

LIFE, LOVE & MEMORIES



PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM

WAKES HOLIDAYS

WAKES - The name

Every church at its consecration was given the name of a patron saint, and either the day of its consecration or the saint's feast day became the church's festival. Church services began at sunset on Saturday and the night of prayer was called a vigil, eve or, due to the late hour 'wake', from the Old English *waecan*. Each village had a wake with quasi-religious celebrations such as rush bearing followed by church services then sports, games, dancing and drinking. As wakes became more secular the more boisterous entertainments were moved from the sabbath to Saturday and Monday was reserved for public entertainments such as bands, games and funfairs.

WAKES - The holiday

During the Industrial Revolution the tradition of the wakes was adapted into a regular summer holiday particularly, but not exclusively, in some parts of the North of England and industrialised areas of the Midlands where each locality nominated a wakes week during which the local factories, collieries and other industries closed for a week. The wakes holiday started as an unpaid holiday when the mills and factories were closed for maintenance.

Each town in Lancashire took the holiday on a different week in the summer so that from June to September each town was on holiday on a different week. In 1906, an agreement on unpaid holidays was reached which became the pattern for the Wakes holidays in Lancashire mill towns. It was implemented in 1907 and guaranteed 12 days annual holiday, including bank holidays - this was increased to 15 days in 1915.



Early transport Charabanc

Oldham Wakes had been at the end of August until in 1948 it was moved to the end of June, unpopular at the time and not something that sat easily with school exams. In 1992 as traditional industries declined and schools objected to the holidays at crucial exam times, the exodus from the town dwindled to a trickle, and wakes weeks were ended.

Some of the places that used to be visited for days out during wakes week:



Hollingworth Lake 1950's Rochdale



Pickmere Lake 1950's Cheshire



Blackpool

WHIT WEEK

As the first holiday of the summer, Whitsun was one of the favourite times in the traditional calendar, and Whit Sunday, or the following week, was a time for celebration. This took the form of fêtes, fairs, pageants and parades, with Whitsun ales and Morris dancing in the south of England and Whit walks, Club Days and wakes in the north.

It was customary for the cotton mills etc., to close for Whitsuntide week to give the hands a holiday; the men going to the races, etc. and the women visiting Manchester on Whit Saturday, thronging the markets, the Royal Exchange and the Infirmary Esplanade, and other public places: And gazing in at the shop windows, whence this day was usually called 'Gaping Sunday'.

Whit Friday has a cultural significance in North West England, as the date on which the annual 'Whit Walks' are traditionally held. By convention, the Whit Walks coincide with brass band contests, held in Saddleworth, Oldham, Tameside and other outlying areas of Greater Manchester. Traditionally, children and their supporters from Anglican Sunday Schools 'walked' on Whit Monday, those from RC Sunday Schools on Whit Friday, and there was an element of competition in general display, dresses and banners. Outside Manchester city centre, other Sunday Schools walked on Whit Sunday and in surrounding towns on other days during (or in the weeks following) Whit Week. This period marked the height of the year's activities for many local brass bands. All members of the church community took part in the walks being lead by the priest or vicar followed by the choir. Young children would walk holding on to a ribbon, to help keep them in straight lines with the little girls carrying baskets of flowers. Scout and guide groups would march along, sometimes the scout group would provide the band. Keeping up the rear would be the stalwarts of the church including the Mothers Union, etc.

At Whitsuntide children were bought new clothes which hadn't to be worn until Whit Sunday and the custom was for them to go round to their families and neighbours to show off their new outfits and in return they were given a small amount of money '**for their new clothes'**. These clothes were taken off as soon as the child arrived back home and kept '**for best'**. They only had to be worn on Sundays and special occasions and definitely not worn to play out in.

Looking back and thinking how children grow it seems a silly idea but for some children of that bygone era it was the only time they got new clothes, so perhaps not!



WHIT WALKS



WOMEN AT WORK TAKEN FROM A STUDY BY AGE UK OLDHAM

Kath Kirtley

Working Life 1960 - 2008

I started work at the age of 14 years (1960) my first job was working at our local telephone exchange which gave me a grounding for later life. I then started working in a café in Guernsey, Channel Islands (1961).

It was near the harbour and because of the mail boat arriving early in the morning I had to start at 6.00 am.

I left 3 years later because I found a better job working in Woolworths while there a lass and I became friends and when she asked me to go to the recruitment drive for the Army with her I went to keep her company but it ended up she didn't bother joining but I did and what a difference it made to my life. (1964)

I travelled to Guildford where I did 6 weeks basic training, passed and then travelled up to Catterick for 6 months trade training as a Communication Centre Operator. That was a great time as it was a very large camp and I made many friends. Once I had passed the course I then belonged to the Royal Corps of Signals.

I then travelled down to Hounslow in London and was stationed there for 2 years before being discharged on Marriage. While stationed at Hounslow I was chosen to be one of the group of girls who marched at the Cenotaph in the November.

While I was married to a soldier and we were stationed in Germany with a young son I didn't work but once we returned to Oldham (1970) on my husband's discharge I then started working again. At first I did a couple of months in a cotton mill as they had a creche for the little ones. Never having been in a mill before I found it very noisy and a bit frightening (but I admire them who worked in them). By then my son was old enough to start nursery school and I was lucky enough to find a very good child minder and I started work as a telephone operator at Alco's builders merchants (1973). I then left there in (1979) and worked at Seddon Atkinson for 4 years.

In 1983 we moved to a large house in Oldham and opened it as a guest house, I did not enjoy that even though the students we took in (from the Gas Board and Ferranti) were friendly.

In 1984 my husband started his own removal business with our son and I ran the office. I enjoyed helping people who were moving house and finding it difficult. In 1998 I started working for Holroyd Meek (later known as Bidvest) on Salmon Fields in customer services but after 12 months transferred to the Transport Department until I retired aged 62. Now I do voluntary work for Age UK Oldham.

The job I enjoyed the most was WRAC and still in touch with lots of them through social media and yearly reunions and meet up with local girls once a month.

Written by Kath Kirtley

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN:

CHILDREN SHOULDN'T BE SEATED WHEN ADULTS ARE STANDING



This was in the days of Bus Conductors and they would make sure the sign above was adhered to.



DON'T ASK FOR CREDIT AS A REFUSAL MIGHT OFFEND. In days gone by and

money was tight people would often get their food on 'tick' (credit).



A policeman used to see you safely across the Zebra Crossing., see middle of picture.



Shush!, was frequently heard if anyone dared to speak within earshot of the Librarian.



Small stations had Station Masters and the stations had waiting rooms, some with open fires to welcome visitors.



and as a child when you got new clothes: **YOU WILL GROW INTO THEM!**

The story of 'A little old lady' to make you smile:

A little old lady went into the bank and asked the cashier if she could withdraw £10. The cashier said, sorry, you can not withdraw £10 from me, you will have to use the ATM outside. The little old lady said, "I don't like technology and cannot use it. The little old lady said, I will close my account. By this time a queue was forming. The cashier said you have £300,000 in your account, you cannot draw all that at once, we have not got that in the bank. The little old lady said, how much maximum can I withdraw. The cashier said £3,000. The little old lady said, I will withdraw that. The little old lady took £10 out of the bundle and said to the cashier I will put the remainder back in my account.

THE MORAL OF THIS STORY IS:

DON'T MESS WITH OLD PEOPLE, THEY HAVE BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME AND KNOW A LOT!



Supplied by Jean Ryder

Article by Rosemary Bailey - Famous people of Oldham

Eric Sykes

Eric Sykes was born on 4th May1923 at 238 Henshaw Street, Oldham, the second son of a cotton mule spinner. His mother died in childbirth and after his father remarried he gained a half brother.

Eric was educated at Ward Street Central School in Oldham. He excelled in Art but his family could not afford to send him to college. Instead he became a storekeeper in a cotton mill.

During World War 2 he served in the RAF and like many of his future colleagues, he got his start in show business by performing for his fellow troops. After the war he decided to make his living by writing comedy scripts. He wrote for Frankie Howerd as well as radio scripts for "Educating Archie" which ran from 1950-60.

From the early 50s he was in demand as a TV writer, becoming particularly well

known for his work on "The Goon Show", having been brought on board in 1954, to help ease the workload of the show's co-creator, Spike Milligan. When the show ended in 1960, they continued their comedy writing partnership and shared an office together for 50 years. By the mid - 1950s



Eric with Spike

Eric had become the highest paid scriptwriter in Britain.

Eric provided much of the material for "The Tony Hancock Show" in which he also appeared, alongside

Tony and Hattie Jacques.

However it was his own first series, "Sykes and a ..." in which he and Hattie Jacques played brother and sister, that

made Eric a household name. The series ran

Eric with Hattie



from 1960-65, and he won a Society of Film & Television Arts Award for his performance in 1962. The series ran again from 1972-79.

During this time Eric was becoming increasingly occupied in feature films, usually in supporting roles, although he did star in "One Way Pendulum" in 1964.





Eric with Spike



Inspired by his love of visual humour, Eric wrote several virtually dialogue-free, short films, the most famous of which was "The Plank", a 45 minute colour film which featured among others, Eric, Tommy Cooper, Jimmy Edwards and Hattie Jacques.

Eric forged a successful career both in front of and behind the camera. A gifted performer in his own right, he was also an acclaimed writer and director for some of the best comedians of the time, all the more amazing as he was deaf from the early 60's, and blind from the early 90's as a



Jimmy Edwards • Roy Castle... ... and a piece of wood 14'×10"×1s'



result of macular degeneration.

Despite his disabilities Eric continued to perform on stage and screen well into his 70s. In 2001 he appeared in the film "The Others" with Nicole Kidman, and in 2005 he was in "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire".

Eric's trademark horn-rimmed glasses were, in fact a sophisticated hearing aid, enabling him to sense vibrations. He could also lip-read.

In a broadcast shown on 25th December 1979, he was the subject of Thames Television's "This Is Your Life".

He was awarded an OBE in 1986 and a CBE in 2004. He also received the James Carreras Award for Lifetime Achievement, from the Variety Club of Great Britain in 2002.

A follower of Oldham Athletic, Eric was an honorary member of the club in the 1970's.

In February 1952 he married Edith, a Canadian, and during the following 8 years they had 4 children, 3 girls and a boy, Kathy, Susan, Julie and David.



He died aged 89 years at his home in Esher, Surrey on 4th July 2012 after a short illness, having celebrated his Diamond Wedding Anniversary earlier that year. His family were with him when he died.



A memorial plaque has been erected to him in Covent Garden. He is certainly an Oldhamer we can feel proud of.



POST LOCKDOWN CAR WASH

I'm going to the car wash which opened up today My poor car's been neglected looking dirty, sad and grey As I arrive I can see there's lots of cars in line It probably won't take too long - everything looks fine

I'm in the middle of the queue now, I won't have long to wait Finally I've reached the front, I'm going through the gate The attendant starts to wash my car a big sponge in his hand He's splashing water everywhere he's really in command

At last my car is ready, I can't believe my eyes Standing right before me, what a big surprise Can this really be my car all gleaming, bright and clean? Or has it quietly been replaced by a completely new machine

I tentatively approach it so I can check it out Yes - it definitely is my car there isn't any doubt For right there on the back seat, in his basket, looking smug Is my best friend and companion, my gorgeous little pug.









PEOPLE AT WORK

Did anything happen at work that you can share with us?

Examples:

Did anyone famous visit your place of work? Did you play a part in the visit? Did you go to any interesting places relating to your job? Did you work at a famous place? Do you remember any funny stories from your working life?

If you have a short story that you would like to share with us **CONTACT: 0161 633 0213.**



On the next page read the story of one of our readers whose job delivering milk earned her a nomination in the Pride in Oldham Award in 2003 for 'Commitment to her Job'...

MY WORKING LIFE BY PAT RUSSELL - MOORSIDE'S MILK LADY

I left school when I was 15 and worked at Sholver Hill Farm for four years as a milk maid. I used to get up early to milk the cows and then I bottled the milk ready to be delivered by horse and cart. I did all kinds of work including cleaning out the animals and haymaking by both hand and machine.

In 1973 I bought my own milk round making deliveries to Moorside, Sholver, Derker, Clarksfield and Watersheddings. It was a big round and many of my customers became friends. I delivered the milk in a small, white pick up truck which I loved driving. I got up at 02:30 am then drove to Lower Doghill Farm to collect the milk. In the winter time it was impossible to get to the farm so the milk was delivered to Spout House, where I live, and it was then stored in the garage.

After making the deliveries I returned home for a break before doing the final drop offs between 07:30 am and 10:30 am. My two sons, Rodney and Robert, helped with the round before they went to work and Robert also went to collect the money each week.

The job wasn't just about delivering the milk. I would also take customers shopping, to GP appointments and collect their prescriptions. I cared for people when they weren't well, visited them if they went into care and, when needed, took their pets to the vet. All that and I only had Sunday afternoon off!

I remember being in plaster from my ankle to my groin when I dislocated my knee. My customers still needed their milk so Rodney and Robert came to the rescue by doing the early morning deliveries and my good friend, Millie, then went out to complete the round. Despite being 'plastered' I still went out with them.

I have memories of many of my customers but I particularly remember one couple for a special reason. In 1994 the dairy ran a competition whereby customers could collect milk bottle tops which had numbers printed inside them. When they had collected enough numbers they qualified for a prize. Two of my customers, Eunice and Walter Mabey from Sholver, won a trip to Florida. Needless to say they were over the moon and I was really pleased for them.

In 2003 I was nominated by a customer for the annual 'Pride of Oldham' award. This is what the nomination said:-

"In all the years Pat has never let us down no matter what the weather was like. Moorside is built on a hill and it can be difficult to get here but Pat is always on time with the milk. She has never missed a day and truly deserves recognition for her hard work".

I couldn't believe that I had been nominated and although I found it embarrassing I was also very proud to think that my customers appreciated me so much. Although I didn't win the award I did receive a certificate for 'Commitment to my job'. *Continued on next page:* In 2006, after more than 30 years, I decided to 'hang up my milk bottles'. I finally retired and was given an unforgettable send off from my customers. I received dozens of presents, cards and flowers which completely filled the back of my little truck.

Bv Pat Russell

Pat on her last day at work with her little dog Sugar who lived to be 14 years old.



Pat puts the gold top on her milk round after 33 years

MILK lady Pat Russell has managed her first lie-in for half a century after delivering her last ever pinta.

Pat's career began way back in 1955, long before the cold, corporate climate set in.

Then only 15, Pat, of Spouthouse Farm, Moorside, tells of a bygone age in which she had to milk cows and bottle the milk before she could start pounding the streets with her stepfather and a horse and cart.

She said: "In some ways it was easier then because the horse could navigate snowy streets better than vans

After five years with the trusty horse and cart, Pat left to have children, but

by JENNIFER HOLLAMBY

was always back at her parents' farm helping out. She eventually bought herself a round in 1973.

For the next 33 years, she racked up the miles around Moorside, Watersheddings, Sholver, Derker and Clarksfield — first with her PAT'S day started at 1.30am, when she would drive to the Lower Dog pet chihuahua, and then with "Chrissy", her when she would drive to the Lower Dog Hill Farm, in Shaw, to pick up the milk. Bot-tles started hitting doorsteps as early as 2am, with Pat taking a break around 5.30am before going back out for the final drop-off to busi-nesses and retired customers between 7.30 and 10.30am pomeranian, in tow.

Even when a knee injury put her leg in plaster four years ago, Pat continued to deliver provisions to houses high on the hills, demonstrating the kind of dedication which earned her a Pride in Oldham nomination a few years ago.

She said: "I absolutely loved my job. My customers were like an extended family to me.

'I've taken them to doctors and dentists and even buried their budgies!"

between 7.30 and 10.30am.

Indeed, it was with a measure of reluctance that Pat said goodbye to

daily the grind. "I didn't think my knees could take another winter — but I'm

missing it already."

Two Recipes from Jean showing how to use up your old bread: **BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING**: Bread needs to be dry, see below.. Serves 6

INGREDIENTS:

8 slices of white bread.

75g butter, softened – plus extra for greasing

Freshly grated nutmeg.

150g caster sugar – plus 4tbsp for sprinkling.

4 large egg yolks.

2 large eggs

300ml whole milk.

1tsp vanilla extra

100g mixed dried fruit.

METHOD:

Cut the crusts off the bread. Put bread on tray and cover and leave for 3 to 4 hours to slightly dry. Dry bread helps to absorb the custard.

Butter one side of each slice of bread and sprinkle with grated nutmeg. Keep 4 slices of bread whole, cut the remaining 4 into triangles.

To make custard, whisk the sugar, egg yolks and whole eggs together in a bowl until smooth. Whisk in the cream, milk and vanilla essence.

Butter a 1.75 litre ovenproof dish. Line the dish with the whole slices of bread in one layer, butter side up and scatter over three quarters of the mixed dried fruit. Arrange the triangles on top, butter side up and almost standing vertically. Sprinkle the remaining fruit between the triangles as you go.

Give the custard a stir, pour slowly over the bread. The bread will float, so press it down gently for a few seconds to help it absorb the custard. Leave to stand for 30 minutes. Pre heat the oven to 180°C/Gas 4.

Place the dish in a roasting tin. Pour in enough just boiled water to come halfway up the sides of the dish. Bake for 30 minutes or until the custard is just set and the bread is golden brown and crisp at the top. Carefully remove the tin from the oven and lift out the pudding.

Serve hot with cream or ice cream.



This is the second recipe from Jean to use up your bread:

SUMMER FRUIT PUDDING:

This can be eaten straightway.

Does not need to be kept in fridge with a weight on top.

Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS:

 $\frac{1}{2}$ punnet each of fresh strawberries, blackberries, and redcurrants.

400g (14oz) mixed frozen fruit, defrosted.

Approx. 125g (4.1/2 oz)

Vegetable oil for greasing

15 slices of white bread.

METHOD:

Quarter half of the fresh strawberries and add to three quarters of the frozen fruit. Add 50g (1.3/4 oz) caster sugar. Place the rest of the frozen fruit in the blender and puree for the sauce. Add more sugar to taste.

Line four to six small moulds with a little oil and then with clingfilm. Remove the crusts from the bread. Cut a bread circle for the base, slices for the sides and a circle for the top, dipping the bread in the fruit puree sauce on one side before placing it, puree side out, in the mould.

Fill the centre with the strawberry mixture, blackberries, and redcurrants and press well. Top with bread. Remove each pudding from the mould and place on a plate. Remove the cling film. Spoon over the fruit puree sauce and garnish with the remaining strawberries.



HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BOROUGHS OF OLDHAM

A picture quiz on Oldham and Saddleworth, starting with the easy ones. The Borough of Oldham:













TURN PAGE FOR ANSWERS: See next page for Saddleworth.

1.Failsworth. 2.Lees. 3.Royton. 4.Chadderton. 5.Shaw 6.Oldham

.9lggid.8 5.Dobcross. .6. Austerlands. 7.Lydgate. 3.Greenfield. 4.Uppermill. .hqləD.f 2.Friezland.

TURN PAGE FOR ANSWERS:







7











The following poem has been supplied by Dorothy Rimmer, one of our readers:

MEMORIES

Do you remember when summer days were long And you knew all the words of a popular song

Do you remember skipping rope and whip and top Liquorice sticks and Spanish and sarsaparilla pop

Do you remember if you were growing fatter Folk said that you were bonny and it really didn't matter

Do you remember all the little corner shops Where you could purchase paraffin as well as lollipops

Do you remember the swishing of the cane When with bottoms up you waited for the short sharp searing pain

Do you remember when dinner was at noon and teatime was at four o'clock and bedtime came too soon

Do you remember when coal went on the fire Black leaded grate with chromium plate for neighbours to admire

Well I remember all these things and now that I am grown I see my children's children making memories of their own



OUR HISTORY — THE PLACES WHERE WE WORKED

OLDHAM BREWERY



The company brewed and sold OB branded beers:

OB Bitter, OB Mild, OB Pale Ale, OB Old Gold, OB Brown Ale, OB Oldham Stout, OB Old Tom, Kaltenberg Lager, Rhinegold Lager.

The Brewery was situated at Albion Brewery, Coldhurst Street, Oldham. It was founded by William Boothby in 1868. Registered July 1873.

Acquired by Boddington's Breweries Ltd. 1982 with 87 houses. An agreement was made to keep open for 5 years and so closed in 1988.

Boddingtons itself was sold to Whitbread in the 1990s and the OB Brand disappeared from sale.

Robinson's Brewery bought the brand in 2006 and at the time OB Bitter could be found on sale in some Robinson's pubs, and as a guest beer in some others.

Oldham Brewery had many pubs in Oldham, Chadderton, Royton, Lees, Mossley, Springhead, Saddleworth, Shaw, Failsworth, Rochdale and Ashton-under-Lyne.

The Oldham Brewery Building was partly demolished in 1998.



- 1. Friendship (Mumps).
- 3. Dr. Syntax (Market Place).
- 5. Alfonso (Manchester St)
- Bath Hotel (Union Street).
 A. Old Mess House (Yorkshire St).
- 6. Queens (Rochdale Rd).

TURN PAGE FOR ANSWERS







1







In years gone by Oldham was known for its pubs but now they are closing on a weekly basis and a lot have disappeared from the landscape. The ones below the names have been blacked out can you name them?

NAME THE PUBS

ANIMAL CORNER

Belle Vue Zoological Gardens:

Was a large zoo, amusement park, exhibition hall complex and speedway stadium in Belle Vue, Manchester, England, opened in 1836. The brainchild of John Jennison, the gardens were initially intended to be an entertainment for the genteel middle classes, with formal gardens and dancing on open-air platforms during the summer. In one of the publicity events of the era he bought an elephant in Edinburgh and walked it to Belle Vue in the company of its exotic keeper Lorenzo Lawrence. There is a skeleton of Maharaja the elephant in the Manchester Museum. Belle Vue soon became



John Jennison

one of the most popular attractions in Northern England. Before moving to Belle Vue, Jennison, a part-time gardener, had run a small aviary at his home, the beginnings of the zoo that over the years grew to become the third-largest in the United Kingdom. The Zoo closed in 1977.





Riding on the elephant was very popular with children on a visit to the zoo. Other visitor attractions, in particular The Reptile House which opened in 1926, were not so necessarily photogenic, but still an essential part of the collections. All types of species could be found at Belle Vue Zoo with elephants, baboons, and hippopotamus alongside camels, deer and miniature ponies.

SPORTING GREATS:

The Owls Disabled Sports club/Wheelchair Basketball



Based at:

National Basketball Performance Centre, Manchester.

Welcome: people of all ages, abilities and levels, from elite to beginner.

The oldest established disabled sports club in the UK

They have 2 core teams that train and compete for the club.

The first team: competes in the National Premier League and the IWBF European League.

The second team: which also serves as a development team, competes in Division 1 North.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Produced over 10 GB Paralympians' in the last 40 years including:

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson.

7 time Paralympian Sir Simon Munn.

Current World and European Gold Medallist Gregg Warburton.

Coaches include:

GB Paralympic Silver Medallist Dan Johnson.

GB Under 23 World Champions coach Peter Finbow

Retired GB Women's coach Garry Peel.

SPORTING GREATS

Dame Sarah Storey DBE



Dame Sarah Joanne Storey, DBE (née Bailey).

Is a British Paralympic cyclist and former swimmer.

Born: 26 October 1977 in Eccles, Manchester.

Married: Barney Storey (2007)

Children: Louisa Marie and Charlie John Storey.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

She is a British Paralympic cyclist and former swimmer. She is a multiple gold medal winner at the Paralympic Games in both sports, and six times British (ablebodied) national track champion (2 × Pursuit, 1 × Points, 3 × Team Pursuit).

Her total of fourteen gold medals makes her the most successful female British Paralympian of all time.

Competed as a swimmer at four Paralympic Games before switching to cycling in 2005.

Since making the career move, Storey added to her swimming golds with a further nine cycling titles at the Paralympics of 2008, 2012 and 2016, bettering the record of Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson and Dave Roberts among modern British para -athletes who won 11 golds.

Now targeting selection for what would be her eighth Paralympic Games, Storey stands on the brink of British history, needing two further golds to match Mike Kenny's British Paralympic record of 16.

Her success at world championships is also astonishing - at the 2020 UCI Paracycling Track World Championships - the 20th of her career - Storey took her total across both sports up to 38 world titles and 60 medals overall. PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM LIFE STORY VOLUNTEERS EDITOR JOAN HOLMES

