



ORRELL HERITAGE WALKS

“A Trip Down Memory Lane”

Orrell derives from the Anglo Saxon *ora* and *hyll*, a hill where ore is dug. It has also been recorded as Horul in 1212, Orel in 1292, Orhull in 1294 and Orul in 1307 and later known as Orrell-in-Makerfield. It was the extreme north-west area of the manor of Newton-in-Makerfield before the Norman Conquest of England.

In 1212 the manor was held by Richard de Orrell but became divided and was acquired by the Hollands of Upholland and descended to the Lovels and subsequently to the Earls of Derby. After several changes of ownership, it belonged to Roger Leigh of Aspull. Orrell was the family name of a number of landowners in the area and branches of the Orrell family held small estates here for centuries. There are records from 1558 showing William Orrell living at Orrell Hall.

Farming, coal mining and nail making were the main occupations, until the area was transformed by the Industrial Revolution with improvements to transport and the development of cotton mills and brick works.

These walks are flexible and do not cover all the Orrell Heritage sites but give an insight into the history of the local area. All the display sites will have more information available. You can pick up the walks at any point along the routes and you may need to use your imagination and memories, but hopefully this will encourage awareness of our heritage and help protect what we have left for future generations.

Following the maps and starting on Church Street at:

1. Living Faith Church (*Display Site*)

Previously Salem United Reformed Church, the original chapel, a Congregational Church, was erected in 1804 by Richard Woodward in the garden behind his house. The first minister in 1809/10 was John Capper. In 1820 John Holgate became minister. He built a school by walking to Liverpool and back to collect money for the building. John Holgate laid the foundations for the church's community work by inspiring the members to provide for over 30 orphans living in the village. The present building dates from 1907.

Walk down Church Street towards –

2. Rose and Crown Public House

In the Far Moor Part of the village. Before 1843, when the National School was built in Far Moor, girls were instructed in a club room here. It was also once a meeting place for burial clubs, lodges, etc. and the headquarters of the Orrell Bowling Club with a large bowling green in the grounds.

Behind the Rose and Crown at the corner of Church Street and Moor Road stood the **Star Inn**. At present the exact location and history are unknown.

The Old Bank on the opposite side of the road was originally houses but became Williams Deacons Bank in 1922, then Royal Bank of Scotland before closing.

3. The Grapes Public House

Situated on the corner of Sefton Road and St James Road. It was the focal point of the Far Moor area and demolished in the late 1950's. The area is still known as The Grapes.

Further down Sefton Road, opposite the launderette was –

4. Majestic Cinema

Originally built near “The Grapes” crossroads in 1936 and named after a naval ship. It closed in 1966 and became a supermarket and later Majestic Glass. It was demolished and replaced with housing at Majestic Mews. The launderette was originally a butcher's shop but then became Horrock's Temperance Bar.

Walk back to Moor Road towards Orrell Post, passing Holgate Park where Holgate House stood until 1935

Alternatively walk down towards the Delph Tavern and Tontine area (no 16), Tontine Methodist Church (15), walk past the beautiful Grade 2 listed cottages on the right, up Tontine Road towards Upholland and eventually St Thomas's Church (No 14)



5. Red Lion Public House

Opposite the Stag at the corner of Moor Road, the Red Lion was owned by the Albion Brewery in the 1870s but eventually demolished in 1934 to make way for road widening at Orrell Post.

On the opposite side of Moor Road, the Post House, on Orrell Road, is where the Makinson family's smithy was sited. Thomas Makinson was a blacksmith and wheel wright, shoeing horses and making and repairing wheels. Next to the blacksmiths (where the shops are located) was a barn.

Walk down Orrell Road towards the M6 motorway interchange.

6. Orrell Urban District Council Offices

The Orrell Local Board first met in July, 1872. The first meeting took place in the Assembly Room of Orrell Gardens. The gardens contained flower beds and fruit orchards, with a heated south wall covered with vines. Orrell Gardens was a meeting point for locals and visitors. A number of rooms were open to the public, and during the 1890s classes were held for the local people. These included mathematics, bookkeeping, handwriting, cookery and dressmaking. The hall was also used as a place of worship before being demolished in 1936.

At the beginning of the 20th century the trade in Orrell had improved and there was a steady growth of population. Orrell need a new council Office and the new Orrell Urban District Council Office, designed by the architect Mr. R Pennington, was opened in Orrell Gardens in 1908.

The entrance opened into a spacious hall with staircase leading to upper floor and basement. The ground floor included a boardroom and offices for the Clerk, Sanitary Inspector and Collector. In the yard were workshops, storerooms and a room that could be used as a public mortuary.

From 1894 to 1974 Orrell had its own local government district, however Orrell's urban district status was abolished with the local government reforms and the area was amalgamated into the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan, Greater Manchester.

Cross Orrell Road and walk to:

7. The Mount (Priory Wood)

In 1810 John Clarke, banker and coal mine owner, purchased the "Orrell Post Estate" and built Orrell Mount, a Grade 2 listed impressive ashlar stone building, now a hotel and restaurant.

8. Benedictine Nunnery

The nunnery was established at Orrell Mount in 1821. It was occupied by a community of Benedictine nuns, who had left France in 1792 during the revolution, until 1835. Carmelite nuns also occupied the site from 1906 to 1917 until moving to the new convent in Upholland.

It is now split into two houses. Most of the fabric in the two houses dates from the 19th century, with an extension in the 20th century. Nunnery Cottage to the east has two storeys and three bays, the windows on the front are casements with wedge lintels and elsewhere are sash windows. Mount Farm Cottage contains the older material with mullioned windows.

*Further down Orrell Road towards Pemberton – **Orrell Lodge** the 19th century home of the engineer Robert Dalglish designer of the steam locomotive for the Orrell Colliery, later becoming the Education Offices and now Wish FM, and **Trinity Trees(Grade 2 listed)***

Walk back up Orrell Road towards the Stag.

9. Orrell Post Primitive Methodist Church

This large red brick built church, on Orrell Road, was opened in 1875. In addition to its religious function, it became a popular centre of social life at Orrell Post. An extension was built in 1913 to provide better facilities and a further extension on the side of the church, added in 1932, consisting of a schoolroom.



10. The Stag Public House (& Orrell Post)

The Stag Inn, standing on a site used as a staging post since the mid 18th Century. The current building dates to 1920.

Orrell Post, situated next to the Stag Inn, was once used as a marker for the junction between ancient rights of way. It is in stone and consists of a Tuscan column on a square plinth. The big stone ball finial represents the world. It is Grade 2 listed and dated 1750. There are records of a post in this location since 1607 which indicated a halt on the turnpike road so it was probably originally sited in the middle of the crossroads. It was also used as a distance post in horse and foot races.

If you are feeling energetic go down Gathurst Road, pass Sunny Brook and the former police station (now houses but the Lancashire Constabulary emblem remains above the entrance) and turn down Spring Road to Orrell Hall Farm and Orrell Hall, a listed 17th century building on the site of the Orrell Hall Colliery. Orrell Hall was the home of the Leigh family for many years and is now a nursing home.

Further down Gathurst Road, past John Rigby 6th Form College to Gathurst Railway Bridge and the wagon road which ran under the small bridge. Coal was taken from the collieries to the River Douglas and the Leeds and Liverpool canal for transporting to the main cities.

Walking down Orrell Road to Abbey Lakes you will pass Orrell Clinic with Nordene and Oakdene above the two doors. These was originally two separate houses. There are several other notable houses along this road including Atherton House and Stoneleigh.

11. Abbey Lakes Hotel

Close to the borough boundary and Up Holland Parish Church. In the 1950s there was a popular dance hall. This is now the gym. The hotel is now the Raj Gate Indian restaurant.

12. Abbey Lakes

Formerly the water supply for the local monastery. It was a popular place for picnics and excursions. In 1887, to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, there are reports of a steamboat carrying 100 passengers on the lake.

In 1928, 10,000 Orangemen gathered to enjoy the lake, zoo and scores of bands.

Walking up towards St Thomas the Martyr Parish Church, and situated behind the terraced houses on the right hand side of the road, there is a wagon entrance with a gate. If you go through this you will find the original grammar school. (Alternatively, you can park in the church car park on School Lane and the entrance is on the opposite side of the road.)

13. Up Holland Grammar School

Situated in School Lane, Up Holland, the original Grammar School was founded in 1661. During the Napoleonic wars (1799-1815) this was an expensive boarding school. In the 19th century it became two schools. The Lower School was independent as an elementary school. In 1878 the Upper School moved to new premises on Ox House Road – the site of the present Up Holland High School, and the old building was sold. This is Grade 2* listed and considered a building of National Importance.

You can also see the back of the school in Fir Tree Building Supplies yard.

The grammar school later moved to Winstanley Road, on land donated by Squire Bankes. Upholland Grammar School became the new Winstanley 6th Form College in 1977.

Continuing the walk and going further up towards the church you will pass many old buildings in the Up Holland Conservation Area, including the Owl Inn and the Old Court House dated 1633.

14. St Thomas the Martyr Parish Church, Up Holland

Although not within the present Orrell boundary, St Thomas the Martyr Parish Church was where most people were baptised, married and buried before the present St Luke's Church was built.

It was originally a Priory, founded in 1307 as a college for a Dean and twelve secular priests, by Sir Robert de Holland, secretary to Thomas Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster. It was dedicated to St. Thomas the Martyr. In 1319, charges of misbehaviour by the priests led Walter de Langton, Bishop of Lichfield to convert it into



a priory. Up Holland Priory was part of the Benedictine order, and was the last foundation of its kind in pre-Reformation England. A tower was added in the 15th Century.

The remains of the priory are situated to the south of the church and are Grade 2 listed. This can also be seen running along the back of the Conservative Club car park.

The churchyard contains many interesting gravestones including that of George Lyon, reputed to be England's last highwayman and hanged in 1815. He is buried in his daughter's grave and the inscription reads "Nanny Lyon, Died April 7th 1804". His name is not recorded. There are also war graves from World War 1 and 2.

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 the church is closed to visitors so you are unable to go inside the church unless attending a service.

15. Tontine Methodist Church

Established in 1859, the current building is dated 1907. It was the centre of the village social events in the early 1900s. Currently being converted into a house.

16. Delph Tavern (& Tontine)

We don't have a date for the pub but it is mentioned in records of the late 1800s as a beerhouse with William Ashurst as "beer retailer". Delph means quarry. There were a number of quarries in the area employing the local people.

Many of the cottages in Tontine were demolished for the M58 motorway but there is still the row of beautiful Grade 2 listed, late 18th century, stone cottages opposite the pub.

17. Sandbrook Arms Public House (Queens Arms)

The Queens Arms Inn was on Sandbrook Road (originally known as Dark Lane) at the corner of Lindley Avenue. We don't have an exact date for it but it is on the 1845 map of the area. Now demolished for housing.

18. Upholland Railway Station

Originally situated off Sandbrook Road where the coal yard and now the new houses are built. The station opened in November 1848 but closed to passengers in June 1852. It was then used as a goods yard. A short distance up the track towards Liverpool is Upholland Tunnel.

The station now known as Upholland Station was then called Pimbo Lane Station but changed its name to Upholland in November 1900.

19. Sandbrook Mill

Sandbrook cotton spinning mill, on Mill Road, was built in the 1860s, and belonged to the Widdows family. It employed generations of Orrell women and children. Pupils were allowed to leave school if they attained the required standard in tests and had perfect attendance.

In 1913 Signal Spinning Company Limited erected a new factory close to Sandbrook Mill. It employed 150 - 200 people. Mr F. Horne was the manager of both mills.

The mill later became Thames Waste Paper Mill and there are reports of several fires in the 1960s and 70s. It was eventually demolished around 1987 and the houses at Sandbrook Gardens were built.

20. Running Horses Public House

Dating back to the 1800s, the landlord would regularly prepare a room for high teas in the 1860s and 1870s for the meetings of the Running Horses Burial Society. A large extension was added in 1920 and further modernisation in 2004.

This area was more recently known locally as Gaskell's corner. Next to the pub is Gaskell's Fish & Chip shop and on the opposite corner was a grocer's shop, originally owned by Jane Topping, but in more recent times was also run by Gaskells before becoming Grosvenor Wines and finally being demolished for houses.

Next to the Fish & Chip shop walking down St James Road is Newfold Community Primary School (formerly St James's County Primary) which opened in 1912 to take children from St Luke's Church School and the National School both on Church Street. (*display board*).



21. St James Roman Catholic Church (*Grade 2 listed*)

Established as a mission in 1699, near to the St John Rigby College site, at the time of persecution of Catholics. In 1805 a purpose built chapel and house, called Serenus Place, later St James' Church, were built at Moor Ditch, Far Moor (now St James' Road). It was enlarged in 1841, with a tower and distinctive belfry added in 1882. The side chapel was built in 1922 as memorial to 10 parishioners who died in 1914-18 war.

In 1848 the parish school was built on the edge of the churchyard, and enlarged in 1871. This is now a nursery.

Cross St James Road and walk down George Terrace to get an indication of how Orrell would have appeared in the early 19th century.

No 62 St James's Road was the former registrar's office. Mrs M Ward (and later her daughter in law) ran the office in the front room of the house from the 1950s until the office was moved to the hospital in the 1970s. On the other side of St James's Road is No 55 which was the police house from the 1920s.

If you walk back to Upholland Road you will pass England's butchers shop and Babar Elephant (formerly the Unicorn Public House). In the wall just before Babar Elephant is a Victorian letter box.

22. Bispham Methodist Church, Crank Road (*Display Site*)

Built in 1845 by William Holt of Bispham Hall. The Sunday School was built in 1912.

Why not visit the Holt Arms (known as "The Foot") for refreshments? There is a time line of its history in the beer garden.

23. Poor Law Infirmary

In 1906, Wigan Union opened a poor law infirmary on a site on Upholland Road. Around 1930 the hospital became Billinge Hospital. The Roy Hartley Maternity Unit, alongside the original hospital, was opened in 1968. It closed in July 2004 and has now been demolished for housing.

24. Greenslate Community Farm (*Display Site & Time Capsule*)

There has been a farm at Greenslate for many years. One of the buildings close to the current community farm site is dated 1701, and it is on the map of 1845. In 1929 Samuel Glover is listed as the farmer, with the Wigan Board of Governors as the landlord. Many will remember getting their eggs from the battery farm. A former disused council-run education farm, the Community Farm was established in 2012. Visit the Education Barn at the farm to learn more.

Walk through **Orrell Water Park**, previously two former reservoirs, to the old Rangers House, once the property of the water board, and now Madisons Café.

25. Colliers Arms Public House

Listed in 1890 as an Albion Brewery pub, although probably in existence before then with ale brewed on site. It was situated on the corner of Moss Road and Greenslate Road, the original inn was demolished and replaced with a modern building, which has since been demolished and houses built on the site and grounds.

26. Robin Hood Public House (Sandy Lane)

Not sure about the history of this pub. There doesn't appear to be many records of a Robin Hood Inn until early 1876 when it is referred to as a beerhouse. The map of 1845 shows an inn in this position called the Colliers Arms. (a mystery!!)

27. St Luke's Church (*Display Site*)

The foundation stone for the first Anglican church in Orrell was laid in 1874. The building of the School Church of St Luke, on Church Street, was completed in the 1880s as a school for boys and a place of worship. In 1912 the children transferred to the new council school, on St James' road (now Newfold). In 1915 a site on Lodge Road was offered by Mr Bankes of Winstanley Hall and in 1926, the foundation stone for the new church was laid. The consecration of the church was in 1927 and the vicarage completed in 1932. An extension to the church was added in 1937. The planned southwest tower was never built.



28. YMCA

Originally built in 1920, on 2 acres of land donated by Squire G.H. Bankes of Winstanley Hall. It was opened by Princess Marie Louise, granddaughter of Queen Victoria. There was meeting room for social events, as well as a billiard and snooker room, a bowling green and playing field. It has been the home of a cricket club since 1921, a very successful football team in the 1920s and the venue for rugby union. Orrell Rugby Union leased a hut and ground from 1937 to 1949.

The current brick building replaced the original structure, and now houses a nursery.

During the weekend the bowls club are offering taster sessions. Why not give it a try?

29. Winstanley Tennis Club

Situated on Hall Lane, just off Winstanley Road since 1980, the club was originally founded in 1921 and known as Winstanley Park Tennis Club due to its location within the parkland of the Winstanley Estate, the home of the Bankes' family. The club moved to its present location in the late 1970s. You can still walk down Hall Lane (about 1 mile) and see evidence of the original courts through the trees, to the left of the cricket club entrance.

The club celebrates its centenary next year.

30. Orrell Brick and Tile Works

On Winstanley Road, where Hewitt Business Park is now. The company produced over 100,000 bricks per week, using clay from a quarry at the back of the factory. It had its own railway sidings with a link to the main railway line. It closed in 1964.

31. The Railway Inn (later known as The Station)

The railway between Liverpool and Bury was opened in 1848. The inn is shown on the map of 1849 but not sure if this is still the original building. Now converted into houses.

Walk over the bridge to **Orrell Railway Station**. The ticket office was on the left hand side of Church Street just over the bridge where the bus stop and ticket machine are now situated.

The house on the left hand side just after station was the Post office for many years.

Walking down Edge Hall Road you will come to:

32. Orrell Rugby Union Club (*Displays on gates*)

The club bought land off the Glover family of Edgewood Hall Farm in 1949 and the first match was played here in 1950, after moving from the leased ground and hut in Winstanley Road as tenants of the Orrell YMCA.

Walking further down this road will take you past Edge Hall Farm and eventually to Orrell Road where you could visit Orrell Mount, The Nunnery and Trinity Trees then back along the road towards Orrell Post.

or

Back on Church Street the old houses were mostly homes to miners and nail makers, with their own smithies. The School of St Luke was where Wescoe Close is now, and the National School (later Holgate Infants) was located where the new Mews houses set back from Church Street are built. The first Farm Meadow Road area was originally Crab Tree Farm, then later Far Moor Nursing home. The second Farm Meadow Road was where Dandy caravans was for many years.

33. Black Horse Public House

It is listed under Oldfield Brewery Ltd with James Unsworth as tenant 1909, although probably much older. Now the Black Horse apartments

34. Orrell Primitive Methodist Church (Church Drive)

The foundation stone for the original Orrell Primitive Methodist chapel was laid on June 20th 1859 by JW Glover. A new Sunday School consisting of a main hall and a classroom at the rear of the chapel was opened in December 1875. In the early hours of February 9th 1910, a fire gutted the church and Sunday School. Only the shell of the chapel remained. The new school church was opened on 5th November 1910. By the 1930s this was considered inadequate for the 253 members and the 345 Sunday School members. A new church was opened in 1964. This is now closed and for sale.

Thank you to the local businesses supporting this event