

The Lancashire Society

The Noise We Mek!



at The Museum of Wigan Life

On the afternoon of Wednesday 29th September 2010, a group of us from the Lancashire Society were at The Museum of Wigan Life on Library street in Wigan to meet and entertain a class of Year 5 children and their teachers from St Philip's Primary School, Atherton.



With the children sat quietly on the floor, Sid Calderbank opened the proceedings by teaching them an old Lancashire song from Rochdale – “A Mower’s Song”. As a visual aid, Sid had brought with him an old scythe that the mowers would have used in the fields to reap the grain harvest and demonstrated how the mower would hold the scythe and the speed that he would swing it in order to maintain a steady pace throughout the day. Starting with chorus and with the scythe put in a safe place, Sid had all the children stand up and pretend they holding a scythe and swinging it backwards and forwards. After singing the first verse, he stopped to explain the unfamiliar dialect words that he had used and asked a few questions about what the children had just heard. After a couple more stops to explain the words, he went on to sing the whole song with the children joining in on the choruses.

Alex Fisher then proceeded to give the group a demonstration of Clog Dancing explaining the different types of clogs such as everyday working clogs and dancing clogs. With accompaniment by Julian Taylor on the fiddle, she left the young audience as well as the teachers spellbound with her speed of dancing.



Following a song of the cotton mills from Mark Dowding and a couple of tunes by Julian, Alex then got all the children and the staff to select a pair of clogs that would fit them from the extensive collection that she had brought with her and with everybody spread out with enough room between them, she got them to perform a number of simple clog dancing steps for about ten minutes.

The afternoon’s entertainment that was enjoyed by all in attendance was brought to a close with Mark on Ukelele, Sid on the ‘bones’, Alex with her clogs and Julian on fiddle performing one of Wigan’s famous son’s songs – ‘Leaning on a Lamp Post’ by George Formby.

Mark Dowding
29th September 2010