

Englesea Extra

No. 85: May 2026

Price: justice

Strange Times

Englesea Brook is back open for business and delighted to have started with a busy Easter weekend, thanks to numerous families coming for our Easter Egg hunt!



Photo: Children's activity room

The new exhibits and exhibitions focus on the 100th anniversary of the General Strike of 1926, with interesting comparisons of the general strike of 1842 and the involvement of the Primitive Methodists each time. Thanks to a loan by John Anderson, we have a rare truncheon on display, issued to workers during the strike to 'keep the peace'.

The former small portrait room has been transformed beyond recognition to explore the different expressions of Primitive Methodist spirituality. Fully interactive, it begins with the Magic Methodists and concludes with the training of ministers. Come and see what a pile of hat boxes has to do with it!

While the museum has been closed to the public, the staff and volunteers have been busier than usual redesigning the museum area. We were delighted to welcome Friends of Englesea Brook to a preview of the new spaces, exhibits and exhibitions – and pleased to receive their overwhelmingly positive comments. Here are some glimpses of the 'new look' museum...



Photo: New Spirituality room

Prior to reopening, the staff and volunteers had training from Kath Reader, the local Dementia Friends trainer. It was a very insightful session, and we are planning to hold dementia-friendly events and Reminiscence cafes in the coming months. Do get in touch with us if you know of a group in your church which might be interested in arranging a visit.



Photo: New look museum space



Finally following an appeal for more volunteers at the Chapel and Museum, I am delighted to welcome 3 new volunteers – Alan Coker Mayes, Mark Morris and Stuart Hood. Stuart and Alan are museum volunteers, have already done their inaugural volunteer slots and are already valued members of the team! Mark has volunteered to mow our lawns – a huge undertaking – and we are delighted to have him join the team too.

Hope you are able to visit soon!

Every blessing

Ruth

Pause for thought:

The belief in the possibility of a short decisive war appears to be one of the most ancient and dangerous of human illusions.

Robert Lynd, writer (20 Apr 1879-1949)

What do angels look like?

According to one of the Oxford English Dictionary definitions of an angel: ***an aspect of a person's own character, nature, or conscience likened to such a spirit in acting as an influence for good***, all our volunteers have angelic qualities! However, there are two who deserve a particular mention:

Andrew Kirk stepped into the breach to mow the lawns at the Chapel and Museum when our paid gardener disappeared after the winter break! And there's a lot of lawns – made even more challenging when the first cut of the season is later than it should be! Thank you Andrew, and we are delighted that you are still keen to help us out from time to time!



Coffee stop on my ride this morning!
Against wind going out but wet coming home!

Many of you know Geoff Dickinson, long time Friend and volunteer at the Chapel and Museum. We are so thrilled that, to mark his 75th birthday, he is taking on the challenge of doing a sponsored bike ride from Lands' End to John o'Groats raising funds for Englesea Brook. We will be sharing details of his progress on our social media platforms, but if you would like to support his endeavours as he does his final training, the details of his Just Giving page is on the poster. Geoff, thank you - what a star!!

The Alsager Book Emporium

Have you visited the Book Emporium's Facebook page? You can find the Facebook page here: https://www.facebook.com/alsagerbookemporiumforengleseabrook/?locale=en_GB

With some modesty – but absolute accuracy – it describes the Emporium with its 60,000 second-hand books at bargain prices on all sorts of topics as *“probably the best second-hand charity bookshop in the north west”*.

Hassall Road Book Emporium, Hassall Road, Alsager. Open Friday and Saturday. 10am-2pm.

Geoff's 75th Year Challenge



During the period 9-30 May 2026, I will be cycling from Land's End to John O'Groats as a challenge for my 75th year.

I am raising money for the Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum of Primitive Methodism.

If you are able to help, my JustGiving page can be found through the QR code.



Have you a tried and tested cake recipe to share?



Here's a sneak preview of one recipe received!

Inspired by a Primitive Methodist recipe book in our collection, we would like to put together a recipe book of cakes/traybakes/sweet treats, together with Primitive Methodist stories, to sell in the gift shop. Do you have a recipe you would like to share? Do you have a story of a Methodist relative who baked for the chapel? Do you have memories of church anniversaries/tea treats (a wonderful Cornish chapel tradition) where food was central to the celebrations which you could share? Here is a recent BBC news article about the dangers of losing these forgotten recipes, so please drop me an email with your recipes and stories – and do include a photo of what the finished product should look like to assure the baker they are on the right tracks!

[BBC News - Forgotten British dishes - and the home cooks reviving them - BBC News](#)

Chris' conundrums

Teas are a key part of the Primitive Methodist story. Many years ago, I started working my way through the [Primitive Methodist magazine accounts of chapel openings from 1820 onwards](#) so they could be added to the My Primitive Methodists website. Although each opening was different, they had things in common.

One was that the chapel then was different to a chapel now. The accounts might include reference to a chapel having “a boarded floor” as if that was something to be celebrated. Ventilation was a critical aspect of early chapels and in later openings there was occasional reference to facilities such as heating and gas supply.

The accounts rarely mentioned the precise chapel location or how many members there were but would always report what the chapel cost and what proportion of the cost had been raised at the time of opening. Quite often it would say where the rest of the money would come from, although it was commonly acknowledged that the amount raised did not meet the one third share required by connexional rules.

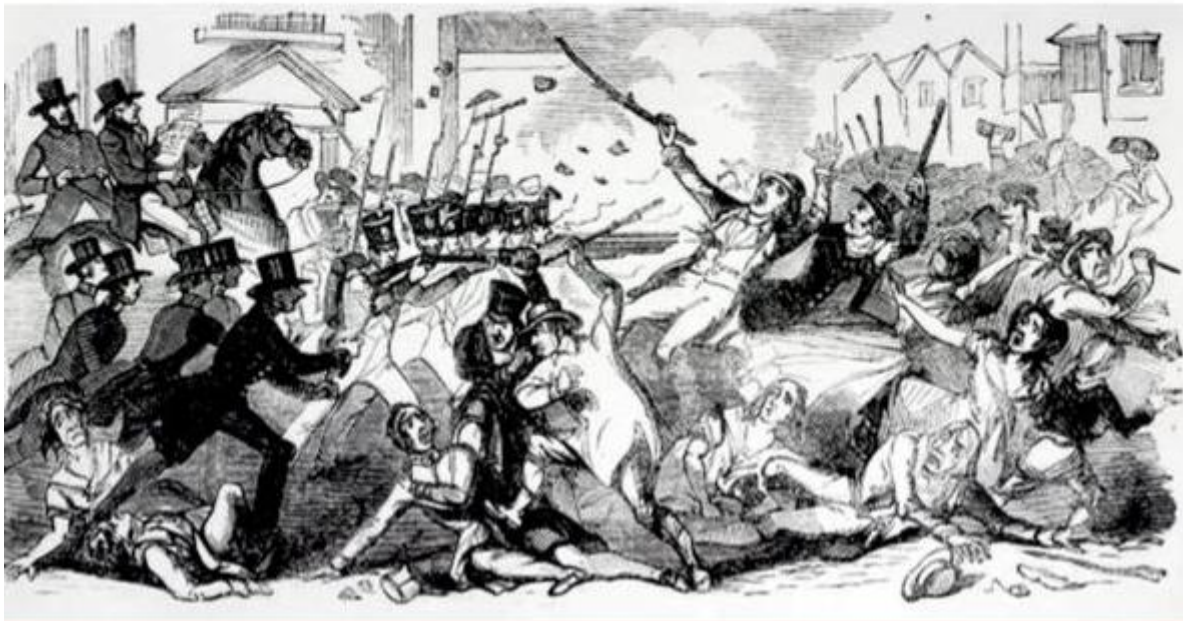
The opening celebrations would be recorded, including opening preachers and their sermons (sometimes in great detail) and there would always be a tea, usually on the day following the opening. The teas were lauded for their value in bringing the fellowship together, but also, essentially, as a means of raising money. Individual donors would be named or in many cases it was the responsibility of “the ladies”, their way of contributing.

The teas were often large affairs. At [Upper End, Buxton](#), the celebration tea was served to over 400 people in the schoolroom on the opposite side of the road. At Plaistow Marsh in London, the celebration tea, “*such as would have done credit to either Lincolnshire or Yorkshire was gratuitously provided by poor but willing people*”. At [Grasby in Lincolnshire](#), the celebration tea enabled them to pay off the outstanding debt on the newly renovated chapel. Unusually, in [Hasland \(Derbyshire\), for the opening of an enlarged chapel in 1865](#), there was a celebration tea meeting with the teas being provided in private houses. They weren't always successful. At [East Garston in Berkshire](#), few attended the celebration tea meeting for the new chapel on the following Monday afternoon as the weather was fine and it was harvest time.

There are many more. Just search for “celebration tea” (in inverted commas) on [My Prims](#).

What's on at the Museum?

Friday
Forum
Theatre



STRIKE!

THE POTTERIES RIOTS OF 1842

Millicent is a slip-caster working in the Potteries in 1842. A member of the Women's Chartist Movement, she is a fervent supporter of strike action to further the Chartist cause, but the events of 16th August in Burslem are not what she expected...

FRIDAY 8TH MAY, 7-8.30PM

Tickets £8. Pay on the door.
Book your seats at
learning@engleseabrook.org.uk
Not suitable for under 12s



Google Maps

Englesea Brook Chapel
and Museum, Englesea
Brook Lane, CW2 5QW
Parking available.

Weft & Warp Weaving Workshop

at Englesea Brook Chapel & Museum

CW2 5QW

on Friday, 15th May

11am to 2pm



Join us for a day of craft and relaxed conversation in the beautiful chapel & museum.

We will be weaving with simple looms to create unique wall-hangings.

All equipment and materials are provided, but please feel free to bring your own buttons, beads or yarn to personalise your piece.

**£15 per person
to include materials, tea
and cake.
Please bring your own
lunch.**

To book email Ruth: director@engleseabrook.org.uk

Places limited.

When booking, please advise of any access or dietary requirements.



**Englesea Brook
proudly presents...**

A Day of Drama!

Are you aged between 8 and 12 years?

Do you love stories?

Then come along to our drama
workshop and explore

**'If you go down to the woods
today...'**

through drama games and
performance.

A tale of visions, dreams,
jealousy and betrayal...deep in
the Forest glades of Delamere!



Book your place:
[learning@englesea-
brook.org.uk](mailto:learning@englesea-brook.org.uk)
Booking closes
21st May

**Wednesday 27th May 2026
10am - 2pm
Performance: 2 - 2.45pm
£10 per child (siblings £5)
Limited places. Bring a
packed lunch**

Led by an experienced drama practitioner, we will recreate the story in the chapel space, using skills, props and costumes and show it to our grown-ups at the end of the day!

Englesea Diary

See the whole page notices for details.

Friday Forum Theatre

Friday 8th May 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm – first of the Friday Forum series with Elizabeth telling a story reflecting the General Strike of 1842 and its impact.

Weft and warp weaving workshop

Friday 15th May 11:00am – 2:00 pm – Come and have a go at weaving.

Day of Drama

Wednesday 27th May 10:00am – 2:45 pm – A day for 8-12 year olds to come and explore the Prim story in a fun and dramatic way!

Copy and publication dates for Englesea Extra 86

The plan is to publish Extra 85 on Wednesday June 3rd 2026. Contributions to Ruth by Friday, May 29th please.

And a final prayer from Mary Gilbert, daughter of Nathaniel and Elizabeth Gilbert (died 1768, aged 16)

God of love, awaken our souls. God of power, protect us in temptation. God of forgiveness, cleanse us by the blood of Christ. God of saints, let us share in their inheritance. God of rest, let us be yours for ever. Amen.