

Bill Huyton: 14 February 1947 - 29 January 2021

It is with enormous sadness that we announce the death of Bill Huyton, our Chairman Emeritus, aged 73, at Aintree Hospital, on 29 January 2021. A stalwart member of ODFHS for twenty years, Bill went on to enjoy the distinction of being our longest-serving Chairman. Described by one of our members as “*one of the leading lights at ODFHS*”, a fellow member of the North-West Group of Family Societies also praised him as a “*thoughtful and passionate family historian, member and leader*”.

Whether attending NWGFHS meetings or helping at public events (from Westhead Carnival and Ormskirk Mediaeval Weekend, to Who Do You Think You Are? Live and the recent Virtual Really Useful Family History Show), Bill was keenly interested in the way our ancestors lived. He was a member of the West Lancashire Heritage Association, and became actively involved with the West Lancashire World War One Anniversary group. When a chance to meet distant cousins from New Zealand came up in 2011, Bill relished the opportunity to further their mutual research.

A study of local census records led Bill to develop a talk on Enumerators’ Walks, and his enduring interest in our ever-growing boat families database inspired another presentation, to showcase its potential to help family, local and social historians alike. Keen to move with the times, he introduced the option to buy our publications in USB format, and as digital downloads. Although ill health influenced his decision to resign as Chairman after exactly 13 years on 25 May 2018, he remained very involved with the Society, becoming a highly organised sales manager. His suggestions for virtual meetings inspired our YouTube talks on Complementary Resources and Dining With Our Ancestors.

Bill devoted much time to his garden in Maghull, nurturing seedling carrots and leeks, and once getting cherry tomatoes to ripen in December! Equally at home in the water, he joined Xaverian Diving Club (later renamed Liverpool Scuba Diving Club) at Woolton in November 1996, training many others to a very high standard; one diving associate remembered him as “*a great mentor and teacher*”. He will be sadly missed by all of his friends at ODFHS, and everyone who knew him in the local history community.

After discussion, the ODFHS Executive Committee would like to request that any charitable donations given in Bill’s memory are directed to the [Royal National Lifeboat Institution \(RNLI\)](https://www.rnli.org).

Check the Gallery Page for some pictures of Bill.