

Local History News

magazine of the British Association for Local History

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Local History News

edited by Jane Howells

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How to contribute

The success of the Association in supporting and promoting local history throughout the country depends very much on contributions made by members, readers, and all those interested and concerned.

Material published in *The Local Historian* is written by a wide variety of people from many different backgrounds. Offers and suggestions for articles are welcomed, and the editor, Alan Crosby, is always pleased to discuss ideas for contributions and to advise on their preparation. 'Notes for contributors' is available on request, and can be found on our website. Dr Alan Crosby, 77 Wellington St, Preston PR1 8TQ

Local History News relies on material - articles, news, pictures, questions etc - from local societies and individual local historians. Please put BALH PO Box 6549, Somersal Herbert, Ashbourne DE6 5WH on the mailing list for your society newsletter and similar regular publications. Information about local initiatives is particularly welcome, and we are always keen to publish items that give examples of best practice, illustrating the diversity and vitality of local history. Readers' comments and queries allow our members to share their knowledge and enthusiasm. If there is a specific event you wish us to mention please allow plenty of time ahead of the date. The mailings are normally sent out at the end of January, April, July and October.

The BALH Reviews Editor is Dr Evelyn Lord, Book Reviews PO Box 649 Cambridge CB1 0JW. If you have a newly published work, either as an individual or a society, please send her a copy for listing and possible review.

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Membership Matters

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Gospel truths

Alan Crosby

In September I was lucky enough to be invited for a private evening viewing of the Lindisfarne Gospels, on display in the library of Durham University. The setting is of course incomparable - the towering magnificence of the immense cathedral, its bells ringing out in the darkness as we left, and the deep encircling gorge of the Wear, together with the cobbled lanes and steep pathways of the peninsula, combine to make this one of the most dramatic urban landscapes anywhere.

Durham has been inextricably associated with St Cuthbert for over a thousand years, ever since his body was finally brought to rest there in 995. But in his lifetime it was windswept Lindisfarne with which he had the closest bonds: from 665, when he was only in his mid-thirties, he was successively prior and bishop there, before retiring to his cell on Inner Farne just before his death in 687. And it was for Cuthbert that the monk called Eadfrith, bishop of Lindisfarne between 698 and 721, created one of the wonders of the world. The Lindisfarne Gospels is rightly described as one of the greatest artistic and cultural achievements of mankind, breathtaking in its complexity and beauty, and immensely powerful in its meaning and significance as a testament of faith.

Here it was, back in the North East (much muttering and murmuring among the multitude about how it should stay there and not go back to London - though, as was pointed out, it has been in the south for almost five hundred years). The exhibition was superb, setting the Gospels in its political, cultural and religious context and emphasising that it was unique only in its exceptional quality. The other illuminated books which had been brought from libraries elsewhere demonstrated cultural and stylistic affinities, and the examples of stone carving and exquisite jewellery (including items from the Staffordshire Hoard) highlighted the intertwined nature of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic art and design.

So precious is it after 1300 years that only certain pages may be displayed, and only then for brief periods under the strictest control of light and humidity. We all know that archives need such conditions, but for the Lindisfarne Gospels it is absolutely fundamental. British Library experts came to Durham during the period of display, specifically to turn the page, and because of 13 centuries of inexorable fading of certain colours the celebrated 'carpet pages' of extraordinary interwoven decoration, and the astonishing pages which introduce the four Gospels, must no longer be exposed.

So we saw the portrait page of St John's Gospel, its colours seemingly as fresh as when they were laid down in a quiet place on that haunted island, as one man laboured lovingly, year in and year out, to create a miracle. Scientific analysis shows that Eadfrith had almost a hundred different pigments, and even the colours had their meanings and their symbolism. His imagination drew upon a vast palette of influences, from the birds that he saw on the island, through Irish and Germanic manuscripts, to Middle Eastern prayer rugs.

But in spite of all this splendour, the item I found possibly even more moving was St Cuthbert's Gospel, which is the oldest European book still in its original binding. This pocket sized volume of the gospel of St John was almost certainly written to be used for the ceremonial occasion in 698 when Cuthbert's uncorrupted body was translated to the high altar at Lindisfarne. Like the Gospels, it travelled with his body on its wanderings around northern England during the ninth and tenth centuries, tucked away on a wooden shelf or inner lid within the coffin, just above the saint's head. In 1104 at Durham the coffin was opened and the book was found, itself in perfect condition despite its vicissitudes. Almost a thousand years ago this little book was already recognised as a precious relic. No less miraculous is its survival today, in mint condition. What tales it could tell.

The railwaymen who went to war: stories held at the National Railway Museum

Alison Kay

The National Railway Museum recently published a database listing details of over 20,000 railway employees who died in World War One. This free resource was compiled by archives staff and volunteers using a number of sources. The backbone of the database is the Order of Service booklet produced for the memorial ceremony at St Paul's Cathedral on 14 May 1919, held in memory of railwaymen who died in the war. Other information is taken from the Commonwealth Graves Commission online database, company rolls of honour held in the NRM archives, and railway company staff magazines. Further information has been contributed by private individuals and groups.

Users have found many stories about their railway relatives, and in some cases accessed a photograph of their ancestor for the first time. The list contains thousands of stories: 15 year old boys who lied about their age, who look shockingly young in staff magazines; 21 year old Betty Stevenson, a North Eastern Railwayman's daughter, who was killed by in an air raid whilst working with refugees in France; numerous men who died as prisoners of war across Europe, one young man dying in Germany on his 20th birthday.

Railways is an industry where families worked for one employer for generations. Families went to war together, and sometimes died together. The list describes twins, brothers, uncles, fathers and cousins who all worked for the railways and who died in the war. A stone's throw from the NRM, Alfred and Thomas Edward Stephenson lived on Railway Terrace, Holgate. Both probably worked in the nearby carriage works, and died four months apart in France.

By looking at individual stories you get a feel for the diversity of experience, and 'school-room' images of mud, trenches and attrition are broadened. It is possible to see the diversity of tasks carried out and the worldwide scale of the war; railwaymen appear on memorials in Jerusalem, Turkey, Egypt and Greece. And die of diseases such as malaria. A significant number joined the air force and around 350 men enlisted as seamen. Many had transferrable skills from their railway employment; others worked as clerks and porters for the railway, and their wartime and peacetime jobs diverged. These men went to places they would not have seen in ordinary times; perhaps an attractive and exciting prospect for some.

As well as personal stories the list also lets us look at the bigger picture. Unlike pay-per-view family history sites, it is possible to see details of men collectively and then analyse the data. Thousands of names brings home the horror of war - and we are only looking at one industry. Data can be analysed by exporting the list into Microsoft Access and conducting query searches; a fairly crude approach until the list can be uploaded into a more streamlined format. However, we can extract significant data.

Sorting the database by railway job can identify the social demographic of men who went to war and died. 17% of all job titles have the word porter/ptr/port' in the title; 15% 'clerk/clrk'; 11% 'labourer/lab', with high percentages of cleaners, apprentices, assistants etc. A search for 'manager' only produces one managerial role; the Stratford Works manager, John A Macallan. Although not a perfect approach we get a sense of who went to the front to fight, and who stayed in Britain.

Further comparative research is needed to analyse how many railwaymen went to war and survived. This would give an idea of how many high ranking railwaymen went to war and returned, compared to lower ranks. Would this research support the view that the higher ranking men more often survived? Or that the chances of being killed were at least five times higher for men who had been students at Oxford or Cambridge in 1914 than for manual workers?

Data on the list is imperfect in various ways; the St Paul's Cathedral list misses individuals and entire railway companies. There are many reasons for this: individuals may have died after the war from injuries sustained on the field, people went to war without gaining permission from their employers, and some small companies appear not to have submitted figures.

There are many ways in which the database could be expanded. We could add further information from the museum staff magazines, rolls of honour, memorials, photograph collections, business records, railway company ephemera, personal archives, oral histories, correspondence and actual museum objects. This would inform more individual stories. Reports printed in staff magazines describe railwaymen setting up cricket pitches in Egypt, and the North Eastern Railway mascot 'Tommy the Cow'. Could this combined research help answer questions about perceptions of war from those who enlisted and the institutions that sent them?

By using NRM sources we can describe and analyse those who did not go to war. Many men remained in the UK to coordinate the railways, and even engage in contingency planning in the event of an invasion. They managed military traffic and built the stock that trans-

ported soldiers, weapons and supplies around the country and to the front. Letters describe home operations such as the carriage of freight, military personnel and even pigeons, as well as the closure of stations and reduction in services. NRM has reserve occupation cards; and photographs of women factory workers who replaced men, highlighting another significant feature of the war. And the museum has drawings and photographs of munitions, planes and ambulance trains built in the factories.

Records at The National Archives such as war diaries and staff records add to our knowledge of those on the list. There are numerous personal archives, correspondence, testimonials, oral histories from survivors, newspaper accounts in local record offices, museums and universities around the country. Advances of 'linked data' may make virtual combination of this information possible.

National Railway Museum archives hold personal, technical and strategic information and records that tell the story of railway workers during World War One. Hopefully this article will encourage research into the collections, and support or challenge existing views of the war. National Railway Museum's research centre Search Engine, where the original source material and much else can be accessed, is open seven days a week 10.00 - 17.30. <http://www.nrm.org.uk/ResearchAndArchive/about.aspx>

Alison Kay is assistant archivist at the National Railway Museum, York.

see back cover illustration

Magazines are available on the open shelves of Search Engine, The National Railway Museum library and archives.

Taking Part Survey

The latest results issued by the DCMS show over half of all adults in England visited a museum or art gallery in the last year. 72% of adults visited a heritage site and more people, nearly a third of all adults, say they now visited at least 3 - 4 times a year. Data about participation (and non-participation) is collected for arts, museums and galleries, archives, libraries, heritage and sport. www.gov.uk/government/news/a-nation-of-culture-vultures

Lady Anne Clifford: power, patronage and equal rights in 17th century Westmorland

Peter J Eyre

Cumbria Archive Service looks after the documentary heritage of Cumbria from the 12th century to the present day. Our collections cover every aspect of life in Cumbria, from political and religious affairs to social and economic life. The Archive Service holds a number of very important collections from the Tudor and Stuart period and this article looks at the

documentary legacy of Lady Anne Clifford (1590-1676).

Until its abolition in 1974, Westmorland was one of the smallest counties in England. Despite its size and relative remoteness, the archives of Westmorland are a rich source for the study of power and politics of the Tudor



above: seal of Queen Elizabeth I, Great Books of Record, book 3 p 94.
WD CAT/16, Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal

and Stuart period. Much of this is down to the life and legacy of one remarkable woman, Lady Anne Clifford.

Born in 1590, Anne was the daughter of George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland and Margaret Russell. Her father was a highly regarded member of Queen Elizabeth's Court, Champion of the Tiltyard (Jousting) and a privateer against the Spanish gold ships. However, when George Clifford died in 1605, he left substantial debts and no male heirs to continue the Clifford line. His will, whilst leaving Anne with a substantial dowry, passed the estates in Westmorland and Craven to his brother Francis and his heirs.

Thus began one of the longest legal campaigns by Anne and her mother to undo the terms of this will. Anne ultimately succeeded to the estates by outliving her uncle and his son, and two husbands. When Anne finally returned to Westmorland in 1649 she set about rebuilding her castles at Brougham, Appleby, Brough, Pendragon, and, in Yorkshire, Skipton and Barden Tower. She also erected many monuments to the family, including the Countess Pillar, memorials in Appleby St Lawrence Church and the Alms houses on Boroughgate in Appleby. This was only a small part of her legacy, however.

More significant are the Great Books of Record, a unique collection of volumes charting the Clifford family history from 1203 when King John granted Robert de Veteripont, and his heirs, the towns of Appleby and Brough and Shrievalty of Westmorland, through to Lady Anne Clifford and her heirs.

The compilation of the Great Books represented a major undertaking and Anne wanted frequent access to them. Three sets of these great volumes were prepared, one each for Appleby and Skipton Castles, and the third for her lawyer Sir Mathew Hale of Lincolns Inn. The Appleby and Skipton sets were deposited with Cumbria Archive Service in Kendal in the 1960s and 1980s. The third set was to remain in private hands until 2003.

The Great Books of Record were created as a record of Anne's long legal battle to assert her right to inherit the Clifford title and estates. Each book is devoted to the setting out of all the available historical documents relating to the title holders of each generation, both in the

original Latin or Norman French, and in English translation. The records were 'gotten out of several offices and courts in this Kingdom' and all correctly sourced in the margins of the text throughout all three volumes. Many of the original documents no longer survive.

The volumes are also an important record of the descent of the Clifford family line and this can be seen in the illuminated pedigrees at the start of each volume. The pedigree, illustrated here [front cover], is from Book III tracing the descendents of Henry Clifford, created 1st Earl of Cumberland by Henry VIII, to Anne and her children at the top of the pedigree.

Book III also concludes with 'A Summary of the Records and a memorial of the life of Mee the Ladie Ann Clifford...', in effect her autobiography. The first page deals with her early childhood up to the death of her father George Clifford in 1605 and sets the character and tone ('I had a strong and copious memorie, a sound judgement and discerning spirit') which is sustained throughout. The sections on her mother and other relatives continue the chronology of summaries from Books I and II up to 1650.

However the memorial to her life to 1675 was a contemporary compilation, not a diary, was written up annually and characterised by Lady Anne's own additions and insertions, leaving her mark in no uncertain manner. The memorial stands as one of the earliest known autobiographies by a woman.

The Great Books of Record are outstanding works of scholarship, tracing the descent of one of England's great landowning families from original sources. All three sets of these volumes are held at the Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal. They are an essential source for historians studying power and patronage in the Tudor and Stuart period and the inspiring story of one woman's struggle for recognition in a more patriarchal age.

Peter J Eyre is Assistant County Archivist, Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal

see also the front cover picture of this issue of *Local History News*

Unexplored Riches in Medical History

from The Children's Society press release

The Children's Society project 'Unexplored Riches in Medical History' has received a second grant of £102,309 from the Wellcome Trust's Research Resources scheme.

The project, now in its second year, has been making great advances in cataloguing and conserving the records of the residential homes that The Children's Society ran for almost 100 years up until the 1970s, and the case files of the children who stayed in them.

In particular the project is focusing on the wealth of information about child health and the effects of poverty contained in these records. This will help shed light on the history of childhood diseases, treatments, medical care and social health in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Historically, The Children's Society helped provide medical treatment of these families, and the records reveal the experiences of children with diseases such as tuberculosis, rickets, pneumonia, and heart conditions amongst others.

By creating an online archive catalogue and through conservation work the records will be widely accessible to medical social and academic researchers, the post-care community and the general public. Through the project, The Children's Society will be able to open up access to its valuable records and promote important research into medical history, social history, and the history of childhood poverty and neglect.



Four boys giving themselves injections at St George's Home for Diabetic Boys, Kersal, Lancashire, c 1950s

The first part of the project has found that before the establishment of the NHS, many families had to seek help from charities such as The Children's Society as they couldn't give their children vital treatment, and some families were pushed into poverty directly because of medical costs.

Janine Stanford, is the project archivist, The Children's Society Records and Archive Centre

www.hiddenlives.org.uk

British Library archives UK websites: you can be involved

If there is one fact most people know about the British Library, it is that, for over 300 years, the Library has collected and preserved a copy of every book, journal and newspaper published in the UK. Now, after landmark new legislation in April this year, and in partnership with the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, the Bodleian Library in Oxford, Cambridge University Library and the Library of Trinity College Dublin, the British Library has begun archiving a copy of every UK e-book and digital publication, including the entire UK web domain. It expects to capture some 4.8 million websites in the first year alone, adding up to around a billion individual webpages.

A billion pages every year; to give an idea of the scale, the British Library's collection of local, regional and national newspapers, built up over 300 years, totals a mere 750 million pages. In 2013 alone the Library will collect more than this amount, plus the same again every year in future. Archiving and preserving the nation's published memory will soon add up to petabytes of content, stored in a purpose-built, secure digital infrastructure spanning England, Scotland and Wales.

What was fragile and ephemeral will become archived and secure, searchable online and accessible via the reading rooms of the British Library and other five libraries. Every UK website, including every change and every new page, will be preserved forever. Our great-

grandchildren and their great-grandchildren will be able to see how we lived, what we said, and what we thought and cared about back in the early 21st century.

The scale is ambitious. The directors of the British Library and other five libraries have already been working very closely with senior figures in the mainstream publishing industry, as partners in the Joint Committee on Legal Deposit (JCLD), to resolve many legal and policy issues. There are also technical and practical challenges to overcome and the JCLD is keen to involve people who could contribute from their knowledge and experience of running local and society websites. You can read more about it on the British Library website at: <http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/legaldeposit/complaints/jcld/index.html>

Membership of the JCLD, which meets every 3-6 months in the British Library boardroom, is voluntary and unpaid. However, if you want to have a hand in shaping the future of this national collection and the preservation of our cultural heritage, please apply to:

Richard Gibby
Legal Deposit Libraries' Manager
British Library
96 Euston Road
London NW1 2DB

Email: richard.gibby@bl.uk

83rd Anglo-American conference of historians

The Great War at Home

Senate House, University of London 3 – 4 July 2014

You can find the call for papers for this 'international festival of local history'
at <http://anglo-american.history.ac.uk>

Don't worry about the instruction to submit proposals only as a panel. Please get in touch with us if you would like to offer a paper – as an individual – and we will do our best to build the panels. mail@balh.co.uk **NB** closing date is 15 December 2013.



History and literature

Jane Howells

Dr Michael Hall becomes President of The Black Country Society for 2013-14. He has contributed in many ways to the local history of that area of the country, through local societies and numerous publications. His particular expertise and main interest lies in the writings of Francis Brett Young, and he is Chairman of the Francis Brett Young Society.

As a boy he became fascinated by history from several points of view: family outings armed with 'I-Spy History', a growing collection of interesting objects, spending his pocket money in second-hand bookshops, and inspirational teachers at critical points in his education. Then in 1960 in the school library he first read Francis Brett Young's *The House Under the Water*, a book which is partly set in Birmingham, with descriptions of places that he knew, along with the retelling of the construction of the Elan Valley reservoirs and the history of Birmingham's Welsh Water Scheme. From that point on he became increasingly aware that well-researched fiction can have its place as valuable history.

Michael Hall chose history as one of his A Level subjects, though post-eighteen opted for English Literature, returning to history, indeed local history, for his MA (Methodism in



Michael Hall with BALH President Professor David Hey at Local History Day in London, June 2013

Quinton) and PhD (Birmingham in the novels of Francis Brett Young).

During his teaching career, though again English Literature was his principal subject, he was often called upon to teach some history. In both of these subjects he always sought to establish links with the other, for example directing whole school end-of-term projects on themes which would unite the curriculum at some period of history – eg Medieval Mystery Plays.

Retirement permitted Michael Hall to devote his time and energy to local history. Eight books have raised money for various charities and organisations. A ninth, on the history of



Michael Hall in 1984 signing copies of his first local history book Who Knows But It May Continue? The title is a quotation about his first visit to Quinton from John Wesley's Journal



*portrait of Francis Brett Young by John Hadley
(private collection)*

nail-making will be published shortly. He continues his interest in the history of nonconformity, and is involved with the Primitive Methodism Museum at Englesea Brook in Cheshire.

Dr Hall believes strongly that the novels of Francis Brett Young are an under-appreciated source of information and understanding, containing as they do a picture of the industrial Black Country in the 19th and early 20th century. He has produced an education pack for schools, a biography of the author and a guide to his publications, and frequently lectures to conferences and groups. His latest venture on behalf of the FBYSociety is to commission a local composer to set to music 'The Ballad of St Kenelm' for performance at music festivals in 2015.

All of which provides us with a demonstration of the rich variety of approaches, topics and methods in local history around the country, recognised by a BALH Personal Achievement award in 2013.

With thanks to Pat Dunn, Michael Hall, Stan Hill, and Judith Watkin

HLF Anniversaries Fund

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is announcing that at least £10m is being set aside over the next four years to fund projects marking some of the UK's most important anniversaries and commemorative events.

The Diamond Jubilee, and the Olympic and Paralympics Games showed how events can bring the people of the UK together. This new funding reflects the fact there is enormous enthusiasm to provide more opportunities to foster the sense of community spirit and national pride. It will help to highlight important historical dates that will resonate with people and communities right across the UK.

The funding will be provided to ensure that projects of all sizes can apply for support, from smaller grants of a few thousand pounds up to grants over £2m.

Culture Secretary, Maria Miller, said: 'Our island story is unique. It is inspiring and educative in equal measure and there is so much to learn from our rich history. This new Anniversaries Fund will give us the opportunity to commemorate, to celebrate or simply to remember. But, more than that, it will allow us to come together as a country, to share moments of national importance, and to continue to be reminded of Britain's place in the world.'

Some of the moments on the horizon that could be supported by this initiative include: the centenary of Dylan Thomas' birth; the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta; the 600th anniversary of Agincourt; the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo; the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death; the 700th anniversary of Bannockburn; the 150th anniversary of Beatrix Potter's birth, as well as a range of significant dates relating to the Second World War and a decade of anniversaries in Northern Ireland.

www.hlf.org.uk/news

from press release 1 October 2013

Westminster progress at VCH Middlesex

Mark Latham

It is maybe one of life's inalienable truths that most people will expect the history of local government to be a tad dull, and, as a researcher deeply interested in this subject matter, I can provide plenty of anecdotal evidence to support the claim! However, not only is local government immensely important in the historical development of localities, it can also be, contrary to popular belief, extremely interesting too. Local government can be a world of intrigue, petty politics, venality, and stagnation, but it can also be a world of innovation, charity, and civic progress, inhabited by cast of colourful characters. Nowhere is this more so than in Westminster.

With the first volume of the VCH Middlesex's City of Westminster series published in 2009 (*The City of Westminster: Landownership and Religious History*) attention has recently turned to the second, which will indeed cover local government and social life.

Along with the usual problems facing VCH work such as scarcity of funding and resources, research on local government in Westminster suffers from several interrelated challenges:

Firstly, there was just so *much* local government. This complex administrative morass produced copious amounts of primary source material, impossible to consult it all.

Secondly, as a result of the richness of sources, and the historical importance of Westminster, many aspects of local government, such as poor relief, have already been the subject of research both by local historians, and those from other historical disciplines.

Thirdly, the advent of Metropolitan wide bodies in the mid-late nineteenth century, and the corresponding decline of vestry based local government, resulted in a fundamental shift in the entire structure of local government. This makes it difficult to sustain a predominately parish based research approach past the mid-late nineteenth century.

Therefore, in order to overcome these issues VCH Middlesex has decided to focus initially on producing accounts of vestry government from the mid seventeenth century to the abolition of vestry government in 1900. The operation of vestry government is an area which has received much less scholarly attention than other aspects of parochial administration. Once these parish histories are complete, it is hoped that work will begin on researching the supra-parochial bodies such as the poor law unions, and metropolitan boards – fascinating entities in their own right.

The first parish chosen was St Clement Danes – a particularly interesting parish in terms of vestry government, as it straddled several administrative jurisdictions, and it was also, by the mid-eighteenth century, a remarkably 'democratic' parish compared to many of its Westminster brethren.

In order to resolve the issue of primary source overload, the research focused on mining the vestry minutes of the parish, along with relevant local and public parliamentary acts, to provide the backbone of the St Clement Danes account.

The fruits of this labour are now to be found on the VCH Middlesex website in the form of a draft account of local government in St Clement Danes, along with an excellent account of the charities of the parish written by VCH volunteer Jonathan Comber. Several maps of the parish illustrating its administrative boundaries, and its development over the centuries have also been posted on the VCH Explore website. It is hoped that an EPE style paperback version of the St Clement Danes account will be published shortly.

Furthermore, the Westminster History Club, with its array of prestigious speakers has been instrumental in raising the profile of the VCH's work in this area, and in generating resources to keep the Westminster project rolling along.

Time Team at the More (Herts): unearthing inaccuracies and errors

Heather Falvey

The Greyfriars dig in Leicester, together with its genesis and results, demonstrates that it is possible for historians and archaeologists to work together on a joint project; however the relationship between practitioners of the two disciplines is not always smooth and mistrust might exist on either side: Does one shard of a pot really tell us all that? ... There is no physical evidence for a building here in that period... But healthy scepticism is different from blatant falsification of written evidence or of well-established facts.

The More, near Rickmansworth, was the site of a large house inhabited by, amongst others, George Neville, bishop of Exeter, which was subsequently extended by both Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII. *Time Team's* archaeological dig there, filmed in May 2012, was transmitted in February 2013 and a book covering the whole series was published in April 2013. Regrettably Tim Taylor's published account, in the chapter entitled 'Northwood', is riddled with inaccuracies.(1) The site is now occupied by Northwood Prep School and, according to Taylor, 'Northwood was a palace near Rickmansworth and came to be known as the Manor of the Moor[sic]' (p.168). In fact it had been known as 'la More' since at least 1182, when the manor was granted by the abbot of St Albans to Adam Aignel in return for some other pieces of land and an annual rent.(2) It has never been known as Northwood.

The programme-makers pounced on one event in the house's history: Catherine of Aragon was banished there briefly during Henry VIII's attempts to annul their marriage. Apparently the house 'played a defining role' in Catherine's life: 'For two years she lived here, still queen of England, but suffering the pain of Henry's dis-

pleasure ...' (p.168). She was indeed sent to the More in the summer of 1531 (3) and there is evidence that she was living there in state in the August (4) but there is no evidence that she remained there for two years.

In 'How to use historical records', readers are informed that 'At Northwood, primary evidence included a plan of the site showing various stages of construction during the 1520s, and a reference to the grandeur of the palace made by the French ambassador in 1527' (p.176). There is no contemporary plan of the More: the plan used on the programme was that reconstructed by Simon Thurley in the



Excavation of the More's 15th century gatehouse

early 1990s.(5) The opinion of the French ambassador, du Bellay, is particularly problematic. In 1929 A. F. Pollard wrote of the More that 'it was Wolsey's favourite country house, and du Bellay thought it more splendid than Hampton Court'.(6) Professor Martin Biddle, who excavated at the More in the 1950s, has been searching (unsuccessfully) for Pollard's source for years. But, amazingly, *Time Team's* historian had managed to track down a reference that proved to be the origin of the high opinion of Northwood's status. In 1527 the French ambassador to England, Du Bellay, visited Catherine when she was housed at Northwood. We may allow for a bit of flattery here, but he referred to the 'sumptuous buildings' with 'goodly galleries all gilt above' and other 'gorgeous devises' (p.177).

But Catherine of Aragon was not at the More in 1527. And the document being (mis)quoted here was not written by the French ambassador in 1527, rather in 1525 by Sir Arthur Darcy in a letter to his father.(7) Not only has evidence been wilfully falsified - Darcy's letter is well-known - but the facts of Catherine's stay have been twisted: in August 1531 she was visited at the More by the Venetian ambassador, who commented on her entourage, not the building.

Previous work by archaeologists and historians had demonstrated that the house built at the More in the 1450s, in the reign of Henry VI, was a substantial red brick construction with a moat. (Taylor says 'we knew that there had been an earlier palace built in the reign of Henry VII' (p.172).) This work had also suggested that the base court constructed for Wolsey in front of the moat was far less substantial. *Time Team* could not locate the base court but did unearth some foundations of the massive fifteenth-century gate-house. To enable viewers to visualise the house, the programme showed pictures of Oxburgh Hall, near Oxborough (Norfolk). But the book reports that images were shown of 'Oxmoor Castle, a building with a huge gate tower, slightly more modest than Hampton Court but of the right period' (p.180). There is no such place as Oxmoor (or Oxmoor castle); and Oxburgh is a fifteenth century house, not contemporary with Wolsey's Hampton Court but with the earlier house at the More.

This summary demonstrates, and laments, the extent to which this book has been badly

researched and sloppily written. During twenty series *Time Team* has popularised archaeology; this was the last. Perhaps Taylor was rushing to publish the book and move on to new projects. But the report of the dig at the More insults the intelligence, not to mention the pocket, of its readers.

(1) Tim Taylor, *The Time Team Dig Book: A practical guide for the would be archaeologist*, (Channel 4, 2013), pp.166-189.

(2) W. Page ed., *The Victoria County History of the Counties of England: Hertfordshire*, vol. 2 (London, 1908), p.375.

(3) *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. 5, 1531-1532 (London, 1880), no.375, Chapuys, Spanish ambassador, writing to Charles V, on 18 August 1531.

(4) *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. 4, 1527-1533 (London, 1871), p.287.

(5) Simon Thurley, 'The domestic building works of Cardinal Wolsey', in S. J. Gunn and P. G. Lindley, eds., *Cardinal Wolsey: Church, state and art* (Cambridge, 1991), pp.76-102, plan on p.92.

(6) A. F. Pollard, *Wolsey* (London, 1929; rev. edn. 1953, reprinted 1966), p.325.

(7) The National Archives, SP1/235, f.4; paraphrased in *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, Addenda (London, 1929), vol. 1, part 1, no.467. I am not suggesting that Suzannah Lipscomb, *Time Team's* historian, made this highly erroneous 'connection'.



Calling all writers - are you claiming secondary royalties?

Sue Rowbotham

Have you ever published a book or article? If so you are automatically the copyright owner for that work, and have certain entitlements. If you have published your book through a reputable publisher then you will probably receive royalties on sales. This is usually about 10% of the purchase price, a small sum for all your hard work when you consider that national retailers, such as W.H. Smiths and Waterstones, get about 50%.

As a writer you are also entitled to 'secondary royalties' for use of your published work by other people. This includes books, TV or radio scripts, magazine or journal articles, poems, chapters and essays. Most writers that I know are unaware of this type of royalty. Secondary royalties are especially important for non-fiction writers, such as local historians, whose work may be used in educational or academic research around the world.

The Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society

The ALCS is a not-for-profit membership organisation which:

Collects secondary royalties due to members for use of their work, including photocopying, cable retransmission in the UK and overseas, digital reproduction and educational recording.

Makes payments in February and August each year to members owed money for secondary uses of their work.

Campaigns on behalf of writers both nationally and internationally.

Keeps members aware of any issues that may affect them as writers, such as the latest EU copyright legislation or Google's mammoth digitisation project.

The ALCS, which is run by writers for writers, currently has about 85,000 members. In 2012 the Society paid out over £26 million to more than 60,000 authors.

How to claim Secondary Royalties

I registered on-line with the ALCS about 12 months ago. Membership costs a single life-time fee of £25, which is only payable once you have earned that amount. Where a book is co-written each author receives an appropriate proportion of the royalties collected. I was delighted when I received my first half-year payment this February, which covered two books and my article 'Cheltenham's Olympic Connections' (CLHS *Journal* 2012). I received over £50, which was more than I had received in sales royalties from the books' national publishers throughout 2012 and paid for my membership. Astonishingly almost all the payments came from outside the UK. I have now registered *Cheltenham Then & Now* (2012) and a second article, 'Carroll's Adventures in Cheltenham' (CLHS *Journal* 2013). I await the outcome with interest.

I strongly recommend that you register your published work with the ALCS. It is worth noting that you can also claim secondary royalties if you have inherited the copyright for a published work. For more information go to www.alcs.co.uk. Let me know how you get on*.

This article was originally published in the July 2013 issue of Cheltenham Local History Society's Newsletter. It is reproduced here with kind permission from the author and editor.

**We would be interested to hear from members who take up this suggestion. mail@balh.co.uk. Ed.*

Stafford 'A proper little town' archive exhibition

Margaret O'Sullivan

Anniversaries exist to be celebrated and, when combined with new status for a settlement, can provide a focus for exploring less well known aspects of local history. Staffordshire Archive Service, in conjunction with the William Salt Library in Stafford, made excellent use of the opportunity to mark the 1100th year since King Alfred's daughter Aethelflaed established Stafford as a Saxon burh in 913. In their recent joint exhibition entitled 'Stafford – a Proper Little Town' original documents from the 13th to the 20th centuries were displayed alongside a looped visual presentation of images of the town from maps, photographs, engravings and prints. Themed display boards focussed on such popular topics as trade and business, schools and education, social life and customs, law and order and 'dirt and health'. In addition, for those who might find palaeography challenging, there were extensive transcripts beside each of the archive exhibition cases. Borough records exhibited included a King John charter of 1206, a burgess roll, court rolls and a bailiff's roll from 1411-12. In the latter, refurbishment of town property was an issue even in the early fifteenth century because one entry records that the old gates had been sold for scrap and the income used to fund new gates. In the same year, almost £20 had been spent to establish a fair in the town on Holy Cross day (3 May). Another important town celebration was the Hobby Horse festival, apparently held at New Year and not on May Day. As late as 1613 'Blind Peter' was paid two shillings for playing music, at the festival, while a Mr Bamford received the same amount for acting as Hobby Horse.

Information and anecdotes about personalities in the locality contributed to the success of this exhibition. The chequered history of the Staffords and Stafford Castle was apparent from a detailed inventory of all the rooms and fittings of the castle in 1537, together with the letter book of Henry, Lord Stafford from 1501-63. A few years later, in 1575, Queen Elizabeth herself visited the town and is said to have enquired the reason for its decay. Loss of the

Assizes was an explanation offered. One of the Borough Chamberlains, Thomas Worswicke, who served in 1595-96, was also Stafford's first local historian, recording events in the town into the early 17th century. He gave a vivid account of the execution of the recusant priest, Blessed Robert Sutton, in 1587, commenting adversely on the 'butcherly manner' of the executioner who swung the axe through Sutton's mouth, not his neck, while he was standing. Sutton was drawn and quartered but, in the following year, his co-religionists were said to have managed to secure one of his quarters, when the thumb and index finger were found to be intact. His brother Father Abraham Sutton gave Father John Gerard the thumb, which is now at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire. Almost a hundred years later, Izaak Walton, of 'Compleat Angler' fame, was a significant benefactor to the town, endowing in his will of 1684 apprenticeships for two poor boys and a dowry for a maidservant 'of long service'.

Individuals also make the borough's petition to Parliament in 1832 against disenfranchisement for bribery and corruption a striking and noteworthy document. A very large and long parchment roll, it included the signatures of many townspeople, together with occupations which clearly show the importance of boot and shoemaking as a local industry, one which continued into the 20th century. Health and well-being were major concerns of the Victorians, and when a bed of salt was discovered locally in the 1880s, this later led to the building of Brine Baths (later Royal Brine Baths) in the centre of the town. Treatment with salt water was believed to alleviate rheumatism, and the Visitors' Book from 1893 to 1952 on show in the exhibition demonstrated that therapeutic benefits appealed to many diverse client groups, including local and regional footballers. If the Brine Baths had not been demolished in 1977, perhaps they might have survived as Stafford's answer to thalassotherapy centres and fashionable spa hotels?

Academic snobbery: local historians need more support

Ian Willis

Local history is one of the most popular forms of history in Australia. Yet there is a yawning gap between the enthusiastic amateur and the academic historian.

While some academic historians engage with local history, sadly there is an entrenched snobbery from the academy. From the other side, the enthusiastic amateur is too wound up with a parochial approach to local history and often doesn't see the bigger picture.

If both sides can engage with each other, the result would be a better type of history practise and a greater contribution to the story of Australia.

Democratic history

Local history is one of the democratic forms of history practise, drawing on a variety of disciplines. These include community history, family history, genealogy and oral history. It also incorporates local aspects of cultural and social history. Done well, local history also engages in both national and transnational themes.

There is a host of local history societies and local museums across the country. But academic historians are rarely involved with them.

For the enthusiastic amateur of local history, the academic historian is in a different world. Academics are often at a city-based university. Their journals are remote, guarded by a peer-review process. And their conferences beyond the resources of the amateur.

This world is not readily entered by the amateur who, unlike professional historians who receive a regular salary, are volunteers with limited means.

Expert history

One of the key issues that divides these two groups revolves around the idea of authority.

The university-trained historian has expertise based on the rigour and discipline of thought and word. The local history enthusiast often has only the lived experience of the past.

Keen amateurs have their own historical sensibilities and history-mindedness. This often means they are interested solely in the affairs of their community. Sometimes they are the custodian of the stories of a place. That is, they are the keepers of the community's sacred knowledge, the collective memory and cultural traditions of a local community.

As a collector of stories, the amateur practises a form of antiquarianism often concerned with lists of facts. Unfortunately this provides no commentary on the past or present, no argument, and no analysis of sources and assessment of methods.

Dealing with the past without interpretation and context is a source of continuing frustration for academics.

Arrogance and cynicism

Some academic historians think they are the only ones with the keys to the past. This is a form of professional arrogance. It creates a perception of aloofness.

This creates a cynical attitude amongst enthusiastic amateurs. Many feel that the academic historian is remote and distant. Amateurs therefore have little time or enthusiasm for academics.

Yet it need not be so

The academic historian has so much to offer. Successful and meaningful engagement is possible.

The academic historian is the discipline expert. They therefore have a responsibility to provide leadership. They should inspire amateur histo-

rians to increase their standards of scholarship. This needs understanding, trust and encouragement from academics. Not paternalism.

Academic and amateur alike need a nuanced understanding of the needs and aspirations of both sides. Academic historians can act as mentors in the practice of local history. Enthusiastic amateurs are keen to learn how to do it better, if given sympathy and understanding.

Even the crudest attempt by the local history enthusiast provides in their own way an archive which the thoughtful, patient and persistent academic can mine. And likewise even the densest writing by academics offers something to the amateur.

A recipe for success

Successful engagement between academic historians and the enthusiastic amateur is a win-win situation for both sides.

Some examples include the ever popular annual Penrith Local History Conference, community history projects such as the *Dictionary of Sydney* and the recent Crime, Cameras Action! local history conference at the University of Wollongong.

There are many good examples of local history as written by academic historians, including Atkinson's *Camden*, Ferry's *Colonial Armidale* and McQuilton's *Rural Australian and the Great War*.

A number of academic historians give popular public lectures and seminars in Sydney at History House, the Mechanics Institute, the State Library, Powerhouse Museum and other venues.

Some historical societies are even able to bridge the gap. They provide a stimulating environment that interests academic historians.

Joint projects and activities can strengthen community connections and social cohesion. The social connections created by local history increase the meaning, purpose and satisfaction in people's lives.

Local history can build community resilience and break down social exclusion especially in communities under pressure. Some are found on the edges of our large cities, while others are in remote and regional Australia.

The practice of local history has a lot to gain from the successful interaction between academic and amateur historians.

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Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the online journal *The Conversation* at <http://theconversation.edu.au/academic-snobbery-local-historians-need-more-support-5710> in April 2012, and is reproduced with the author's permission.

Since then Dr Willis has reinforced his argument and generated debate on the topic. He presented a keynote address 'Academic snobbery. Local historians need more help', at the annual Yass Historical Association Conference 'Beyond the limits of location', held in March 2013 at Galong, NSW. Using two case studies, the Camden's writers project for the *Dictionary of Sydney* website and the Wollondilly Heritage Centre History Project, he examined how there can be successful engagement based on the development of trust between local historians and academics.

Bibliography of British and Irish History (BBIH)

Despite the enthusiastic response from some of our members who have found this add-on to their BALH membership subscription extremely valuable, sadly there have not been enough of them to make it viable to continue beyond this year. At the moment our suggestion is that you contact your local university library, or go to the British Library if you are near London, or the Institute of Historical Research, or National Libraries of Wales and Scotland. But of course that is not the same as having access to it at home.

For further suggestions see Gill Draper's article in *The Local Historian* Vol 40 No 4 Nov 2010 p 320 'Connect to the Native Interface': access to electronic resources and websites for independent scholars', and Jacquie Fillmore's regular updates to the Internet Sites Directory.



Given the number of occasions we mention anniversaries of one thing or another in these pages, and the number of events and activities they generate amongst our members, particularly societies, it is good to be able to draw attention to a source of funding that had just been announced. **See extract from HLF press release on p 12.**

Oxfordshire Local History News reports on the importance of the Morris centenary to the county this year. **Oxfordshire History Centre** hosted a Morris Reminiscence event, which was also attended by the Vintage Mobile Cinema Bus, a restored 1967 Bedford coach converted to show public information films. 2013 is of special significance for The Oxford Bus Museum, and the Morris Museum at Long Hanborough. Nuffield Place (open during the summer) was bought by William Morris as his home in 1933; he took his peerage from the name of the village, becoming Lord Nuffield. www.olha.org.uk.

NB Local History Day 2014 – the BALH annual lecture next year examines the impact of motoring in the inter-war years

Society anniversaries come thick and fast:

Suffolk Local History Council is celebrating 60 years; they have held a number of events and have published their own history looking over the contribution members have made to local history in the county. Its origins, as do those of BALH itself, date back to The National Council of Social Service setting up the Standing Conference for Local History. Suffolk was one of the counties that responded to the Standing Conference's encouragement to establish local committees. www.slhc.org.uk

The **Birmingham and Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry** is very proud to be celebrating its 50th anniversary, commenting that it 'is the first and foremost family history society in the country'. Their Coat of Arms predates that of the Society of Genealogists. www.bmsggh.org



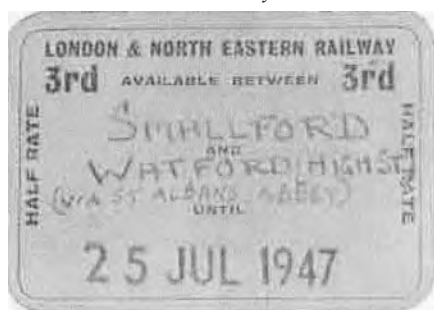
Shanklin & District History Society is ten years old. They are looking forward to next year when it will be 150 years since the first passenger train arrived in the town. In the Autumn 2013 issue of their Newsletter there is an article that brings home how important the rail service was to many households who took in paying guests during the holiday season. 'Shanklin station yard [below] was a centre of feverish activity on Saturdays in summer. Trainloads of passengers spread out through the town in half-hourly flood waves ...' www.shanklinhistory.webplus.net



On the subject of stations, Northampton is having a new railway station, due for completion later next year. There is a plan to create a display in the new building revealing the history of the medieval castle parts of which, dating from the 12th century, have been unearthed beneath the present car park. Stonework from the castle's royal apartments has been in storage for many years and could form part of the permanent station exhibition. **Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group** www.northants-iag.org.uk



Another railway community project received an English Heritage grant to record the history of Smallford railway station on the former branch line (now the Alban Way footpath) between Hatfield Station and the Abbey terminus in St Albans. The ticket office, platform and station master's house still exist, and the group is interviewing former employees and passengers with memories of the station at work. Illustrated below is a schoolboy's quarterly season ticket. **Hatfield Local History Society** c/o Mill Green Museum, Hatfield AL9 5PD



Chadderton Town Hall was opened on 15 November 1913, and on the exact date of the centenary this year there will be a social event in the Edwardian Ballroom. **Chadderton Historical Society** has been relating the developments leading up to the opening, which was described at the time as the 'most memorable day in the history of Chadderton'. The building benefited from the most modern heating, ventilation, and telephonic communication. The public clock on the clock tower (not replaced until 1990) and all the other timepieces in the building were operated together by electricity. www.chadderton-historical-society.org.uk

Towcester & District Local History Society are inviting their members to take part in two new projects. For the centenary of the First World War they are planning to research biographies for the people from the town who appear on the War Memorial and Roll of Honour. They are also part of a collaborative WW1 event being considered by various organisations including the Library, the Museum and the Town Council. Looking further ahead, 2017 will be the 1100th anniversary of the re-fortification of Towcester by Edward the Elder, the attack by the Danes and their capitulation in the 'Battle of Towcester'. Of major significance to the development of modern Towcester, this will be marked by a series of Anglo-Saxon and Viking events throughout the year. www.mkheritage.co.uk/tdllhs

On Saturday 16 November the **London & Middlesex Archaeological Society** will be holding its Local History Conference. The topic is 'The River and Port of London', and the programme will cover the subject from the first to the twenty-first centuries in many different ways. For further details see www.lamas.org.uk/localhistory

Partnerships and collaboration between several organisations often enable a great deal to be achieved that would not otherwise be possible. Just two examples are to be found in the current collection of newsletters:

In Devon, people from The Devonshire Association, Bovey Tracey Library, Devon County Council, Bovey Tracey Town Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority and Bovey Tracey Heritage Trust are working on the history of Bovey Tracey. Beginning with the historic borough itself, they are developing a number of separate projects, and are looking others to join them. One project will study the local water supply, and associated public health and industrial topics. **Devon History Society** www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk

Initial support from HLF has been received for the 'Our Warwickshire' partnership which aims to promote access to heritage within Warwickshire communities and to improve the experience of visitors to the Market Hall Museum. Heritage & Culture Warwick, **Warwickshire Local History Society** and the Friends of Warwickshire County Record Office will work together, filling real and virtual spaces with stories of the county's history. www.warwickshirehistory.org.uk

Cleveland & Teeside Local History Society's Newsletter for September 2013 draws attention to the existence of surprising archives in what might be considered unlikely places. Prior Pursglove College is in a modern building and is very much a working sixth form college of the present day. Its collection of archives spans 800 years, and a recent Heritage Lottery Fund grant has enabled them to carry out conservation work and to digitise the entire collection. Material covers landownership, the foundation and endowment of Robert Pursglove's Hospital of Jesus in 1561, further documents relating to the Hospital, and the records of both Guisborough Grammar School, and Prior Pursglove College itself. The catalogue can be browsed online www.pursglovearchive.co.uk

The Bourne Society covers the communities of Caterham, Chaldon, Chelsham, Chipstead, Coulsdon, Farleigh, Godstone, Kenley, Purley, Sanderstead, Whytlease, Warlingham and Woldingham (and not surprisingly claims to be England's largest local history society). Its 'Tape Archive' consists of a number of audio-cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes that contain historically important voice recordings (all in cardboard boxes in a member's house). Several are of interviews made in the late 1950s and early 1960s with elderly residents whose memories go back to the 1890s. Although some of these had been transcribed and published in early issues of the Bourne Society *Bulletin*, it was felt important that the originals should be preserved. To quote the technical description: 'a restored Sony 3-speed professional tape deck was pressed into service and connected via noise reduction and frequency equalization circuitry to an Olympus digital recorder. This arrangement, which required constant re-configuration during the recording process, resulted in the digitization of more than four hours ...in remarkably high quality ...The resulting wma-format files ... were then recorded on five audio CDs and returned with explanatory documentation to the archive'. enquiries@bourne-society.org.uk

The Friends of the National Archives' magazine for August 2013 contains two articles relating to what is referred to as 'a national collection of local records'. This is the Home Office correspondence for England and Wales classified under HO42. Magistrates and other local 'worthies' wrote to the Home Office about issues of law and order affecting their area. For example in the 1790s they raise problems associated with food prices, unemployment and poor relief, with the French Revolution and war, with the activities of organisations such as Corresponding societies, and much more. A project, supported by the Friends, has enabled this material to be digitised and described to greatly improve accessibility,

and it will be made available on the TNA Discovery online catalogue. Friends-tna@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Moves: Romsey Local History Society (aka Lower Test Valley Archaeological Society) are back in their home in the Town Hall basement. After months of nomadic existence following the flood last December their room has a new lay-out, new carpets, new lights and a wall-mounted screen. The group held a celebration and official opening in September, as a 'welcome back' and 'thank you' for all the support they have received. *Chair 01794 513751*

Christchurch History Society are on their way back to a new venue in the Library. After meetings with Dorset Library Service, they should be installed by the time this is published. Work by many enthusiastic volunteers continues to tackle the backlog of material in their extensive collections. www.historychristchurch.org

Leominster Historical Society have changed venue of their meetings from The Lion Ballroom to Earl Mortimer College and all start at 7.30 pm. On Wednesday 19th March Dr Helen Frisby will talk about the 'Victorian Way of Death.' [see Birmingham coffin works p 23*] Wednesday 16th April Brian Jauncey will talk about Madresfield prior to their visit on 4th June [see stained glass book p32 *]. In May Weobley Society will host this year's Day School. *More details from the Chairman Will Pridie on 01568 611398.*

*these really are coincidences! Ed



*Handbill enclosed with a letter
from William Hill of Blythe
Hall near Ormskirk,
Lancashire 7 August 1795
HO42/25/155.f.373*



The Cuming Museum in Southwark has been gutted by fire and subsequently subjected to theft from the ruins. The Newington Parish Vestry Hall (below) was opened in 1856; in 1899 it became the Town Hall for the Metropolitan Borough of Southwark, remaining so until 1965. In 2006 the Cuming Museum moved into part of the building, which also housed Newington Library and the council's One Stop Shop (both also damaged in the fire). The museum was opened in 1906 after Henry Syer Cuming left his collections and library to the borough, together with investments for a museum to be opened to the public. In 1992 it won a National Heritage Museum of the Year award. The efforts of the fire service saved many valuable items from the exhibition area but it is not known how much damage has been done to items in store. www.southwark.gov.uk/cummingmuseum; **Southwark & Lambeth Archaeological Society** email b.bloice@btinternet.com



The Association of Independent Museums (AIM)/BIFFA Award National Heritage Landmarks Partnership Scheme is awarding £1.5m over three years to interpretation and education projects across the UK showcasing changes in industrial development that have shaped the nation's history. Amongst the first five recipients is the **Birmingham Conservation Trust** for the refurbishment and interpretation of Newman Brothers' Coffin Works in the Jewellery Quarter of Birmingham. This is a rare survival of the metal-working firm that made coffin furniture for over a century. Film makers and a digital interactive developer have been commissioned to work with young people to interpret the processes, the business, multi-faith funerary traditions and the conservation story.



The NHLP scheme award panel visiting The Coffin Works

www.birminghamconservationtrust.org,
www.aim-museums.co.uk

Chertsey Museum is looking at the period immediately before the outbreak of the First World War with their new exhibition 'Farewell to All That 1901-1914'. Items from their important costume collection will reveal the underwear, sportswear, and dazzling evening dress worn in the 'golden era' of the early 20th century. There is an accompanying catalogue for the exhibition which is open until 23 August 2014. www.chertseymuseum.org



In the new **Harpenden Library** in the High Street, officially opened last July **Harpenden & District Local History Society** has two glass display cases next to the shelves housing the local history section of the library's collections. The society is setting up a series of mini-exhibitions to highlight different aspects of the area's history. So far they have covered 'Plaits and Hats', 'Made in Harpenden' and 'Harpenden Races'.

www.harpenden-history.org.uk

Friern Barnet Library was closed by Barnet Council on April 2012 and re-opened on 5 February 2013 under Trustees for the newly formed Friern Barnet Community Library. A long campaign by the local community did not prevent the closure, but pressure to re-open continued. A pop-up library, occupation and re-opening of the original building by squatters from Occupy London, listing of the building, and a court hearing that granted the Council a possession order filled the ensuing months. During this time activities at the library were growing in popularity and were well-supported by the community, as well as gaining national media attention. The library is now becoming a vibrant community hub. It relies heavily on local volunteers for day-to-day running and for the wide ranging programme of activities. A detailed account of the campaign to keep the library running has been written by Keith Martin, member of **Friern Barnet & District Local History Society** and one of the team closely involved. *Friern Barnet: The Library that Refused to Close* is published on 28 October. ISBN 978 0 9569344 7 5

www.friernbarnethistory.org.uk

The Victorian Society's travelling exhibition 2013 - 14 'Saving a Century', shows the battles the society has won and lost since its foundation. A full list of venues can be found at

www.victoriansociety.org.uk/events/; these include **Cubitt Town Library** from 1 – 22 November; **Saffron Walden Library** from 25 November to 31 December; **Chelmsford Library** during March, **Tyntesfield** in June and July, and **Dundee Central Library** from 4 Sept to 11 Oct 2014.



Archives News compiled by Margaret O'Sullivan

September 2013

The £189m **Library of Birmingham**, which houses a collection of one million books, opened on 3 September. The library has more than 200 public access computers, theatres, an exhibition gallery and music rooms. This also marks a significant development in care for the city's archive collections. These include internationally important series such as the Boulton and Watt papers. An exciting series of events is proposed to make the city's archives even better known. *For further details, please see: www.libraryofbirmingham.com*

Another service which has recently benefited from re-location is **Barnsley Archives and Local Studies**, now to be found in the Town Hall in the centre of Barnsley. This is home to a Museum and Discovery centre offering a hands-on approach to history told through artefacts, documents, films and recordings donated by local people. *See www.experience-barnsley.com*

Awareness of past industries has grown as long-established businesses have changed and sometimes disappeared. **The Museum of the Carpet in Kidderminster** opened in Autumn 2012 and includes a large archive of social, technical and historical resources. As well as standard business records such as ledgers and reports, there are also designs by distinguished artists such as Glorget and Lucienne Day. Local social history is also well represented in photos

of industrial and town life. See www.museumofcarpet.org.uk. [NB this is the location for the BALH Pauper Prisons ... Pauper Palaces (Midlands) conference in November]

Business archives of the very recent past are the beneficiaries of two new cataloguing grants from the **Business Archives Council**. It has awarded £2000 each to IRIE! Dance Theatre for the cataloguing of their performance collection, and to Pentabus Theatre for the cataloguing of their company records.

Pentabus Theatre is unusual in that it is one of the few survivals from the innovative community theatre movement of the 1970s. Their records include photographs, playscripts, original hand drawn posters and advertising material, press reviews, letters, drawings, musical scores, video and audio material and rehearsal notes. The project proposal is to create a summary catalogue of the entire collection - the company committing additional funds to do so - and then to deposit the collection with **Shropshire Archives** to ensure access and preservation. Outreach was a key element of the application, specifically the theatre's 40th birthday celebrations, but including the use of volunteers to seek out further material and testimonials from former staff, performers, and audience members; to create an exhibition; and to create a history section on their website which will include digitised archives.

IRIE! dance theatre is a charity and leading exponent of African Peoples' Dance from 1985 to the present day. It has developed initiatives such as Europe's first Diploma in dance which incorporates African and Caribbean dance as a significant area for academic study and research. The performance collection relates to the historic touring dance shows of the company from 1985 - 2004, in a variety of formats including audio/visual material. The performance records form part of a larger collection that has been put forward as an educational resource supporting the Foundation Degree programme in dance run in partnership with IRIE! dance theatre, City & Islington College and London Metropolitan University. Additionally, the project will facilitate IRIE's future aim to integrate catalogues with Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance and build partnerships with other archives such as the British Black Dance Archives Project (at the National Resource Centre For Dance) and the Black Cultural Archives. The collection also

holds clear potential as a resource for the study of dance history, dance ethnography and migration studies and for engaging the African-Caribbean community, volunteers and others.

The Royal Free Hospital's archive collection is moving from Hampstead to the **London Metropolitan Archives** (LMA) in Clerkenwell. Both the Royal Free Hospital and London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women collections will be available at the LMA from early 2014. A spokeswoman from the Royal Free said: "This is an exciting new chapter for the Royal Free's archives. The trust has an enormously rich history and, with documents dating back to 1828 when the hospital was founded, it is of paramount importance that the archive is properly cared for. Its new home at the London Metropolitan Archives will allow greater access for members of the public and will ensure this valuable material is preserved for future generations."

A £1m project to digitise a core part of BT's archive collection from the past 167 years has created the **BT Digital Archives**, an interactive online research resource and archive catalogue of almost half a million photographs, reports and items of correspondence preserved by BT since 1846. The project, in which Coventry University and The National Archives were also partners, has been largely funded by JISC, which provides digital services for UK education and research. The archive showcases Britain's pioneering role in the development of telecommunications and the impact of the technology on society, and will be freely available under a Creative Commons licence to encourage sharing and the use of the material in education curricula and research. Case studies show how digitised archival material can be used to explore new avenues both in research and teaching in a wide range of subjects, from design to linguistic and cultural studies. When fully complete, the BT Digital Archives will replace the existing online catalogue for BT Archives, first launched in 2009.

University of London Libraries attracted unwelcome attention with its recent proposal to sell their four Shakespeare Folios (the First, Second, Third and Fourth) to create an endowment fund in order to attract more readers. After a public campaign co-ordinated by the Bibliographical Society, the idea was dropped.

Objectors to the sale included Professor Henry Woudhuysen of London University whose open letter can be seen on the website of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association. National media coverage also noted that the firm which was to handle the sale, Bonhams, included a staff member who is the partner of the Library's Director, although the university concluded there was no conflict of interest.

UPDATE ON WEDGWOOD COLLECTIONS

Stoke on Trent has given planning permission for housing development on former sports grounds on the Wedgwood site at Barlaston in Staffordshire. In principle, this should unlock funds for redevelopment of the existing factory, museum and visitor centre. This should also mean that the future of the Wedgwood collections, both museum artefacts and archives, might be more secure, but considerable uncertainty remains. The issue of the pension plan liabilities is still in the hands of lawyers because a legal loophole left the museum trust liable for a £134m pension shortfall linked to former staff of the Waterford Wedgwood company which went into administration in 2010. The redevelopment plans show museum space as part of the scheme and statements have been made that new museum galleries and improved archive store facilities are intended in order to allow, inter alia, better visitor access to the reserve collections.

Things are still far from clear because the firm's chief financial officer has said 'While our plans do not address the complex issue of the future of the collection, we remain confident that it will remain at Barlaston. We recognise the importance of the collection and are working closely with the administrator to play our part in securing the future.' A spokesman from the administrators commented: 'The case is still with lawyers. There is no further action at the moment.'

SURVEY OF ARCHIVE USERS 2012

Users of record offices may remember last year filling in a long questionnaire about their experiences.

The results of the 2012 survey have now been published (<http://www.archives.org.uk/latest-news/2012-survey-results-showed-improved-user-satisfaction-in-key-areas.html>). Headline points are:

· There was a 7% increase in those rating the **QUALITY AND APPROPRIATENESS OF THE STAFF'S ADVICE** as 'very good'. In all 96% of those responding rated staff advice 'good' or 'very good'.

· There was an 8% increase of those rating the **HELPFULNESS AND FRIENDLINESS OF STAFF** as 'very good'. In all, 97% of those responding rated staff helpfulness and friendliness 'good' or 'very good'.

· There was an 8% increase in those rating the **ARCHIVE'S SERVICE OVERALL SERVICE** as 'very good'. In all 96% rated the overall service they received as 'good' or 'very good'.

This survey covered 128 archive offices and resulted in nearly 9,000 completed questionnaires.

Because questions have remained the same for several years, the user survey in 2014 will cover different areas. It is expected to run between April and May 2014. Most importantly, because remote users now feature significantly in total usage, a separate survey of people who make enquires of record offices by email or letter will take place later in the autumn of this year.

The positive response from users is not unexpected and remains consistent from year to year. However, there have been many changes to local archives in recent years – notably reduced opening hours, increased charges for 'value-added' services such as genealogical enquiries, use of digital cameras, etc. It is noteworthy that these do not seem to have changed users' overall perceptions of services.

THE FUTURE OF THE CENSUS

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has started a public consultation on 'The Census and future provision of population statistics in England and Wales'. Their research has resulted in a view that there are two possible approaches to census-taking in the future:

- a census once a decade - similar to the 2011 Census but primarily online; or
- a census using existing administrative data and compulsory annual surveys.

Both approaches would provide annual statistics about the size of the population, nationally and for local authorities, as ONS do currently.

A census using existing data and annual surveys would provide statistics about population characteristics every year. An online census would provide more detailed statistics but only once a decade. Different users will have different views on the approaches, depending on how they use the data, and ONS welcomes views from anyone. The consultation will run until 13th December 2013. ONS has also arranged a number of events to support the consultation.

You can find the consultation document and a link to the online questionnaire on the ONS website (beyond2011@ons.gov.uk)

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The most significant piece of recent news is the resignation of the Keeper and CEO of TNA, Oliver Morley, to take up the post of Head of DVLA (Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency). Following on the departure earlier this year of Jeff James, this means that two senior TNA officers have left in quick succession. Assurances have been given that the recruitment process for the new CEO will not be unduly protracted and the User Advisory Group has made strong representations that the successful candidate should have historical knowledge and, preferably, experience, in addition to essential strategic management and financial skills requirements. This is particularly important now that TNA is the lead body in the archives sector throughout the country. Archives Accreditation will further strengthen these responsibilities. Budgetary constraints are still very tight, but Oliver Morley has commented that footfall at Kew appears to have increased in recent months. He hopes that the newly designed website will raise TNA's profile further and make its resources more widely known. The inclusion on the home page of a location map is one new feature amongst many. The new website will be launched on 30 September and comments are invited.

Digitisation, both in-house and with commercial partners continues to be a priority. This was the subject of a detailed and wide-ranging presentation to the UAG by Caroline Kimbell, Head of Licensing. Group members raised questions about quality of digitised images from microfilm/microfiche and about reliability of transcriptions. Another presentation concerned proposals for further academic engagement by TNA.

Discovery-related projects in progress include Finding Archives (assimilation of archive databases) and it gratifying to note that some UAG comments have been taken on board by the development team, specifically links with the Archive Accreditation process. A further update is expected at the end of the year. Other initiatives include the search replacement project (to move from the current search platform to a new one) and the single sign on project (to create an integrated sign on across all TNA's web services).

Of particular interest to local historians is the news that imaging from school registers up to 1914 from over one hundred local archives is to begin at four regional centres before the end of 2013. This project is managed by a national consortium.

A TNA project completed this summer was enhanced cataloguing of WORK architectural drawing series 29-38 and 40-44. These Ministry of Works drawings comprise 18,200 items dating from the 17th century to the 1930s. Historic buildings such as the Tower of London are to be found together with plans of telephone exchanges and remote coastguard cottages. One series is a detailed record of the Houses of Parliament buildings, both pre-fire, competition drawings and 'as built'. The upload to Discovery very will facilitate searching by architects' names, drawing numbers and phases of construction. Exact dating is now given where practicable.

Another project of interest to researchers studying Victorian women is the revision of catalogue entries for C14: Court of Chancery: Clerks of Records and Writs Office: Pleadings 1842-1852. This follows similar work on C16: pleadings 1861-1875. Descriptions have been expanded to include the names of plaintiffs and defendants and searchable codes have been added to indicate female plaintiffs (SFP for one and JFP for more than one).

Historians with 20th century Irish interests will welcome cataloguing by name of WO 35/206-207: War Office Army of Ireland: Irish Rebellion: Sinn Fein personalities, 1922 and of CO 904/193-216 Dublin Castle Papers: Personalities Files and CO 904/42-44 Murder trials. In addition, catalogue entries for WO 35/94-120/1 and WO 35/121-131/1: Prosecutions of civilian files now include: name, charge, date, place and/or county, verdict, sentence and/or other outcome.



Researchers at **Trinity College, Dublin**, are calling on members of the public to upload old family letters and photographs to a new digital archive as part of an ambitious public history project to recreate ordinary life in Ireland around the time of the Easter Rising of 1916. This will be Ireland's first crowd-sourced humanities project. *The Letters of 1916: Creating History* invites contributions of letters written within, to or from Ireland between 1 November 1915 and 31 October 1916 no matter what the theme – romance, gossip, local politics, literature, the Rising or the War. People can also get involved by transcribing the hundreds of letters already found in public institutions. The project is being carried out by students on Trinity College's M Phil in Digital Humanities and Culture. Previous work includes the *Mary Martin Diary* project, a digitised diary offering insight into life for families of Irish soldiers during World War One. www.tcd.ie

A collaborative project between the **University of Manchester** and Manchester City Council makes available online eight reports spanning 40 years of what planners wanted and often failed to do in Manchester. From the 1920s, through wartime reconstruction, 1950s austerity to the 'swinging' 1960s, it is clear that the city today would have looked very different if the professionals had got their way. The digitisation of these substantial documents, which can be browsed in their entirety online, was made possible by funding from the Manchester Statistical Society. www.mappingmanchester.org/plans

The Yorkshire Society

Yorkshire History Prize

In 2013 the First Prize (the Beresford Award) for essays of up to 10,000 words has been awarded to:

Nicholas J Verrill of Barnet, Hertfordshire for his essay on 'The Religion of the Yorkshire Gentry 1509-1531: The Evidence of Wills'

Mr Verrill was the only prize-winner this year, the 27th year of the Prize. The rules provide for the award of a second prize in the longer essay category but none of the other entries was adjudged suitable. The same was true of the entries in the shorter essay competition (up to 5000 words) for the Bramley Award and no award was made.

The following information is for 2014 Prizes:

Entries should be original and based on research, and should not have been published already nor offered for publication. Any subject drawn from the history of places and people in traditional Yorkshire is usually acceptable. Successful essays have often been adapted subsequently for publication in learned journals.

Persons thinking of entering should first inform the Secretary (see below) who will give guidance on the format in which essays should be submitted.

Those wanting to discuss academic matters, the wording of their title or the eligibility of their subject may, if they wish, consult Professor Edward Royle, Chairman of the Judges. (Tel. 01904 423009; email: er1@york.ac.uk)

The closing date is 1 May 2014 and essays should be sent to the following address by that date:

J M Bradford, Secretary for the Yorkshire History Prize, 14B Wood Lane, Leeds LS6 2AE (Tel: 0113 274 3804; Email: thebradfords@btinternet.com)

BALH guided visits

The Events Committee has not met since the last issue of *Local History News* so there are no further firm details of the visits offered in 2014. As the information becomes available it will be on the website, and will appear in the next e-newsletter and in the January issue of *LHN*.

On page 1 of the Supplement other events are listed, together with the visits proposed for next year.

BOOKING: see the website www.balh.co.uk or contact BALH PO Box 6549, Somersal Herbert, Ashbourne DE6 5WH 01283 585947

The Events Committee would be delighted to hear of suggestions from members to help future planning of the Guided Visits programme. Is there somewhere special near you that other members would be interested to see?

BALH Publications

We have been reviewing our stock of publications and updating the information on the website. Books no longer in stock have been removed from the 'Our Publications' pages.

Remaining current publications are available at the published prices.

The most recent, as members will know, are

Remembrance and Community: War Memorials and Local History (Kate Tiller) £5 for members and £6.95 for non-members (plus £1 p & p per item)

Internet Sites for Local Historians (Jacquelené Fillmore) £4.99 (incl p & p)

Living the Poor Life (Paul Carter and Nathalie Whistance) £4.99 (incl p & p)

SPECIAL OFFER FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Any copy of the other stock at £6 (+ £1 p & p) each. To check availability before ordering please email the Business Manager amjones-balh@btconnect.com. State your Unique Reference Number (on your renewal letter) with your order.



BALH Publications Awards 2013

Alan Crosby

The first BALH Publications Awards were made in 1999, so this is now a venerable institution dating back to the last century. Since then it has become a major feature of our own publishing work, and a key element on Local History Day when the awards are presented. Over the years we have extended the scheme, to differentiate between long and short articles (though where the dividing line lies is to some extent a subjective decision) and also to include an annual award for a society newsletter. The original aim of the awards, which were founded by the late Mike Cowan, then the general secretary of BALH, was that they would give recognition to the wealth of excellent local history that is published in local journals (whether village, town, district, county or region) but which all too often is unrecognised beyond the immediate geographical area. Since every year the reviews editor of *The Local Historian* receives approaching 200 copies of journals, which include perhaps 1000 articles, there is plenty to choose from, and a quite extraordinary range of material is available.

The process of choosing is unavoidably subjective. How can we readily measure an article on, say, the origins of a late Anglo-Saxon minister against a biographical study of a significant local clergyman and, in turn, an analysis of the finances of a railway branch line 1860-1890. Early on, it became apparent that assessment would have to involve a set of simple but important criteria, to try to avoid the inevitable personal preferences that would otherwise creep in (thus, some historians don't regard the twentieth century as history at all, while others have a passion for it). The criteria are hardly unexpected: articles should show imaginative use of historical sources; they should be fluently and accurately written with reliable referencing; they should demonstrate a clear awareness of historical context; they will have made a real contribution to the wider understanding of the history of a locality; and, ideally, they should make other local historians think about the possibility for looking at that topic, those sources or that approach when they do their

own research and writing. The subject matter is not in itself the key, but we do look for unusual or particularly imaginative thinking (not, however, mere novelty!).

We follow a deliberate policy of not being swayed by the visual appearance of the journal. Although in the last ten years the quality of publication production has increased tremendously, thanks to technological changes, we are very conscious that some societies have ample funds for publication while others just get by and have to minimise expense. The reviews editor chooses six or eight longer articles and the same number of shorter ones, and sends the journals in question on to me, a weighty set of packages. I then photocopy the articles and send them to a panel of assessors, one for long articles and another for short, who read the whole lot (it's usually in the dark and gloomy days of late November and early December, so this brings light and cheer into winter-burdened lives). The assessors rank the articles in order of preference, usually giving comments on the reasons for their choice, and I then tot up the figures and produce a winner. It's a simple method that works well.

This year the outright winner of the long article award was Ian Hancock's 'The Irish gent and his strumpet' (and no, it wasn't just the title that attracted our praise) while Natalie Burton's article on civil defence preparations in Berkshire was the winning short article. You couldn't really have two more different approaches to local history—one is a very detailed and meticulous reconstruction of the life, in Ireland and Northumberland, of a wildly notorious figure, using the evidence of court depositions, probate records, parish registers and quarter sessions material. The other uses the local authority administrative records of the late 1930s to consider the preparedness (or otherwise) of one of the Home Counties in the face of the threat of European war.

concluded on page 32

Books

Jane Howells

Ancient Woodland: History, Industry and Crafts

Ian D Rotherham

Shire Library 2013
£6.99 ISBN 978-0-74781-165-7

Within this slim volume is to be found a wealth of information, enthusiasm and advice. Maps and placenames, routes and boundaries, plants and surnames, all play their part in the methods for locating ancient woodlands and identifying the remains of the wide variety of occupations dependent on their resources.

The diverse nature of woodland and forest industries, their skills and language, all have a regional dimension often traceable over centuries. Their present day fate lies in the hands of committed craftsmen and women who exploit old traditions in new ways, and in the efforts of local campaigns to survey these very special places.

The author is an authority on the cultural and historical aspects of landscape. He expresses concern about the number of ancient woodlands that today go unappreciated, and urges local historians to explore their areas and to develop a communal recognition of this valuable



part of their heritage before it disappears under modern forestry and construction techniques.

With its many fascinating illustrations, and bibliography of written and online sources, this book is a valuable starting point from which to explore, understand and take action.



Stained Glass Window Designers and Makers of Birmingham School of Art

Roy Albutt

£12.95 (+£2 postage) www.roy-albutt.co.uk
ISBN 978-0-9543566-3-7

When Henry Payne introduced a course in stained glass work to the curriculum of the Birmingham School of Art in 1901, he began an important contribution to the history of that craft, influenced by the Arts & Crafts ethos of the School.

Many of the early participants were experienced artists in other media, including Payne's colleagues on the staff. This book examines the remarkable legacy of twelve of the best known of these workers in stained glass. Their windows can be found across the Midlands, and further afield in Britain and overseas. Most of the commissions undertaken by Payne's students were for churches, but others worked for schools, hospitals, cinemas and in domestic settings. Throughout the 20th century their work



serves to demonstrate the qualities of this method of decoration at its best.



(above) 'Let the Heavens Rejoice', St Peter & St Paul, Blockley, by Toxall & Whitford 1975

(below) detail from 'Little Brother and Little Sister', Glasgow Kelvinside, by Mary Newill 1906



In this volume for each maker there is a short biography, brief particulars of their career, a gazetteer of their work, and coloured photographs of some examples. Also included are appendices on the Bromsgrove Guild, and the Chapel at Madresfield Court, as well as a bibliography.

continued from page 30

I sense that local historians are often rather wary of writing biographical studies, perhaps because it is felt that biography is about people (well, of course it is) but local historians ought to write about places. But Ian's article brings in a great variety of other themes, linked together by the turbulent life on an individual—themes as diverse as Anglo-Irish connections, the legal process of chancery courts in the mid-eighteenth century, landownership and tenure in south-west Northumberland, patterns of inheritance and family networking, and of course contemporary attitudes to sexual laxity.

Natalie's article makes use of material of the sort so often regarded as dull. Local authority minute books are actually an extraordinarily rich resource, full of fascination and of exceptional importance for local history. They do not tell us everything—debates are not reported, reasons for decisions rarely given—but they are part of the fabric of communities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In her short account Natalie highlights features such as the powerful tensions not only between central government and local government, but between neighbouring local authorities (county against district, urban against rural). She also shows—the biographical element again—that the personalities of individuals were important factors in the decision making process. This was no cool, calm and clear objective procedure, but one involving numerous irrationalities, disputes, local variations and petty differences. Both succeed very well in their aims, and we congratulate their authors.



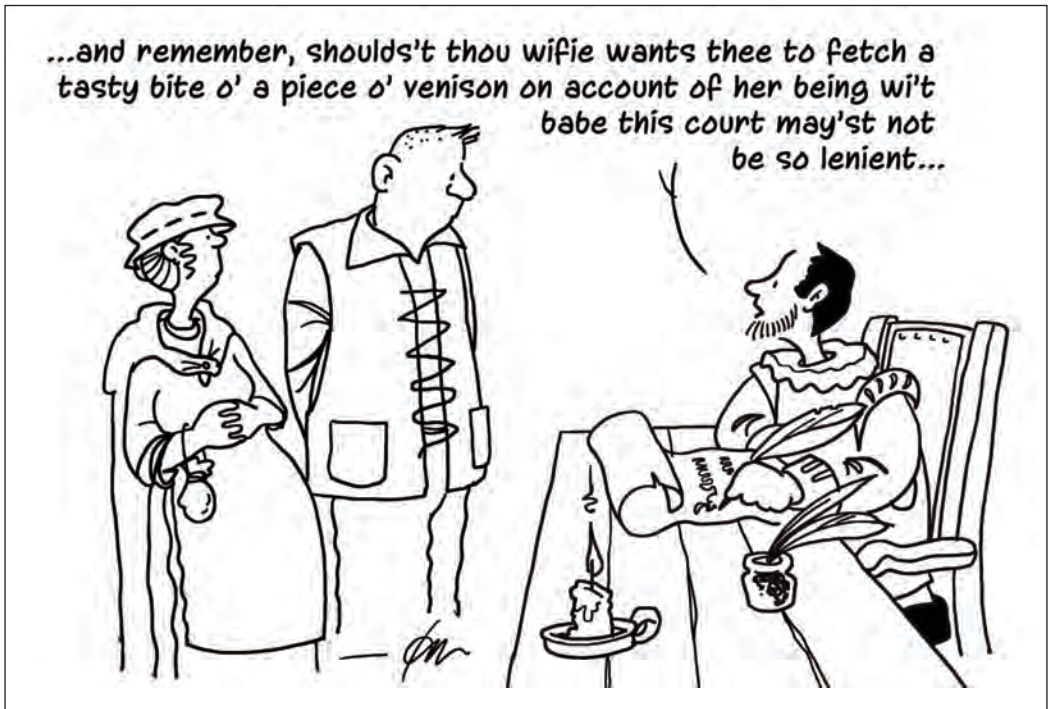
Domestic discussions

Alan Crosby

Mrs Crosby was preparing a palaeography class and we were working on some examples together (it's a touching symbol of the pure romance which is the Crosby household - sharing some knotty problems of the handwriting of the Restoration period).

One of the documents was a page from the manor court book of the Honor of Clitheroe for 7 May 1674, recording the sitting of the court for the division of Whitewell in the Forest of Bowland. This was a vast medieval forest which belonged (as it still does) to the Duchy of Lancaster. Indeed, her present majesty still regularly visits her Bowland estates, east of Preston, and is on record as saying that if she ever retired that's where she'd really like to live. It's a wonderful area, beautiful and redolent of its rich historic past. But I digress ...

The game laws were still in force in 1674 and many of the presentments concerned infringements of the regulations. For example, on this single page were twenty separate cases of the keeping of unregistered greyhounds (and in a few cases 'a brace' of them). In the winter of 1673-1674 there had been exceptionally severe weather, and there are entries recording, typically, 'tooe brace of fawns which dyed in the Storme'. Richard Parker, the servant to Thomas Parker of Greystonelee, was presented for 'killing of 2 Patrdg [sic] with a gunn' and was fined only 2s 6d because he had confessed. Clement Parker was amerced twice, once 'for felling and makeing of waest of wood in the leese' (20s) and once for 'Stoping the Ceeper for makeing search in his house' (13s 4d). The elite were, as was often the case, also among the guilty: Roger Parker, gentleman, was amerced



20s for 'stubbinge of some woods within Stotheyes within this Forest'.

One very obvious point is that the surname Parker was extremely common in the area (it still is). Three of the thirteen jurors had that surname, as did five of the eight men named in the more serious presentments. The Parkers, a clan rather than a family, owed their name to the fact that their medieval forebears had been keepers of the deer parks within the forest.

The vernacular was extensively used - the word 'stubbing' is Lancashire dialect for uprooting trees - and the spelling was exceptionally idiosyncratic and erratic, as the above examples amply demonstrate. And the entry which charmed us both was also characterised by unusual spelling ... but I am sure that this is a statement unique in the entire corpus of British manor court records. Here it is:

wee present John Parker for killing one Sallam fish for his wife shee being yougly with Childe

The phonetic spelling of the word 'hugely' is perfect - even today that's exactly how it would be pronounced in this part of Lancashire. Picture the scene. "John, mi dear, am cravin' again an' am fair clemmed*. Canst tha not fotch

me summat .. a' c'd so fancy a tasty bite o' salmon. Ah, John, my love, canst tha not go down t' river and get me some. 'Tis near dark soon and there'd not be a soul t'see thee. An' a' do so fancy it and wi' t' babe now sah near an' all. Aye, a tasty bite o' salmon 'd do me well". So, loving and devoted husband that he was, he took his net and went down to the Hodder, that lovely river, and sought a quiet spot in the deep high-banked stretch near Whitewell where the river rushes across its rocky bed, and saw the fish come leaping. And lo, one was in his net, and he took it home to his true love, about to bear their child.

Someone saw him. He was not unobserved. He was collared. Everyone knew him, a local man. Everyone knew his wife, so near her time. Everyone knew that he'd doing anything for her. Sympathy was on their side. He freely admitted his crime. The court book shows that he was let off. And I've no doubt she enjoyed her stolen salmon, spiced with the relish of poaching.

** dialect for 'hungry, starving'*

BALH TRUSTEE PROFILE

My involvement with BALH dates to 1999 when I was asked to represent the Victoria County History for which I had been working (in Staffordshire) since 1979, with a move to the history department at Keele University in the mid 1990s. I was assigned to the Publications Committee, and became its chair in 2005 and *ex officio* a member of the Management Committee.

I continue to research and write the Staffordshire VCH volumes, besides teaching mainly medieval history but also local history at Keele, as well as running the university's long-established Latin and Palaeography Summer School.

For too many years now I have edited the transactions of the Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society, and more recently also

the volumes of the Staffordshire Record Society, as well as being closely involved with the work of the county Archive Service helping with study days and the recently-established annual Staffordshire History Day.

It was a pleasure to ensure that some members of the North Staffordshire Guild of Historians were included in the BALH-supported Living the Poor Life Project cataloguing the poor-law correspondence in the National Archives.

Before all this activity began to overwhelm me, my original research was on editing the medieval records of the lesser clergy of York Minster, of which two volumes have appeared and others are planned for, in retirement!

Nigel Tringham

Notes News Issues

Jane Howells

Joan Thirsk

Joan Thirsk died on 3 October, aged 91. She was one of the leading economic and social historians of the 20th century, and a long-standing supporter, and Vice-President, of BALH. There will be a full appreciation of Dr Thirsk's work in the next issue of *The Local Historian*.

Contributions on archives

I would like to thank Steve Hobbs, who has for many years contributed a regular column for us from the point of view of an archivist deeply involved everyday with the trials and delights of working at Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre. He will continue to write for us in alternate issues, and in between we will have an article from one of the archivists in Cumbria - at the opposite end of England. Peter Eyre is beginning this time, and has also supplied the wonderful front cover image. Many thanks to him and his colleagues for taking on this task.

Thanks are due also to Margaret O'Sullivan for her comprehensive coverage of Archives News; her emails are always most welcome.

Themes?

I am not intending to start a regular 'editorial' here, but I am sure readers will have noticed some themes that, entirely by accident, have arisen in the course of this issue. Those of you who attended Local History Day last year will recall Malcolm Chase's lecture on Regency 'local government', and everyone else can now read it in *The Local Historian*. Mark Latham begins his report here from VCH Middlesex by expressing concern that people tend to assume local administrative history is dull; he has every intention of proving them wrong. As does Natalie Burton's award winning short article, discussed by Alan Crosby in his overview of this year's publications awards.

And also Margaret O'Sullivan describing a recent exhibition in Stafford. Alan raises the second theme in discussing Ian Hancock's award winning longer article: The relationship between biography and history is many faceted, but individuals are often a significant element in the history of a locality: Peter Eyre on Lady Anne Clifford, Michael Hall's work on Francis Brett Young, and the influence of Edward Rudolf of The Childrens' Society.

Questionnaire

Please do complete and return the questionnaire enclosed with this mailing. It is a great help for the Association to receive feedback from its members to inform current decisions and forward planning.

Website

As this issue goes to press we are receiving 'expressions of interest' from possible developers for our website. A small group, much assisted by volunteer consultant Mike Jennings, has drawn up a specification which will go to tender shortly. We hope members have not been too seriously inconvenienced by the shortcomings of the BALH website in its current state, and look forward to being able to introduce the new version before too long.

Open Forum

The next Open Forum will be on Saturday 1 March 2014.

Contributions from members to LHN and to the e-newsletter are always welcome.

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Local History News

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AUTUMN 2013

www.balh.co.uk

Supplement

Events 2013

Saturday 23 November **Conference – Kidderminster.** Pauper Prisons ... Pauper Palaces (Midlands).

Events 2014

20-22 February **London.** Who Do You Think You Are? Live. BALH will be at Olympia, do visit our stall!

Friday 28 February **London.** 'Experiences of World War One: strangers, differences and locality' workshop. BALH and Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London (see *LHN* 107 p19)

Saturday 7 June **London – Local History Day** (see overleaf).

2-4 July **Conference – London.** 'The Great War at Home' Anglo-American conference, Institute of Historical Research, University of London. (See page 10)

Saturday 13 September **London.** County Societies Symposium 'Communication and local history'.

Guided Visits proposed for 2014 include

Oxford (Bodleian Library), Hampshire (D-Day Map); South Derbyshire; York (Railway Archives); Swansea; Leeds (Liddle Collection, Marks & Spencer Archives); Worcester (The Hive).

Further details will be available as soon as arrangements have been confirmed.
Please get in touch if you would like to suggest a visit destination in your area.

*Guided Visits are designed for small groups to visit less accessible places and collections; booking forms for these, and all other events, with full details and prices are available on our website or from **BALH(V) PO Box 6549,***

Somersal Herbert, Ashbourne, DE6 5WH.

This information becomes available at intervals and a separate addressed envelope or label should be sent for each set of details required.

■ PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

York Cause Papers project: online catalogue of court proceedings 1300-1858

■ BALH Annual General Meeting

■ **2014 LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS:** for research & publication, for a society newsletter, and for personal achievement

■ BALH ANNUAL LECTURE:

‘A Lost Elysium’? The impact of motoring on English landscapes in the inter-war years.

John Minnis

Senior Architectural Investigator, English Heritage

Tickets: £25 for members (£35 for non-members)
includes coffee/tea on arrival, and a sandwich lunch.

BOOK EARLY! Orders received after 8 May subject to availability.

Please ensure you have sent a stamped addressed envelope with your completed form and cheque.

To: BALH (L) 7 St Mark's Rd, Salisbury SP1 3AY

Please send me ____ tickets for the 2014

Local History Day at £25.00 (£35 for non-members);

A cheque for £ _____ payable to BALH,

and a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed*

Please send me details of BALH membership

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* min 110 x 160mm (C6)

Please print below your name, address and email or phone number in case of query

BALH Annual Lecture 2014

will be given on Saturday 7 June by

John Minnis

Senior Architectural Investigator, English Heritage



‘A Lost Elysium’? The impact of motoring on English landscapes in the inter-war years.

The motor car was a transformative feature of 20th century Britain, forging a social, economic and cultural revolution. The needs of the car and its occupants – from filling stations to cafes, garages to car parks – prompted a remarkable diversity of solutions, which until the late 1940s were essentially unplanned. John Minnis’s lecture, richly illustrated with contemporary and modern images, reveals the battles between practicality, originality, spontaneity and Good Taste which were fought in the 1920s and 1930s as roadside structures multiplied. Aside from its exceptional historical interest and significance, in anybody born before 1960 this subject will evoke feelings of deepest nostalgia for the golden age of motoring!

LOCAL HISTORY DAY MORNING PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

On the morning of 2014 Local History Day an archivist from the Borthwick Institute at York will be talking about the recently completed York Cause Papers project which has resulted in a free online catalogue of more than 13,000 cause papers (court proceedings) relating to cases heard in the church courts of the diocese of York between 1300 and 1858. The cause papers contain a wealth of material, spreading well beyond Yorkshire, on social and economic as well as religious history of the greatest value to local and family historians alike. The catalogue, which can be searched by surname, place name and topic, makes it possible to access this material for the very first time. Comparable records exist for other dioceses but have not benefitted from such a cataloguing project.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

This year your subscription renewal has been enclosed with this mailing. As many of you will appreciate, the cost of postage has risen dramatically over the past couple of years and we have therefore decided to send out the renewals with the last mailing of the year to save on costs. This also means that I do not have to transform my living room into a mailing house for a week or so while the Renewals are prepared and Terry Clarke (Finance Officer), his wife Gill, my husband Mark and I do not have to stand for hours on end putting everything into envelopes!

Renewal Incentive

The first 150 'Individual' members to return their renewals slip with their payment / details of payment to the BALH Office will win one of our publications from a choice of the following:

Remembrance and Community: War Memorials and Local History by Kate Tiller.

Internet Sites for Local Historians – a directory – compiled by Jacqueline Fillmore and edited by Dr Alan Crosby.

Living the Poor Life – A Guide to the Poor Law Union Correspondence, c.1834 to 1871, held at The National Archives.

Insurance Scheme

Any Societies that would like an insurance certificate and factsheet should ensure that they **send a sae with their return slip**. Please also clearly mark the name of your Society on the sae - this will help us to process everything as quickly as possible.

Please direct any insurance queries to Tariq Mian at Towergate on 0870 366 9552 or tariq.mian@towergate.co.uk

General Points

We would really appreciate it if you could take time to read the instructions on the form you have been sent. One of the most important things to note is please only complete the address box on the return slip if your mailing address has changed. We would also request that if you are a Treasurer (of a Society), please do not change the address to your own unless this is to be the 'new' mailing address for your Society.

If you have mislaid the renewal form, we are unfortunately unable to provide a replacement. In this case, please send in a short note detailing your name / name of society, unique reference number and include your payment / payment details. The Finance Officer and I will then be able to update your records accordingly.

Our bank account details for those wishing to set up a Standing Order or pay us by Direct Payment are:

Bank: CAFBANK

Account: British Association for Local History

Sort Code: 40-52-40

Account Number: 00009383

Please ensure you include your unique reference number and name.

Finally, a big THANK YOU to all of you that subscribe to BALH – your support is very much appreciated.

If you have any other queries, you can contact me direct at
amjones-balh@btconnect.com or 01283 585947.