

TRMT NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2026 - ISSUE 8

Knitting Project: An Update

A note from Pat Hamilton:
(Trustee & Collections Manager)

We're making good progress with our new project - a knitted depiction of Rickmansworth High Street in the 1890s. Drawings and models of the featured buildings are now complete, bags of wool are filling my dining room and knitters are waiting, needles at the ready.

More news next month!



A sketch of The Bell Inn, one of the buildings to be featured in the project. Once a familiar sight on Rickmansworth High Street, it is now lost to history.

Connect with us on Social Media

THREE RIVERS MUSEUM TRUST

@3RIVERSMUSMRICK

@THREERIVERS MUSEUM

A company limited by guarantee, no 2907154.
Registered charity: no 1164893.
Registered office: 20 High Street, Rickmansworth WD3 1ER

ACCREDITED MUSEUM

Three Rivers Voices

Written by Fabian Hiscock:
(TRMT Chairman)

Three Rivers District, we now know, is to disappear on 31st March 2028. It will become part of a new unitary authority, called (at the moment) South West Hertfordshire, which will also include Watford and Hertsmere.

We, as Three Rivers Museum, may well be one of the last vestiges of the District, and we agree with a number of people in TRDC, notably the Chairman, Keith Martin, and the Leader, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, that it would be a real shame if it just vanished without trace. So we're now engaged in what will become a major oral history project to capture the experiences and recollections of people who have worked here, lived here, attended school here, run a business here... over the last 50 years or so.

We've made a start on the recordings, and you can hear the first few on our website - as a podcast! Others are in the wings, and we hope local people will come forward to be interviewed or even just give us some audio reflections recorded by themselves. It will become, over the next year or so, a pretty major project.

We aim to record the experiences and memories of members of the communities of Three Rivers, as well as councillors and staff members of TRDC. We hope that some, perhaps even most, will be happy to have their recording (suitably edited, and anonymised if they wish) posted as a podcast. These might feature them individually, mixed with others, or as part of a group recording. Some may be willing to contribute but not want their recording made public, and that is absolutely fine. There is no expectation that every recording will be made public; the important thing is that it helps paint the picture of what life has been like here.

This project is being managed quite formally. The agreement forms that we ask people to sign - one agreeing to take part, the other agreeing that we may use what they've said, with whatever caveats they wish - make that clear. Permission can also be withdrawn at any time.

There will be other ways of presenting *Three Rivers Voices*. For example, we'll also be putting together a book, drawing on the interviews to present a range of different topics. The recordings will, in any case, be preserved for posterity (anonymised if necessary), whether or not they are published. I'm hoping that they'll eventually become part of the county archive, although that has yet to be agreed.

You can listen to the first recordings on our website - https://trmt.org.uk/local-history/three-rivers-voices. If you have experience of life in Three Rivers over the last 50 years and would be willing to share it, please email us at threeriversvoices@trmt.org.uk, and we'll arrange a date for an interview.

You can become a member of the museum through our website:
https://trmt.org.uk/about-us/membership/

Artefact of the Month

Our Artefact of the Month for August is a collection of postal parcel scales, including one made by Salter. Crafted from a mixture of cast iron, wood and brass, the collection includes circular dials marked in pounds and ounces, with a weight capacity of up to 24 oz. The accompanying weights (not pictured) range from 1 oz to 8 oz.

Established in the 18th century in West Bromwich, Salter became one of Britain's best-known manufacturers of weighing machines and postal scales. Commonly found in homes and offices during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, they are now sought after by collectors.

These particular scales came from Scotsbridge Mill during the period when the iconic Hollywood film studio, MGM, was based there between 1927 and 1973.

Scotsbridge Mill has a much longer industrial history. It was originally a fulling and corn mill between 1692 and 1755, before being converted to a paper mill in 1757. The mill closed in 1885 amid concerns that chemicals from the mill were polluting the River Chess.



Our Collection of Postal Parcel Scales

MGM moved into Scotsbridge Mill in 1927, where the mill was used to produce materials for motion-picture and photographic film. In 1940, Scotsbridge Mill became MGM's British headquarters and remained so until 1973.

These scales, once everyday office and household items, help tell the story of Scotsbridge Mill and its unexpected but fascinating connection with Hollywood.

Metropolitan Railway Electric Locomotive

The late Keith Tibbles, a member of the museum and Metropolitan Line train driver, was presented with a matchstick model upon his retirement. Following his death a few years ago, Keith's family kindly passed the model to the museum. The model depicts a Metropolitan Railway electric locomotive that would have been in service in 1922-23.

There were 20 1,200hp Metropolitan-Vickers locomotives, which remained in operation until 1962. They were then withdrawn from passenger service after electrification reached Amersham and the A Stock electric multiple units entered service.



One locomotive, No. 5 John Hampden, is preserved as a static display at the London Transport Museum. Another, No. 12 Sarah Siddons, has been used for heritage events, most recently running alongside Metropolitan Railway Locomotive No. 1 on steam excursions to mark the 150th anniversary of the opening of the District Railway.

This model is one of the many smaller items on display in our museum, helping to tell the story of the people and transport history of the area.



Matchstick Locomotive Model Presented to Keith Tibbles Upon his Retirement

You can become a member of the museum through our website:
https://trmt.org.uk/about-us/membership/

Sip at 9

Whilst we don't have a café of our own, visitors can enjoy a 10% discount at Sip at 9 on Church Street, just off Rickmansworth High Street – the perfect place to relax after exploring some local history. Discount vouchers are available from the museum reception desk.

Dates for the Diary

Three Rivers Museum Trust

- Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th September: We will have a stall at COAM's Harvest Weekend. Location: Chiltern Open Air Museum, HP8 4AB.

Abbots Langley Local History Society

- Monday 28th September: **Talk:** 'A Local History Vintage Photo Show: Part 2'. Location: Manor House Sports & Social Centre, Gallows Hill Lane, Abbots Langley WD5 0DD.

Rickmansworth Historical Society

- Thursday 10th September: **Talk:** 'Aerial Thrills and Spills at Northolt Airport'. Location: St Mary's Church Centre, Church Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1JB.
- Thursday 8th October: **Talk:** 'HS2 Archaeology'. Location: St Mary's Church Centre, Church Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1JB.

Chiltern Open Air Museum

- Saturday 26st & Sunday 27th September : Harvest Weekend - Learn about a traditional Harvest, watch rural skills in action, see the Harvest display and celebrate the season.
- Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th October: Wild About Wool - Learn about traditional wool and textiles crafts.
- Saturday 17th October: Diwali Celebration - Family Diwali celebration.
- Tuesday 27th October: Terrific Tuesday - Autumn themed family activities.
- Friday 30th October: Halloween Spectacular - An evening of spooky fun. 5pm - 9pm.

If you are interested in attending these talks/events, please check details and timings with the individual societies. An admission fee may apply.