



MANCHESTER GROUP OF THE
VICTORIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Summer 2022

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COVER

Former County Court, Encombe Place, Salford, designed by Charles Reeve, surveyor of Police, in 1862

Now converted to apartments and suitably gentrified, its appearance is far removed from that of the 1950s when a century of soot covered every surface and any trees were at best severely stunted. These changes can best be appreciated by comparison with the film 'Hobson's Choice.' Filmed in 1952, David Lean's film used this area of Salford and the nearby Peel Park as the location for a number of identifiable outdoor scenes. While the spire of St John's RC Cathedral, the tower of St Philip's Church, and the bulk of the former Salford Royal Hospital still remain as local landmarks, the streets of terraced housing which surrounded the court building are long gone.

The views expressed within this publication are those of the authors concerned and not necessarily those of the Manchester Group of the Victorian Society.

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JOHN H G ARCHER 1927 – 2022

An Appreciation by Ken Moth

I first got to know John in 1973 when we were each taking part in a public enquiry. John was representing the Victorian Society in their objection to the proposed demolition of J E Gregan's Mechanic's Institute on Princess Street. This sophisticated and accomplished palazzo was Gregan's last work and John gave a detailed analysis of the building and its wider significance. The Inspector ruled in the Society's favour and the building still stands. This was just one of many battles that John fought on the Society's behalf.

John was a distinguished architectural historian and a keen member of the Society which he represented on Manchester's Historic Buildings Panel for many years. He was a former Chairman of the Northern Buildings Committee, a former trustee of the Society, Past President of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, a university lecturer and a writer. He was the acknowledged authority on Manchester Town Hall and on the Arts and Crafts architects Edgar Wood and James Henry Sellars. He wrote several articles on Edgar Wood and drafted a book which we hope will be published in the not too distant future.

John encouraged both Society members and students in their interest in Victorian and Edwardian architecture and was a good friend to many.

Ken Moth



John Archer outside Manchester Town Hall 2006 © Mark Watson

CHURCH LECTERN BY J. E. C. CARR

Richard Fletcher

A few months after my article on the decorative artist J E C Carr was published in the Summer 2021 Newsletter, I was contacted by a gentleman from Richmond in Surrey to say that his church had recently acquired a lectern by Carr, and he enclosed some photographs. It is one of the few known surviving examples of Carr's decorative iron work from his period in Manchester.

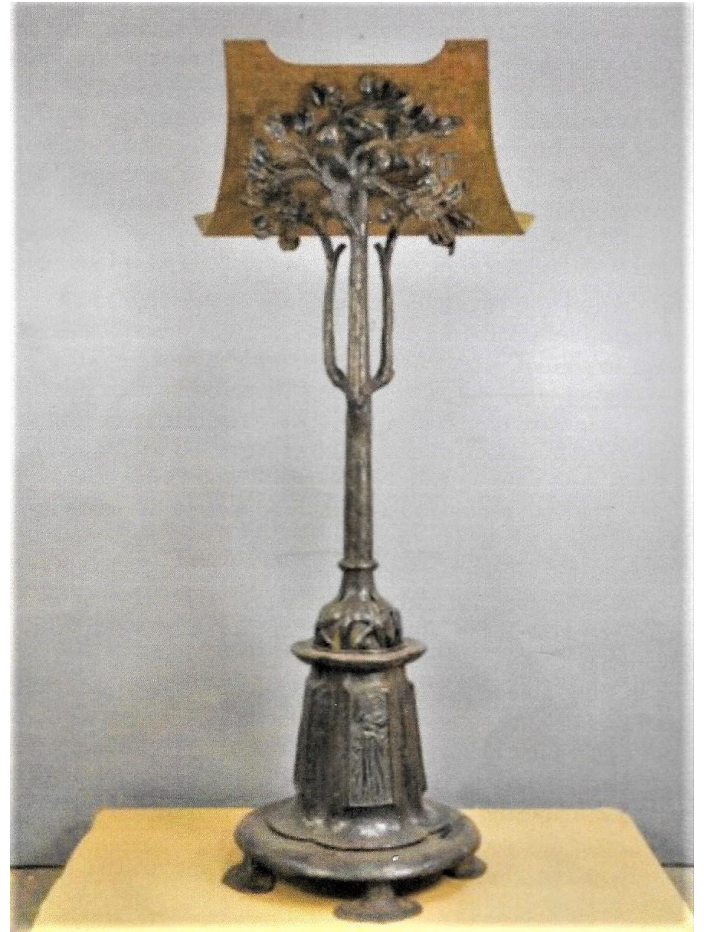
It was originally part of the furnishings of Bedford Hospital Chapel, built between 1897 and 1899, and a contemporary document states that "the lectern and electric light services were made by one J E Carr of Manchester". Unfortunately, the light fittings have not survived. The architect of the building was Percy Adams, and it is interesting to note that the young Bolton architect Charles Holden had just joined this practice in 1897 – could he perhaps have recommended Carr's work?

When the chapel was re-ordered in 2015, the lectern was considered surplus to requirements. It was acquired by the Friends of Friendless Churches organisation who, after appealing for a suitable recipient, sold it to the church of St John the Divine in Richmond. St John's contains furniture and fittings by several Arts and Crafts artists, including Henry Wilson, Ernest Gimson, Christopher Whall and MacDonald Gill, and the lectern has been placed in the Lady Chapel, complementing a screen by W Bainbridge Reynolds and a reredos by Arthur Grove.

The lectern itself is made of iron and brass. The pedestal incorporates four repoussé brass panels depicting the four Evangelists, and from this springs a wrought iron column representing the Tree of Life. The top of the column opens out into an intricate pattern of branches and foliage supporting a brass Bible rest. At some stage, a thin coating of black varnish was applied to both the iron and brass work, but this has since deteriorated in several places. A specialist firm has concluded that the lectern is in sound structural condition but a general restoration, including removal of the varnish, will cost in the region of £10,000. It is planned to pay for the work out of a Lady Chapel restoration fund.

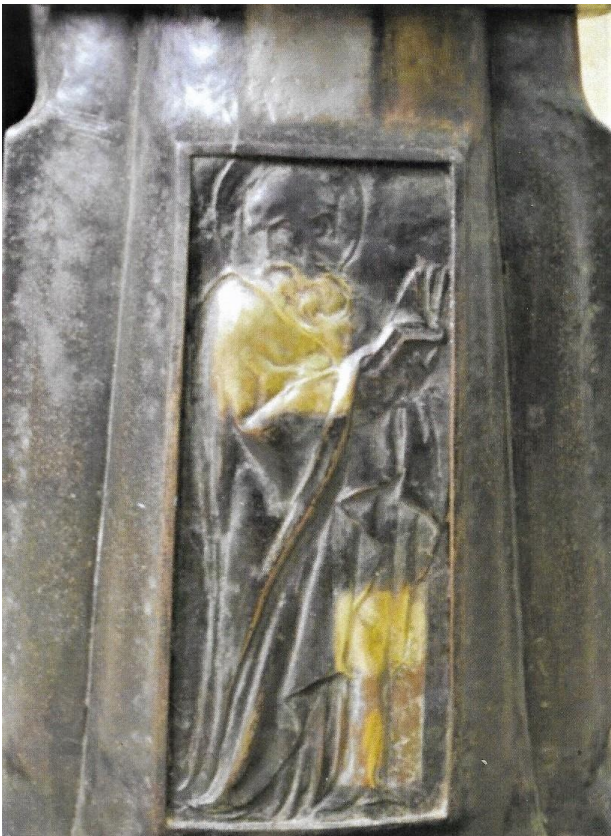


Above: A photograph of the lectern from The Studio journal of 1904 showing its original condition.



Above Left: The lectern in situ in the Lady Chapel.

Above Right: The lectern in its current condition



Left: One of the pedestal panels showing test areas where the metalwork has been restored.

DINNER FOR ONE

The late James A Johnstone: Club Captain 1958

One of the highlights of the days of the Manchester Golf Club on Kersal Moor was the occasion when Mr. Ross arrived at the club house for dinner one Friday evening in September 1858 and found he was the only one there. The member whose turn it was to provide dinner was Mr. J. Simpson Young, who had joined the club only the year before. Mr. Young had arranged for the dinner to be prepared in accordance with the rota and the club's rules, but only Mr. Ross turned up. The newspapers of the time contain no reports of storm or tempest in the Manchester area that might have accounted for the absence of all the other members, and there are no reports of an outbreak of cholera or other disease. So Malcolm Ross dined on his own, drank all the port, proposed the Toast to Her Majesty and the standard toast "Golf Clubs all over the World", even though there was nobody in the room but himself, and then sat down to record the evening's proceedings in the Minute Book. Mr. Ross had been at pains to record a previous occasion when the entire membership had turned up to play golf on the Moor and to dine in the evening, on September 18th 1845, so perhaps he felt constrained to record this occasion when there was nobody there but himself. One can imagine Malcolm Ross, a short, stocky little man only 5' 4" in height, bald of head but with a mass of hair round the back of his neck and with mutton chop whiskers, sitting on his own in the club room having had his meal and having drunk more port than was good for him, no doubt wondering where all the other members were, and toying with the idea of entering up the evening's events in the Minute Book. One can picture him gazing round the empty room, eyeing the wine table and helping himself to yet another glass of port, and then, with an impish glint in his eye, reaching for his Minute Book and his pen and his ink pot, and settling down to write up the evening's proceedings. But this is precisely what Malcolm Ross did, that evening in September 1858. He wrote in the Minute Book as follows:

Meeting 13th September 1858

Present: Mr. Ross In the chair: Mr. Ross

This meeting was remarkable for its unanimity and such unanimity as Mr Barge would say rarely occurs: perhaps this is the first time that any Member had dinner, toasts and repartee all to himself. There was no lack of substantials if a large Cod, a Saddle of Mutton, a Goose, two brace of Partridge, and puddings etc. can be considered enough for one little man. After the cloth was drawn and the solitary candle lighted the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were given and received with marked but not uproarious cordiality, but the toast of the evening, unlike such on ordinary occasions was given in solemn silence amidst sullen fits of execration: that toast was 'The Absent Members'. The Standard toast 'Golf Clubs all over the World' was given with a little reserve and suspicion seeing that Chambers Journal and the mother club, St Andrews, in inviting all clubs to contest for the St Andrews annual tournament had uniformly left out Manchester, the wit at the table suggested that this was done from a fear of the Manchester club having the best players and all the others not liking to run a chance of being beaten by such provincials. One toast deserves honourable mention, and was given very heartily and received most cordially: the purveyor, Mr. Young, this being the only absent member who had done even half his duty. The toast was received with as much enthusiasm as was possible under the circumstances; the Town and Trade of Manchester Better times and soon - Good harvest weather the Army and the Navy and a host of others were for once left alone..."

At the bottom of the page another member, Mr. Barge, wrote:

"Friends will please look kindly and not harshly upon the Orthography, Phraseology etc. etc. of the above. The little man was alone in his glory and after the third bottle wrote this wandering report. Don't smile at it, gentle stranger, such discrepancies don't occur every day."

This occasion when Malcolm Ross dined on his own in the club room has become known as the 'Dinner for One', and has received Press publicity from time to time over the years. The 100th anniversary of the occasion happened to fall during the captaincy of the writer of these notes, in 1958. The club planned to celebrate the occasion with a dinner with

the same menu as that put before Malcolm Ross, but the Manchester hoteliers felt that the stomachs of the golfers of 1958 would not be able to cope with such a menu, so a dinner with a conventional menu was arranged. The dinner, called the Malcolm Ross Centenary Dinner, was held in the club house on September 12th 1958. Sixty members and their friends were present, and the guests of the club were the Mayor of Salford, Alderman S.W. Davies, J.P., the captain of the Society of Manchester & District Golf Captains, Mr F. M. Heap, of the Ringway Golf Club, and the captains of the two clubs with which the club had inter club matches in those days - Mr Noel Worthington, of Stand, and Mr W. A. Thompson, of Prestwich.

The text is taken from the History of the Old Manchester Golf Club by James A Johnstone and circulated privately.



Above: Golf Club House Singleton Road, Kersal

The location of the “Dinner for One,” the original Club House of the Old Manchester Golf Club in Singleton Road, Kersal, shortly before demolition. At the time Jimmy Johnstone believed it to be the oldest surviving club house in England. The adjacent house was rebuilt on the foundations of Siddall’s farmhouse in the early 20th century. This rebuilding retained part of the original chimney stack, complete with priest’s hole, the Siddalls, father and son, having been actively involved in the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 on the side of the Jacobites.

Malcolm Ross was well-known in business circles in Manchester, being a member of the Royal Exchange and chairman and director of Manchester Chamber of Commerce. He was a driving force behind the creation of public parks to serve the working people of Manchester and Salford, and had the honour of turning the first sod in the creation of Queen's Park in Harpurhey. He was a member of the Manchester Golf Club for 40 years, serving as both secretary and treasurer for almost 30 of them. By his own admission he was not a very good player, and in 1846 it took him 160 strokes to complete the 10-hole course. It was the highest score ever recorded in the club's history.

Left A poor image of the bust of Malcolm Ross exhibited in the sculpture gallery of Manchester Town Hall.

Records indicate that Papworth was the sculptor responsible and that the bust was exhibited at the Manchester Royal Institution in 1875



RECENT EVENTS

WORSLEY DELPH

Unfortunately, this walk had to be cancelled.

It is hoped to reschedule this at a later date. See Events September 2022 – January 2023 below for details

new date: Sunday 6th November 2022 1 30pm - 3 30pm

PETER STREET TO PICCADILLY

An architectural and commemorative sculptural walk led by David Astbury, recent Chair of Manchester Vic Soc. on Tuesday August 23rd.

A full report of this event will be included in the next Newsletter

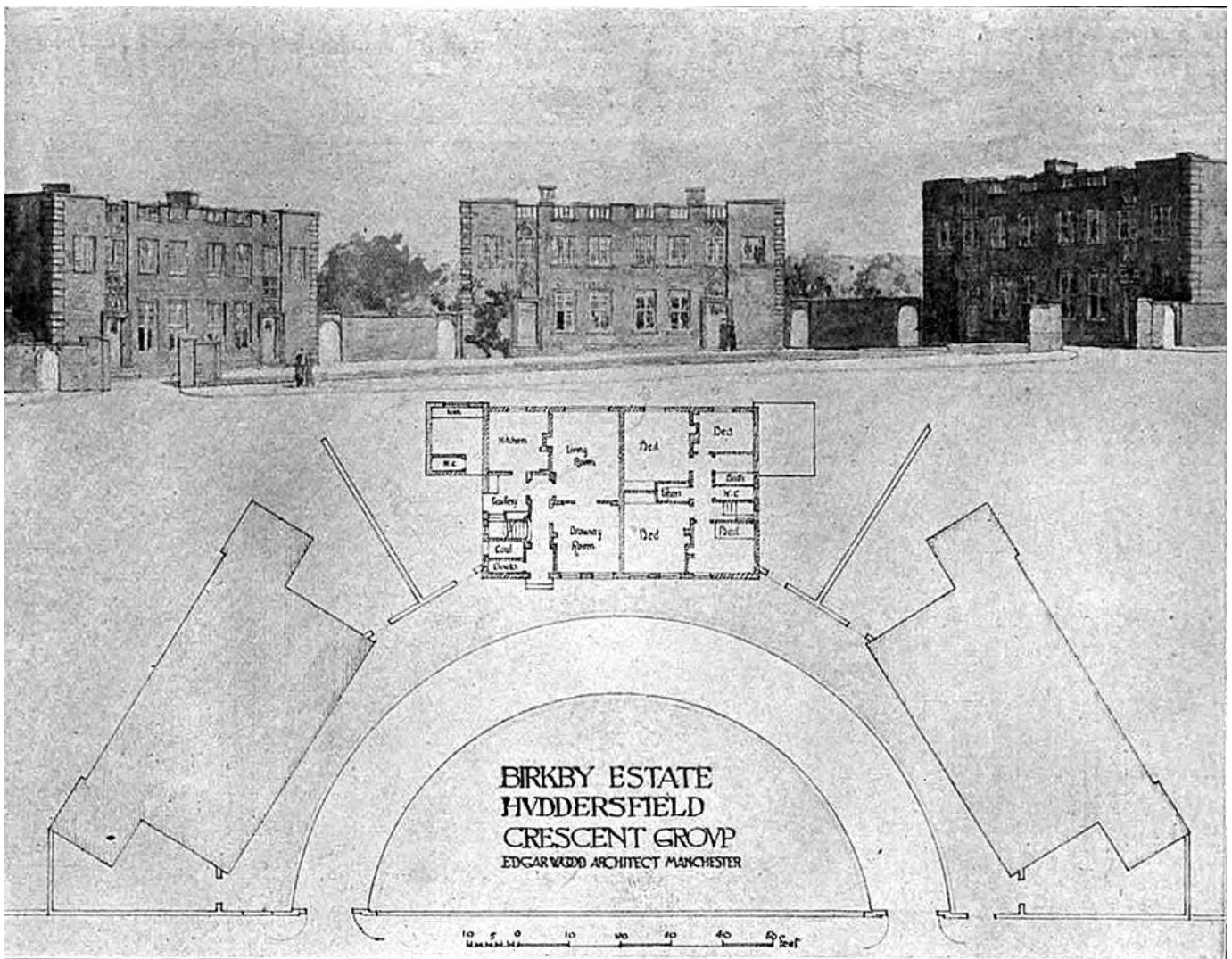
BIRKBY ESTATE HUDDERSFIELD

Architect: Edgar Wood

Reference Builder 6 September 1912 page 282

Although based in Manchester, Edgar Wood received a significant number of commissions in Huddersfield and district. Most are well documented but the proposed scheme at Birkby is little known.

This illustration was published in the Builder without further text and the scheme is assumed unbuilt. Of interest is the introduction of concrete and asphalt flat roofs, in marked contrast to the Fairfield estate, Manchester, of about the same period.



Proposed Estate Development, Huddersfield.

[The above illustration explains the nature of the Crescent Group designed by Mr. Edgar Wood, F.R.I.B.A., for the Birkby Estate, Huddersfield. The buildings would be carried out in local stone, cut face surface, with concrete and asphalt roofs. This group forms a portion of an estate laid out on town-planning lines.]

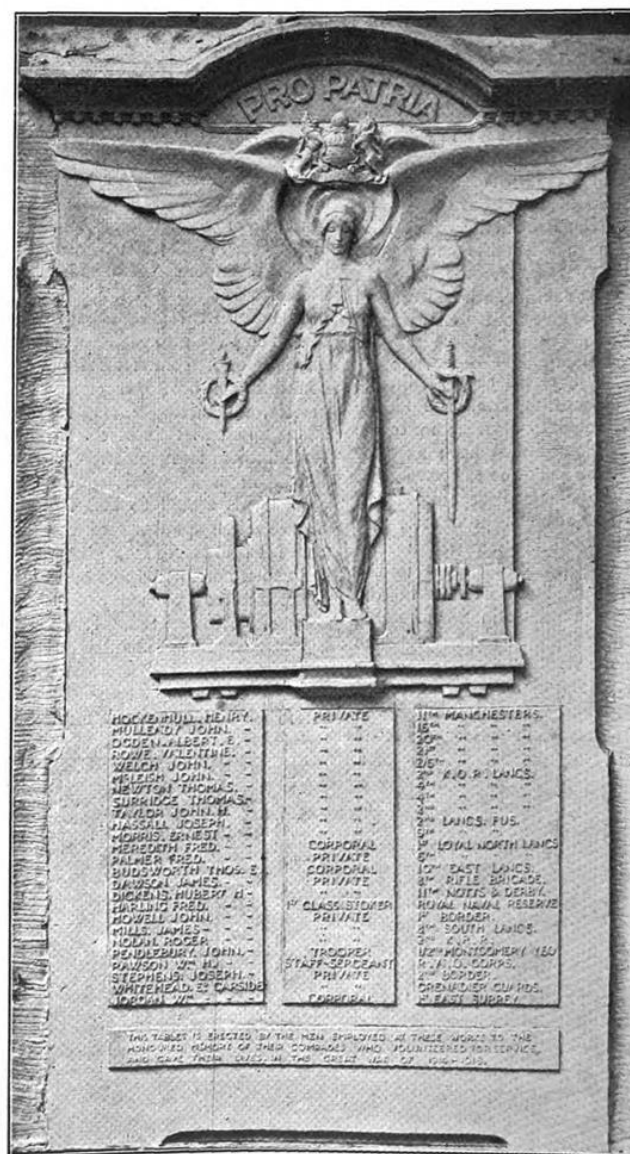
MEMORIAL TABLET AT THE MANCHESTER CORPORATION ELECTRIC POWER STATION

Neil Darlington

Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1919, this memorial panel was illustration in the Builder of 21 October 1921 and is unusual in that the depiction of electrical machinery formed part of the design. A similar panel was subsequently produced for a cotton spinning mill in Halifax for the Rt Hon J H Whitley featuring a diagram of the spinning jenny.

The sculptor, Ferdinand Victor Blundstone (1882–1951) was born in Switzerland but spent most of his life in Manchester and London. He was awarded Royal Academy Schools Gold Medal in 1907 and produced several War Memorials after the First World War, including those at Stalybridge and Folkestone and one for the Prudential Insurance Company.

It is assumed that this memorial panel was originally placed in the Bloom Street Generating Station of the Manchester Corporation but no evidence has been found in support of this supposition. Its present whereabouts are unknown. Should any member have any further information, please could they get in touch.



R.A. EXHIBITION, 1919.

Memorial Panel at the Manchester Corporation Electric Power Station.
MR. F. V. BLUNDSTONE, R.B.S., Sculptor.

MANCHESTER VICTORIAN SOCIETY EVENTS: SEPTEMBER – JANUARY 2023

Saturday 24th September 2022 3pm

VISIT TO ALL SAINTS RC CHURCH, (E W Pugin) REDCLYFFE ROAD, BARTON-UPON-IRWELL

A chance to visit this grade 1 listed church which is not often open these days. Situated alongside the Manchester Ship Canal and with the Barton Swing Bridge and Barton Swing Aqueduct nearby, the church is, in Pevsner's opinion, 'Pugin's masterwork' built in the Gothic Revival style for the de Trafford family.

The Franciscan order of Friars Minor Conventual live in the adjoining house, now the friary. The order moved here in 1962 to serve the Salford diocese.

A talk will be given by James Crowley, MA Archaeology of Buildings (York), MA Antiques (UCLAN), BA (Hons) Spatial Design, Salford.

James has practiced as a freelance Architectural Historian and Ecclesiastical Heritage Consultant since 2016 following the completion of his post graduate studies. He also serves as Secretary of the Historic Churches Committee for the three Catholic Diocese in Wales.

Specialising in Catholic places of worship and collections, James has worked on numerous historic Catholic sites including the Cathedrals of Lancaster, Salford, Shrewsbury, Plymouth, and Westminster, as well as the notable 19th Century churches of St Walburge's, Preston; St Mary's (the Hidden Gem), Manchester; and All Saints, Barton-upon-Irwell. His work ranges from investigation of buildings to inform re-ordering and conservation work, to heritage content for guidebooks and websites, and the recording of artefacts to produce church inventories.

For his MA Archaeology of Buildings thesis James chose the study of All Saints and the buildings control procedures of the Catholic Church. A native of Salford and local resident, he has been a worshipper at All Saints since childhood, continuing family connections which have existed since the church was first built.

£10 pay on the day. Please book with Anne Hodgson at anne.hodgson@hotmail.com

Added Extra! Guided walk around the unique Barton Swing Bridge, Barton Swing Aqueduct and control tower on the Manchester Ship Canal.

Mark Watson, Victorian Society member and member of the Northern Buildings Committee will lead a walk around this area that adjoins All Saints Church. There have recently been proposals to reinstate the towpath along the canal and the Victorian Society have been involved with commenting on this. (See bridgewatercanal.co.uk for more details).

Meet for a 1.30 start at the corner of Old Barton Road and Redclyffe Road by Barton Swing Bridge. (For those coming by car there is plenty of free parking along Old Barton Road by the side of the church).

There is no extra charge for this event. If you have already booked for the All Saints visit then please let Anne Hodgson know (anne.hodgson@hotmail.com) if you would like to come to this event as well. Bookings are still open for both events.

Saturday 15th October 2022 2pm for 2 15pm

THE GREAT MISS LYDIA BECKER: SUFFRAGIST, SCIENTIST AND TRAILBLAZER.

A talk about this remarkable woman of nineteenth century Manchester by Joanna Williams, historian and biographer who has recently published the first biography about Lydia Becker: 'The Great Lydia Becker: Suffragist, Scientist and Trailblazer'.

Stretford Public Hall, Chester Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 0LG

£7 pay on the day. Please book with Anne Hodgson at anne.hodgson@hotmail.co

WORSLEY GREEN AND DELPH:

new date: Sunday 6th November 2022 1 30pm - 3 30pm.

The July walk and talk led by Dr. Mike Nevell which unfortunately had to be cancelled will now be an autumn walk and will take place on Sunday, 6th November 2022, 1 30 pm - 3 30 pm.

The walk is to complement Mike's talk to us earlier this year on 'Digging the Bridgewater Canal': recent research on the Worsley Green Workshops and Worsley Delph. There is an interesting and informative account of the talk in the Spring edition of the Manchester Group newsletter which should whet the appetite for the event!

Places are reserved for those who had booked already, but there are still spaces available so please book via anne.hodgson@hotmail.com. £7, pay on the day.

Saturday 12th November 2022 2pm for 2 15pm

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MUSEUM AT THE MANCHESTER MUNICIPAL SCHOOL OF ART: - A GUIDED TOUR FROM 1903

A talk by Stephanie Boydell, Curator of the Manchester School of Art Collection, Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collections Museum (and PhD candidate).

This talk will look at the history and rationale behind the establishment of the Manchester School of Art's Arts and Crafts Museum in 1898 and explore the variety of objects that were acquired for display through a virtual tour of the gallery as it was arranged in 1903.

Stretford Public Hall, Chester Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 0LG

£7 pay on the day. Please book with Anne Hodgson at anne.hodgson@hotmail.com

SAVE THE DATE: The Victorian Society Manchester Group AGM

Saturday 21st January 2023. 2pm for 2 15pm.

Stretford Public Hall, Chester Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 0LG. All members are entitled to attend the AGM free of charge. Details to follow nearer the time.

