of the many rare photographs of Cheadle life Heather had collected.



Military ceremony at St Mary's graveyard, c1900s



Teachers at Cheadle Primary School, 1953



Performers at Cheadle Village Fair, 1935



Whitsun Parade along High Street, date unknown



Congestion in High Street, c1940s



Residents of Hall Grove, c1900s





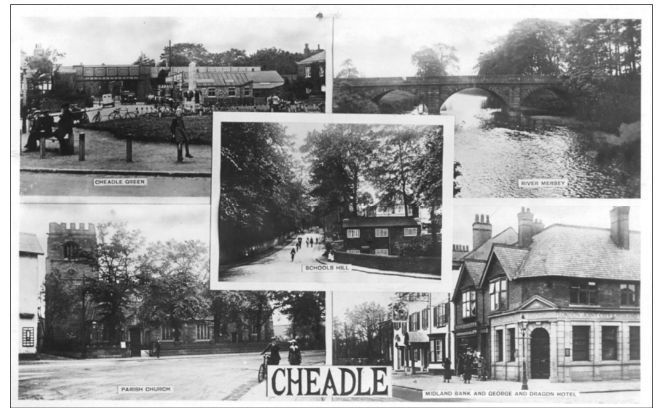
Cheadle Carnival, 1914



Coronation of King George V, 1911



Workers posing at the old Wellfield Steam Laundry



Old postcard of Cheadle



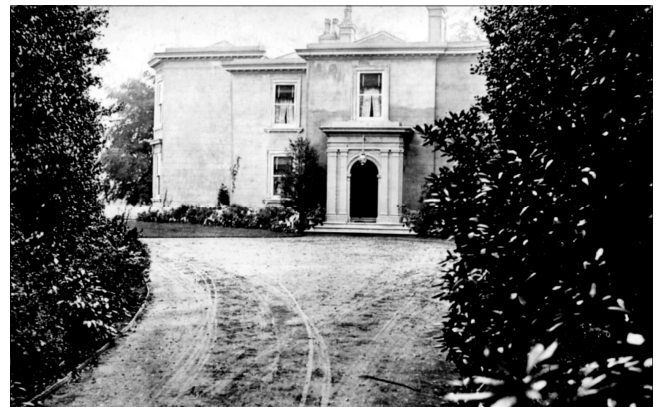
The Old Rectory, date unknown



Post-war Armistice Day march towards the War Memorial



Repairing the bus shelter on Wilmslow Road



Richmond Hill House, date unknown

You can view more images from Heather's archive on the back page or by going to the Society's web site at [www.cheadlecivicsociety.org](http://www.cheadlecivicsociety.org) where we are creating a special section devoted to these important records of village life.

## Personal memories of what it was like growing-up in Cheadle more than 70 years ago when the village was a fraction of the size it is today

Bill Fishwick recalls growing up in the 1930s

During the 1930s, Cheadle was much smaller than it is today, with much fewer people around.

One of those growing up in the village at the time was Bill Fishwick, who lived with his family at number 10 Broadway. Bill was born in 1926 and his family moved to Cheadle when he was four. He was then enrolled at Cheadle Primary School where he still remembers the names of some of his teachers.

He remembers everyone having to dress up on Empire Day (24th of May) each year and one year, a photograph was taken of Bill and some of his classmates wearing costumes representing countries from across the world and this picture was then used on the front cover of Dora Steele's book "Cheadle Remembered".

Even though it is nearly 80 years ago, Bill still has many vivid memories of growing up in Cheadle at the time. One of the highlights was of his mother taking him to the Premier Cafe, next to the George and Dragon, where his favourite cake was Kunzel cake and where you could also get Easter eggs with personal names etched into the chocolate.

He also recalls going regularly to the Saturday matinee at the Electra Cinema and seeing such stars as Laurel and Hardy, Roy Rogers and Flash Gordon. But he says many of the youngsters went as much to play with their friends, as enjoy the entertainment on the screen.



Bill is second from the left at the back in a 1936 school photo

His other memories of High Street at the time include Marsh's printers, which had been there for decades; Meadows Cycle shop, which was then located near where the Co-op is now sited and where he not only got his bicycle repaired, but would also to buy fireworks in advance of bonfire night; and a barbers shop his mother would take him to which was at the back of a tobacconists on the south side of High Street.

Bill had a full and happy childhood and one of his best memories was winning a competition with the prize being a trip in a de Havilland Rapide aeroplane from Ringway. This was when the "airport" still

largely consisted of a single runway and a small hut and when very few local people had ever been in an aircraft or seen Manchester from the skies.

Another memory he keeps from this period is when he was a choirboy at St. Mary's Church. He sang there regularly and also found it quite profitable as he would earn half a crown when he sang at a wedding and a whole crown for a funeral.



Bill Fishwick now enjoying retirement in Alderley Edge

He was also in the church on the morning of Sunday the 3rd of September when the radio announcement by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain that Britain was now at war with Germany was broadcast live to the congregation before the main service began.

With Bill only 13 at the time, the outbreak of war didn't greatly affect him and he simply carried on growing up and spending time with his friends. They spent much of their time playing outside as there was much less traffic in those days and Broadway itself effectively petered out into fields at what is now the other side of Kingsway. Their favourite place here was Pigs Valley, a young boys paradise covered with ponds, trees and undergrowth within what was Worthington's farm. It was here he also came with the 4th Cheadle Scout troop which met in the cafe above the Co-op (Weavers Building) opposite the White Hart. As more of the older members of the troop began to be called up for service, Bill's responsibilities began to increase and by the time he was 16, he had become the troop leader.

In September 1944, when he was 18, he was called up and joined the Grenadier Guards and subsequently went off to serve in India for a few years.

On his return, he got married, ran his own business for many years and eventually moved to Alderley Edge where he now lives with his wife in retirement. But he has never forgotten his life early in Cheadle and still looks for all the familiar landmarks whenever he drives through.

## Joyce Derbyshire recalls the hardship of growing up during World War 2

The war years affected everyone in Cheadle and families in particular were torn apart by the conflict. With most adult men sent away, the wives and children who remained had to do the best they could in times of extreme austerity.

Joyce Derbyshire (nee Livesey) and her family were typical of many in that they survived by hard work and a close family bonding.



Joyce Derbyshire as she is today

Born in 1934, Joyce was only four when the war broke out. She had two older sisters (Irene and Joan) and a younger brother (Jack) and they lived on Ash Avenue, behind Stockport Road. Her mother effectively had to look after the young family herself as Joyce's father was sent to North Africa in 1939 and didn't return until the war was over in 1945.

Joyce went to Cheadle Primary School and still remembers many of her friends from the period, including: Joyce Sandiford, Brenda Healey, Marlene Miller, Barbara Preston and June Nolan. With so little money around, Joyce and her friends had to make their own entertainment using their own resources. No-one had any new toys and so much of their time was spent playing games like hopscotch and "whip and top" on the street. But they also used their initiative to earn a little bit of money. They discovered that taking old jam jars back to the Horsefield jam making factory, which was then located at the back of the Manor House, opposite Cheadle Green, could be quite profitable. The deal was that Horsefields would give a half penny to anyone returning a 1lb jar and a whole penny for a 2lb jar. With such hefty rewards available, Joyce and her friends would knock on the doors of local houses and then every time they got a jam jar they would take it to the old lady at the back of Horsefields who would give them the money in the hand, there and then.

Once they had their money, they would then walk to Favourites sweet shop, located near the old po-

lice station on Stockport Road. The shop was run by two sisters, both named Miss Brash and Joyce and her friends would buy whatever they could afford. It was here they also went with the sweet coupons which came with their family ration book.

Other memories Joyce has of the war was hearing the air raid siren at regular intervals and then going into the air raid shelter within their home. She also recalls her mother taking her and her siblings to Manchester one day so they could get a professionally taken photograph of the family which they could then send away to their father who was still stationed overseas and hadn't seen his children growing up.



A wartime photograph of Joyce (right) with her sisters Jean (left) and Irene and younger brother Jack

Having survived the war, Joyce then went to Broadway Secondary School when the war was over and in the early 1950s, when she was only 15, she started dating a young man called Ray, three years her senior. He was her one and only love and in 1954 they got married and had a wonderfully happy time together until Ray tragically died in his early sixties in the mid 1990s.

Now, Joyce, who still lives in Cheadle, cherishes her memories of her early years. She believes today's youngsters have no idea of the hardship and difficulties that the children who grew up in the war had to endure. But she believes that what she went through, made her a her a better and stronger person for the rest of her life ahead. **AJ**

## Cheadle's horse-drawn transport

Getting to and from Manchester in bygone times

During the latter half of the 19th Century, when Cheadle was still a rural village in Cheshire, the main form of transport for most people travelling to Manchester was the horse-drawn bus.

A service had developed from the White Hart Hotel into the city centre and for many years, up until the early years of the 20th Century, the main coachman (driver) was the larger than life character James Telford, commonly known as Scotch Bob.

Most of the buses serving the route were made locally and typically most had seating for up to 40 passengers, split around half and half between the lower and upper decks. Downstairs, most of the seats faced each other and were covered in cushions, making them reasonably comfortable. But to enjoy such comfort, the passengers who sat here had to pay a premium. Those looking for a cheaper ride would have to climb the steep, narrow, open-air staircase at the back of the bus and then sit on one of the wooden benches which were literally positioned on top of the lower deck roof. If it rained or snowed, these passengers would have been drenched, as would the coachman, who

undertook all his chores in the open.



Fletcher Moss ran a small summer-only horse-drawn coach service between Cheadle and Manchester in the late 1870s

During busy times of the day, there would also have been many people standing on the bus, wherever there was room available.

The bus had a predetermined route, starting at the White Hart, before going through Northernnden on its way to the Palatine Road terminus in West Didsbury and then further north to the centre of Manchester. On board, there was a string bell



Coachman Scotch Bob sits aloft a Cheadle to Manchester horse-drawn bus in 1887. The conductor waits at the back of the bus while the upper desk is full of passengers who were willing to brave the elements for a cheaper priced seat





Another bus waiting at the White Hart terminus.  
Again men, women and children pack the upper deck

passengers would pull if they wanted to get off, and on some buses, the coachmen blew a bugle along the journey to alert people that the bus was approaching in case anyone wanted to get on.

All the buses had a conductor on board who would collect fares and maintain order. The driver, meanwhile, would be positioned in a semi-standing position on a special ledge between the two decks and it's believed youngsters would often sit next to him on the upper deck as it gave them a commanding view of the road ahead.



One of the original Cheadle to Manchester horse drawn buses now on display at the Manchester Transport Museum

Although most of the route was along main roads, which, by this time, were reasonably smooth, this wasn't the case along some of the more local roads, which were still mainly cobbled and would have made this part of the journey very uncomfortable. To make matters worse, the wheels of the buses were made of cast iron, with no outer rubber tyre. This would have made the ride even more

uncomfortable whenever the bus was able to generate any level of speed.

There are no remaining records as to the price of a ticket between Cheadle and Manchester at the time or whether there were such innovations as season tickets, pensioner fares or other special pricing schemes, but this early form of public transport linking Cheadle with the busy Manchester metropolis paved the way for the more modern buses which were to come in later years, and, which, still broadly follow the same path into the city centre today.



Lower deck passengers usually faced each other

The only remaining example of a Cheadle to Manchester horse-drawn bus is now on permanent display at the Manchester Transport Museum in Cheetham Hill, along with an assortment of other public service vehicles which have been used across Manchester over the years. The museum is currently applying for a grant to enable them to pay for the renovation of the huge wheels of the Cheadle bus so the bus can again be driven on the road -albeit for exhibition purposes- and, possibly, one day make a symbolic return journey back to the White Hart.



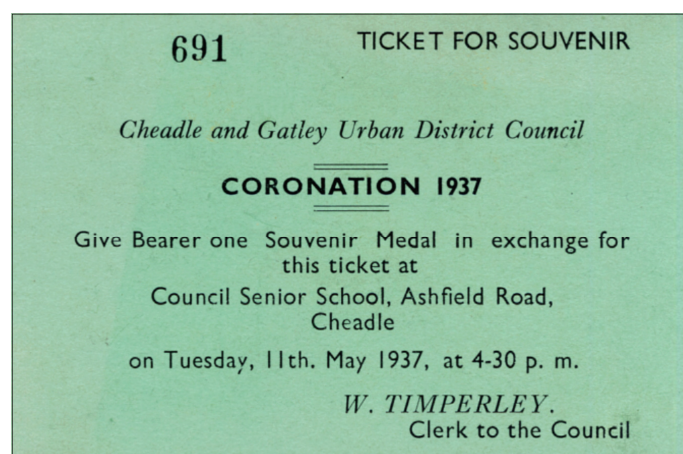
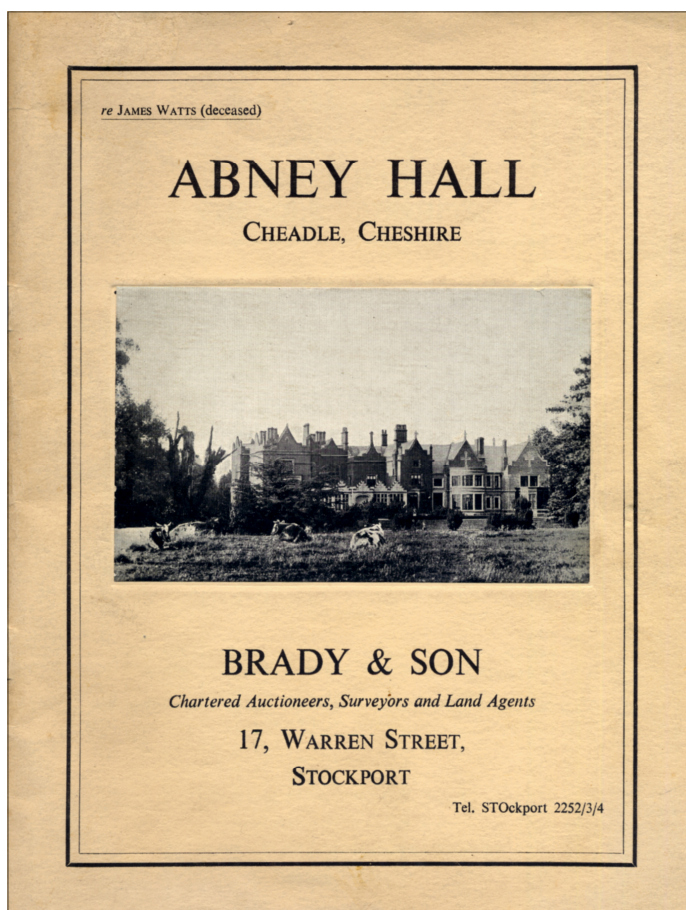
Passengers on the upper deck would sit on seats which were literally bolted to the roof of the bus

**The Manchester Transport Museum is located on Boyle Street, Manchester M8 8UW. AJ**



## More images from Heather Clarke's archive (in colour)

Below is a further selection of photographs and other literature from Heather Clarke's extensive archive of Cheadle life. Clockwise, starting at the top left, the images are: a photograph of the front of Marsh's print shop in 1901, a 1950s postcard of Cheadle, a leaflet for the centenary celebrations of Cheadle Wesleyan Chapel in 1907, a coupon to be exchanged for a medal to mark King George VI's coronation in 1937, the catalogue of goods for sale in the Abney Hall public auction, 1958.



### NOT YET A MEMBER?

#### JOIN THE CHEADLE CIVIC SOCIETY TODAY AND HELP TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

If you are not yet a member of the Cheadle Civic Society and would like to join, please send a cheque for £5 with your name and address to: Honorary Treasurer, Phillip Gould-Bourn, 19 Mornington Road, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1NJ. You will then get your own copy of the newsletter mailed to you directly twice a year and will also get free admission to the Society's AGM and any other event. Your contribution will also help the Society maintain its efforts to make Cheadle a better and safer place.