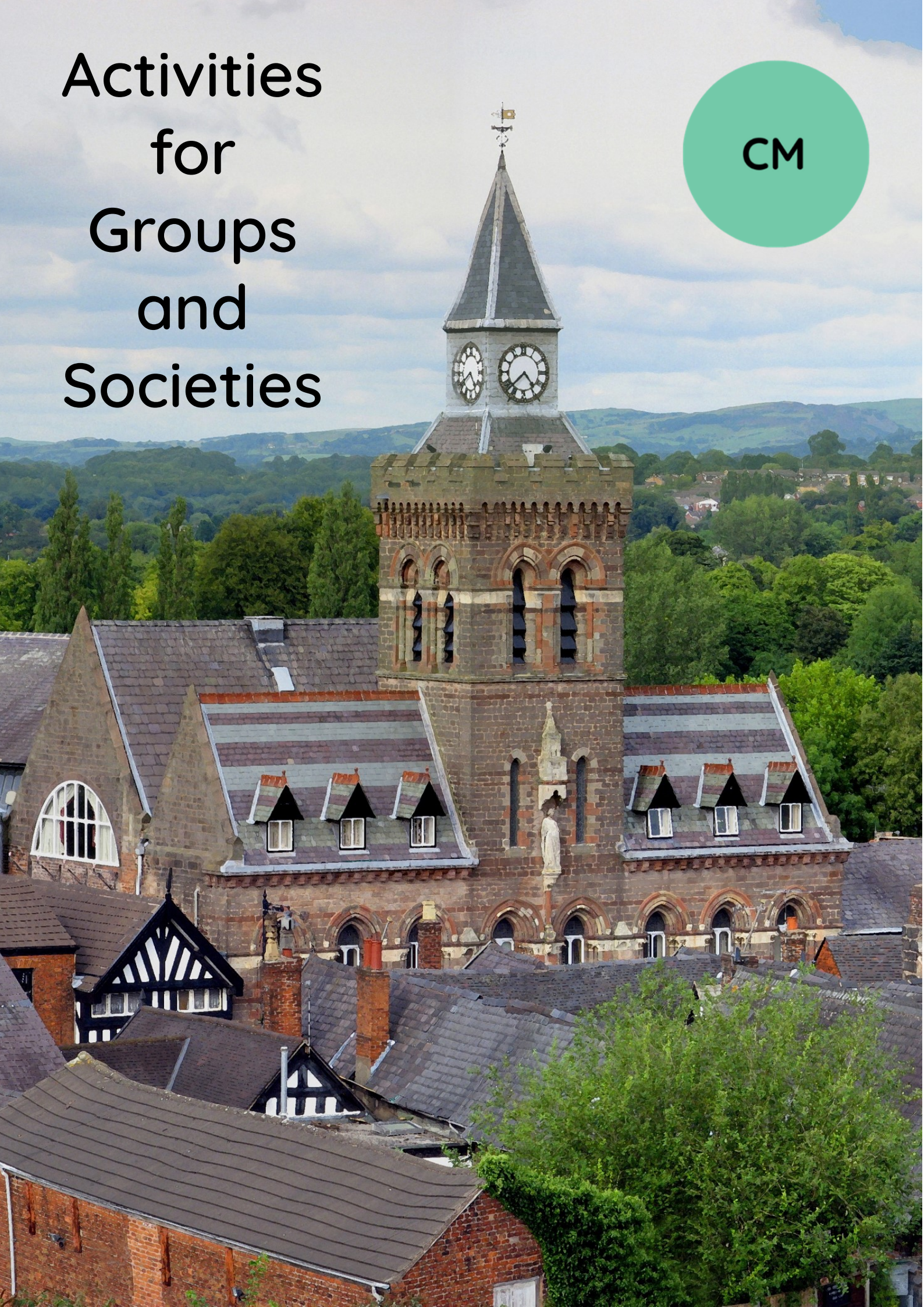


Activities for Groups and Societies

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Planning your organisation's talk programme or looking for a group excursion?

Then why not learn about the historic town of Congleton?

Visit Congleton Museum

(Maximum number of people for an effective visit 30)

Adult Groups £60 per visit

There is an additional charge for refreshments

Youth Groups £2.50 per person

Arrange a group guided tour looking at an aspect of the town's history

(Maximum number of people per walk 30)

£100 per walk

Book a talk on an aspect of the town's history to be presented at your meeting venue.

£45 per talk plus travelling expenses

To discuss your requirements either complete the online booking form.

Email Ian Doughty at ian@congletonmuseum.co.uk or telephone the museum on 01260 276360

Congleton Museum



Congleton Museum is in Market Square behind the Town Hall. The building was originally the town's police station. It also included the Chief Constable's house. In 1890 the force comprised a Chief Constable, two sergeants and eight constables.

Museum Visit



The museum's collections represent all aspects of life associated with the town of Congleton and the surrounding townships.

Our heritage is currently presented through four themes:

- prehistory and archaeology,
- the Civil War,
- the town's industrial development including the textile trade and
- the Second World War.

Each theme is presented through the use of information panels, artefacts, visual display screens and relief maps showing how the town has grown over the past 4,000 years

What can you see.

Congleton museum has a unique collection of nine hoards ranging from the New Street Bronze Age hoard of tools and weapons, the four Roman hoards of over 8,000 coins to the 17th century Priestly Hoards of 3,500 silver coins.



Bronze Age Hoard



One of the Priestly Hoards

The Priestly Hoard is an illustration of how this conflict of the English Civil War impacted upon Congleton. The population of the town was, like every community in the country, divided between King and Parliament. The Corporation supported Parliament and excluded those who supported the King. It is thought one of the king's supporters, John Walker, a skinner by trade, was the person who hid his wealth in a field bank above the adjoining the Howty Brook.

The Priestly Hoard as displayed in the museum.



Knutsford Roman Hoard



What can you see.



Congleton's Old Mill

Congleton had a pivotal role in the development of the textile industry through its early adoption of water power. The construction of the 'Old Mill', between 1752 and 1754, one of the largest textile mills in England at the time began the town's industrial revolution.

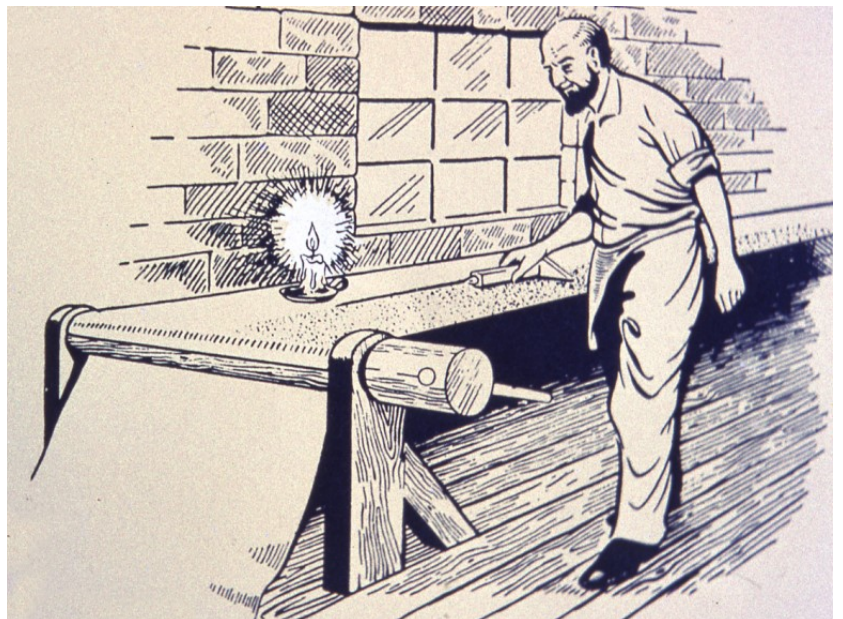
The motive power of the River Dane also proved an attraction to other industries. In 1762 Charles Roe saw the River's potential when he established his copper manufactory on a site in the neighbouring township of Eaton and called it Havannah. This site evolved over the following 200 years to be a focus for silk manufacture, cigar and cigarette production and the mechanisation of the industry which re-invigorated the town prosperity toward the end of the 19th century—the art of fustian cutting.



The weir at Havannah, which powered five waterwheels.

Fustian cutting, was initially, the labour intensive method of raising the pile on woven cloth to produce velvet. In 1923 the owner of the Eaton estate partnered with two industrial engineers to establish a new velvet production business using electrically operated machinery.

Drawing illustrating the hand production of fustian (velvet).



What can you see.



Through its growing collection of clocks, by local makers, the museum is working to establish their role in the town's industrial revolution through their contribution to the development of the early silk spinning or throwing machinery, upon which Congleton's early prosperity was based.

Dial from the clock made by the father of polymath John Whitehurst of Derby.

A lesser known Congleton industry was cigarette and cigar manufacture. At the end of the 19th century Andiamio moved its manufacturing operation to Havannah, Charles Roe's industrial village, in order to harness the water wheels to power the cigarette rolling machines as well as capitalising upon the name in order to advertise genuine 'Havannah' cigars but made from much cheaper East Indian tobacco. By 1905 the company had moved production to the "New Mill" in Congleton but still kept the marking link with Havannah.



Box of 50 'Havannah' Cigars - made in Congleton.



Prince Bernhard inspecting Dutch troops in Congleton.

Whilst Congleton never suffered from bombing during World War II, this community had an important role in supporting the armed forces not only of Great Britain, but also Holland and the United States. Many of the unoccupied factories became temporary barracks and those factories which continued to operate converted production to support the war effort.

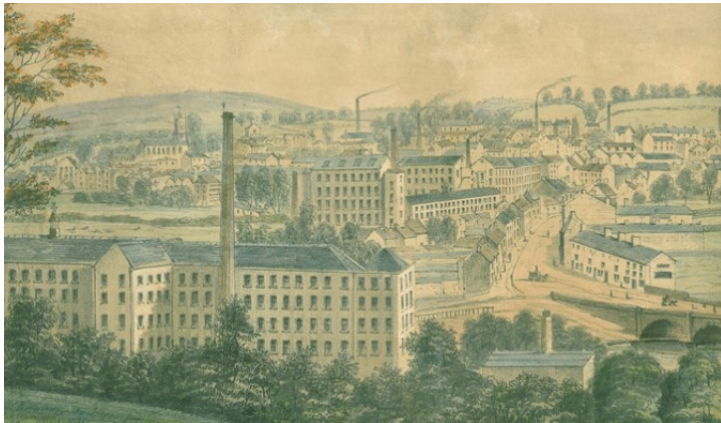
Examples of guided walks available.



Milford House West Street

'From Mansion to Cottage'

18th century industrial wealth allowed the building of elegant Georgian houses set in spacious pleasure grounds. This walk will look at how the settings of these houses has changed over the past 100 years as industry and workers' terraced housing encroached upon the privileged lifestyle they represented.



Congleton around 1820

'From Weaver to Wearer'

From the construction of the town's first silk mill in 1752 until the late 20th century, Congleton's skyline was dominated by textile mills. This walk shows, through a study of the remaining mills, how its textile industry met the challenges caused by changing economic circumstances.



King's Arms Congleton High Street

'History on your Doorstep'

What is the story behind a name? What can the present tell us about the past? During this walk you will learn some of the techniques which can be used when visiting an unfamiliar place to find out about its history.



Edwardian Villas in Park Lane

From Artisan to Patrician

In 19th century Congleton the mill owner and his workers often lived side by side. Green Island was one of Congleton's major industrial centres with its textile mills and workers houses, including the notorious Gibraltar Rocks. In contrast the Edwardian and Victorian villas of Park Lane reflect the self assuredness of the town's industrial and commercial elite.

“Lambersloone” Routeways to the Past

The countryside around Congleton is crossed by many ancient pathways. Passing the site of the horrific murder by the Congleton Cannibal, this walk follows the route taken by medieval priests as they travelled from Astbury to Congleton to take mass in the Higher Chapel of St Peter's. Depending upon the weather waterproof footwear may be required for this walk.



Paynes Bridge Priesty Fields

‘Throstles Nest by Tommy’s Brook’

Until 1937, the township Buglawton was a separate entity with its own Urban District Council. This walk will discover how this industrial village grew during the 18th and 19th centuries to become a major industrial centre concentrated around the confluence of the River Dane and the Dane in Shaw Brook.



Davenshaw House Buglawton

‘Importance of Water ‘

Water has played a crucial role in the development of Congleton as both a means of transport and an industrial resource for the tanning and textile trades. The provision of drinking water and an effective sewage disposal system remained a crucial issue for the town as late as the 1960's.



Havannah Weir

‘Congleton and the Age of Enlightenment’

The 18th century saw many advances in science, art, literature, industrial and agricultural production. This walk will examine how the wealth, the ‘Age of Enlightenment’ and the Industrial Revolution changed the architecture of the town.



Bradshaw House



John Bradshaw

‘People and Places’

Congleton has associations with a number of men and women who have had an impact upon national and international affairs. This walk looks at the various places associated with people like John Bradshaw, President of the Court that tried Charles I, Elizabeth Wolstenholme-Elmy, a prominent campaigner for women’s rights, Sir Thomas Reade, one of Napoleon’s guardians on St Helena and John Whitehurst an 18th century polymath.



Porky Green’s Butchers

‘Retail Therapy’

As a market town, Congleton’s commercial success has been dependent upon its shops. Using images, this walk looks at the way in which the town’s main shopping streets changed from family businesses in 1880 to the multiple chain stores of the 1970s.



Medieval Chimney Stack

‘Discovering Congleton’

This walk will introduce you to Congleton’s considerable heritage. Explore the origins of the town, through the development of its medieval street plan and discover places that help explain the town’s significance in national history.



Bridge Street c1900

‘Changing Places’

Using images, taken over the past 100 years, this walk will show how the main streets of Congleton have developed to meet the changing social and economic needs of the town and its inhabitants.



King's Arms

'Last Orders'

Where have all Congleton's public houses gone? In 1906 Congleton had 63 Public Houses for a population of 10,500 people. This walk will seek out those long lost drinking establishments and look at how those which still exist have changed over the years.



Making military uniforms

'A Community at War'

How did the population of Congleton respond to the challenges of war? This walk will identify those locations associated with the First and Second World Wars. Where were the Belgian refugees and the members of the Prinses Irene Brigade housed and where was the 'hush hush' department?



Kinsey Street Primitive Methodist Chapel

'Where two or three are gathered together'

This walk will look at how spiritual belief and practice, as represented through the town's religious buildings, became a reflection of Congleton's growing civic pride, administrative independence, industrial confidence and social conscience.

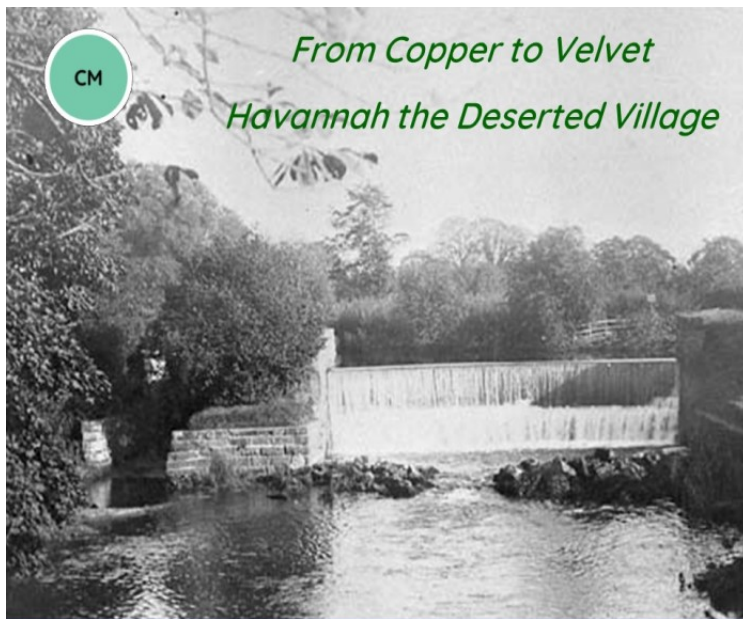


Moody Street

'The Art of Architecture'

Using images, taken over the past 100 years, this walk will show how the main streets of Congleton have developed to meet the changing social and economic needs of the town and its inhabitants.

A selection of the talks available.

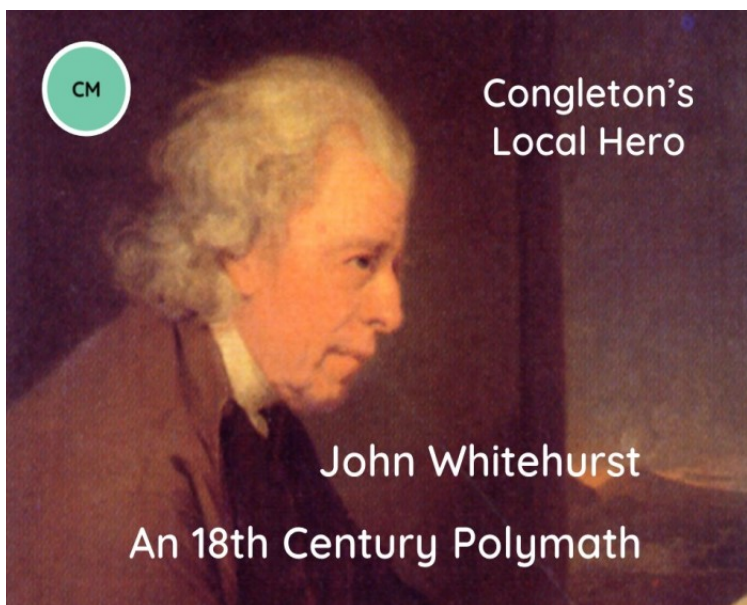


Cheshire's Deserted Village

Havannah was one of the first industrial villages to be built, pre-dating Styal by 22 years. For over 200 years the village's five water powered mills were:-

- used to manufacture sheet copper and brass wires;
- a centre for the spinning of silk;
- one of the first centres for the mechanical cutting of 'fustian' or velvet.

As Cheshire's deserted village it became an early 20th century tourist attraction.



An 18th Century Polymath

John Whitehurst was the son of a Congleton clockmaker. On moving to Derby he established himself as one of the foremost clockmakers in the area. As an 18th century polymath he was a scientist and engineer with an interest in geology, hydraulics, and astronomy. He became a member of that unique group of industrialists and philosophers known as the Lunar Society, which included Matthew Boulton, James Watt, Josiah Wedgwood, and Benjamin Franklyn.



From Weaver to Wearer *The rise and fall of a Textile Industry*

The textile industry has been an integral part of the town's economy from the establishment of the silk industry in the 18th century to the production of air bags for cars in the 21st century. The talk examines the growth and decline of this industry and how it met the challenges of a changing national and international economic climate.



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Bradshaw House A Place on History



Bradshaw House A Place in History

Once the centre of a landed estate Bradshaw House and its predecessor Cole Hill House have dominated Buglawton Street for over 500 years. Yet the history of this estate has an ancient beginning as it was in one of its fields that the Bronze Age Hoard was found. This talk will look at who lived here and their importance to the town.



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'The Congleton Hoards'

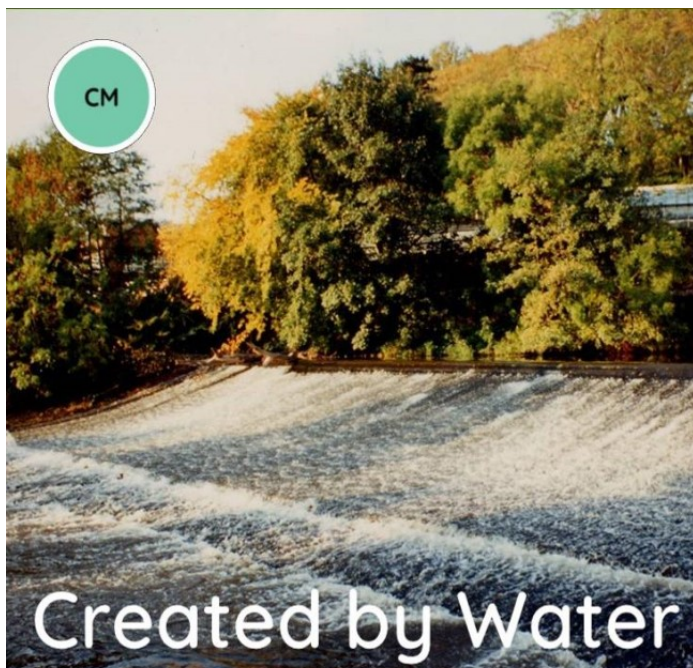


The Congleton Coin Hoards

17th Century Congleton is defined by the Civil War and associated coin hoards from Moody Street and Priestly Fields. This talk will use these two fascinating discoveries to unlock those tensions between Royalists and Parliamentarians which existed in the town during this period.



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Created by Water

Created by Water

Water has been important in the development of Congleton. Established initially on an area of high ground bounded by three water courses, the rivers Dane, Howty and Dare and at the junction of major trade routes, the town grew into a regional market centre. This abundant supply of water later became an important industrial resource for both the tanning and textile trades. The provision of drinking water and effective sewage disposal system remained a constant concern for the town as late as the 1960's.

Congleton
A town of surprises.



Congleton A Town of Surprises

Every day new and interesting facts about Congleton and its inhabitants emerge to add to those already known about people like John Bradshaw and Sir Thomas Reade or industrial successes like the construction of the 'Old Mill'. This talk will introduce you to more fascinating facts about how the son of a 19th century Congleton industrialist became Governor of the Bank of England or how the town became the home of one of the few female surgeons to work with the armed forces during World War I

Railway Mania
Congleton: The Railway
Town that never was!



Railway Mania

Was Congleton destined to become an even greater railway junction than Crewe? Between 1825, and 1853, at the height of 'Railway Mania' 12 different proposals to build railways through the Township of Congleton were lodged with the County Quarter Sessions. Had they been successful Congleton would have had direct lines to Ashbourne, Buxton, Crewe, Manchester, Liverpool, Derby, Stoke on Trent and Newcastle, Staffordshire.



Collecting for a Museum

Collecting for a Museum
How are museum collections developed? Using the Museum as an example this talk will look at how the collection was begun and why the main collecting themes were chosen. It will explain how the museum manages its collections and identifies the issues which arise when the museum takes responsibility for the items it has been given.



Congleton's Lost Buildings

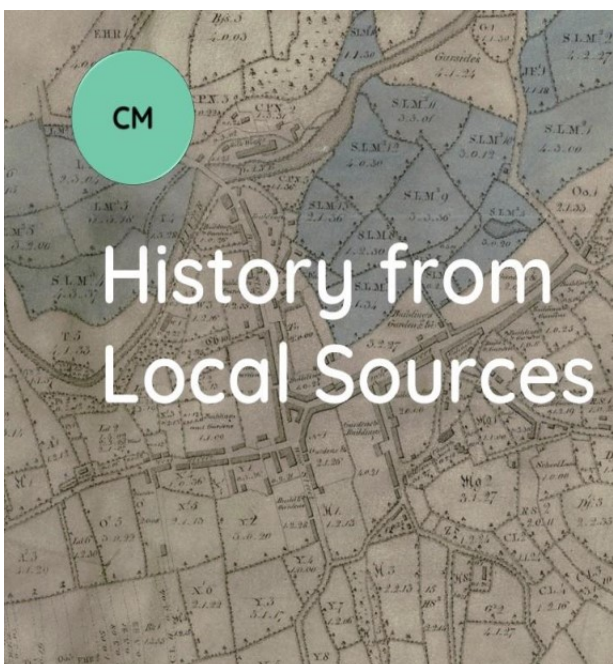
What is fashionable in architecture for one generation can become outdated to succeeding ones. This evolution of building styles from medieval timber framing through classical Georgian to Victorian gothic which gave towns like Congleton their distinctive appearance. It is a mistaken belief that many iconic buildings were demolished during the 1960's and 1970's as much of the town's timber framed heritage began to disappear after World War I, a process which continued throughout the century until the advent of the 1968 listed building regulations.



Civic Pride

Congleton's Town Halls

The site between 5 and 7 High Street has, for over 700 years, been the focus for the town's government. This talk will look at how each of the buildings to successively occupy this site reflected the town's increasing independence from manorial control and its growing importance as a commercial and industrial centre.



History from Local Sources

Every community has its own fascinating stories to tell and as time passes it becomes increasingly important to capture these before they are lost. This talk examines some of the sources available to you and the part played by:

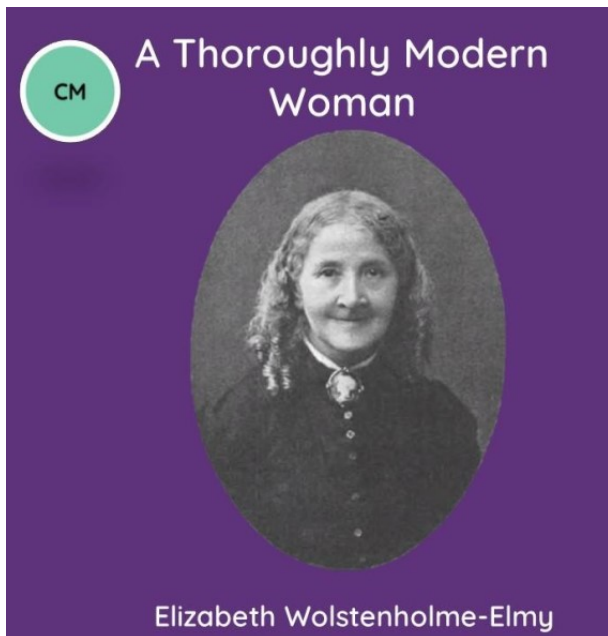
- parish and census records;
- estate accounts;
- map and plans
- photographs;
- books, and objects;

in understanding the development of your community.



Treasures beneath our feet.

The stories behind Congleton museum's treasure trove of archaeological artefacts. These range from Stone Age, axes and flints, Bronze Age weapons and tools, Roman coin hoards and jewellery, a medieval boat and 17th century coin hoards. They, and other items from the museum's extensive collections all have their own unique stories to tell. This talk will share these stories which prove that there are still treasures to be found 'beneath our feet'.



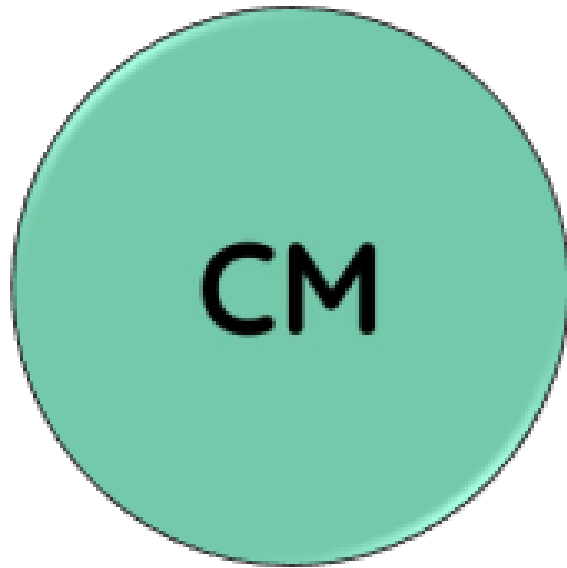
A Thoroughly Modern Woman

The fact that Congleton for over 40 years at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries was at the centre of the fight for women's rights was due to the work of Elizabeth Wolstenholme-Elmy. It was from Congleton, her adopted home that this remarkable woman successfully fought for the right of women to access higher education, own and manage their own property, and to vote. The talk traces her life and work and the enduring legacy she left for future generations.



Where Trains Would Run

Was Congleton destined to become an even greater railway junction than Crewe? Between 1825, and 1853, at the height of 'Railway Mania' there were 12 different proposals to build railways Congleton. If successful Congleton would have had direct lines to Ashbourne, Manchester, Newcastle Staffordshire, Sheffield, Buxton, Crewe, Liverpool and Derby. What would Congleton have looked like had these proposals come to fruition?



Museum Opening Times

Tuesday to Saturday 10.30 to 4.15pm
Sunday: 12.00 to 4.15pm
Last Entry 3.45pm

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Email. info@congletonmuseum.co.uk
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