

## Slaley, Healey & Minsteracres Local History Group

The dates for the 2022 Local History meetings held on the fourth Monday are:

April	Monday	25th			
September	Monday	26th			
October	Monday	24th	November	Monday	28th

The meetings will be held in Slaley Commemoration Hall from 7.30 p.m. – 9 p.m. with an admission cost of £2 per adult or 50p for anyone in full time education.

### **Monday April 25<sup>th</sup> My Time at the Hexham Courant by Brian Tilley**

Brian Tilley joined the Hexham Courant in 1973 as a reporter. (Five years after I left the advertising department in September 1968 to get married and move to Didsbury in Manchester).

Today, Brian Tilley is best known as ‘Hextol’, a character made famous by him when he was the Courant’s deputy editor. Two books ‘The Hextol Collection’ published in 2007 and ‘The Hextol Collection 2’ published three years later in 2010 sold all over the world from Macclesfield to America and even Australia. Enjoying his retirement with Mrs Hextol, at Hextol Towers in Bellingham, Brian is still entertaining readers today with his weekly column. The funniest of 2022 was the issue of January 6<sup>th</sup> when his story of filling the pepper pot for Boxing Day guests caused a paroxysm of sneezing. It was the final paragraph to this story which made me laugh the most, but for copywrite reasons I cannot retell here – it will however be part of the April display. As will the story of being at a garden centre when the fire alarm went off (November 2018). In December 2020 Brian amused us with stories of serving behind the bar, in the late 1970s, at Dontino’s night-spot while out on strike as a journalist from the Hexham Courant. However, for anyone who wears hearing aids and glasses the addition of face masks during the COVID 19 pandemic made his article of July 2020 the funniest of all. Brian has many stories to tell about his years as a reporter for the weekly newspaper. What was printable in the 70s, 80s and 90s wouldn’t be allowed today so join Brian on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> for a trip down memory lane.

There will be a display to look at after the talk containing many of the Hextol articles, several local history editorials written by Brian and some Hexham Courant background information.

For more information contact Pat Wilson 01434 673388 Email: pat.wilson28@outlook.com