MILLOM AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
10 a.m. Saturday 29th November 2025
Millom Library

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Jan Bridget, Liz North, Jonathan Powell, Margaret and Geoff Edmondson, Sue Dawson, Alison Holburn, Jenny Case. Apologies from Mary Wilson, Wendy and Ken Battersby

1. **Minutes:** from last AGM: accepted as an accurate record.

2. **Objectives of Society:**

To promote and encourage interest in and research into the local history of Millom and its surrounding areas.

To arrange events and activities which will cater for the above, including lectures, outings and exhibitions.

To acquire funding to commission relevant geophysical surveys and archaeological digs within Millom and its surrounding areas.

3. **Overview of 2024-2025:**

3.1 Facebook:

1,655 members of Facebook – 307 more than last year. Several posts each week, sharing activities, posts from members and publicising other History Group events throughout the year

3.2 Website:

Unique visitors: 2,286. No of visits: 2,804 Hits: 34,260 Pages: 4,880 Have removed groups as the Society no longer runs any groups. Have added new section: Millom Footprints which includes access to Duane Farren's impressive footprint photograph archive (a major task). Medieval section of Millom Through Time added. Two new sections in Projects: Father John Huddleston; The Huddlestons and Cotherstone; plus the Sykes Project and Millom Names Project up-dated.

3.3 **Publicity:**

Cumbria Local History Federation Newsletter: Winter 2024; Summer 2025; Winter 2025

•BBC series Digging for Britain covers BronzeAge axe heads |Times and Star22 December 2024

•Cumbria Life:BBC's Digging for Britain to feature Millomin January 2025 | Great British Life31 December 2024

•BBC's Digging for Britain features Millom's 'very rare' finds | The Mail9 January 2025

•Cumbrian historiansworried by nuclear waste dump plans | The Mail22 February 2025

•'Millom's No.1 historian', Duane Farren, passes away age 59 | The Mail13 March 2025

•Millom:Art exhibition set to bring town's industrial past to life |The Mail29 May 2025

•Millom: Descendantof Millom Lords returns to trace family legacy | Newsand Star6 August2025

•VJ Day: RareWWII India photos to be shown in Millom | TheMail12 August2025

•Millom and District Local History Society to holdAGM |The Mail11November 2025

•New publication focuses on Millom's prehistoric footprints | The Mail13 November 2025

•CWAAS: Summer 2025: Sykes Update and David Bates

•BBC2: Digging for Britain

3.4 **Events:**

•Digging for Britain, Millom Baptist Church, 14 January 2025

•David Bates exhibition and talk, Holy Trinity Church, 14 June 2025

•Medieval Millom, Holy Trinity Church, 16August 2025

•Tribute to Duane, Holy Trinity Church, 27September 2025

•Dorian Players, Holy Trinity Church, 1November 2025 - CANCELLED DUETO ILL HEALTH

•AGM Father John Hudleston

3.5 **Groups:**

After having run several groups at Millom Library for 18 months, due to a disagreement with a member, the Chair of the Society decided to hand the History Group over to its members. It

is now run by Kathryn Miller. The group has continued to meet (successfully) but have recently changed venues and now meet at Millom Heritage and Arts Centre. The same group are now organising regular events at the Pensioner's Hall in Millom. Unfortunately, because they are called Millom History Group many people are confusing them with the History Society and vice versa.

3.6 **Projects:**

•The **Sykes Project** has been completed with the exception of some documents held at Carlisle Library which is currently closed. An update on the project was included in CWAAS News Bulletin.

•The **Heritage Triangle Project** has been abandoned as the CiC were unable to acquire funding to buy the Old School from the Diocese (£150,000) and to renovate it, which would have cost around another £250,000. We really tried to save the school for Millom and to help ensure the future of Holy Trinity Church but after three years we gave up.

• **Millom Castle and Holy Trinity Church Archaeology Project** was completed when the dig appeared on Digging for Britain. Unfortunately, two farmers did not give us written permission (we thought we had verbal permission) to dig investigative sites identified in the first two stages of the project. Perhaps with a change of heart this project can be completed and who knows what we might find. But we were happy with Millom appearing on Digging for Britain.

• **Millom Castle, the Huddlestons and the English Civil Wars** has now been split into two books and further research is needed.

• The **Millom Names Project** came out of the archaeology project; permission was gained from the National Archives, Cumbria Archives, and the Lowther Estates to photograph extracts from the Manorial Records and place these on our website: it seems highly likely about a third of families who live in Millom can now trace their heritage back around 500 years.

• In response to feedback from Professor Angus Winchester, the chapters on the Huddlestons and Cotherstone and Father John Huddleston have now been taken out of the book and placed on the website.

• Finally, two new Projects have arisen: a new book, **Medieval Millom**, much of which has already been written and **The Prehistoric Footprints of Millom**, a booklet on the incredible photographic archive of the human and animal footprints Duane Farren took over eight years of monitoring. Two memory sticks full of local photos and footprint photos: now available on website. Dr Alison Burns has agreed to read the draft before print early next year.

4. **Membership:** Members agreed there would be a membership scheme to support the work of the Society. Members pay £1 and complete the membership form. The AGM ratified this decision. There are currently 22 members but the scheme has yet to be widely publicised.

5. **Evaluation:**

• Complete and publish: Josh Carr's Best Finds/Digging for Millom: unable to complete as not acquire right kind of photographs, nor did Prof Alice Roberts get back to us with a comment for the book.

• Continue exploration of finds: completed as much as possible – unfortunately not able to find more information about the wonderful little badge (boar's head)

• Complete and publish: Millom Castle, the Huddlestons and the English Civil Wars: draft submitted to Professor Angus Winchester who suggested to split the book into two – Medieval Millom and Millom Castle, the Huddlestons and the English Civil Wars. This requires further research which has yet to be completed.

• Organise series of events to uncover and celebrate history of Millom: five events organised.

6. **Chair's Report:** this was covered by the above.

7. **Election of Committee:** previous officers agreed to re-stand and were unanimously accepted:

Chair: Jan Bridget
Treasurer: Liz North
Secretary: Liz North
Membership Secretary: Margaret Edmondson
Other Members: Geoff Edmondson, Jonathan Powell.
Acknowledging that it had been a hard year, Margaret thanked Jan for all her work in supporting Holy Trinity Church and uncovering and promoting the history of Millom.

8. **Treasurer's Report**

Millom and District Local History Society Financial Report Year Ending 31.8.25
The History Society has had a relatively quiet year financially due in part to fewer events and book sales slowing down, although expenditure for its archaeological work continued as the final stages of the Digging for Millom project were completed.

The Society carried forward a balance of £6,968.48 from 2023/4 and had a total income of £5143.16 of which £4,466.16 was the final instalment of the Digging for Millom grant. Expenditure for the year was £9,104.92, again, the majority of this, £8260.80 for the Digging for Millom project and the Civil War Book research and ISBN number. Day to day essential expenditure for the Society included website/domain charges, printing and stationery and membership fees CLHF.

The carry forward is £3,038.82 including cash in hand of £32.10 of which £2,054.36 is unrestricted to be used for general Society activities and the remaining £984.46 is restricted. The accounts have been independently audited and signed off by Elizabeth Johnson, ACT Technician.