



On March 22nd 2017, the Mayor of Rochdale, Mr Dutton, together with Mrs Dutton, the Mayoress performed the official opening ceremony of our Watergrove Room project in front of a group of members and visitors.

They expressed an interest in our work and we hope to see them again in the near future when their mayoral duties are complete.



At the end of February, using the excuse of celebrating the birthday of one of our members, we had a most enjoyable trip to the White House on Blackstone Edge for lunch.

On a historical note, this place wasn't always as peaceful as on the day of our visit.; in early December, 1894 the landlady was shot by a thief. Fortunately her life was saved when the bullet bounced off her steel corset. Her husband was also seriously injured in the arm and shoulder and died within the following two years.

The assailant, Robert Ackrigg was soon caught and was sentenced to 12 years Penal Servitude for attempted murder.



Left is a contemporary view of the White House

Contact us

Wardle & Smallbridge History Centre
110 Wardle Road
Rochdale OL12 9ER

We're *almost* always there on Wednesdays between 10am and 12 pm – pass straight along the corridor, then up the stairs for a friendly chat and a look at our exhibits.

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Please leave a message and we'll reply ASAP

Our Facebook page continues to grow in popularity; there's no need to subscribe as you can access it by simply going to our website at www.washg.co.uk and clicking on the link, while you're on the website, you can also download this newsletter

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We have for some time been in contact with a group from the Downham area who are involved in the research and preservation of a silk banner from the local Benevolent Society.

As it was made by Skerretts of Bury who also made one of ours, they were keen to see our collection. In April they paid us a visit and explained the lengthy process involved in getting funding for this work.

A successful visit ended with a trip to the friendly Primitive Methodist Chapel at Greenhill in Littleborough to see their `Skerrett` banner.



A friend of the Wardle and Smallbridge group recently presented us with a most unusual gift, a badly damaged 19th century musket which was found some years ago in a local lake.

The gun was made for the Moroccan market and how it came to be in this area will probably remain for ever a mystery. The various pieces have now been reassembled; it is of course deactivated and makes an interesting addition to our displays.



Publicity.

Our attractive window displays at Wardle Library continue to be very popular with both customers and passers-by.

After a number of failed experiments we believe that we have now succeeded in making a notice which will survive the wind, sun and rain at Watergrove car park....

We now have a telephone number to make it easier for those without email to contact us.

Membership of our Facebook group is constantly increasing; we now have a worldwide membership of well over 700 members.

Pennines in Bloom 2017

We have been asked to participate in this enterprise which takes place in June this year. The local venue is at Littletown near Watergrove.

A more appropriate photograph will be posted in the next edition but in the meantime we have an `artist's` impression of what it could have looked like after an evening in the Trap Inn or The Orchard.



On what must have been the best day of the year so far a group of the members recently enjoyed a stroll by the waters of Knowl Syke Brook from Law Flat down to Rydings Dam.

This sign proved to be an exaggeration but we did later meet a group of very friendly horses who were reluctant to let their new friends go.



We look forward to the next expedition, non members are welcome to come along on an informal basis.

The restoration of the `Last Supper` painting from Smallbridge Church is now complete and the picture shows it in its new home in the United Reformed Church in Littleborough. The artist, Mrs Cook also painted a similar piece at their next church in Hartlepool. After numerous attempts we have now got pictures of this, and also of the illustrations which she painted on the pulpit panels.

Ongoing research includes the story of a Wardle man who fought in both World Wars and was the first man from the village to receive a medal.

Smallbridge resident James Tweedale was correspondent for the Rochdale Observer and wrote numerous articles about the area. These are being transcribed and will be available on the website in the near future.

The little known story of the Wardle Fire Brigade is being followed with the co-operation of the Fire Service Museum in Rochdale.

