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LIFE, LOVE & MEMORIES



MEMORY LANE

PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM

MAY FESTIVALS

Maypole Dancing

This was a tradition on May Day.

It is believed to have started in Roman Britain around 2,000 years ago, when soldiers celebrated the arrival of spring by dancing around decorated trees thanking their goddess Flora. These days dancers weave ribbons around a pole. Before the changes to the calendar in 1752 it was held eleven days later.

Hawthorn or Mayflowers were once a common sight on May Day as they festooned every door and window. In the North West 'May Birchers' would go round the parish on the night before May Day handing out different kinds of branches to all the houses. To be given Mayflowers was a compliment but any other type of thorn was a symbol of scorn.



Maypole Dancing (1911)

Watersheddings (Oldham Rugby ground)

Older readers may have memories of dressing up for the event on the first day of May and dancing round with their friends to entertain their families and neighbours.

MAY FESTIVALS

Empire Day

After the death of Queen Victoria on 22 January 1901, her birthday, 24 May, was celebrated from 24 May 1902 as Empire Day, though not officially recognised as an annual event until 1916. The British Empire League was instrumental in promoting Empire Day as a patriotic holiday. Each Empire Day, millions of school children from all walks of life across the length and breadth of the British Empire would typically salute the union flag and sing patriotic songs like *Jerusalem* and *God Save the Queen*. They would hear inspirational speeches and listen to tales of 'daring do' from across the Empire, stories that included such heroes as Clive of India, Wolfe of Québec and 'Chinese Gordon' of Khartoum.

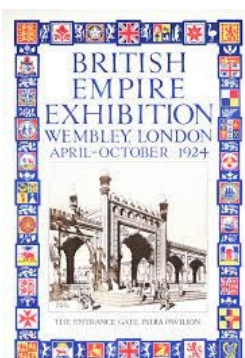
But of course the real highlight of the day for the children was that they were let of school early in order to take part in the thousands of marches, maypole dances, concerts and parties that celebrated the event.

As times changed Empire Day was re-named as British Commonwealth Day, and changed again later in 1966 when it became known as Commonwealth Day. The date of Commonwealth Day was also changed to 10th June, the official birthday of the present Queen Elizabeth II.

British Empire Exhibition

The idea for an Empire Exhibition, at which a new Commonwealth Nation would arise out of the ashes of the Great War, was proposed in 1919. Its supporters in Britain included the Prime Minister, the Colonial Secretary and the Prince of Wales.

The Exhibition would run from 1924 to 1925 and made Wembley a household name. In 1919 the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) had become the President of the organising committee for the proposed Exhibition at Wembley Park, north-west London, although the closing ceremony was presided over by his brother, the future George VI. The Prince, at the time, also wished for the Exhibition to boast a great national sports ground and so exercised some influence on the creation of Wembley Stadium at Wembley Park in 1923.



WOMEN AT WORK TAKEN FROM A STUDY BY AGE UK OLDHAM

My Working Life

1957 – 2002

Anne Ashton

My name is Anne Ashton I was born in what is now the Tameside Hospital in 1937

I went to Aldwyn County Primary School and Fairfield High School until I was 18. I then moved to Padgate Training College for two years.

I started work aged 20 at Mossley Road County Primary School in the infant department and left after I married and went to live in Chadderton.

I then started work at Yew Tree Infant School until I left in 1963 to have my first son. My second son followed and in 1967 I prepared to go back to work but discovered my daughter was on the way.

I eventually returned to work in September 1968 leaving my daughter in the excellent hands of my next door neighbour.

I moved into the juniors at Yew Tree in 1970 and remained there until I decided to retire in 1996. However, I was then offered work at a Private school, Norman House, and began working there in September 1996. I remained there until I retired again 2002.

I loved working with children but found the massive increase in paperwork a strain. I ticked boxes and wrote down every little thing they wanted, it sucked all the pleasure out of the job and I was glad to leave in the end.

I have been retired for 16 years and have gradually lost touch with all the friends I made at work. Many have died, or become ill, some are looking after their family but intermittently I do bump into some of them.

By Anne Ashton

HOW IT WAS AND HOW IT IS NOW

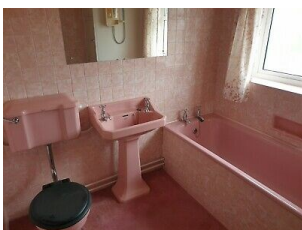
How our lighting has changed through the years from the traditional Standard Lamp and glass shades. Do you remember the funky 70s styles? The one in the picture has an orange and yellow shade, typical style and colours of the day. Today we are able to have as many lights as we want to light our homes.



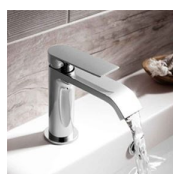
Not only has our lighting changed but so have our light bulbs. In the 1950s it was usually the wattage that varied now bulbs come in all shapes, sizes and colours and some with no resemblance to the bulbs of the past, with the introduction of LED lights.



How the way we heat our homes has also changed over the years! The coal fire always looks warm and welcoming but anyone who was brought up with one will remember the cold winter mornings waiting for the fire to 'get going'. The coal shovel and newspaper being put in front of the fire to help it set alight. It's a scary thought now but it was done.



Bathrooms have changed over the years, some have even gone full circle and come back in fashion, like the free standing baths. Showers have become the norm, very few people had them in the 1940/50/60s; many people didn't even have a bathroom. Taps used to be just a basic item now there are many choices. Regular readers do you remember the poem Sue wrote: 'When is a tap not a tap'?



THE CHANGING OF THE DUVET COVER

*Today the time has come again, the deed has to be done
I need to change the duvet cover which won't be any fun
With the greatest trepidation I slowly approach the bed
My knees are really shaking and my heart is filled with dread*



*It starts off well - it's looking good, I'm on the winning side
Then suddenly it all goes wrong and things begin to slide
The duvet won't behave itself and we start to have a fight
I've got to get the cover on before I go to bed tonight
I push and push the duvet down just hoping it stays there
But then I start to lose control and I'm tearing out my hair!
I struggle to contain it, I start to lose my grip
I've got to keep a hold on it I cannot let it slip
I finally just grit my teeth and push with all my might
At last it's done but I'm worn out so now I'll say goodnight!*



*The following has been supplied by Reggie Heapy
Life Story volunteer:*



WE WAS BRUNG UP PROPER!

"And we never had a whole Mars bar until 1993"!!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL MY FRIENDS WHO WERE BORN IN THE 1930's 40's, 50's, 60's and early 70's!

First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they carried us and lived in houses made of asbestos...

They took aspirin, ate blue cheese, raw egg products, loads of bacon and processed meat, tuna from a can, and didn't get tested for diabetes or cervical cancer.

Then after that trauma, our baby cots were covered with bright coloured lead-based paints.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets or shoes, not to mention the risks we took hitchhiking.

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags.

We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle.

Takeaway food was limited to fish and chips, no pizza shops, McDonalds , KFC, Subway or Nandos...

Even though all the shops closed at 6.00pm and didn't open on a Sunday, somehow we didn't starve to death!

We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and NO-ONE actually died from this.

We could collect old drink bottles and cash them in at the corner store and buy Toffees, Gobstoppers, Bubble Gum and some bangers to blow up frogs with.

We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter and drank soft drinks with sugar in it, but we weren't overweight because...

WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on.

No one was able to reach us all day. And we were OK.

We would spend hours building our go-carts out of old prams and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. We built tree houses and dens and played in river beds with matchbox cars.

We did not have Playstations, Nintendo Wii , X-boxes, no video games at all, no 999 channels on SKY, no video/DVD films, no mobile phones, no personal computers, no Internet or Internet chat rooms...

WE HAD FRIENDS and we went outside and found them!

Continued from previous page...

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents.

Only girls had pierced ears!

We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us forever.

You could only buy Easter Eggs and Hot Cross Buns at Easter time.

We were given air guns and catapults for our 10th birthdays.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just yelled for them!

If Mum went to work as well as Dad it was to make ends meet not because we needed to keep up with the Jones's!

Not everyone made the rugby/football/cricket/netball team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that! Getting into the team was based on **MERIT**.

Our teachers used to hit us with canes and gym shoes and throw the blackboard rubber at us if they thought we weren't concentrating.

We can string sentences together and spell and have proper conversations because of a good, solid three R's education.

Our parents would tell us to ask a stranger to help us cross the road.

The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law!

Our parents didn't invent stupid names for their kids like 'Kiora' and 'Blade' and 'Ridge' and 'Vanilla' and 'Tiger'.

We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned:
HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL!

Article by Rosemary Bailey - Famous people of Oldham:

Dora Bryan

Dora Bryan was a very talented, well loved character actress. Born in Parbold, near Southport, on 7th February 1923, she grew up in Oldham where she attended Hathershaw School. Her father was a cotton mill director and her mother was a seamstress.



Dora's career began in the 1930's with the Drury Lane Babes, at the Palace Theatre in Manchester. Her acting career began in earnest when she joined Oldham Rep in 1938, where she spent 6 years honing her skills, before moving to London where she became a regular performer in the West End.

Cast in a production of Noel Coward's 'Private Lives' Dora was encouraged to adopt a stage name by Noel Coward himself. She decided on Dora Bryant, being inspired by a box of Bryant and May matches which were lying on a table. However, due to a typing error, the last letter was left off on the theatre programme, and so she became Dora Bryan.

Dora appeared in lots of films, usually in a supporting role. In 1961 she won a Bafta Best Actress Award for her role in



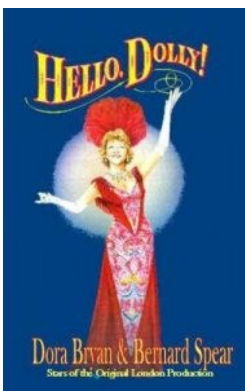
the film 'A Taste of Honey', achieving international recognition as the domineering, alcoholic mother of Rita Tushingham.

In 1968 and 1969 she starred in her own TV series, 'According to Dora' for the BBC.

Throughout her career she continued to perform on the stage, often appearing in musicals such as 'Gentlemen Prefer Blondes' (1962) and 'Hello Dolly!' (1966-68).

She made her Broadway debut in 'Pygmalion' (1987) starring Peter O'Toole.

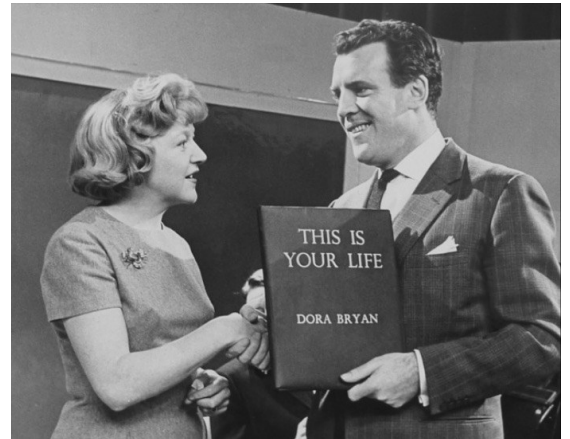
In 1993 she joked with Terry Wogan and Michael Barrymore on their TV shows, that she was aged not 70 but '60 several' and could still kick her leg higher than her head, which brought much audience laughter.





In 1996 she was awarded an OBE in recognition of her services to acting, and the same year she received a Laurence Olivier Award for her role in the West End production of 'The Birthday Party' by Harold Pinter.

She was twice the subject of 'This is Your Life', firstly in April 1962 when she was surprised by Eamonn Andrews at her home in Brighton and secondly, in January 1989, when Michael Aspel surprised her on the stage of the Opera House in Manchester during the curtain call of 'Hello Dolly!'



In later years Dora played Roz in 'Last of the Summer Wine', getting the part through her friend Thora Hird who said, "I wish you were in it with me". She also appeared in a recurring cameo role in 'Absolutely Fabulous' as June Whitfield's on-screen friend, Dolly.



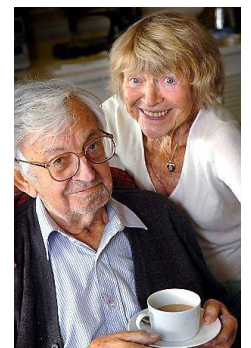
Dora and Bill: Wedding Day



Bill and Dora

Dora was married for 54 years to former Werneth and Lancashire County cricketer, Bill Lawton, until his death from Alzheimer's in August 2008. They met in Oldham during the war and married at his local church, St Thomas's, Werneth, in February 1954. Of their 3 children, Georgina and Daniel were adopted, but following three miscarriages, Dora then gave birth to a son. He was named William after his father.

Dora and Bill bought a seafront hotel named Clarges, in Brighton, which they lived in for more than 40 years. It was later turned into flats and Dora continued to occupy one of them until, as a result of declining health, she moved into a nursing home in Hove, where she died on 23rd July 2014 at the age of 91.



Bill and Dora

Dora was a talented character actress who could turn her hand to everything from musicals to Shakespeare, comedy to tragedy. From a little 12 year old, earning 2/6d in the pantomime 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at Manchester's Palace Theatre, to leading lady in her 20's, Dora Bryan's endearing qualities helped make her one of Britain's highest paid stars.





People at Work

Carrying on with our people at work series:

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 you can remember from your working life?

If you have a short story that you would like to share with us

CONTACT: 0161 633 0213

This month read the story of one of our readers whose job at the University of Manchester involved him working at a very famous place in Cheshire.

Continued on next page...

Editors Note:

When I was at school our class was taken on a trip to Capesthorne Hall in Cheshire and on the way back the coach stopped so we could look across at the new telescope at Jodrell Bank. Little did I know that many years later my brother would be in charge of the annual painting of this huge construction.

This is his story:

I worked for the University of Manchester for over twenty-two years as a Building Supervisor prior to my retirement in 2010. I look back fondly and feel privileged to have been in charge of the buildings at Jodrell bank and the painting of the Lovell Telescope.

The painting was carried out during the summer months and due to the immense size and scale of the telescope we broke it down into five sections and would paint one section each year so that in five years the whole of the telescope had been painted. The following summer we would start the process all over again.

I remember my first visit to site. I was astonished at the size of this structure; it's enormous and runs on a circular railway track.

The work had to be inspected on a daily basis so having a good head for heights was essential. Once you are up there amongst the array of steelwork it's like a giant steel jigsaw puzzle.

Originally the telescope was painted grey but at the request of the scientists at 'Jodrell' we painted it white as this was advantageous on getting a better reception of the radio waves. I remember one of my early visits to the site and speaking with Sir Bernard Lovell the man who conceived it.

It is testimony to the late Sir Bernard who wove a nightmare of intractable problems and battled for over twelve years to secure the site, the finance and the moral support for the construction of the radio telescope which would study the remote regions of time and space. It is remembered as the telescope that in 1957 located by radar the carrier rocket of the first earth satellite Sputnik 1. Alerting the world to the dawn of the 'Space Age'.

On a clear day I can see the telescope 40 miles away on the horizon as I live on the hills above Oldham.

'Talk about memories, I will never say painting is boring again'.

Written by *Les Bramwell*

See next page for photos:

Continued from previous page:

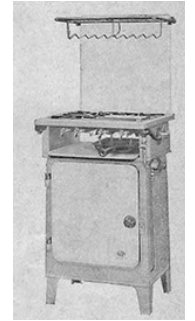


The Lovell Telescope at Jodrell Bank



The late Sir Bernard Lovell founder of the Lovell Telescope

The recipe from Jean this month is a savoury dish:



VEGETABLE PIE WITH CHEESE AND OATMEAL CRUST.

(Serves 4)

1½lbs cooked mixed vegetables

2 tbs spoonful chopped parsley

½ pint stock or water.

2oz oatmeal	4oz flour)
2oz mashed potato.)
1oz fat	2oz cheese) Pastry
Water to mix.	Salt.)

Place cooked vegetables in a pie dish and sprinkle with coarsely chopped parsley. Add vegetable water and seasoning.

To make pastry, cream fat and potato together. Mix grated cheese, oatmeal, flour and salt and stir into it the creamed fat and potato. Mix to a stiff dough with water.

Roll out pastry and cover pie, bake in moderate oven for 30 mins.

Serve with baked jacket potatoes and greens.

How well do you know the parks around Oldham and Districts? (one of them no longer exists):



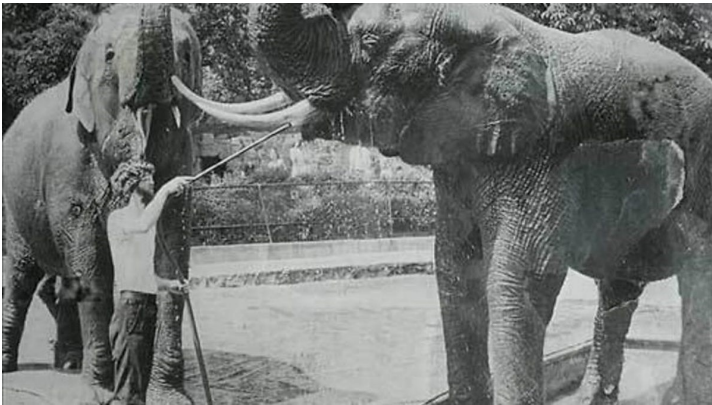
Turn Page to view Answers:

Top Row: Chadderton Hall Park, Royton Park, Dunwood Park (Shaw)
 2nd Row: Foxdenton Park, Stoneleigh Park (Derker), Copster Park
 3rd Row: Waterhead Park, Alexandra Park, Westwood (Now NHS car park)
 4th Row: Verneth Park, Saint Chad's Gardens (Uppermill), Coalshaw Green Park

ANIMAL CORNER

JONNY MORRIS - ANIMAL MAGIC

Among the most loved of television presenters, *Johnny Morris* (born Ernest John Morris in Newport, Wales, on 20 June 1916) entertained and educated generations of children and their parents through the *BBC* children's series *Animal Magic* (*BBC*, 1962-83). Based on an idea by *Morris*, *Animal Magic* was launched on 13 April 1962, with himself as both studio presenter and a zookeeper in the filmed inserts. The latter were usually shot at Bristol Zoo and were the most popular element of the programmes. In his role of zookeeper (which many children grew up believing him to be), *Morris* bathed, fed and looked after various zoo animals, adding voices to the soundtrack to mimic their physical characteristics. Certain animals - Christina and Wendy the elephants, Dottie, the French-accented ring-tailed lemur (named after Hollywood star *Dorothy Lamour*) - even attained a level of stardom through the series.



Morris was awarded an OBE in 1984, but television appearances in the 1980s and '90s were infrequent. He revived his zookeeper character one final time in *The Magic Keeper* (Channel 4, 24/12/1998). Partly filmed at Bristol Zoo, the dialogue-free film featured *Morris* attending to various animals, accompanied by the music of Darius Milhaud.

Morris was to begin working on an animal series called "Wild Thing" for Tyne Tees Television when he collapsed and died on 6 May 1999. He was buried, and much mourned, with his old zookeeper's cap.

LOOKING BACK IN TIME, OUR TOWN -The Railway Stations

Mumps Station



Oldham Mumps railway station opened in 1847 and closed in 2009.

The name of the station is taken from its situation within the Mumps area of Oldham, which itself probably derived from the archaic word 'mumper', slang for a beggar.

Central Station



Clegg Street Station



Oldham Central Railway Station was opened on 1st November 1847 as part of the extension of the Middleton Junction to Oldham Werneth line to Oldham Mumps. Although conveniently located to the centre of the town it was selected for closure in April 1966.

Neighbouring Clegg Street Station was closed to passenger services in May 1959.

Glodwick Road Station



Glodwick Road Station opened on 1st November 1862 on the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) line between Oldham Clegg Street and Greenfield, the bulk of which had been open since 1856. It replaced the LNWR's original terminus at Oldham Mumps.

The station closed on 2 May 1955 when the Delph Donkey passenger train service to Delph via Greenfield was withdrawn. The line remained open for goods traffic until 1964.

WERNETH STATION



Werneth station was originally built to serve Platt Bros. a huge cotton spinning engineering company, who had their headquarters in Werneth.

The Middleton Junction and Oldham Branch Railway formerly ran from Werneth Station down to Middleton Junction. The line included the Werneth Incline which had a gradient of 1 in 27, and was one of the steepest stretches of line regularly used for passenger traffic in the country. The branch line closed on 7 January 1963.

LOOKING BACK IN TIME - OUR TOWN -The Shops

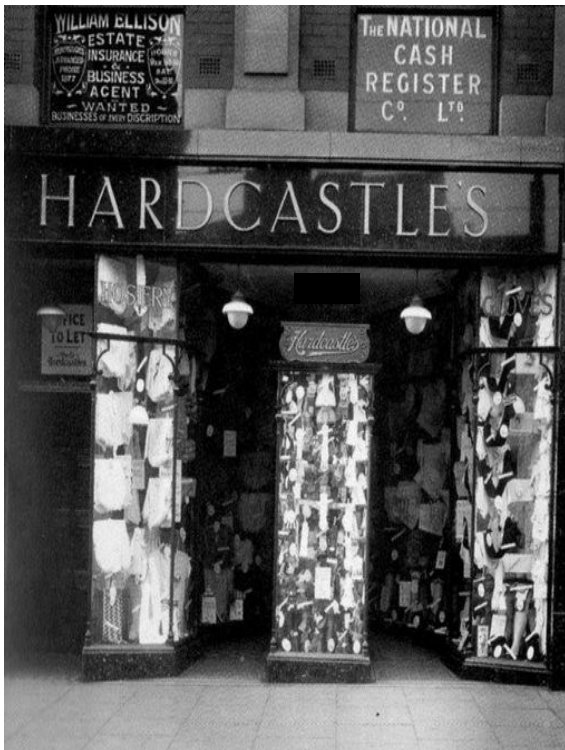
Open in 1925 - Closed 1984



Littlewoods



Old Market Hall



SPORTING GREATS

PAT SMYTHE OBE



Patricia Rosemary Smythe OBE was an English Horsewoman, Show Jumper and also writer.

Born: 28 November 1928.

East Sheen, London and moved to the Cotswolds at the age of 10.

School: Boarder at Talbot Heath school in Bournemouth.

Died: 27 February 1996.

Parents: Ronald Eric Hamilton Smythe & Frances Monica Curtoys.

Siblings: Ronald & Dicky Smythe

Married: Sam Koechlin (a swiss Lawyer) in 1963.

Children: Two Daughters.

Achievements:

1950 in Paris set European record for Women Jumpers of 6ft.10 $\frac{7}{8}$ ins.

Won Prince of Wales Cup for England as member of Nations Cup Team (1952).

Won bronze medal and was first female show jumping team member at Stockholm Olympic Games (1956). Also completed in the 1952 Olympics.

Won European Ladies' championship (1957, 1961–1963);

Won British Jumping Derby (1962).

Served as President of the British Show Jumping Association 1983-86 and as Vice President 1987-96.

When she was 14, Smythe got her first horse, Finality, with which she competed at her initial International Show at White City in 1946. Her performance was so impressive that Harry Llewellyn, head of the British show jumping team, invited her to join the team for their first tour abroad. At the Horse of the Year Show in 1950, Smythe tied for first place with Llewellyn in a famous jump-off.

During a ten-year stretch starting in the 1950s, she was victorious in a record eight British Show Jumping championships, an accomplishment for which she was made an Officer of the British Empire (OBE).

Writer of many books including Leaping Life's Fences and Pony Adventure stories for children.

OLDHAM RLFC -THE EARLY YEARS



The Oldham team that won the Northern RFU championship in 1898



In 1876, Oldham Football Club was founded in a meeting at the Prince Albert Hotel, Union Street West, attended by Chairman of the Watch Committee, William Chadwick, Chief Constable Charles Hodgkinson, mill owner Fred Wild, eminent local Quaker and Lord-to-be Alfred Emmott and three brothers of the Fletcher family. Their first match at Sugar Meadow was held on 21 October 1876 against Stalybridge. After two seasons they joined Oldham Cricket Club at the new Clarksfield ground before finding a more permanent home in 1889 at Watersheddings.

Oldham were one of the twenty-one clubs that left the Rugby Football Union to form the Northern Union in 1895. Oldham were fourth in the first title race of 1895–96 and second a year later. They were the second club to win the Challenge Cup after beating Hunslet 19–9 in 1899. Batley had won the first two finals.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Oldham won their first Championship title in 1904–05, just edging out Bradford Northern by three points. Won the Lancashire League in 1897–98, 1900–01 and 1907–08 as well as the Lancashire County Cup in 1906–07. In the 1907–08 season, Oldham finished as league leaders but Hunslet were crowned champions in their historic all-four cups season after winning the Championship Final 12–2 in a replay after an initial 7–7 draw.

Another title success followed in 1909–10 as they beat Wigan in the Championship final. Also in that same season they managed to win the Lancashire League and Lancashire Cup. The following season, 1910–11, they beat Wigan again in the Championship final.

Oldham's record attendance was set in 1912 when the visit of Huddersfield for a league match drew 28,000 spectators.

Oldham won the Lancashire League in 1921–22 and the Lancashire Cup in 1912–13, 1918–19 and 1923–24. The annual Law Cup was first contested against neighbours Rochdale Hornets on 7 May 1921. Having lost in the 1907, 1912 and 1924 Challenge Cup Finals, they finally won the trophy again in 1925 when they beat Hull Kingston Rovers 16–3 at Headingley, Leeds.

They beat the visiting Australasian team of the 1921–22 Kangaroo tour of Great Britain 15–5.

The club's last Challenge Cup final was in 1927 when they beat Swinton 26–7 at Central Park, Wigan, their fourth consecutive final and revenge for their 9–3 defeat when the same teams met in the previous year's match. In 1932–33, Oldham won the Lancashire Cup again.

OLDHAM RLFC –1950's

In the 1950s, Oldham won the Championship and other trophies with a side that included Alan Davies, John Etty, goalkicker Bernard Ganley, Jack Keith Sid Little, Frank Pitchford, Derek 'Rocky' Turner, Don Vines and Charlie Winslade.

On Monday 15 September 1952, record receipts were taken from a gate of 19,370 at Watersheddings to watch Oldham take on the Kangaroo tourists. The Australians lost only one of twenty-two club matches in Britain during that tour but came close to defeat at Oldham, where the Roughyeds held them to a 7–7 draw.

Oldham played in the 1954–55 Championship Final at Maine Road, Manchester against Warrington. They also lost the Lancashire Cup final in a 2-12 defeat by Barrow in 1954.

Oldham's success in the 1950s also included a Championship title – in 1956–57; the Lancashire League 1956–57 and 1957–58 and the Lancashire Cup 1955–56, 1956–57 and 1957–58. Oldham lost 16–13 to Wigan in the 1966 Lancashire Cup Final. In 1964, Oldham reached the semi-finals of the Challenge Cup against Hull Kingston Rovers, the tie is remembered for taking three games to find the winner, the first match at Headingley finished 5–5, the replay at Station Road, Swinton finished prematurely 17–14 in Oldham's favour when the game was abandoned midway through the second half due to bad light, and the third game was won by Hull Kingston Rovers 12–2 at Fartown, Huddersfield.

Oldham were Division Two champions in 1963–64.

League Champs. 1956-7, Lancs. Cup Winners 1956-7, 1957-8



Lancs. League Cup

Lancs Cup

Championship Trophy

Law Cup

*Back Row: B. Day, E. Watkins, S. Cambell, P. Carter, R. L. Thomas, E. Thomas, F. Ashworth, F. Ridgeway.
Middle Row: H. Summerscales, J. Coulthard, Vines, Winslade, Keith, Little, Turner, Jackson, Jarman, G. Jenkins.
Front Row: F. S. Holt, Cracknell, Davies, Daley, Ganley, Bill Howard., Stirrup, Pichford, Ayers, Etty, A. Cordwell.*

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LIFE STORY VOLUNTEERS
EDITOR
JOAN HOLMES**



Life Story

Every life has a story...

