

## Meeting Report – 10th February 2023

### EDUCATING KNUTSFORD

The group were the beneficiaries of Mary Gracie's excellent presentation on the schooling of Knutsford's young. Not that any schooling was done prior to Tudor times, unless you were wealthy and had a tutor, and a boy. In the 1550s Sir John Legh of Norbury Booths established the first grammar school on land he donated, giving him and his successors the right to appoint headmasters. Was it next to the Old Market Place? Pupils were aged 6-9 and taught arithmetic, reading and writing.

Later, the Old Dame School on Chelford Road was one of a few in Knutsford including one on King St run by Elizabeth Antrobus, who died in 1694. Through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries many more schools came and went, the talk being well illustrated with portraits, old and recent photos of buildings, old maps to help us get our bearings, education policies that raised standards and the fascinating progression of school leaving age, from 11 in 1893, 14 in 1918, 15 in 1944 and into the 21st century. Mary's research shone through and the subject matter, whilst about Knutsford, was clearly indicative of what was going on elsewhere in the country. A brilliant piece of social history, well received by the group on its first outing. Look out for it appearing again soon, to other audiences.