



We are sad to announce the recent deaths of two of our oldest members, **Graham Colclough** and **Len Hale**.

Both men brought an amazing range of first-hand knowledge to the Ellesmere Port Local and Family History Society over the years since the Society was founded.

Graham Colclough

A staunch supporter of the EPLFHS and the Wednesday 'Press Clippers', Graham was one of the most well-read men anyone could ever meet.

As far back as the early 1800's, the Colclough Family were Tinsmiths and Boatmen from Wolverhampton who came to settle and work in the young Ellesmere Port Town around 1880.

Graham was born in Whitby Village - a true 'Whitby Villager' and 'Portite' who was a big contributor to the 'Whitby Village' and 'Bowaters' books.

He always brought something '*to the table*' whenever the history of Ellesmere Port's Industry was discussed whether it was artifacts, books or his mechanical and industrial knowledge.

Len Hale

Len, who recently passed away in Thailand, was born and bred in Ellesmere Port. The Breeze family from Montgomeryshire and the Hale family came off the boats to work at the Ellesmere Port docks and Ironworks.

He was a proud 'Bottom Ender' who was very proud of his connection to his cousin, the famous footballer Joe Mercer through their grandmothers Elizabeth Jane and Ethel Breeze. (Ethel had married Joseph Powell 'Joe' Mercer, whose teenage son joined Everton Football Club In September 1932 and became famous).

Len was a contributor to many of the Society's early books and loved to regale tales of those who had lived at the Bottom End of Ellesmere Port.

Both will be missed by everyone.



Our 2026 AGM

Thank you to everyone who stayed for our 2026 AGM – we appreciate your support!

Thank you to Keith, Janet, Alex and Fred for standing up and giving their presentations!!

The past few years have been difficult for the Committee as we try to keep the Society, Meetings, Newsletters and publications going for you all to enjoy.

Our small Committee has now been elected to continue for the next year and we hope that you will continue to join us for our 2026 Calendar of Events with a range of interesting speakers and our visit to Eastham in the summer.

Our Elected Officers are:

Chairman

Alex Jenkins

Treasurer

Janet Davies

Secretary

Carol Gorman

Membership Secretary

Sue Wynne

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 21st April

THE CHILDREN OF THE 'DISAPPEARED'

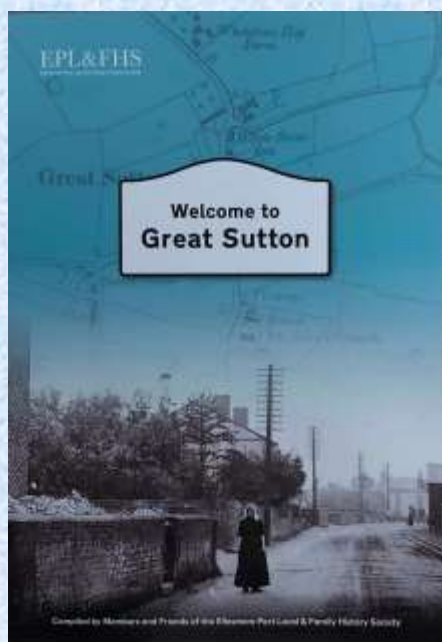
By Dominga Devitt



Following World War II, over 1,300–2,000 Chinese merchant seamen, many of whom had travelled to England as part of the war effort and had served in the British Merchant Navy were secretly and forcibly deported from Liverpool by the British government in 1945–1946.

Many had settled, married local women, and had children, yet they were rounded up—sometimes in the middle of the night—and forcibly repatriated to China without notice.

This is the story of what happened to many of Liverpool's Chinese merchant seamen after the Second World War, the cruelty inflicted on their children and families.



'Welcome to Great Sutton'

Price £18

Copies are available at the next meeting on **Tuesday 21st April**.

The book is currently available to buy directly from

- **T.E. Hughes, Great Sutton** and
- **the 'Press Clippers'** who meet on Wednesday mornings at Ellesmere Port Library 10-12:30pm

WIRRAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE FAIR

EXPLORE WIRRAL'S FASCINATING PAST!

Saturday 21 March 2026



This was a very busy day for the Society Table, which was manned by Barry, David, Janet, John and Carol.

We sold copies of our 'Great Sutton' Book and had a busy turnover of our Used books.

This article was spotted by Jane Miller.

Old Whitby Villagers and those people will remember **Ron Jones** and those who bought copies of our 2022 publication, 'Welcome to Whitby Village' book will have read about his family's garage 'H.I. Jones' of Whitby Village.

Remembering Little Ron



Ron Jones, affectionately known as 'Little Ron', passed away on Tuesday 13th January 2026. Typical of Ron it was also his birthday.

Ron had been living in a care home in Rugby, near to his daughter and son-in-law, so they were able to see Ron most days. Unfortunately Ron's wife passed away a couple of years ago. His funeral was held on Monday 9th February 2026 at Rainford Crematorium, Rugby.

Richard Dixon-Gough writes:

Ron was born and grew up in Ellesmere Port where his parents had a small motor mechanic business and petrol station. His love of all things mechanical started here and after studying Mechanical Engineering, he joined the Royal Air Force, where he trained as a pilot of the earliest jet fighter aircraft, the Gloster Meteor.

Following the early death of his father, Ron left the RAF and returned home to help run the family business, H I Jones (Whitby Garage Ltd), growing it into a main dealer of Jaguar, Rover and Triumph cars. His love of flying never faded however, and when the business allowed, he would take to the skies in a Piper Cherokee.

Having sold the business years later, Ron and his wife Christine entered the pub and restaurant business, and then before retiring, joined Witter Towbars in Chester, helping develop a strong national dealer network.

Finally retiring, Ron set about building his own 2-seater sports aeroplane, a Europa, in the garage! He happily flew this around North Wales as often as he could until finally having to stop flying at the age of 84.

Having moved to Llangollen in the meantime, Ron's now itchy feet caused him to seek out a new pastime, and what could be better than the famous Llangollen Steam Railway! He spent many a happy hour with the team building the Corwen extension, revelling in the team banter (of which there was lots!), helping where he could and was very proud of what the team had accomplished. Whenever family visited, a trip to catch up on progress was always included. Finally, in his nineties, Ron was able to relax at home with Christine and spend time with the family.

Ron suffered a stroke in 2025 and after losing Christine in the same year, he moved into a lovely care home until sadly passing away on his 95th birthday. Ron was a tremendously capable gentleman who could turn his hand

to anything and gave so much to the communities he served. He will be sorely missed.

During one of the many conversations with Ron, I mentioned an idea of an aerial photo of the Corwen site as it would be a great addition to the history of the development of the new railway station at Corwen. Unbeknown to me, Ron was a pilot, aerial photographer and had his self-built Europa aeroplane. A few weeks later Ron appears on site with a photo of the station taken from

the air. The photo was framed and is hanging in the former 'Chicken Dock' at Corwen. Ron also compiled a group of photographs, supplied by other members of the Corwen team, and created a slide show on CD of the progress from Bonwm to Corwen East. Both great reminders to us all of Ron's skills, abilities and dedication.

Ron is greatly missed by us all. RIP.

Cheshire Archives & Local Studies

Did you know that Chester will be the location of one of two new state-of-the-art centres that will co-host Cheshire's archives, at Chester and Crewe. Work has now started on Cheshire Archives Chester, on the site of the former Enterprise Centre, on Lightfoot Street in Hoole, Chester.

See:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/regeneration-of-west-cheshire/chester-regeneration/cheshires-archives-a-story-shared>

If you would like to find out more about the information currently available to researchers, visit:

<https://www.cheshirearchives.org.uk/visiting-us/visiting-us.aspx>

Cheshire Archives celebrates 'Cheshire Day' with some 'Made in Cheshire' discoveries.

Have a look at 'Cheshire Day'

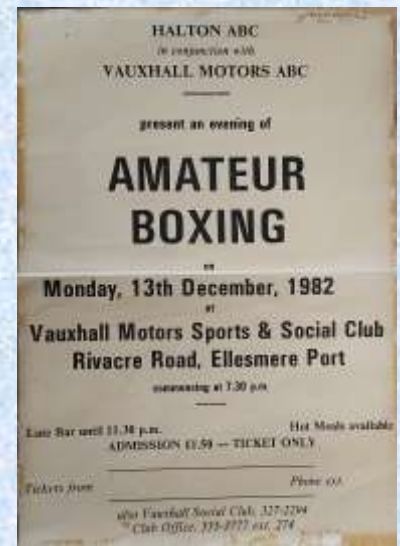
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/news/cheshire-archives-celebrate-cheshire-day-with-some-made-in-cheshire-discoveries>

Vauxhall Motors Amateur Boxing Club

It was in **September 1981** that I had the idea to form an Amateur Boxing Club, and along with a couple of friends Mick Whitley and Peter Titherington, we did just that. The club was based at the Vauxhall car factory in the town. It was tough at first as we had nothing - no equipment no helpers and most importantly, no boxers – but we did it.

We organised, recruited, and with the help of the Company, developed our facilities. The club also had a strong link with the Transport and General Workers Union within the plant. We moved into the old canteen in the factory as our gym and began to flourish.

Fast forward to **1990** and we had our first A.B.A. (Amateur Boxing Association) Champion and England International, Paul Lloyd, who was himself from Ellesmere Port. I then thought that it would be a good idea to take the kids to different places to box so we made links with other clubs and went to London, Glasgow, South Wales and Dublin. More kids were joining and we were having more success in National Championships. I think we gave hundreds of kids the chance to not only 'get off the streets' but also to see the world.



Local lad **Matty Fagan** won 4 National Titles and boxed for Young England.



Nick MacDonald from Wallasey won a total of 10 National Titles to equal the all-time record – he had won 4 prior to joining us. He boxed for England, becoming England's most decorated Amateur Boxer at the time, competing in the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

Paul Lloyd boxed many times for England and his achievements included Central Area, European, Commonwealth and ABA titles.



Paul Butler Jnr became a two-time World Champion, as well as winning the 2010 ABA Flyweight title and going on to win the British and Commonwealth Super Flyweight Championships, IBF World Bantamweight Championship (twice) as well as 6 other professional Championships.



Many local kids like Kevin Phelan, Roy Stanley, Alan Millet, Danny Duffy, Paul Butler Jnr, Jack Kelly and others from Eastham and beyond, were joining the club whilst Lee Holmes, Alfie Duncan and Alex Foulkes went on to become coaches at the club.

Around **1992**, we were taking the kids on the train to box at the famous **Repton ABC** in London and ended up chatting to **John H. Stracey**, the former British, European and World Welterweight Champion who was travelling down from his home at Moreton on the Wirral.



He asked if he could become involved in the club and accepted the role of Club President.



The famous **Repton Amateur Boxing Club (ABC) is widely regarded as one of the most successful and historic boxing institutions in the United Kingdom.*

We needed to raise serious money to improve so I had the idea to have Sportsman's Dinners – our guests included the World Cup winning footballer Alan Ball, former British professional boxers and World Champions Henry Cooper, John H. Stracey, John Conteh, Ken Buchanan, Ricky Hatton, Sugar Ray Leonard and Heavyweight World Champions Frank Bruno, and Mike Tyson.

The money raised provided the facilities to take hundreds of kids off the streets to London, Dublin, Scotland, Germany and New York.

In 1998 we raised money and decided to take the kids to box at **Ring 8** in New York City where young boxers come from four different clubs across the five boroughs of New York City.

At Manchester Airport, the kids in their matching outfits drew the attention of someone who worked in the media and a TV documentary **'Squaring Up'** was made for Channel 4 television, narrated by the English performance poet, broadcaster and former member of the 1960's group 'The Scaffold', Roger McGough.



*** This video is going to be posted on the EPLFHS website <https://eplfhs.org/>**

We visited Ring 8 three times (1998, 2000 and 2006) as well as inviting them to visit us over in England and one of our main sponsors was **Mr. Jack Thornley** of 'Thornleys Solicitors, Manchester' (pictured left).



*** Ring 8** refers to a non-profit organization located in New York City, founded in 1953 by ex-prize-fighter Jack Grebelsky to help former professional boxers in need of financial assistance, including housing, medical care, and funeral related expenses. Ring 8 is composed of current and ex professional, amateur, and collegiate boxers, referees, trainers, promoters and others involved in the fight game. (source – Wikipedia)

(right) **Outside the Ellesmere Port Civic Hall c2006**

1. David McDonnell
2. Paul Butler Jnr
3. Matty Fagan
4. Lee Holmes



In 2000, we decided to look for new premises and found a great empty building by Little Sutton Railway Station – we completely refurbished it and the club went from strength to strength.



In 2005, we visited Ellesmere Port's German twin town, Reutlingen.



In 2010, we held a Sportsman's Dinner with our guest, **Mike Tyson**, former World Heavyweight Champion.

In 2010, after 29 years, I decided to leave the club – I had been Founder, Secretary, Chairman and Matchmaker – I thought 'that'll do!'

David McDonnell Vauxhall Motors ABC (1981-2010)

The 'Press Clippers' are still meeting every Wednesday morning at Ellesmere Port Library from 10am -12.30pm.

Come along and join us for a chat and a cup of tea (and toast) from the Library Café!!



Two of our Members, Rob Callister and Bill Kearney bumped into each other at the Wednesday morning meetings and realised that they had been friends as young Schoolboy footballers!

Rob is an exceptionally skilled artist and engineer, who often brings his mechanical toys and pictures to show us whilst Bill is a very keen gardener who offers tips and sometimes tomato plants for us to take home!



IMPORTANT NOTICE

for our Members:

The cancellation of the popular **'Plus Bus'** has upset many of our older members.

Here is news of its replacement, known as **'Your Bus'**.

Cheshire West & Chester Council



Welcome to

Your Bus

The new Your Bus service is operated by Changing Lives Together, covering all of the west Cheshire borough.

Helping people stay connected, independent, and able to reach the places that matter most, for example medical appointments, shopping trips, social activities, or visiting loved ones.



When does the service operate?
Monday to Friday from 1 April 2026

How do I book a journey?
Further details on how to register and book are available by contacting:
Tel: 01606 784100

Your Bus replaces the service previously provided by PlusBus from 1 April 2026




Website: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communitytransport

Forthcoming Events by other Societies

<p>Wednesday 22nd April 2026</p>	<p><u>Christleton Local History Group</u></p> <p><i>'Following the Wild Boar. The story of the Twentieth Legion. Legio XXV'</i></p> <p>by David Cummings</p> <p>As a prelude to a visit to 'Park in the Past' and the new "Roman Fortress" at Hope near Wrexham, he takes a look at the history of the Twentieth Legion whilst serving in the UK from AD 43 to AD410. David traces them from their first fortress at Inchtuthil north of Perth, to their building of the second fort at Deva in AD80, to Wroxeter and many other sites where the legion of a cohort of the legion served. Their presence is often indicated by the placing of a Wild Boar stone, brick or tile at the site.</p> <p>Visitors welcome - £5 All meetings start at 7.30pm, in the Parish Hall</p> <p>https://www.christleton.org.uk/village/villageinfo/groups/localhistory/index.html</p>
<p>Friday 1st May 2026</p>	<p><u>Merseyside Branch of the Western Front Association (WFA)</u></p> <p>"The U Boat campaign" by Scott Lindgren</p> <p>At Trinity and Palm Grove United Reformed and Methodist Church, Alton Road, Oxton, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH43 1UZ.</p> <p>£2 for members and £4 for visitors which includes coffee or tea at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>https://wfa-merseyside.weebly.com/</p>
<p>Tuesday 5th May 2026</p>	<p>Wirral Archives will be going out to Birkenhead Central Library for monthly drop-in sessions, presenting archives drawn from their holdings re:</p> <p><i>'The Birkenhead Park Collection'</i> 10am to 12pm</p> <p>At Birkenhead Central Library Borough Rd, Birkenhead CH41 2XB</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 6th May 2026</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lache and Westminster Park History Group</u> AGM and 'The Architects of Chester'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">by Stewart Shuttleworth</p> <p style="text-align: center;">at The Venue (Lache Community Centre) Hawthorn Road, Chester CH4 8HX</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting starts at 7.30pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All welcome, no need to book - £2 per person on the door. Refreshments will be available as usual for a small charge.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Thursday 7th May 2026</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Wirral Postcard Club</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">We meet first Thursday of the month. At Thornton Hough Village Hall, Wirral</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting opens at 2pm with half an hour for buying, selling and socialising before the talk which begins at 2.30pm</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Friday 8th May 2026</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Friends of Wirral Archives 'The Industry of Wirral'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">By Robert Jones</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wirral Archives present these FREE local history workshops 2pm in the Wirral Archives Search Room</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday 10th May</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Antique & Collectors Fair at Cheshire County Sports Club</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Monday 11th May 2026</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Frodsham and District History Society</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">'Vintage Advertisements to Make You Smile'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">by Dominga Devitt</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This meeting will be held in the Main Street Community Church, Frodsham</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Members £2.00 Visitors £4.00. Please arrive from 7.15pm for a 7.45pm start.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>https://frodshamhistory.org.uk/</u></p>

<p>Wednesday</p> <p>13th May</p> <p>2026</p> <p>At 2pm</p>	<p><u>Ellesmere Port and Chester Postcard Club</u></p> <p>In the Entrance Hall, Hope Farm Church, Ellesmere Port. If the inner door is locked, please ring the bell on your left marked "Circuit Office".</p> <p>£2 to include tea/coffee and biscuits or £1.50 without refreshments.</p> 
<p>Thursday</p> <p>14th May</p> <p>2026</p>	<p><u>Burton and Neston History Society</u></p> <p>'AGM + Talks to be confirmed'</p> <p>at the Parkgate and Neston United Reformed Church, Moorside Lane, Parkgate CH64 4UZ</p> <p>Meeting starts at 8pm and last about an hour.</p> <p>Non-members welcome free of charge on the <i>first</i> occasion. Tea, coffee and biscuits are served afterwards.</p>
<p>Thursday</p> <p>28th May</p> <p>2026</p>	<p><u>The Family History Society of Cheshire (Chester Group)</u></p> <p><i>'Cheshire women photographers during the infancy of Victorian studio photography'</i></p> <p>by Linda Clarke</p> <p>Meeting starts at 7:30pm at the Upton-by-Chester Pavilion, Wealdstone Lane, Chester CH2 1HD</p> <p>Visitors £3</p> <p>https://fhsc.uk/groups/groups/chester-group</p>
<p>Saturday</p> <p>30th May</p> <p>2026</p>	<p><u>Chester Society for Landscape History</u></p> <p><i>'Industrial Archaeology'</i> by Dr Michael Nevell, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust; Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society</p> <p>2pm: Lecture St Columba's Church Hall, Plas Newton Lane, Chester</p> <p>Admission: Members free, Visitors £4, Student Visitors £2 https://www.chesterlandscapehistory.org.uk/</p>

Interested in Old Liverpool images?

Have a look at this [Facebook](#) site:

[The Future Sounds
of Liverpool](#)

A Group by
Jonathon Wild



Thank you for reading this newsletter.